

The Executive Council The Committee on the Status of Women

MEMBERSHIP

Diana Akiyama, *Co-Chair*, Diocese of Eastern Oregon
Virginia A. Brown-Nolan, Diocese of Chicago
Marjorie A. Burke, Diocese of Massachusetts
Patricia S. Castillo, Diocese of West Texas
Marge Christie, *Co-Chair*, Diocese of Newark
Antoinette Daniels, Diocese of New York
Ginny Doctor, Diocese of Central New York
Frank Griswold, resigned, *replaced by*
Robert H. Johnson, Diocese of Western North Carolina
Bonita Ann Palmer, Diocese of California
Ginger Paul, Diocese of Western Louisiana
Byron Rushing, Diocese of Massachusetts
Carolyn Wilson, *R. I. P.*, *replaced by*
Maggie Ross, Diocese of North Dakota

Judith Conley, *Executive Council Liaison*, Diocese of Connecticut
Pamela W. Darling, *Consultant*, Diocese of Pennsylvania
Ann Smith, *Staff Liaison*, Episcopal Church Center

The committee includes nine lay persons, two priests, and one bishop.

Bishop Robert H. Johnson is authorized by the committee to receive non-substantive amendments to the report in the House of Bishops.

Deputy Marge Christie is authorized by the committee to receive non-substantive amendments to the report in the House of Deputies.

IN MEMORIAM: Carolyn Malpass Wilson

The Committee's life was grievously diminished by the sudden unexpected death of our Co-Chair, Carolyn M. Wilson of Milwaukee, in November 1992. Carolyn had served on the Committee since its creation in 1988, and was associated with the predecessor Committee for the Full Participation of Women in the Church as coordinator of the Milwaukee diocesan survey, one of twelve that led to the Committee's report to the Detroit Convention, "Reaching Toward Wholeness." She was a person of immense energy and devotion to the life of the Church, who had known more family tragedy than most of us could bear yet overflowed with love and laughter, actively caring for everyone she met and setting an example of deep Christian joy for us all. We miss her very much. May she rest in peace.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Committee on the Status of Women is to investigate and advocate the full participation of women in the life of the Episcopal Church and to advise the Church on theological, educational, health and socioeconomic issues that determine the conditions of women's lives. This mission is undertaken in the context of our baptismal covenant, which binds us to "persevere in resisting evil," to "strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being," and to "proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ." We believe that one aspect of that Good News is that all are one in Christ Jesus, male and female, and rejoice that we have been called to minister in an age in which new implications of that unity in Christ are being realized.

GOALS

To monitor the status of all women and promote their full participation in the life of the Church.

To monitor the effects of sexism, racism and other forms of discrimination on the status of women in the United States.

To advise and recommend to General Convention, and to the Church, policy and program which will improve the status of women.

SUMMARY OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

The committee is appointed by the Presiding Bishop, to report to the Executive Council, in accordance with Resolution A077 of the 1988 General Convention. During the 1991-94 triennium the committee met nine times in various parts of the country, and reported to the Executive Council each year. Five of the meetings were in conjunction with committee-sponsored Consultations on Violence Against Women.

The committee's mission statement and goals were formulated during the 1988-91 triennium on the basis of the charge received from the General Convention and the work of the predecessor Committee for the Full Participation of Women in the Church. Specific objectives proposed in the 1991 Blue Book Report shaped the work of this triennium. They are presented below followed by discussion of progress in each area. The committee offers three resolutions to the 1994 General Convention, which will be found at the end of this report.

1991-1994 OBJECTIVES

- 1. To sponsor a series of regional hearings on violence towards women, to enable the Church to listen to the voices of those whose lives have been affected, to encourage theological reflection about the connections between violence and sexism in our society, and to promote appropriate educational and direct service programs in response.**

The somber topic of violence against women has begun to receive attention within both the Church and the larger society. Near the end of the last triennium, the Committee on the Status of Women had listened to testimony from a number of victims, advocates and service

providers in the San Francisco Bay area. The tremendous need and the value of sharing experiences and pooling resources to improve ministry in this area became apparent, and has been the major focus of the Committee's work in the current triennium. A consultation process evolved, combining several components— witness and personal testimony, education and consciousness-raising, theological reflection and worship, resource-sharing, planning— to engage the Church in responding to what many perceive to be an escalating problem.

