

### III. MAJOR CHANGES OVER THE LAST FIFTEEN YEARS IN THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

#### A. National Statistics

The proportion of women in leadership positions in the Episcopal Church has clearly increased over the last fifteen years. Many more women have been ordained, and more now serve as rectors and bishops than was true in the mid-eighties. At the same time, according to statistics collected by Louie Crew<sup>1</sup>, male priests are nine times more likely to be hired as rectors than female priests, and this disproportion increases nearly exponentially with increases in congregational size. A recent study based on a national random sample of 726 Episcopal rectors and vicars reported by Hadaway<sup>2</sup>, also indicated that male rectors primarily lead the larger, multi-staffed congregations. That men are far more likely than women to be senior pastors of the larger, wealthier congregations is a situation that has been documented in several multi-denominational studies (which include the Episcopal Church) over the last fifteen years<sup>3</sup> as well as by our diocesan data in 1987 and 2002. The factors of congregational size and gender of ordained leadership will be discussed later in this report.

	<u>2002</u>	<u>1987</u>
Women Clergy	3,481 of 17,118 or 20.3%	1,236 of 14,353 or 8.6%
Women Bishops	11 of 222 or 4.9%	0
not retired	8 of 104 or 7.7%	
Women on		
Executive Council	15 of 38 or 39.5%	12 of 38 or 31.5%
Women Deputies		240 of 970 or 24.7%
& 1 <sup>st</sup> Alternates	397 of 1,028 or 38.6%	

<sup>1</sup> Louie Crew, "Female Priests in the Episcopal Church", 1998-2002 (website)

<sup>2</sup> C. Kirk Hadaway, *A Report on Episcopal Churches in the United States* (New York: The Office of Congregational Development, Episcopal Church Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, April 2002).

<sup>3</sup> Paula D. Nesbitt, *Feminization of the Clergy in America: Occupational and Organizational Perspectives* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997) and B. Zikmund, A. Lummis, P.Chang, *Clergy Women: An Uphill Calling* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1998).

Comparing the gender makeup of vestries as reported in our diocesan surveys in 1987 and 2002, women are significantly more represented. In illustration, 45% surveyed in 1987 compared to 70% surveyed in 2002 said that women made up over two-fifths of their vestries.

**B. Trends and Explanations: Survey Comparisons, 1986-87 and 2000-2002 of Perceptions of and Attitudes Toward Women’s Leadership in the Episcopal Church**

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- **Particularly at the diocesan level, men and women have more favorable attitudes about women holding church leadership positions now than was the case fifteen years ago. At the same time, the higher the position is in the diocesan leadership hierarchy, the less favorable attitudes are.**

In the Episcopal Church, as in other mainline denominations, the greatest trend differences over this fifteen-year period are found at the diocesan level. Women and men at the same level of the Church do not differ significantly in their willingness to have a woman fill a particular leadership position. More important is the level of the position itself in the church hierarchy; i.e. the higher the position, the less enthusiastic persons in the dioceses are to have a woman fill it. At the same time, women and men in dioceses are almost twice as likely to be “very willing” to have a woman as rector and bishop than were those surveyed fifteen years ago.

		<b>Chart 1</b>							
		<u>National Level</u>				<u>Diocesan Level</u>			
		1986		2000		1987		2002	
		wmn	men	wmn	men	wmn	men	wmn	men
<b>% <u>Very Willing</u></b>									
<i>to Have a Woman as:</i>									
my senior warden		100%	72%	95%	96%	77%	73%	88%	85%
my assistant minister		89%	88%	98%	93%	64%	60%	81%	78%
my rector		83%	79%	93%	86%	46%	39%	73%	63%
bishop of my diocese		72%	64%	86%	87%	36%	30%	67%	55%

- **National and diocesan respondents in 2000-2002 see fewer barriers to women’s full participation in the church than those surveyed fifteen years ago. However, as in the earlier study, women leaders on the diocesan and national levels are more likely than men leaders at these levels to perceive such barriers.**

