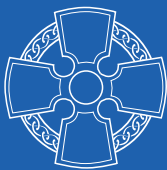


CROSSING THRESHOLDS



**The Licensed Ministry of Women
in the Church in Wales: 1884-2014**

Crossing Thresholds

This publication has been brought together by the members of the St Deiniol's Group, to mark the significant threshold of the episcopate being open to women. Our hope is that it will inspire and encourage a future generation of women in ministry in Wales to step forward, realise their potential, and offer their gifts to the Church. Our fond hope is that someone might be so inspired as to want to write the full history of the women whose lives and ministries are reflected here. If you have an interest in joining such a project, please contact any member of the St Deiniol's Group.

The St Deiniol's Group

We are a group of 'senior' women in the Church in Wales, lay and ordained, who meet two or three times a year to reflect on, and assist, the ministry of women within the Church in Wales. While not being formally constituted, the group has an invited membership, with limited numbers. Our aim is to develop support for women's ministry in the widest sense, improve the representation of women at all levels of Church life, and devise strategies for improving women's lives. The word 'senior' reflects our intention that each member would be someone who, either by years of experience, and / or by responsibility or inclination, has a provincial viewpoint and perspective on Church affairs.

Current membership is:

St Asaph

Mrs Sue Last
Mrs Diane McCarthy
Reverend Lynette Norman
Reverend Mary Stallard

Bangor

Canon Caroline Evans
Very Revd Dr Susan Jones
Reverend Angela Williams

St Davids

Mrs Gaynor Ford
Reverend Ann Howells
Reverend Dr Rhiannon Johnson
Canon Sian Jones

Llandaff

Mrs Helen Biggin
Reverend Jan Gould
Venerable Peggy Jackson
Canon Jennifer Wigley

Monmouth

Dr Sue Greening
Canon Jennifer Mole
Reverend Dr Jean Prosser MBE

Swansea & Brecon

Reverend Sue Knight
Reverend Janet Russell
Dr Gill Todd

MU Provincial President

Mrs Ann Gill

Provincial Staff

Canon Carol Wardman

WOMEN WHO HAVE SERVED IN WALES IN LICENSED ANGLICAN MINISTRIES 1884 – 2014

SERVED AS DEACONESSSES (*LATER AS DEACONS / PRIESTS):

ELEANOR CARBONELL (1884); EDITH THOMPSON (1893); ALICE ELEANOR OSWALD (1893); FLORENCE ELIZABETH BROUGH (1896); FLORENCE CAROLINE LLEWELLYN (1901); SOPHIA GANDERTON (1918); ELSIE KATE SKINNER (1918); ELSIE HEDLEY (1958); IRENE ALLEN (1961); PHOEBE PETO WILLETTS (1966); MARGARET CLAIRE HARVEY (1968)*; BARBARA JOHN (1967)*; ANGELA MARGERY GRAY (1973)*; SALLY BRUSH (1976)*; LINDA MARY EDWARDS (1976)*; CLARICE MARY SMITH (1977)*; JOANNA SUSAN PENBERTHY (1984)*; SHEILA PATRICIA TOMS (1991)*.

SERVED AS CHURCH ARMY SISTERS (*LATER AS DEACONS / PRIESTS):

JULIE MICHELLE BARRELL*; JEAN CADE; AVIS DENNIS; FIONA FISHER; NIKKI FOSTER-KRUCZEK; ANNIE GRIFFITHS JONES; DONNA HAYLER; CHRISTINE HINDS; CELIA LYNN JONES*; A REASON; BARBARA RICHARDS; WENDY CHRISTINE TAYLER*; SYBIL WHETTON.

SERVED AS DEACONS / PRIESTS:

CELIA ADAMS; THELMA NAOMI ADEY-WILLIAMS; MARILYN ANN ADSETTS; JESSICA-JILL STAPLETON AIDLEY; ROSEMARY ALDIS; JANE ROSEMARY ALLEN; JENNIFER MARY ANNIS; SARAH ARNDT; LUCYANN ASHDOWN; VICTORIA LESLEY ASHLEY; ELAINE ATACK; SUSAN FLORENCE ATKINSON-JONES; LORRAINE GWYNETH BADGER-WATTS; BETHAN BAILEY; JANE ROME BAILEY; LINDA ROSEMARY BAILY; SALLY BAIRD; ALICIA MARY BAKER; HEATHER ELIZABETH BAKER; JEAN MARGARET BAKER; JULIE ANN LOUISE BAKER; SUSANNAH BALE; ANNE CHRISTINA BALLARD; MARIAN BARGE; SASKIA GAIL BARNDEN; LINDA BATT; STEPHANIE KATHLEEN NORA BEACON; CHARMAIN PATRICIA BEECH; TONI ELIZABETH BENNETT; PETRA MAY ELIZABETH BROOM BERESFORD-WEBB; SUE BEVERLY; SHIRLEY ANNE BIRCH; ELSPETH JOYCE BIRKIN; MARGARET BLAKE; SHERRY LESLEY BLOOMER; GERALDINE ANNE BLYTH; MARY VERONICA BOLT; JANET MARY BONE; CHRISTINE MARY BONNEYWELL; ROSEMARY BOOKLESS; DELYTH BOWEN; SARA BOWIE; ALICE TERESA BOYLAND; MADELAINE MARGARET BRADY; CHRISTINE ELAINE BREWSTER; JENNIFER BRITTON; ISABEL MARY BROTHERSTON; JANICE ELIZABETH BROWN; SUSAN GERTRUDE BROWN; PATRICIA ANN BRYANT; JAYNE ELIZABETH BUCKLES; VIRGINIA ANN BURTON; BETTY BUTLER; HEATHER CALE; PATRICIA ADELE CAMPION; CAMILLA ANNE CAMPLING-DENTON; JESSIE MARGUERITE TARIE CARLYON; JACQUELINE ANN CARTER; LORRAINE CAVANAGH; HELENA MARIA ALIJA CERMAKOVA; LYNN CHAMBERS; MARY CECILIA CHARLES; ANNETTE MARIE CHURCH; SYBIL COLEMAN; SUSAN LYNNE COLLINGBOURNE; KATHRYNE BRONCY COLLINS; CHRISTINE COLTON; SYBIL MARGARET CONSTABLE; LESLIE ELIZABETH COOKE; MARGARET DOROTHY COOLING; GWENDA COOPER; MELIA LAMBRIANOS COPE; LYNDA COWAN; GILLIAN MARGARET DALLOW; GAYNOR ELIZABETH DANIEL-LOWANS; CAROL ANN DAVIES; EDNA NANSI MARGARET DAVIES; EVERLYN DOROTHY DAVIES; JACQUELINE ANN DAVIES; RACHEL HANNAH EILEEN DAVIES; REBECCA JANE DAVIES; SARAH ISABELLA DAVIES; SUSAN ANNE DAVIES; HEIDI MARIA DE GRUCHY; DENISE SUSAN DEMPSEY; CAROLINE REBECCA DOWNS; MARIAN IVY ROSE DOWSETT; JEAN DRAPER; MARY ELIZABETH DUNN; ROSEMARY CARMEN DYMOND; JEAN MIRIAM ELLIS; SARAH ERRINGTON; ANN ELIZABETH MARY EVANS; CAROLINE MARY EVANS; CLAIRE ELIZABETH EVANS; FRIEDA MARY ANN EVANS; GILLIAN EVANS; HEATHER RHIANNON EVANS; HILARY MARGARET EVANS; JENNIFER EVANS; LINDA JOYCE EVANS; MARINA ANNE EVANS; PAT EVANS; CAROL ELIZABETH FARRER; HEATHER FENTON; KATHLEEN FERGUSON; VALERIE ANNE FERNANDEZ; ANN NESWYN FIRTH; JANET FLETCHER; LINDEN ELIZABETH FLETCHER; ADRIANA MARIA (MARJA) FLIPSE; PAULINE BARBARA FLORANCE; WENDY FOULGER; ANNETTE FRANCIS; JUDITH ROSALIND GAVIN; SALLY ANN GAZE; SARAH JANE GEACH; SHARON LOUISE GOBLE; PATRICIA ANNE GOLLEGE; DOROTHY GRACE GOSLING; JANET GOULD; JANE ELIZABETH GOUPILLON; PAULETTE ROSE-MARY DE GARIS GOWER; ALEXANDRA GRACE; MARION MCKENZIE GRAHAM; ALISON MARY GREEN; CLARE GRIFFITHS; ELIZABETH LEIGH GRIFFITHS; LINDA BETTY GRIFFITHS; PAMELA VERLEY GRIFFITHS; SHIRLEY THELMA GRIFFITHS; CAROLYN RUTH HALL; HELEN CONSTANCE PATRICIA MARY HALL; LINDA CHARLOTTE HALL; VAL HAMER; VITTORIA RUTH HANCOCK; KATHLEEN JOYCE HARMAN; ELAINE SARAH HARRIS; SIAN ELIZABETH HARRIS; J P M H; ROSALIND MARY HAWKEN; CATHERINE MARY HAYNES; CYNTHIA HEBDEN; DAWN YVONNE LORRAINE HELLARD; JANET HENDERSON; SARAH FRANCES HILDRETH; CAROL ANN HILL; NORA HILL; ELAINE HILLS; CHRISTINE HELEN HOCKEY; VALERIE IRENE HODGES; PATRICIA SUSAN HOLLINS; CAROLINE ELIZABETH HOLMES; JENNIFER LOUISE HOOD; VANESSA ANNE HOPE-BELL; NATALIE DELIA HOWARD; ELIZABETH ANN HOWELLS; SANDRA JANE HOWELLS; ANNE-MARIE (ANNA) HUMPHREYS; SUSAN MARY HUYTON; MARILYN ELIZABETH IVEY; FRANCES ANNE (PEGGY) JACKSON; MARGARET ELIZABETH JACKSON; JANE EVA JAMES; GILLIAN MARY JAMES; MANON CERIDWEN JAMES; MARGARET JUNE JEFFORD; AUDREY JOAN JENKINS; TANYA LOUISE JENKINS; ELAINE JENKYN; CAROLINE VICTORIA JOHN; KATHRYN ANN JOHNSON; RHIANNON MARY MORGAN