With the help of a grant from the United Thank Offering, the Committee conducted six consultations on violence against women during the triennium. There were two national gatherings at the Episcopal Church Center, at the beginning and end of the consultation process. These brought together representatives of policy and program groups, seminaries, provincial leaders, staff, and elected officers, to consider the Church's responsibility and role in responding to the many forms of violence against women. Four regional consultations were also held, in Boston, San Francisco, San Antonio, and at the Anglican Encounter in Brazil, and the Committee was represented at a national ecumenical conference addressing this topic. Two Committee members conducted a mini-consultation for the bishops of Province I, the Diocese of Massachusetts held a workshop on "what a parish can do" as follow-up to the Boston consultation, the Episcopal Church Women of Province VIII organized a program drawn from the consultation in San Francisco for the provincial synod meeting in 1993, and other regional and local groups are planning similar programs. Press coverage of the consultations in diocesan and national publications, including a "Life-Lines" centerfold in *Episcopal Life*, helped to spread the word.

It would be difficult to overestimate the powerful impact of these consultations on both committee members and participants. Shocking statistics— a woman is beaten every 15 seconds, every six minutes a woman is raped, four women are murdered by husbands or boyfriends every day— took on particular human faces. One after another, women— Episcopal women from Episcopal families, rich and poor, white and of color— told their stories of incest, rape, battering, economic violence, clergy sexual misconduct and spiritual abuse, and the repeated failure of church leaders and congregations to recognize their desperate plight and respond appropriately. "You're not a good Christian if you don't return and submit to your husband," said her rector to a woman fleeing a husband who routinely beat her, epitomizing the fact that for far too many victims of violence the Church has not been a safe place, a sanctuary, a community of shelter and healing. Too many of its leaders, the language of its Scriptures and liturgy, its structures and traditions and theology, have perpetuated and reinforced a world in which simply being a woman is dangerous. In powerful theological reflections and moving liturgies, consultation participants began the arduous but rewarding work of bringing the Good News of Christ into the darkness of violence and despair. At several consultations, candles lit in the name of women personally known to be victims of violence flickered throughout the day, brought light to the Eucharistic table, and were carried home as a sign of individual commitment to become part of the solution instead of silent partner to the problem. We confessed our blindness, grieved with those who suffer, and called with confidence on the One who healed the woman with the issue of blood to make us instruments of reconciliation and healing, to make the Episcopal Church a safe place for women.

Several program resources to promote this goal grew out of the consultation process, in cooperation with the Office for Women in Mission and Ministry at the Episcopal Church Center. These include a revised and expanded edition of "Breaking the Silence of Violence," a booklet containing statistics, pastoral guidelines and resources for assisting victims of sexual and domestic violence; a study guide and video exploring the topic through interviews with persons attending the Anglican Encounter in Brazil and the Committee's consultation in San Francisco, distributed *via* all diocesan Episcopal Church Women presidents, with notification to all diocesan bishops, and through Parish Services; and a model program design for conducting local consultations to build a network of community support to deal with the wide array of problems associated with violence against women. The latter is being made available as part of a booklet reporting on the consultation process, with another video from the 1993 consultation in San Antonio demonstrating how the model can be applied and a list of ideas for local, diocesan and national church responses, which the Committee will make available separately to dioceses and others.

Perhaps the most striking of the findings from the series of consultations was the apparent lack of interest among male church leaders in the problem of violence against women. Despite intensive efforts, including personal invitations from the Presiding Bishop to bishops, clergy and lay leaders identified as potential change agents within the Church's structure, the great majority of those who chose to attend the consultations were lay and ordained women. This seems to be the result of two factors: lack of concern based on ignorance of the terrible scope and seriousness of the problem, which leads to giving it a low priority amidst the pressure of other responsibilities, and a reluctance to take responsibility for complicity in a society and church which tolerates this level of violence against women.

