

# Pearls: God's Holy Irritants

## Thirty Years of Feminism in the Church

### Prelude

**Entrance Hymn:** **"Come, Labor On"**  
(Entrance Hymn at the Philadelphia Ordinations)

### Opening Sentences

Blessed are you, holy and living God  
You come to your people and set them free.

**Song of Praise** **"Tell out my soul"**

### Collect

Blessed be God, who made us in the image of goodness and truth, a reflection of our Creator; Sustain us with sisters, ground us with friends, bless us with desire that our souls may seek truth, the world may find healing, and glory be given to your Name.

**The First Reading** (Translation: The Message) **Numbers 27:1-8**

The daughters of Zelophehad showed up. Their father was the son of Hopher son of Gilead son of Makir son of Manasseh, belonging to the clans of Manasseh, son of Joseph. The daughters were Mahalah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. They came to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. They stood before Moses and Eleazar the priest and before the leaders and the congregation and said, "Our father died in the wilderness. He wasn't part of Korah's rebel anti-God gang. He died for his own sins. And he left no sons. But why should our father's name die out from his clan just because he had no sons? So give us an inheritance among our father's relatives." Moses brought their case to God. God ruled: "Zelophehad's daughters are right. Give them land as an

inheritance among their father's relatives. Give them their father's inheritance. Then tell the People of Israel, If a man dies and leaves no son, give his inheritance to his daughter."

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church. **Thanks be to God.**

**A Contemporary Psalm      "Pearls"      Alla Renee Bozarth**  
(To be read responsively)

Leader:

People:

You are pearls.  
You began  
as irritants.

**The ocean pushed  
your small, nearly  
invisible  
rough body  
through an undetected  
crack in the shell.  
You got inside.**

Happy to have a home  
at last  
you grew close  
to the host,  
nuzzling up  
to the larger body.

**You became  
a subject  
for diagnosis:  
invader, tumor.**

Perhaps your parents  
were the true invaders  
and you were born  
in the shell -  
no difference-  
called an outsider  
still.

**You were a representative  
of the whole  
outside world,  
a grain of sand,  
particle of the Universe,  
part of Earth.  
You were a growth.**

And you did not go away.

**In time  
you grew**

so large,  
an internal luminescence,  
that the shell  
could contain  
neither you nor itself,  
and because of you  
the shell Opened itself  
to the world.

Then your beauty  
was seen  
and prized  
your variety valued:  
precious, precious,  
a hard bubble of light:  
silver, white, ivory  
or baroque.

If you are a specially  
irregular and rough  
pearl, named baroque  
(for broke),  
then you reveal  
in your own amazed/amazing  
body of light  
all the colors  
of the Universe.

## Contemporary Lesson

Barbara Ehrenreich

(Excerpts from her Commencement Speech at Barnard College)

I had another speech prepared for today- all about the cost of college and how the doors to higher education are closing to all but the wealthy. It was a good speech -lots of laugh lines - but 2 weeks ago something came along that wiped the smile right off my face. You know, you saw them too - the photographs of American soldiers sadistically humiliating and abusing detainees in Iraq. These photos turned my stomach - yours too, I'm sure. But they did something else to me: they broke my heart. I had no illusions about the United States mission in Iraq, but it turns out that I did have some illusions about women.

A lot of things died with those photos. . . . a certain kind of feminism or, perhaps I should say, a certain kind of feminist naiveté. . . .That was before we had seen female sexual sadism in action. . . . But it's not just the theory of this naïve feminism that was wrong. So was its strategy and vision for change. . .

That strategy and vision for change rested on the assumption, implicit or stated outright, that women are morally superior to men. . . .

Now the implication of this assumption was that all we had to do to make the world a better place - kinder, less violent, more just - was to assimilate into what had been, for so many centuries, the world of men. We would fight so that women could become the CEOs, the senators, the generals, the judges and opinion-makers - because that was really the only fight we had to undertake. Because once they gained power and authority, once they had achieved a critical mass within the institutions of society, women would naturally work for change. . . .

That's what we thought, even if we thought it unconsciously. And the most profound thing I have to say to you today, as a group of brilliant young women poised to enter the world - is that it's just not true. . . .