**Chart 2**

% who **DISAGREE**: *Women now have all the opportunities they need for full participation in the life of the Church.*

		<u>Women</u>	<u>Men</u>
National level:	1987	81%	59%
	2002	69%	44%
Diocesan Leaders:	1987	61%	52%
	2002	51%	33%
Pew Members:	1987	42%	35%
	2002	29%	22%

At all levels of the church fewer persons in 2002 than in 1987 believe that women have all the opportunities they need for full participation in the church. In both time periods the data indicate that awareness of barriers to women’s participation not only increases as men and women become more active at higher levels of the church, but also the discrepancy between women’s and men’s perceptions of those barriers increases at each successive level of the church. In other words, the higher a position in the Episcopal Church, the more obstacles women must surmount to obtain that position.

- **National and diocesan leaders surveyed in 1986-1987 were nearly three times more likely than those surveyed in 2000-2002 to disagree that in their dioceses women have as easy a time as men in becoming postulants and curates, and were twice as likely to disagree that women have as easy a time becoming rectors.**

<b>% Who <u>DISAGREE</u> In my diocese <u>women</u> have as easy time as men in becoming a:</b>	<b>Chart 3</b>							
	<u>National Level</u>				<u>Diocesan Level</u>			
	1986	2000	1987	2002	1987	2002	1987	2002
	wmn	men	wmn	men	wmn	men	wmn	men
postulant	76%	59%	14%	5%	30%	25%	8%	7%
curate, assistant	86%	75%	19%	6%	58%	58%	14%	16%
rector	79%	64%	38%	24%	67%	65%	35%	34%
bishop	(not asked)		36%	22%	(not asked)		29%	34%

The above responses from national and diocesan leaders in 2000-2002 indicates that there has been some real progress over the past fifteen years in opening ordination to women and with subsequent employment as curate or assistant. However, among the diocesan leaders, 34% of the men and 35% of the women recognize that becoming a rector in their dioceses is still more difficult for women than for men.

### **C. Language**

In the 1987 report much attention was given to gender exclusive language as one of the “subtle attitudinal barriers that impact women’s full participation in the church.” This was based on the premise that language is linked to acceptance of the changing roles of women in church and society. The argument was made then that endorsement of inclusive language that explicitly included women as well as men in the liturgy would open the way to other attitudes favoring more liberal representation. We cannot tell from survey data which came first, but the two values – (1) approval of the use of language in the liturgy which specifically includes women and (2) positive attitudes regarding women’s participation in leadership positions are associated in the 2002 survey study as was true in the 1987 study done fifteen years ago, and probably these values reinforce each other.

- **There is now somewhat more support for inclusive language referring to humans in church services than there was fifteen years ago, particularly on the diocesan level. Inclusive language referring to the gender of God is considerably less acceptable on the diocesan than on the national level among both men and women. Significant differences exist between clergy and lay attitudes regarding the use of inclusive language referring to either humans or God.**

Chart 4 compares the attitudes of men versus women and then clergy versus laypersons regarding use of inclusive language for humans. The second chart compares the comfort level of these same groups regarding the use of female nouns and pronouns for God.

In 1987, almost equal numbers of women and men at the diocesan level approved (37% & 41%) or disapproved (43% & 42%) of using inclusive language referring to humans in worship. In 2002, the proportions of both women and men that favor such use of inclusive language have risen (51% & 49%), while the proportions that clearly disapprove have fallen (30% & 32%).

When clergy responses are separated from those of the laity, the diocesan level responses indicate that clergywomen are the most supportive of the use of inclusive language for worship (84%) and quite comfortable with female nouns and pronouns for God (66%). Clergymen follow with 65% supportive and 43% comfortable.