The Committee calls upon all Episcopalians, and especially male clergy and laymen, to recognize that your sisters, mothers and daughters are at risk, that your brothers, fathers or sons may be abusing their partners, children or co-workers, that the connections between violence and sexism in our culture are deep and profoundly dangerous, manifesting themselves throughout the spectrum from coarse humor and harassment through exclusive language and economic discrimination to sexual assault and murder. This is not a problem affecting "others" outside the Church. Moving testimony from consultation participants makes it tragically clear that many Episcopal women are victims of physical, emotional, sexual and spiritual abuse and violence from Episcopal men, that Episcopal clergy frequently fail to respond appropriately to women seeking help, that some Episcopal clergy are themselves abusers of family members or parishioners. This is a vast problem, and all Episcopalians, especially men, must acknowledge it and share responsibility for its solution. The Consultations during the 1991-1994 triennium began the process of consciousness-raising within the Episcopal Church, but there remains much work to be done.

2. To continue to collaborate with the Office of Pastoral Development and the Committee on Clergy Sexual Exploitation.

The Committee on the Status of Women maintained a close collaboration with the Committee on Clergy Sexual Exploitation throughout the triennium, with two members

serving on both groups. Information and resources have been shared; clergy sexual exploitation has been one component in the violence consultation process; the Committee on the Status of Women has supported requests for support in developing procedures and training materials related to sexual misconduct; and it endorses the resolutions being brought to the 1994 Convention by the Committee on Clergy Sexual Exploitation: namely, that the Episcopal Church establish a nationwide 800 number to put people in touch with an advocate who will guide them into the proper diocesan channels for dealing with clergy misconduct, and for continuation of the committee for one more triennium to complete the task of policy development and creation of model training modules and response procedures for diocesan adaptation to local canonical and civil requirements (see that Committee's report elsewhere in the Blue Book for complete text of resolutions).

3. To expand cooperation with the Executive Council Commission on Racism, especially to promote the use of anti-racism training models throughout the Church.

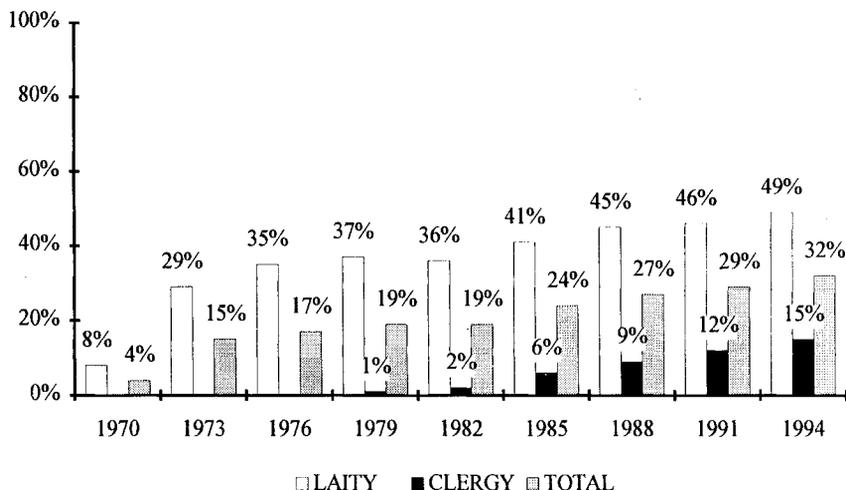
Early in the triennium, one of the Committee's co-chairs served as liaison to the Commission on Racism, giving special support to its monitoring of the 1991 resolution on racism awareness within Interim Bodies originally introduced by the Committee on the Status of Women. The Committee continues to promote the need for anti-racism training within the Church's policy and program units and to encourage the appreciation of diversity in church and society. In planning the violence consultations, the Committee was particularly intent on bringing a wide array of voices, experiences and perspectives into conversation, to heighten awareness of the race-specific ways in which violence against women manifests itself.