What I have finally come to understand, sadly and irreversibly, is that the kind of feminism based on an assumption of moral superiority on the part of women is a lazy and self-indulgent form of feminism. Self-indulgent because it assumes that a victory for a woman - whether a diploma, a promotion, a right to serve alongside men in the military - is ipso facto - by its very nature -- a victory for humanity.

And lazy because it assumes that we have only one struggle - the struggle for gender equality - when in fact we have many more. The struggles for peace, for social justice and against imperialist and racist arrogance ... cannot, I am truly sorry to say, be folded into the struggle for gender equality. To cite an old - and far from naïve -- feminist saying: "If you think equality is the goal, your standards are too low." . . . .

It is not enough to be equal to men, when the men are acting like beasts.

It is not enough to assimilate. We need to create a world worth assimilating into.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church

**Thanks be to God**

**Gradual Hymn:**  
**Ellacombe**

**"We Praise You God"**

**Music:**

We praise you, God, for women saints  
who lived before their time,  
for prophets, priests and abbesses,  
for poets with their rhyme  
Great Hildegard of fiery tongue  
Teresa, tireless, bold:  
such women lived with trust in You  
and broke tradition's mold.

We praise you, God, for all who risked to champion freedom's cause:  
Sojourner Truth and Rosa Parks  
who challenged evil laws.  
They spoke the truth and held their ground,  
resisting what is wrong.  
They rested on your love and power,  
their courage makes us strong.

We praise you, God, that women dared  
to make your call their choice.  
The church denied, but they affirmed  
Your Spirit's inward voice.  
They break the bread and bless the cup.  
though that was man's domain.  
Their priesthood opens worlds of grace  
to heal our grief and pain.

We praise you, God, for all the saints  
who ventured paths unknown  
with trust that you had called them there  
and claimed them as your own.  
When we lose heart, then bring to mind  
the courage you bestow.  
The saints surround, a witness cloud  
To cheer us as we go.

Words: Ruth Duck

**The Holy Gospel** (Translation: The Message) **Matthew 15:21-28**

From there Jesus took a trip to Tyre and Sidon. They had hardly arrived when a Canaanite woman came down from the hills and pleaded, "Mercy, Master, Son of David! My daughter is cruelly afflicted by an evil spirit." Jesus ignored her. The disciples came and complained, "Now she's bothering us. Would you please take care of her? She's driving us crazy." Jesus refused, telling them, "I've got my hands full dealing with the lost sheep of Israel." Then the woman came back to Jesus, went to her knees, and begged, "Master, help me." He said, "It's not right to take bread out of children's mouths and throw it to the dogs." She was quick: "You're right, Master, but beggar dogs do get scraps from the master's table." Jesus gave in. "Oh, woman, your faith is something else. What you want is what you get!" Right then her daughter became well.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church. **Thanks be to God.**

**The Sermon**

**the Rev'd Strongwomanpriest**

**1A Litany of Prayers for Women and Ministry**

In peace we pray to you, O God.

We pray today with special intention for all people who struggle for survival, for visibility, for a voice, for equality, and for quality of life in a patriarchal world and church.

For all people in countries and cultures impacted by global capitalism. For the world's poor, destitute and homeless, most of whom are women and children. Let not the needy be forgotten. Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.

**We pray to you, O God.**

For women in this place and throughout our land who are beaten and abused physically, emotionally, or spiritually. For those who are exploited and enslaved as sexual objects, especially victims of sexual tourism in Asia, those who

undergo female genital mutilation in Africa, and those women who are the victims of the so-called 'honor murders' in Jordan. For people in other cultures torn by war who, because of their powerlessness, have been subjected to rape and other forms of torture, especially Bosnian, Serbian and Croatian women.

**We pray to you, O God.**

For all people of minority cultures and ethnic groups in the United States who continue to be trivialized and endangered by the pervasiveness of racism and for all who are infected with the epidemic of race hatred. For all people, especially women, in this country who are economically exploited. For the health and welfare of every person in every circumstance.

**We pray to you, O God.**

For women who struggle to maintain their dignity and identity because of unwanted sexual involvement, including the emotional and physical violence of sexual harassment, rape, and involvement in the sex work or pornography industries. For all those who are addicted to drugs, alcohol or sex, and all who are infected with or affected by sexually transmitted diseases like herpes, syphilis, HIV and AIDS. For all those who must make the life changing decision about an unwanted pregnancy, including birth control and abortion, especially when there is cultural, religious, spousal, partner, and family pressure against the choices a woman must make about her own body and future.