**Chart 4**

**% who AGREE: *Inclusive language should be used in church services***

		<u>Women</u>	<u>Men</u>
<u>National level:</u>	1987	61%	61%
	2002	78%	56%
<u>Diocesan level:</u>	1987	37%	41%
	2002	52%	50%
<u>Diocesan level by Orders</u>			
	1987		
	ordained	79%	60%
	lay	35%	37%
	2002		
	ordained	84%	65%
	lay	49%	45%

**% who AGREE: *I am comfortable using female nouns and pronouns for God.***

(Not asked in 1987)		Women	Men
National level		53%	44%
Diocesan level	total	32%	28%
	ordained	66%	43%
	lay	30%	24%

In 2000-2002 slightly more than half of female respondents at the national level and slightly less than one third at the diocesan level were comfortable with using female images of God. Men at those levels were less comfortable with using female images for God (44% and 28% respectively).

While the differences in attitude between clergy and laypersons are considerable, the differences between laywomen and laymen in 2002 in their support or their comfort level with inclusive language are minimal. Further, the proportions of women versus men, whether ordained or lay, have not changed much over the last fifteen years. One possible explanation for

this latter finding, suggested by a 1993-94 fifteen-denominational study<sup>4</sup> is that although clergy with M.Div. degrees (particularly ordained women) in liberal Protestant denominations personally prefer inclusive language, church worship services were no more likely in the 1990' s to use inclusive language than they were in the 1970' s. Being in a congregation with an ordained woman as rector, vicar, associate minister or interim on staff does appear to have a positive effect on reducing lay persons' resistance to worship services which use inclusive language.

<b>Chart 5</b>				
<b>Lay Persons Only</b>				
<i>(Respondents in 2002 Diocesan Sample)</i>				
% <b>DISAGREE</b> that:	<b>Services Should Use Inclusive Language</b>		<b>Am Comfortable With Female Images of God</b>	
	<u>Women</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>	<u>Men</u>
<i>Clergywoman on pastoral staff in my church</i>	25%	27%	41%	46%
<i>No clergywoman on pastoral staff in my church</i>	40%	42%	56%	65%

- **Survey respondents at the national level, diocesan and congregational levels, are much more willing to have a woman in a leadership position in their congregation or diocese in 2002 than in 1987. However, at both times they are more willing to have a woman as their senior warden or assistant minister than their rector or bishop.**

#### **D. Personal Willingness To Have Women In Leadership Positions**

Few survey respondents in either the 1987 or 2002 survey studies stated that they personally would be unwilling to have a woman in any church leadership position; it is more that they show different levels of enthusiasm for a woman' s filling the position rather than a man. National leaders surveyed in great majority are very approving of women in congregational

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<sup>4</sup> Zikmund et. al., op.cit., pp. 16-18,

leadership positions personally, both in 2000 and fifteen years ago. There is no significant difference in national leaders' own degree of approval expressed in the 1987 survey and that in the 2002 survey for most positions, except bishop. In 1986 no women were bishops. Having women in the episcopate now is likely one explanation why more national leaders in 2000 approve of women being bishops.

<b>Chart 6</b>									
<u>In more detail:</u>	<u>National Level</u>				<u>Diocesan Level</u>				
	1987		2002		1987		2002		
	wmn	men	wmn	men	wmn	men	wmn	men	
<b>% <u>Very Willing</u></b>									
<b>to Have a Woman as:</b>									
my senior warden	100%	72%	95%	96%	77%	73%	88%	85%	
my assistant minister	89%	88%	98%	93%	64%	60%	81%	78%	
my rector	83%	79%	93%	86%	46%	39%	73%	63%	
bishop of my diocese	72%	64%	86%	87%	36%	30%	67%	55%	
<b><u>Diocesan Sample in 2002</u></b>									
<b><u>Ordained Persons</u></b>									
<b><u>Lay Persons</u></b>									
<b><u>Wmn</u></b>									
<b><u>Men</u></b>									
<b><u>Wmn</u></b>									
<b><u>Men</u></b>									
<b>% <u>Very Willing</u></b>									
<b>to Have a Woman as:</b>									
my rector			93%	68%	71%	62%			
bishop of my diocese			90%	61%	65%	53%			

National leaders, both women and men, are generally more theologically and socially liberal than diocesan leaders. More conservative attitudes toward women's place are found on the diocesan, and especially congregational levels, and among these much more in some congregations and dioceses than in others. Those surveyed in the participating dioceses in 2002 are significantly more approving now than was true fifteen years ago of a woman being their assistant minister, their rector and particularly their bishop.