4. To initiate a study to follow up the 1987 Action Research Survey on the participation of women in the Church.

In view of limited resources, the Committee chose to concentrate its efforts in the area of violence during this triennium and to postpone consideration of a formal follow-up to the 1987 survey. However, some of the monitoring begun by that survey was continued, and updated charts depicting women's participation in the General Convention appear below. These show an interesting pattern. At the first four conventions after women were permitted to serve as lay deputies, the number elected rose steadily to about 35%, levelled off for one triennium, and then has climbed slowly to the present 48.7%. Clergywomen were first elected as deputies in 1979 and their numbers have gradually crept forward, to the current level of 63 clerical deputies, just under 15%. In assessing the significance of these figures, it is important to note that accurate figures on the overall gender balance within the Episcopal Church are not available. A 1981 Gallup poll suggested that women constituted 55% of the total membership, but most observers agree that they are a far higher percentage of active participants; and there may have been significant changes in the intervening years. Parochial report forms which collect membership data do not provide a gender breakdown— or racial/ethnic data— so the Church continues to function on the basis of more-or-less informed guesses about its overall composition. Furthermore, there are no complete figures on the number of ordained women: a

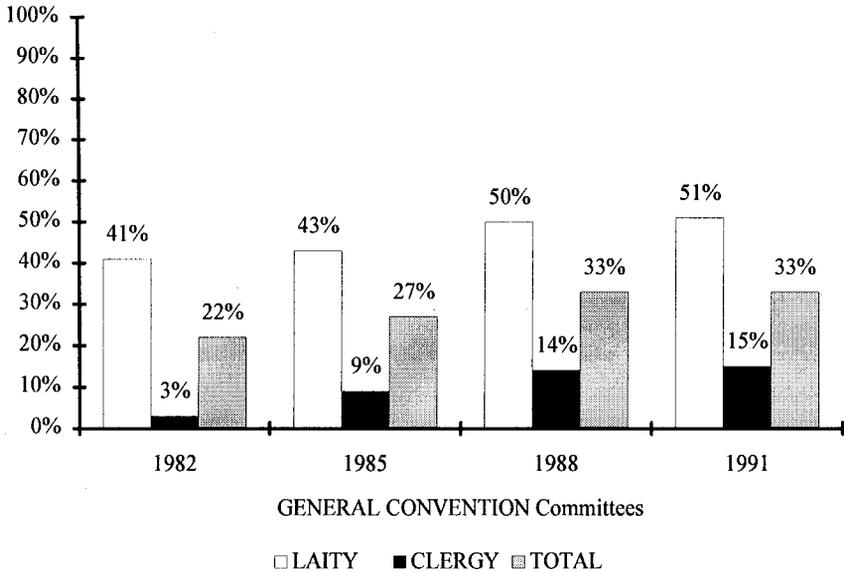
disproportionately high number are non-stipendiary and thus not enrolled in the Church Pension Fund, which maintains statistics for the ordained ministry.

WOMEN DEPUTIES to CONVENTION
As Percentage of Those Elected



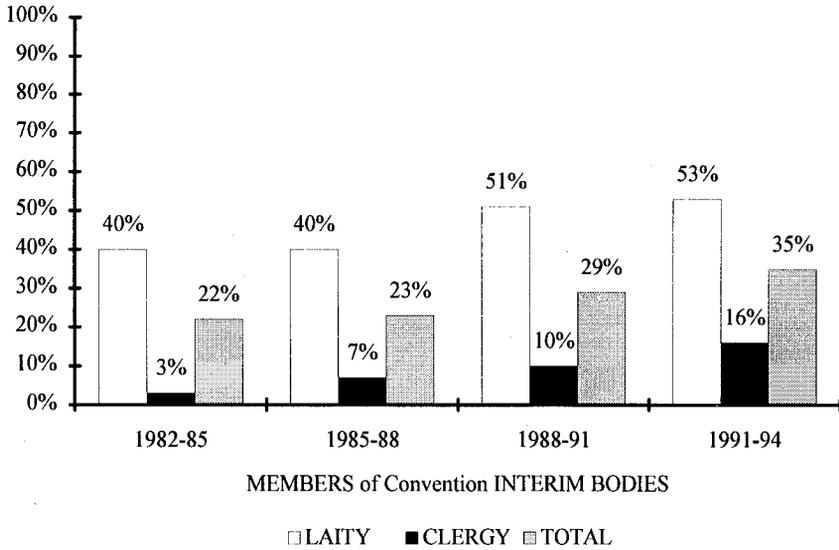
The proportion of women deputies appointed to Legislative Committees at the last four conventions has been slightly higher than their representation in the House of Deputies as a whole, indicating that successive presidents (Charles Lawrence in 1979, 1982 and 1985; David Collins in 1988 and 1991) valued the perspective women would bring to the legislative process. Lay women have served on these committees in virtually equal numbers with lay men since 1988, and even first-time women clerical deputies have generally received a committee appointment. But given the relative scarcity of ordained women, even these efforts result in a continuing imbalance, with 33% of all 1991 legislative committee appointments in the House of Deputies held by women. (Within House of Bishops legislative committees there can still be only scant presence of women— one woman sat in that House at the 1991 Convention, and three will be present in 1994, of some 175 active members.)