**We pray to you, O God.**

With all people resisting their fundamentalist religious cultures. For lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, divorced and single people who suffer special forms of oppression and hatred within and beyond the church. With men and women in Episcopal and other communities who care enough to struggle for the transformation of the Church and the world.

**We pray to you, O God.**

With those women and men who will not make peace with imperialism, or with systemic or organizational prejudice based on race, gender, sexuality, age, physical or intellectual ability, marital status or class.

**Inspire us, brother Jesus.**

With those who do not fear diverse spiritualities; or the wondrous variety of creatures on earth.

**Increase our wisdom, our Father.**

With those who refuse to give in to despair or cynicism and who continue to dream, envision and struggle for a more fully just world and a more courageous church.

**Encourage us, our Mother.**

For the courageous witness of the ministry of women, for the congregations and priests who have supported the faith and witness of the countless laywomen, deaconesses and women religious (Anglican and Roman) who have been models of leadership for all women in our ministries, remembering especially Sr. Rachel Hosmer, OSH and Sr. Margaret Helena, CSJB.

**Sweet, sweet Spirit, empower your sisters and brothers.**

For the courageous witness of the first women ordained priests in this country - Merrill Bittner, Alia Bozarth, Alison Cheek, Emily Hewitt, Carter Heyward, Suzanne Hiatt, Marie Moorefield Fleisher, Jeannette Piccard, Betty Bone Schiess, Katrina Martha Swanson, Nancy Hatch Wittig, Eleanor Lee McGee, Alison Palmer, Betty Powell, and Diane Tickell,

**We give you thanks, O God.**

In thanksgiving for the activism of the men and women in this diocese who worked in the early movement to ordain women, especially, Leland Stark, George Rath, Marge Christie, Joe Leidy, Fran Trott, Jack and Joan Spong, Bill Coats, Reuel Kaighn, Philip Watters, Sanford and Dorothy Cutler, Herbert and Mary Donovan, Marshall Rice, Hughes and Ann Garvin, Hank Franzoni, Peg and Fred Gilman, Craig Burlington, David Hamilton, John Rollins, Dick Louis, David Gillespie, Anne Speirs, and Ann Pettingill, and for the first women to be ordained priests in this diocese: Abigail Painter Hamilton, Page Bigelow, Martha Blacklock, and Nancy Hatch Wittig, who was officially "recognized" and "received" January 2nd, 1977.

**We give you thanks, O God.**

For the contributions of women in all walks of life, in all churches, throughout all generations, especially today for the creative, liberating ministries of laywomen, female deacons, female priests and female bishops throughout the Anglican Communion,

**We give you thanks, O God.**

We lift up and celebrate the work in this diocese where the mind, soul, heart and hand of a woman provides the mark of leadership, especially: ACTS/VIM, Commission on Aging, Apostles' House, Bishop Anand Resource Center, the Bishops' Executive Secretaries, the diocesan Chancellor and Vice Chancellor, the Christian Education Commission, Christian Social Relations, the Convent of St. John Baptist, Episcopal Community Development, Food for Friends, Isaiah House, the diocesan Jubilee Officer, the diocesan Justice Missioner, the North Jersey Episcopal City Mission, the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief, Seamen's Church Institute of NY/NJ, St. Peter's Haven, North Porch, St. James CDC, St. Paul's CDC, The Voice, the Trustees of the Episcopal Fund and Diocesan Properties, The Women's Commission, Friends for Life, the Commission on Ministry, the Standing Committee, Diocesan Council, and the Episcopal Church Women.

**To you, O God, we give honor and glory.**

For our sisters and brothers throughout the world who have yet to have their priestly vocations tested or acknowledged because of their gender, race, sexuality, age, class or physical condition, but who continue their faithful work for Christ's gospel; for their courage and perseverance in remaining faithful ministers

**To you, O God, we give honor and glory.**

For the dangerous gift of the continued renewal of our church - for the grace of radical hospitality and the skills of evangelism, for the courage to proclaim and live the truth of the inclusive love of God in the world and in our church, and for the inspiration and edification of our children, youth and young adults to carry on the mission of Christ from generation to generation.