Respondents' gender had little if any effect on their personal willingness to have a woman as senior warden or assistant minister in either 1987 or in 2002 in the national and diocesan samples. Nor did national leaders' gender affect how willing they were to have a woman as rector or as bishop. However, in the diocesan sample, women (particularly those who are diocesan leaders) are significantly more likely to strongly approve having a female rector or bishop. In the diocesan sample, the difference in attitudes toward female rectors between clergywomen (93% supportive) and clergymen (68% supportive) is greater than the differences between laywomen (71% supportive) and laymen (62% supportive). In fact, clergymen do not differ much from laymen in willingness to have an ordained woman on pastoral staffs. This suggests that clergywomen aspiring to be rectors or bishops may encounter difficulty gaining the support of their male clergy colleagues.

- **Lay persons who are members of congregations where they regularly see an ordained woman in the pulpit and at the altar, are significantly more likely to approve of women in all congregational leadership positions, including rector, than those who only see men in these pastoral roles.**

<b>Chart 7</b>				
<b><u>Lay Persons Only</u></b>				
<i>( Respondents in 2002 Diocesan Sample )</i>				
<b>% <u>Very Willing</u> to have a Woman be my:</b>	<b>Rector</b>		<b>Diocesan Bishop</b>	
	<u>Wmn</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Wmn</u>	<u>Men</u>
<i>Clergywoman on staff in my church</i>	81%	73%	52%	64%
<i>No clergywoman on staff in my church</i>	60%	50%	56%	41%

For congregational members, having an ordained woman currently as assistant minister, vicar, interim rector or rector makes it easier for both men and women to enthusiastically endorse the idea of their next rector being a woman. While it does not make laywomen more open to a woman being their next diocesan bishop, when laymen actually see a woman priest preach,

administer the sacraments, counsel and teach, it does seem to have an impact on their thinking more positively about the possibility of a woman bishop. Given that laymen are more negative generally than lay women toward women in top church leadership positions, this finding is noteworthy.

However, even when church leaders and congregants are personally willing to have women in top church leadership positions, this does not ensure that women get into these positions. The personal values of these leaders or congregants may not be sufficient to ensure that they will actively or publicly endorse calling a well-qualified woman to be their rector rather than a less qualified man. Lay leaders on pastoral search committees are likely to take into consideration what the rest of the congregation might prefer in a new pastor. This reality can work as an obstacle to the search committee's calling a woman (or for that matter a pastor of a different race, ethnicity or sexual orientation than most of the congregation).

- **In both the present survey and the one of fifteen years ago, diocesan respondents were significantly more likely to say they personally would accept a woman in top church leadership positions than they see as true of most in their congregations.**

A larger proportion of diocesan respondents in 2002 than in 1987 said that “most” in their congregations would be amenable to having a woman as rector. Responses to survey questions only asked in this present study, however, indicate that this support is contingent on her full attention to their church, i.e., not being a mother of young children. Also, being a lesbian with a partner would likely disqualify women priests from becoming rectors of most of these congregations.

**Chart 8**

***DIOCESAN RESPONDENTS ONLY***

**% Very Willing to have a Woman be my Rector**

	<b>1987</b>		<b>2002</b>	
	<u>Wmn</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Wmn</u>	<u>Men</u>
MYSELF	46%	39%	73%	64%
MOST MEMBERS	20%	18%	39%	31%
<b><i>Difference</i></b>	<b>+ 26</b>	<b>+21</b>	<b>+32</b>	<b>+33</b>
<b>a) “Very willing” IF she has young children</b>				
MYSELF			56%	53%
MOST MEMBERS			27%	25%
<b><i>Difference</i></b>			<b>+29</b>	<b>+28</b>
<b>b) “Very willing” IF she is lesbian with partner</b>				
MYSELF			30%	22%
MOST MEMBERS			5%	5%
<b><i>Difference</i></b>			<b>+25</b>	<b>+17</b>