WOMEN on LEGISLATIVE Committees
As Percentage of Deputies Appointed



A similar picture emerges among appointments to the Interim Bodies which study issues and recommend policy to the Convention. For most of these, the canons specify membership by order— for example, three bishops, three presbyters or deacons, and six laypersons— and while the proportion varies, the fact that half of virtually all groups must be ordained, together with the still small number of ordained women who might be appointed, results in continuing gender imbalance, with women holding 35% of the seats on Interim Bodies in the most recent triennium, 1991-1994.

WOMEN on INTERIM BODIES
As Percentage of all Appointed/Elected



These figures demonstrate the interconnections between clerical power and gender in the institutional structures of the Church: in both legislative and policy-making bodies, mostly-male clergy (priests and bishops) generally outnumber lay persons. Thus full parity in the leadership and governance of the Episcopal Church can only be achieved when women are equally represented within each of the Holy Orders, a transition in the life of the Church which will probably require another generation to be fully accomplished. In the meantime, regardless of their numerical presence, special efforts must continue to be made to ensure that women's perspectives are available in deliberations within all the councils of the Church.

In addition to monitoring General Convention elections and appointments, the Committee also undertook an informal attitude survey in cooperation with the Episcopal Church Women (ECW). Questions about diocesan programs related to women, and the position of the bishop(s) on key issues were addressed to diocesan ECW leaders. Responses were received from 58 dioceses, including at least five from most of the domestic provinces (only one diocese in Province I responded). It is reasonable to generalize that the composite results represent a snapshot of women leaders' perceptions about their home dioceses and bishops, and it is a very mixed picture that emerges.

While almost 80% of the dioceses of the women responding supported organized ministries such as battered women's shelters and rape crisis centers, only 65% of the bishops were perceived to be supportive of groups working on women's issues, and a mere 27% of

dioceses had a task force or other group devoted to women's concerns. The great majority of ECW leaders reporting (84%) believe that women are fairly represented in diocesan committee appointments, professional staff positions and among the clergy at diocesan liturgical functions. Nonetheless, a full third of diocesan bishops did not authorize or encourage use of the Supplemental Liturgical Materials or use inclusive language in diocesan publications, and at the time of the survey most dioceses did not have policy statements on sexual harassment (only 35%) or clergy sexual exploitation/abuse (44%). Almost all bishops (93%) ordain women, but not as many were perceived to be supportive of the deployment of ordained women (90%), or to encourage fair treatment of women in the ordination process (88%). Less than half (47%) were seen as supportive of the Ecumenical Decade: Churches in Solidarity with Women, fewer had participated in or supported the Consultations on Violence Against Women (40%), and only 45% were known to have expressed support for women's decision-making and responsibilities regarding abortion. While these results demonstrate considerable improvement in the status of Episcopal women over the previous generation, they also indicate the need for continuing education and institutional reform to ensure that the structures and leadership of the Church do not demean or discriminate against women.

5. To continue to monitor the participation of all women in the life of the Church, identify barriers, and stimulate appropriate efforts to eliminate them, with attention both to lay women's voluntary service and to lay and ordained women employed by the Church.