**To you, O God, we give honor and glory.**

We pray for all who have died, remembering their courage and faithful witness, especially for Li Tim Oi, Jane Hwang, Jeannette Piccard, Pauli Murray, Ava Hutchinson, Daniel Corrigan, Elizabeth Corrigan, William Creighton, Ann Pettingil, Page Bigelow, Janette Pierce, James Pike, George Rath, Charles Lawrence II, Leland Stark, Edward Welles, Catharine Welles, William Stringfellow, Quinton Primo, John Walker, Sanford and Dorothy Cutler, Hughes Garvin. Annette Jaecker, Nancy Talmadge. Anne Speirs, Mildred Trotman with those we remember now. Sophia God, let your loving kindness be upon them. **Who put their trust in you.**

Merciful God, accept the fervent prayers of your people; in the multitude of your mercies look with compassion upon us and all who turn to you for help. for you are gracious, O lover of your creation, and to you we give glory. Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

(Adapted from the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration in Philadelphia)

## **The Peace**

## **The Announcements**

The Offering will be designated for the "Angel Project"  
of the Episcopal Women's Caucus.

## **The Offertory Hymn**

## **Sweet, Sweet Spirit**

(Sung at the consecration of Barbara Clementine Harris)

# **The Ministry of the Sacrament of the Eucharist**

## Presentation of the Gifts

### The Great Thanksgiving

All who are able stand throughout the following prayer.

Christ is risen!

**Christ is risen indeed.**

Lift your hearts to heaven

**Where Christ in glory reigns.**

Let us give thanks to God.

**It is right to offer thanks and praise.**

It is the joy of our salvation, God of the universe,  
to give you thanks through Jesus Christ.

You said, "Let there be light"; there was light.

Your light shines on in our darkness.

For you the earth has brought forth life in all its forms.

You have created us to hear your Word,

to do your will and to be fulfilled in your love.

It is right to thank you.

You sent Jesus to be for us the way we need to follow,

the truth we need to know, and the liberation we need to claim.

You sent Jesus to give his life, that we might boldly live.

The cross has become for us a pearl of great price.

Christ has restored our intimacy with God and with each other;

Christ brings us together for the reconciliation of the world,

that peace may reign with justice, and all may know hope.

Let us join together in giving glory to God:

**Holy God, holy and merciful, holy and just,  
glory and goodness come from you.  
Glory to you most high and gracious God.**

Blessed are you, Most Holy, in Christ Jesus, who washed his disciples' feet.  
"I am among you," he said, "as one who serves."

On that night before he died, he took bread and gave you thanks.  
He broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said:  
Take, eat, this is my body which is given for you;  
do this to remember me.

After supper, he took the cup, and gave you thanks.  
He gave it to them and said: Drink this. It is my blood of the new covenant,  
Shed for you, shed for all, to forgive sin; do this to remember me.

Therefore with this bread and wine we recall your goodness to us.

**God of the past and present we your people remember Jesus. We thank  
you for his cross and rising again, we take courage from his ascension; we  
look for his coming in glory and in Christ we give ourselves to you.**

+Send your Holy Spirit, that we who receive Christ's body  
may indeed be the body of Christ,  
and we who share his cup draw strength from the one true vine.

Called to follow Christ, help us to reconcile and unite.  
Called to suffer, give us hope in our calling.

For you, the Heavenly One, make all things new;  
You are the beginning and the end, the last and the first.

Praise, glory and love be yours this and every day,  
from us and all people, here and everywhere. **Amen!**

## **The Communion**

As Christ teaches us we pray

**Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,  
Source of all that is and that shall be, Father and Mother of us all,  
Loving God in whom is heaven:  
The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!  
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!  
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!  
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on  
earth.**

**With the bread we need for today, feed us.  
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.  
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.  
From trials too great to endure, spare us.  
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.**

**For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever.  
Amen.**

The priest breaks the bread in silence and then says

Christ's body was broken for us on the cross  
**Christ is the bread of life.**

Christ's blood was shed for our forgiveness  
**Christ is risen from the dead.**

## **The Invitation**

Lifting the bread and the cup, the priest invites the people saying

Come God's people, come to receive Christ's heavenly food.