On leadership positions other than rector, similar discrepancies exist between personal and congregational attitudes. For instance in 2002, although two-thirds (67%) of those in the dioceses said *they personally* were “very willing” to have a woman as diocesan bishop, less than a third (30%) said that *most in their congregations* would be that eager to have a woman as their bishop, a difference of 37 percentage points. What such differences portend for women’s leadership in the next decade is not clear. It is possible that church members who believe women should be in top leadership positions will find others in their congregation sharing their view, or these differences may be a sign of growing divisions over whether women should continue in similar or growing proportions to ascend to ordained positions in affluent congregations.

**E. Comparisons With The Attitudes of And Toward Ethnic Minorities**

- **There is more support for increasing the ordination of ethnic minorities than there is for increasing the number of ordained women on both the national and diocesan levels. However, the majority of those surveyed seemed rather ambivalent about whether affirmative actions and efforts should be taken in promoting racial/ethnic minorities and particularly women for ordination.**

In 1986-1987 whether “more women should be ordained” was not asked as it was on the 2000-2002 surveys. However, there were three separate questions asking national leaders only in 1987 whether more Asian, more Black and more Hispanic Episcopalians should be ordained. Each question received about the same proportion (**69% of the women, 74% of the men**) agreed that more of each ethnicity should be ordained. In 2002 the three questions were combined in one, i.e. “More ethnic minorities should be ordained.” On the national level, a higher proportion of women than in 1986 but about the same proportion of men in both 1987 and 2002 agreed that more ethnic minority clergy are needed.

<b>Chart 9</b>						
<b>The 2000-2002 Surveys</b>						
	<u>National Level</u>		<u>Diocesan Level</u>			
			<i>Clergy</i>		<i>Lay</i>	
<b><i>I. % Who <u>AGREE</u></i></b>	wmn	men	wmn	men	wmn	men
<b><i>a. Shd Ordain More who are:</i></b>						
Ethnic Minorities	88%	75%	86%	70%	58%	51%
Women	70%	31%	59%	36%	49%	40%
<b><i>b. Shd NOT consider Applicants’ :</i></b>						
Race or Ethnicity	51%	55%	50%	61%	75%	75%
Gender	60%	67%	65%	64%	74%	72%

Both women and men on the national and diocesan levels, as seen in the above table, believe that getting more ethnic minorities ordained is of higher priority than getting more women ordained. Men on the national level and clergymen in the dioceses are especially likely to have this priority. The reasons underlying this finding are unclear. It is not likely that men are necessarily more committed than women to ordaining ethnic minorities. It may be that (1) some of these men do not want more women ordained, or (2) that some feel that the changing

proportion of ordained women compared to ordained men is more balanced than the more static proportion of ordained ethnic minorities to all ordained persons.

Laypersons are less enthusiastic about ordaining more clergy from ethnic minorities, possibly because they are apprehensive about hiring a rector or assistant who is not Anglo. Parishioners in predominantly Anglo congregations may fear that an ethnic minority priest will have a different leadership style, worship preferences and mission orientation than they are comfortable with;<sup>5</sup> or will simply “change” their congregation in some unknown way. Although almost all responding on the national and diocesan levels in 2001-2002 agreed that in their congregations “persons of all races and ethnicities are welcome,” this does not extend to their top ordained leader being of another race or ethnicity. Whatever the reasons predominantly white Anglo congregations do not call ethnic minority clergy to be their senior rectors. This worked against being able to recruit black postulants in 1978<sup>6</sup> and likely is still a problem today. Lay leaders may very well entertain similar reasoning when considering hiring a woman as their rector.

Women on the national level also believe that more efforts should be placed on getting women ordained than do either clergy or lay women in the dioceses. Is it possible that those who are now clergywomen in the dioceses are less enthusiastic than women in national level positions about ordaining more female priests? Perhaps this reflects their less than positive experiences in the clergy job market.