A. To support the lives and ministries of lay women by: encouraging sensitivity to the time constraints facing single mothers and women working outside the home when scheduling church activities; stimulating development of a training process to enhance awareness of church leaders about the way women's voices are so often not heard and their work undervalued in comparison with that of their brothers in the Church.

B. To promote continued improvement in the deployment prospects for ordained women and lay professionals by promoting active participation in the Church Deployment Office system by ordained women and lay professionals; continuing to monitor the deployment process; supporting the development of information and training materials to reduce unconscious discrimination in that process; advocating and promoting salary and benefit equity.

In pursuit of these goals, the Committee has engaged in a variety of activities, often in cooperation with other groups:

— The Committee's Executive Council liaison served also as liaison to the United Thank Offering Committee, facilitating communication in the process of updating the UTO guidelines to reflect ecumenical guidelines regarding the allocation of funding to programs directly benefiting women and children.

— Committee members assisted in planning for and participated in the 10th Anniversary gathering of the Council on Women's Ministries, and collaborated closely with the Episcopal Church Women and the Episcopal Women's Caucus in preparation for programs at the 1994 General Convention and Triennial Meeting.

— On request of the Executive Council, the Committee prepared a first draft of the Policy on Sexual Harassment applicable to clergy and lay leaders participating in meetings, programs

or other activities sponsored by the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Episcopal Church (the legal entity constituting "the national Church"), which was adopted in final form by the Council in 1992.

— The Committee has repeatedly offered to provide personnel and program resources to the House of Bishops to facilitate consideration of issues affecting the life and ministry of women in the Church.

— The Committee has encouraged the work of the Standing Liturgical Commission in the areas of lectionary review and development of inclusive language liturgical resources.

— Near the beginning of the triennium, the Committee met with a member of the Standing Commission on Health to discuss health issues of special concern to women. The Committee on the Status of Women endorses the Health Commission's resolution, found elsewhere in this Blue Book, to strengthen this Church's policy in opposition to any local, state or federal legislation interfering with a woman's right to make her own decision about and have access to safe abortion services.

— The Committee also met with House of Deputies President Pamela P. Chinnis, and Bishops Barbara C. Harris and Jane Holmes Dixon, for general discussion of the challenges, problems and satisfactions experienced by women in positions of lay and ordained leadership within the church's existing hierarchy.

The Status of Ordained Women

In the decades since the 1970 admission of women to the diaconate and the 1976 canon opening all orders to women on the same basis as men, the Episcopal Church has been engaged in a process of institutional and attitudinal change, as the implications of incorporating women into all aspects of our life have become more fully realized. The Committee on the Status of Women has worked to facilitate this process in several areas. A meeting with a representative of the Council for the Development of Ministry led to endorsement of a proposed project by the Council and the Church Deployment Office to gather information about and to encourage the effective deployment of ordained women throughout the Church. The Committee also adopted a policy of not holding committee meetings in dioceses where ordained women have not been permitted to celebrate the Eucharist.

Conscious of the importance of titles to the understanding of roles and relationships, the Committee developed a "Recommendation on Priestly Titles" which was widely disseminated for discussion and response, leading to further drafts of which the latest appears below:

PRIESTLY TITLES: A RECOMMENDATION

The Committee on the Status of Women recommends eliminating "Father" as a form of address for male priests, in order to decrease the often-discriminatory distinctions made between men and women in ordained ministry.

The most common terms used for ordained women in places where ordained men are called "Father" have been "Ms." and "Mother." "Ms." is obviously not a parallel term, and the Committee believes that "Mother" is not an appropriate equivalent to "Father" because of the very different values and roles assigned to "mother" and "father" in our culture. The

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Committee also questions the appropriateness of parental terms for ordained persons, which imply a parental role *vis a vis* lay persons. Confusion of the pastoral with the parental role can lead to authoritarian or care-taker models of clergy leadership which undermine mutual responsibility and interdependence within the Body of Christ. However, in places where "Father" continues to be used for male clergy, use of the parallel term "Mother" for female clergy would provide some parity of address, despite the disadvantages just mentioned.