The Eucharistic Ministers say the following words to each person

The bread of life, broken for you.

The cup of blessing, poured out for you.

The communicant may respond each time, **Amen**.

## **Communion Hymns**

**Like the Murmur of the Dove's Song**

(Sung at Consecration of Jane Holmes Dixon)

**Earth and All Stars**

(Sung at the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ordination of Florence Li Tim-Oi)

## **Closing Prayers**

**Janet Morley**

Let us pray.

**God of our integrity,**

**in whom knowledge of truth**

**and passion for justice are one;**

**our hearts were sentimental and you cleansed them**

**with your rigorous mercy;**

**our thoughts were rigid and you engaged them**

**with your compassionate mind.**

**Heal our fragmented souls;**

**teach our naiveté;**

**confront our laziness;**

**and inflame our longing**

**to know your loving discernment**

**and love out your active love,**

**through Jesus Christ. Amen.**

## The Benediction and Dismissal

May the power of the Holy Spirit come upon us.

May the wisdom of godly women encourage us.

May the cloud of witnesses accompany us.

+And may the blessing of God

- Creator, Word and Spirit -

Drive us from this place and

Make us witnesses to the ends of the earth.

**Amen.**

## The Procession Into the World

**Please join us for a festive reception in the Parish Hall**

Hymn: Take up the Cross

Tune: crucifer ("Life High The Cross")

Take up the cross,  
The cross of Christ, take up!  
And live a life - of love - and ho-li-ness.

Live, Chris-tian live - in hum-ble joy and love,  
For-giv-ing all as God's for-given you!

Take up the cross,  
The cross of Christ, take up!  
And fol-low love  
From here to Cal-va-ry!

Let each one's life in God's own grace pro-claim,  
We're free to love in lim-it-less ac-claim!

Take up the cross,  
The cross of Christ, take up!

And follow Christ  
To love's re-de-eming Sun!

WE are a pe-ople, marked before our birth,  
For God's great joy in heal-ing all the earth!

Take up the cross,  
The cross of Christ, take up!  
Till all the world-knows God-  
Through your own life!

Music by Sydney Hugo Nicholson 1916

Words by Schuyler Rhodes 1994

# **1In Memory of Her...**

## **The Diocese of Newark**

### **By Fran Trott**

Until the Diocese of Newark held its convention in May, 1969, just a little over 30 years ago, women were effectively an auxiliary organization to the accepted power structure of the official Church body, although in the 1950's the word auxiliary had been officially eliminated from the Episcopal Women's Organizations titles.

In May 1969 a woman was elected to Diocesan Council and a woman was also elected to the Department of Missions, for the very first time.

Also in 1969, Ann Pettingill was elected a Deputy to General Convention and in 1970 was one of the first 24 women seated when the House of Deputies, meeting in Houston, finally voted to seat women.

This was not to say women had not been doing their share of carrying responsibility for the work and mission of the Church for a long time. Records reveal the following:

An account of the founding of St. James, Delaware by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in 1768 includes the handing down from mother to daughter memories of service and fellowship in the Woman's Auxiliary.

In 1817 a convention report states "the females of Newark and Elizabethtown have established Bible and Prayer-book Societies, auxiliaries to the Episcopal Society." In 1855 Grace Church, Orange made notice of a ministering league. Christ Church, Hackensack had a parish guild in 1871 and is believed to be the oldest auxiliary in continuous service in the Diocese of Newark. Also in 1871, the General Convention created the Woman's Auxiliary to the Board of Missions. although not until 1903 was this reorganized both nationally and in the diocese as Auxiliary to the National Council.

The Woman's Missionary League was organized in our diocese in 1875 and in 1876, Bishop Starkey reported the women contributed \$2,262.58 in money and boxes. He stated of the League: "its members trust that this modest beginning will steadily develop into a vigorous association, extending a ready hand wherever there is a call for help. In many parishes the good work has long been going on, and the hope is that by initiating many in the good cause, sympathy and good will may be increased, and the bonds of fellowship may be strengthened among the Christian women of the Diocese."

Between 1913 and 1919 the Girls' Friendly Society, the Church Mission of Help and the Church Institute for Negroes were affiliated with the Auxiliary.