JOHNSON; SUSAN ELAINE JOHNSON; ALISON JONES; BRENDA JONES; ELIZABETH JONES; KATHY LOUISE JONES; MAIR JONES; MARY VALERIE JONES; SALLY JENNIFER JONES; SIAN EIRA JONES; SUSAN HELEN JONES; VICTORIA KAY JONES; TRACEY JANE JONES; ALICE MARINA KENNARD; ELIZABETH KERL; ZOE ELIZABETH KING; SUSAN MARGARET KNIGHT; UNA MARGARET PATRICIA KROLL; ELIZABETH MARGARET LE GRICE; ANN THEODORA RACHEL LEWIS; CHERYL IRENE LEWIS; MARY CAROLA MELTON LEWIS; RACHEL VERONICA CLARE LEWIS; ALISON SUSAN LITTLER; URSULA ANN LIVENS; CHRISTINE ANN LLEWELLYN; CAROLINE ANDREA MANSELL; GILLIAN KATHRYN MARSHALL; MARGARET JENNIFER MAUND; ALEXIER OWEN MAYES; CHRISTINA ELIZABETH MCCREA; IRIS EVELYN MCINTYRE DE ROMERO; BETTY MCNIVEN; SULIN MILNE; JENNIFER VERA MOLE; ENID MAY MORGAN; ENID MORRIS ROBERTS MORGAN; KATHARINE MORGAN; MARIAN KATHLEEN ELEANOR MORGAN; SUE MARGARET MORIARTY; BETI ELIN MORRIS; CATHARINE MARY MORRIS; HERMIONE JANE MORRIS; NIA WYN MORRIS; JUDITH MORTON; RUTH ELAINE MOVERLEY; BEATRICE MUSINDI; SHELAGH NAYLOR; LINDA ELIZABETH NEWMAN; LYNETTE DIANNE NORMAN; MARIANE LILY-MAY OSBORNE; HELEN MARY O'SHEA; CAROLINE OWEN; CHRISTINE ROSE OWEN; HANNAH MAIR OWEN; SUSAN MARGARET OWEN; PATRICIA MARGARET OWENS; MARILYN MARIE PARRY; OLWEN MARGARET PARRY; JENI PARSONS; CAROLINE ELIZABETH ALICE PASCOE; ELIZABETH PAYNE; GLENYS PAYNE; JANET ELIZABETH PEARCE; LYNN JANICE PERRY; JOANNA VERA PERCIVAL; JUDITH MARY PHILLIPS; BEATRICE ANNE PITT; VALERIE ISABELLE DAWN FRANCES PLUMB; CAROLE MARGARET POOLMAN; ELEANOR ANN POWELL; PAMELA POWELL; SUSAN AVERINA PRATTEN; ALISON MARY PRICE; MARI JOSEPHINE PRICE; CAROLINE HEIDI ANN PRINCE; MELANIE AMANDA PRINCE; GILLIAN MARGARET PROSSER; JEAN PROSSER; JUDITH ANN PRUST; SHIRLEY CHRISTINE RAYNER; BEVERLY JANE REANEY; MARION REDWOOD; EMMA LOUISE REES; ELIZABETH MARY REES; HELEN REES; SALLY ELIZABETH REES; SUSAN MARY REES; DELYTH ANN RICHARDS; YVONNE LORRAINE RICHMOND; FREDA MARGARET ROBARTS; JANET CAREY ROBBINS; CAROL SUSAN BUTLER ROBERTS; ELIZABETH ROSE ROBERTS; SANDRA JUNE ROBERTS; JEAN ROCK; KATHLEEN ANNE ROGERS; PATRICIA GLADYS SYLVIA ROGERS; SALLY JEAN ROGERS; SARAH ANN ROGERS; INGRID ELIZABETH ROSE; SARAH CAROLINE ROWLAND JONES; VALERIE CHRISTINE ROWLANDS; JANET MARY RUSSELL; SUSAN SARAPUK; HILARY LINDA SAVAGE; BETHAN LYNNE SCOTTFORD; JAYNE SHAW; RACHEL VICTORIA SIMPSON; NICOLA RACHAEL SKIPWORTH; JANE ALISON SLENNETT; BEVERLEY ANNE SMITH; PAULINE PATRICIA SMITH; MARY KATHLEEN ROSE STALLARD; MARGARET ALISON STARK; NAOMI ERNESTINE STARKEY; NICOLA GAIL STARTIN; CORALIE MARY STEEL; JEAN STEPHENS; REBECCA CLAIRE STEVENS; SUSAN ANN STEVENS; HAZEL STIBBE; MARIAN ELIZABETH STURROCK; SHARON JUANITA SWAIN; REBECCA JANE SWYER; SUSAN MARY TAYLOR; SYLVIA MARY TEMPLE; CHRISTINE TEN WOLDE; DOROTHY LUCILLE THOMAS; IRIS THOMAS; JUDITH THOMPSON; MARY KATHLEEN THORLEY; MARGARET ELEANOR THRALL; DAWN CAROLINE TILT; KATHERINE JOAN TILTMAN; BRONWEN DORIS TIMOTHY; CHRYS EVNATH TRISTAN TREMTHANMOR; KATHRYN RUTH TRIMBY; GILLIAN TUCK; GAYNOR TYLER; MARGARET JEAN UNDERDOWN; ARIADNE ROLANDA MAGDALENA VAN DEN HOF; HELEN VAN KOEVERING; JULIE WAGSTAFF; JOAN WAKELING; PAULINE ANN WALKER; JANE WALLMAN-GIRDLESTONE; PATRICIA WARD; CAROL WARDMAN; KATHERINE IRENE WARRINGTON; GWYNETH WATKINS; LORNA ANN FRANCES CHARLES WATKINS; JENNIFER WELSH; SIAN HILARY WIGHT; JENNIFER WIGLEY; JANICE JOY WILKINS; MARY FRANCES WILKINSON; P A S W; ANGELA WILLIAMS; CATHERINE LOIS WILLIAMS; GILLIAN JEAN RICHELDIS WILLIAMS; KIMBERLEY VICTORIA WILLIAMS; NIA CATRIN WILLIAMS; PAULINE MARY WILLIAMS; SUSAN WILLIAMS; SUSAN MERRILYN MARSH WILLIAMS; DENISE ANN WILLIAMS; AMANDA CLARE WILLIAMS-POTTER; BARBARA ANN WOOD; CAROLYN MARIE THERESE WOOD; JANE WOOD; ANITA MARIE WOODWELL; PAMELA ANNE WRIGHT; ESTHER CHRISTINE YATES.