If the secular Mr./Ms. form of address for all priests is deemed inadequate, the Committee **recommends use of "the Rev." (or the full "Reverend" when speaking) or "Pastor."** The Committee is aware that older English usage discouraged the use of "Reverend" on grammatical grounds. However, it is commonly accepted in contemporary English, and in widespread use within many American Protestant and black church traditions. This usage is recognized in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, which defines the term—with or without the definite article—as follows:

1. a. Of persons: Worthy of deep respect or reverence on account of rank, age or character; b. As a courteous or respectful form of address. 2a. As a respectful epithet applied to members of the clergy; b. Used in addressing a member of the clergy; c. Prefixed to the name of the person.

The Committee recommends the following forms of title and address:

Full title:

The Rev. John Doe	The Rev. Jane Doe
The Rev. Mr. John Doe	The Rev. Ms. Jane Doe

Salutation:

Dear Mr. Doe,	Dear Ms. Doe,
Dear Rev. Doe,	Dear Rev. Doe,
Dear Pastor Doe,	Dear Pastor Doe,

When speaking:

Hello, Mr. Doe.	Hello, Ms. Doe.
Hello, Reverend Doe.	Hello, Reverend Doe.
Hello, Pastor Doe.	Hello, Pastor Doe.
Hello, John.	Hello, Jane.

The Committee hopes its recommendations will stimulate continued thoughtful discussion about the significance of clergy titles and their relationship to changing roles in the Church, particularly in terms of the ordination of women.

"Conscience" and Women

Another issue affecting the status of ordained women in the life of the Church has been the use of the 1977 House of Bishops' "Statement of Conscience" to justify the exclusion of women from the ordination process in some parishes and dioceses, and the refusal to license ordained women for ministry within some dioceses. The Committee believes that this interpretation of the "Statement of Conscience"—never endorsed by the General

Convention—constitutes an inappropriate and discriminatory circumvention of the plain intent of the canon regarding ordination, which perpetuates the exclusion of women from areas of the church's life and undermines the canonical discipline of the whole Church. Continued tolerance of this situation is an institutionalized form of sexism and violence against all women. While no one can coerce the conscience of any other, the leaders of this Church—and especially its bishops—have an obligation to witness to the fact that the theological tradition which denies that women can be ordained is a sexist tradition, just as the theological traditions that endorsed slavery and apartheid were racist, and those holding to such a tradition may not interfere with the incorporation of women into all ministries and geographical areas of the Episcopal Church. The Committee on the Status of Women therefore joins with others throughout the Church who are calling for an end to this anomaly.

The theme of this 71st General Convention, "With Water and the Holy Spirit: proclaiming one God, one family, one earth," provides an apt framework for the work of this Committee as summarized in this report. Rejoicing in the redeeming love of the triune God, who has placed this precious earth under our stewardship, we proclaim the equal value and worth of all members of the human family, male and female, sisters and brothers bound together in mutual responsibility—to care for each other, to speak out against violence and injustice, to invoke the healing power of the One who died and rose again, that the world may see and say, "Behold these Christians, how they love one another." Then may all glory be given to God.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Resolution #A049

Work to End Violence against Women

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, **That this 71st General Convention condemn**
- 2 **violence against women in all its forms, and resolves that each deputy and bishop will**
- 3 **work toward making the Episcopal Church a truly safe place for all God's people, by**
- 4 **encouraging every parish to develop appropriate ministries to this end; and be it further**

- 5 *Resolved*, **That the Committee on the Status of Women continue to raise awareness about**
- 6 **the Church's role in responding to violence against women by supporting extension of**
- 7 **the consultation process in every province and diocese, providing resource people and**
- 8 **educational materials for use in regional and local programs, and securing outside funds**
- 9 **to support training local planners and presenters.**

EXPLANATION

As societal violence has increased, violence against women in homes, the work place, the economic and legal systems, and the streets is reaching horrific proportions. Traditional interpretations of certain Scriptural passages have been used to justify the subordination of women to men, while masculine-dominated liturgical language reinforces the invisibility of women's lives and suffering. The consultation process creates a safe environment in which

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healing can begin both for victims of violence against women and for the church which has been a complicit bystander. By bringing together facts, figures and human faces telling their own stories, it raises awareness of the many dimensions of violence within a context of theological reflection and worship, empowering members of the Body to proclaim the Good News of Christ who alone can bind up wounds and heal the broken-hearted.