Women in the black community were doing their share of Christian witness. In the 1930's and 1940's from the National Women's Auxiliary Board, Esther Brown and Fannie Gross traveled the country to inspire black women to join the mainstream of the Church Women's auxiliary.

In the 1950's the name Women's Auxiliary was eliminated and the name Episcopal Churchwomen of the Diocese of Newark substituted.

(the above is taken from OUR HISTORY, 1875-1997, Episcopal Church Women, Diocese of Newark)

MEANWHILE ... women desiring holy orders between 1862 and 1976 experienced the following:

- \*1862                    Ancient order of deaconesses restored in Anglicanism when Bishop of London orders a deaconess with the laying on of hands.
- \*1885,1887            Bishops of Alabama and New York order deaconesses with the laying on of hands.
- \*1889                    General Convention authorizes the "setting apart of deaconesses" by canon.

- \*1919            The Ministry of Women, the report of a commission appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury to reconsider the office of deaconess, is published in England.
  
- \*1920            Lambeth Conference (the regular meeting of all Anglican Bishops held every ten years) resolves that "ordination of a deaconess confers on her holy orders."
  
- \*1930            Lambeth Conference withdraws the assertion that deaconesses are in holy orders.
  
- \*1935            Report of a commission on the ministry of women appointed by Canterbury and York published in England. Finds no compelling theological reasons for or against the ordination of women, but affirms the male priesthood "for the Church to-day."
  
- \*1944            Bishop B. O. Hall of Hong Kong ordains Ms. Li Tim Oi to the priesthood. Canterbury and York repudiate the ordination and the Rev. Ms. Li Tim Oi resigns her orders.
  
- \*1948            Lambeth Conference denies Hong Kong's request for permission to order Women as priests on an experimental basis on the grounds that "the time has not come" to consider the matter. Lambeth urges renewed emphasis on the role and work of deaconesses.
  
- \*1965            The Rt. Rev. James Pike, Bishop of California, declares that deaconesses are within the diaconate and recognizes Deaconess Phyllis Edwards as a deacon by virtue of her prior ordination as deaconess. In a ceremony in San Francisco, he confers on her the New Testament and stole, historic marks of the diaconate.
  
- \*1966            House of Bishops receives the report it commissioned on "The Proper Place of Women in the Ministry of the Church." The House of Bishops recommends that the Lambeth Conference of 1968 study

the question of the ordination of women to the priesthood.

- 1966                *Women in Holy Orders*, the report of the Archbishops' commission to study the ordination of women in preparation for Lambeth 1968, is published in England.
- \*1968                Lambeth Conference refers question of the ordination of women to the priesthood to the provinces of world Anglicanism for further study. Lambeth endorses the principle that deaconesses are within the diaconate. Anglican bodies (e.g., Hong Kong, Kenya, Korea, Canada) begin ordaining women to the diaconate.
- \*1969                Special General Convention (South Bend) changes canon so that women may be licensed to be lay readers and to administer the chalice.
- \*1970                General Convention (Houston) declares deaconesses to be within the diaconate. Convention changes canon on deaconesses to permit women to be ordained deacons under the same regulations as men.
- \*1970                Joint Commission on Ordained and Licensed Ministries reports to General Convention (Houston) and recommends that all orders of ministry - diaconate, priesthood, episcopacy -- be opened to women immediately. Report rejected by narrow margin in the clergy order in the House of Deputies.
- \*1970                Triennial meeting of Episcopal Church Women (Houston) considers the report of the Joint Commission on Ordained and Licensed ministries and votes to endorse the report by a margin of 222-45.
- 1971                Anglican Consultative Council (world Anglican body of clergy and laity meeting between Lambeth Conferences) declares that it "will be acceptable" if a bishop ordains women priests with the

consent of his province (or synod, in the case of Hong Kong).

- \*1971            House of Bishops votes to commission a study of the ordination of women in preparation for considering the question at the Fall 1972 meeting.
  
- \*1971            Bishop Gilbert Baker of Hong Kong and Macao, acting with the approval of his synod, ordains two women to the priesthood - the Rev. Jane Hwang Hsien-Yuen and the Rev. Joyce Bennett.
  