The question of affirmative action to get more women and ethnic minorities into the ordained Episcopal clergy ranks has as many mixed responses in 2000-2002 as in the 1987

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<sup>5</sup>Charles Bennison et. al., *In Praise of Congregations: Leadership in the Local Church Today*. (Cambridge: Cowley Publication, 1999), pp 76-79, and Chapter 6 in this volume pp 160-184 by Kortright Davis, “Black Anglican Congregations”.

<sup>6</sup> One of the difficulties reported by black clergy in a 1978 national study was that it was very difficult to become rectors of predominantly white (larger, richer) parishes, and this deployment issue had a negative impact on the recruitment of black seminarians. Franklin D. Turner and Adair Lummis, *Black Clergy in the Episcopal Church: Recruitment, Training and Deployment*. (New York: Episcopal Church Center, 1981).

survey to a similar kind of question. Generally, most hope that the best-qualified applicants would feel called to the ordained ministry and present themselves without any special efforts on the part of church officials. However, persons at the national level seem to be more aware that without special recruitment, education and deployment efforts, getting qualified applicants to consider the ordained ministry, particularly those of a racial/ethnic minority, will continue to be difficult.

- ***Non-Anglo* respondents in dioceses are more likely than *Anglo* respondents to be aware of and sympathetic to problems women have in attaining *equal* status to men in church leadership.**

<b>Chart 10</b>				
<b>THE 2002 DIOCESAN SURVEY</b>				
<b>1. % Who <u>AGREE</u></b>	<b><i>Non-Anglo</i></b>		<b><i>Anglo</i></b>	
	wmn	men	wmn	men
<b><i>a. Shd Ordain More who are:</i></b>				
Ethnic Minorities	80%	61%	57%	54%
Women	62%	47%	48%	38%
<b><i>b. Shd NOT consider Applicants':</i></b>				
Race or Ethnicity	71%	76%	73%	71%
Gender	70%	71%	74%	70%

Non-Anglo respondents, particularly women, are *somewhat more likely* than Anglo respondents to agree that more ethnic minorities should be ordained. At the same time Non-Anglo respondents are just as likely to affirm the value of more women being ordained as Anglo respondents, and they are just as opposed in principle to using race/ethnicity or gender as a consideration in filling church positions. These are not big differences. Further, Non-Anglo respondents did not differ significantly from Anglo respondents in their views on most of the issues queried in the survey, including the extent to whether they would approve of a woman as their senior warden, associate, rector or bishop.

However, on the “leader series of questions,” Non-Anglo respondents are *more likely* than Anglo respondents to disagree that in their diocese “clergy women are well represented on diocesan commissions and committees.”

Non-Anglo respondents are *somewhat more likely* to:

1. Agree that: “A woman would have a better chance of being priested if she went to a diocese other than this one.”
2. Agree that: “Episcopal women, whether lay or clergy, do not hold position or influence in this diocese comparable to lay or clergy men.”
3. Disagree that in their diocese it *is as easy for women as it is for men to* (a) “become postulants to the priesthood”, (b) “obtain a full time assistant-minister position” , and (c) “be appointed to diocesan commissions and committees.”

These findings suggest that it is probably not the great cultural difference between Non-Anglo and Anglo that would be a problem for clergy or new members of a minority race/ethnicity/national origin in a predominantly white urban/suburban congregation, but rather it is people’s fears that their congregation would change in ways with which they would no longer be comfortable. These findings also suggest that it may not be enough just to educate individuals, even those who are official church leaders, to be less fearful and more open to women and minorities in church leadership positions.

Non-Anglo respondents are *somewhat more likely* than Anglo respondents to value social action for the poor. In illustration, Non-Anglo respondents are more inclined than Anglo respondents to believe that the national church should be involved in addressing “Poverty in this region or state,” and that more importance should be given both by their diocese and their congregation to “Legislation affecting USA families, welfare reform and medical care.”