Resolution #A050

On Women and Ordination

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, **That this 71st General Convention declare the**
2 **language of Canon III.9.1, that "the provisions of these canons regarding the admission**
3 **of Candidates for the Ordination to the three Orders: Bishops, Priests and Deacons shall**
4 **be equally applicable to men and women," to mean that no one shall be denied access to**
5 **the ordination process in any parish or diocese of this Church solely on account of**
6 **gender, and that no one shall be denied call to a pastoral cure, licensing, or permission to**
7 **exercise the ministry appropriate to her order solely on account of gender in any diocese**
8 **of this Church.**

EXPLANATION

Some opponents of the ordination of women have taken the House of Bishops' 1977 "Statement on Conscience," particularly its clause, "No Bishop, Priest, Deacon or Lay Person should be coerced or penalized in any manner, nor suffer any canonical disability as a result of his or her conscientious objection to or support of the 65th General Convention's action with regard to the ordination of women," as justification for excluding women from the ordination process and from the exercise of ordained ministry in a few dioceses. This manner of seeking to protect their own conscientious right to dissent in the matter of ordaining women has the effect of enforcing their views on others within their dioceses, which was not the intent of either the original canonical change adopted by the 1976 General Convention nor of the full Statement as adopted at the 1977 interim meeting of the House of Bishops. Continuation of this practice creates a *de facto* schism within the Episcopal Church, in which a few jurisdictions refuse to acknowledge persons duly ordained by the rest of the Church, thereby undermining canonical discipline as well as impeding the incorporation of women fully into all aspects of the Church's life and work.

Resolution #A051

Initiate Prayer Book Revision Process

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, **That this 71st General Convention authorize the**
2 **Standing Liturgical Commission to prepare a plan for the next revision of the Book of**
3 **Common Prayer, and a time-table for revision such that a new book might be ready for**
4 **presentation to the 75th General Convention in the year 2006, being the thirtieth**
5 **anniversary of the first approval of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer.**

EXPLANATION

As the Church has lived into the implications of the baptismal covenant in the scant two decades since the text of the current prayer book was prepared, many theological and linguistic developments and a wealth of liturgical resources have been recovered and created, both here and in other provinces of the Anglican Communion. Prayer Book revision, if it is to be done well, is a lengthy process, and past experience demonstrates that the longer the period of time between revisions the more difficult it is for both individuals and institutions to maintain a balance between faithfulness to our heritage and openness to what God is calling us to do in our time and how our worship can best be expressed in the living language of the worshipping body. Initiating an orderly revision process in this timely fashion should reduce the trauma so often associated with this vital task.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE NEXT TRIENNIUM

The Committee on the Status of Women continues its tasks of monitoring, investigating, advocating and recommending to the Presiding Bishop, the Executive Council, and the Church, measures which will promote the full participation of women in the life of this Church and their corollary well-being in society. Its overall goals and objectives remain the same as those presented above. Specific tasks for the next triennium include:

— Making the Episcopal Church safe for women, by extending the consultation process to facilitate the development of ministries responsive to violence against women in dioceses and parishes, including:

- giving special attention to violence against youth and young adult women;
- seeking outside funds to support training by present and former committee members of provincial and diocesan teams to implement local consultations.

— Using information derived from the Sexism Panel and discussion during and following the 71st General Convention to identify educational needs, particularly in terms of the scriptural traditions and theological concepts sometimes used to rationalize sexism and justify the often-violent subordination of women.

— Continuing to monitor the changing status of lay and ordained women, supporting the Council for the Development of Ministry's project on clergywomen deployment, and working with the Committee on the State of the Church to develop and maintain an accurate picture of the changing gender distribution in church membership and participation.