- \*1972            Various dioceses prepare resolutions for the 1973 *General Convention*, urging the ordination of women to the priesthood. Other dioceses resolve to study the questions.
  
- \*1972            House of Bishops, meeting in New Orleans, passed a resolution favoring the ordination of women to the priesthood and the consecration of women to the episcopate. The roll call vote was 74 in favor, 61 opposed, and five not voting.
  
- 1973            *General Convention* (Louisville) votes against women in the priesthood.
  
- 1974            Eleven women are ordained irregularly in Philadelphia.
  
- 1975            Four women are ordained irregularly in Washington, D.C.
  
- 1976            Women are declared to be eligible for priesthood and episcopacy by *General Convention*. A rash of ordinations quickly happens. Women ordained in Philadelphia and Washington are accepted as "regularly ordained" effective January 1, 1977.
  
- 1989            The Rt. Rev. Barbara Harris is consecrated to the episcopacy.

\*Documents and actions of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America.

See also *Women in the Priesthood: Questions and Answers with an Introduction and Chronology of Related Events* by Emily C. Hewitt and the Rev. Dr. Suzanne R. Hiatt.

The Committee on the Status of Women presents  
Thirty Ways to Celebrate Thirty Years of Women's Ordained  
Ministry

To be used joyfully between July 29, 2004 and September 16, 2006.

1. Hold a forum on ordination for the girls in your congregation.
2. Send a note to a woman priest, deacon, or bishop—or all three—who has influenced your life, and a note of affirmation to a woman in seminary.
3. Put flowers on the altar one Sunday in thanksgiving for the ministries of ordained women.
4. Learn the names of the eleven women ordained in Philadelphia and the four ordained in Washington D.C. before the General Convention of 1976.
5. Send a donation to an organization that supports women's ministries or concerns and memo it in thanksgiving for women's ordained ministries.
6. Explain to people in your congregation why *God* is not a boy's name.
7. Work to make your congregation's language more inclusive and expansive.
8. Use the hymn *Blessed Is She*.
9. Buy a copy of the new hymnal "Voices Found" for your church. All the words or tunes are written by women.
10. Have women as the subject for Vacation Bible School.

11. Buy or make a stole that celebrates women's ministry for your priest to wear.
12. Work to understand and dismantle patriarchy, being aware of how its oppression affects all minorities, not just women.
13. If you don't have an ordained woman on your staff or in your congregation, invite one to preach and celebrate.
14. Send a note to a non-ordaining male Bishop and tell him how important women's ordained ministry is.
15. Find out about the history of women's ordination in your diocese.
16. Join the Episcopal Women's Caucus, the Episcopal Public Policy Network, and the Episcopal Women's History Project.
17. Celebrate our Lady of Guadalupe Day on December 12.
18. Read the *Gospel of Mary* by Karen King.
19. Find a way to celebrate your part in the priesthood of all believers.
20. If you are an ordained woman, make intentional efforts to reach out to laywomen as peers; if you are a lay woman, reach out to an ordained woman as a colleague in ministry.
21. Thank one of the people who made the ordination of women a possibility in your diocese.
22. Celebrate Mothers Day as a Day for Peace, the way the founder, Julia Ward Howe, intended it.
23. Write a poem, prayer or hymn in thanksgiving for women's ministries.

24. Have a feast in your church and invite a woman who has been ordained twenty years or more to come and share her story.
25. Plant a tree in your church yard in honor of women's ordained ministries.
26. Add one or more mothers' names to the list of the fathers in Prayer C.
27. Decorate gingerbread cookies like women priests and serve at coffee hour.
28. Ask your vestry to find a way to celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in your congregation.
29. Visit the Office of Women's Ministries Web Site at [www.episcopalchurch.org/women/](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/women/).
30. Celebrate the Feast of Mary Magdalene on July 22 and pass out red eggs. (Learn about this story if you do not know it.) Continue the octave in celebration of all women's ministries and end on the Feast Day of Mary and Martha, the anniversary of the Philadelphia II in 1974.

#### The Her-story

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| July 29, 1974      | 11 women were ordained irregularly in Philadelphia, Pa |
| September 7, 1975  | 4 more were ordained in Washington DC                  |
| September 16, 1976 | General Convention approves the ordination of women    |