**E. Advocacy and Educational Support For Women's Concerns**

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- There is strong support, particularly among national leaders, for continuing national church attention to education for women's concerns and ministries. There is less widespread enthusiasm for church job advocacy for women now than fifteen years ago, particularly among men. In this new millennium, however, the majority of men and women, ordained or lay, at all levels of the Episcopal Church, do affirm the value of continuing education and advocacy for women's ministries well into the millennium.

**Chart 11**

**% AGREE: *Special efforts should be made to see that there are more women in professional staff positions on the diocesan and national church levels.***

		<u>Women</u>	<u>Men</u>
<u>National level:</u>	1987	89%	68%
	2000	60%	38%
<u>Diocesan level:</u>	1987	68%	44%
	2002	57%	37%

**% AGREE: *The National church should educate about and work for women's concerns.***

		<u>Women</u>	<u>Men</u>
<u>National level:</u>	1987	94%	81%
	2000	88%	81%
<u>Diocesan level:</u>	1987	75%	67%
	2002	12%	58%

**% AGREE: *Education and advocacy for women's ministries across the Church should be continued well into the new millennium.***

		<u>Women</u>	<u>Men</u>
2000-2002	<u>National level</u>	86%	71%
	<u>Diocesan level</u>	81%	68%

**% AGREE: *This diocese should develop and fund programs to assist women being more involved in ordained or lay ministry***

		<u>Women</u>	<u>Men</u>
2000-2002	<u>Diocesan level</u>	54%	38%

The lesser degree of enthusiasm in 2000-2002 than fifteen (15) years ago for taking special efforts to get women into diocesan and national leadership positions is similar to the general ambivalence of survey respondents in whether special efforts should be made in 2000 to

encourage more women to be ordained. There are, in fact, many more women in the clergy and in professional positions in other church organizations than fifteen years ago. Supporting women's efforts to rise in the church hierarchy and participate more broadly in church leadership roles poses a dilemma for some people. They believe, probably correctly, that there exists a finite number of "adequately paying" clergy or professional positions. Therefore, if women get those positions, men will not. Probably no one wants women's ministries and concerns to be neglected totally. And most people understand that if women stayed in the pews and left the work of the church only to men, both congregations and the denomination would be in trouble. However, reluctance comes in designating official resources to strengthen women's ministry.

Although there is widespread support for national attention to women's ministries, it is not clear what this might entail. Many survey respondents neither know what is now done nor would they be able to articulate a solution. Looking at the twentieth century history of other denominational and ecumenical women's organizations,<sup>7</sup> some lessons might be taken. National women's groups were very successful in raising money and motivating volunteers to give time to addressing local and global mission needs, not only for assisting women, but for a variety of causes.

The very success of women's organizations, however, resulted in apprehension among the male leadership in many denominations. Typically, and within the Episcopal Church as well, this seemed justification for the takeover of women's mission organizations through the rationale that joining women with men in one large organization would be a more inclusive and effective Christian way to do ministry. One illustration: in the 1970s the Episcopal Church reorganized the Executive Council into new standing committees, whereby the Women's Office was subsumed into the Office of Lay Ministry and the United Thank Offering – begun by the Women's Auxiliary in 1889 – into World Mission. This led to an emphasis on a majority of UTO grants being awarded to mission projects overseas rather than maintaining a balance between domestic and foreign ministry. Over time, however, the all-women UTO Committee

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<sup>7</sup> M.L. Bendroth and V.L. Brereton (eds.), *Women in Twentieth Century Protestantism*. Champaign, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2002.

was able to reclaim its authority to raise and allocate its funds with an emphasis on projects affecting the lives and ministries of women in both foreign and domestic settings..

Conditions change over time. New ways of operating must be tried to fit new occasions and duties. However, to change attitudes about the appropriate place of minorities and women – attitudes embedded in social traditions as to who should be church leaders according to their birth characteristics – may take a broader educational effort than the survey findings suggest people are willing to undertake.