Information as available from published sources only; excludes Lay Readers.

Foreword

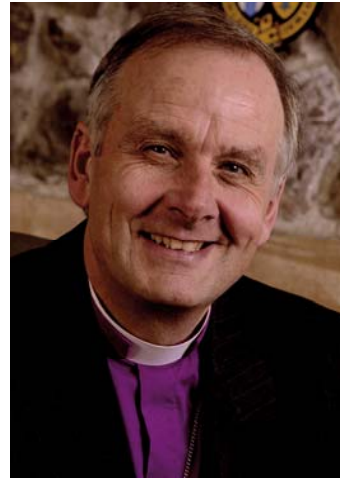
When we cross a threshold we are not just entering into a new place but embarking on a new phase of our lives. It's a big step, implying significant change, a new beginning. Today it's an expression most commonly associated with marriage with the tradition of husbands carrying their new wives 'over the threshold' of their first home, marking the start of their new lives together.

There has been no carrying of women over the threshold of ministry in the Church in Wales, however. Rather, they have been tripped up, had obstacles put in their way and doors slammed in their faces. This is a threshold they have crossed themselves and they have done it through faith, courage, vision, determination and a sense of justice.

It has been a long and arduous journey during which a generation of women has had to endure inequality and prejudice against them as they served first as deacons, then as priests, before finally breaking the stained glass ceiling to be allowed to be ordained as bishops.

They are the ground-breakers and ground-breakers are the people who throughout history are the ones who have built our Church and formed our faith. They are the ones who truly follow the example of Christ by refusing to be bowed by tradition or authority in the face of justice, respect and love for each other.

Thanks to them, the Church has finally caught up with the rest of society by recognising that women can contribute, and are as valued, as much as men in all spheres of life. Today's young people have grown up seeing the ministry of women in churches across Wales as the norm. I look forward to the time when the same can be said of women bishops, and the whole notion of women not being allowed to be ordained in any capacity seems as old-fashioned and fuddy-duddy as carrying wives over thresholds and tying them to the kitchen sink.

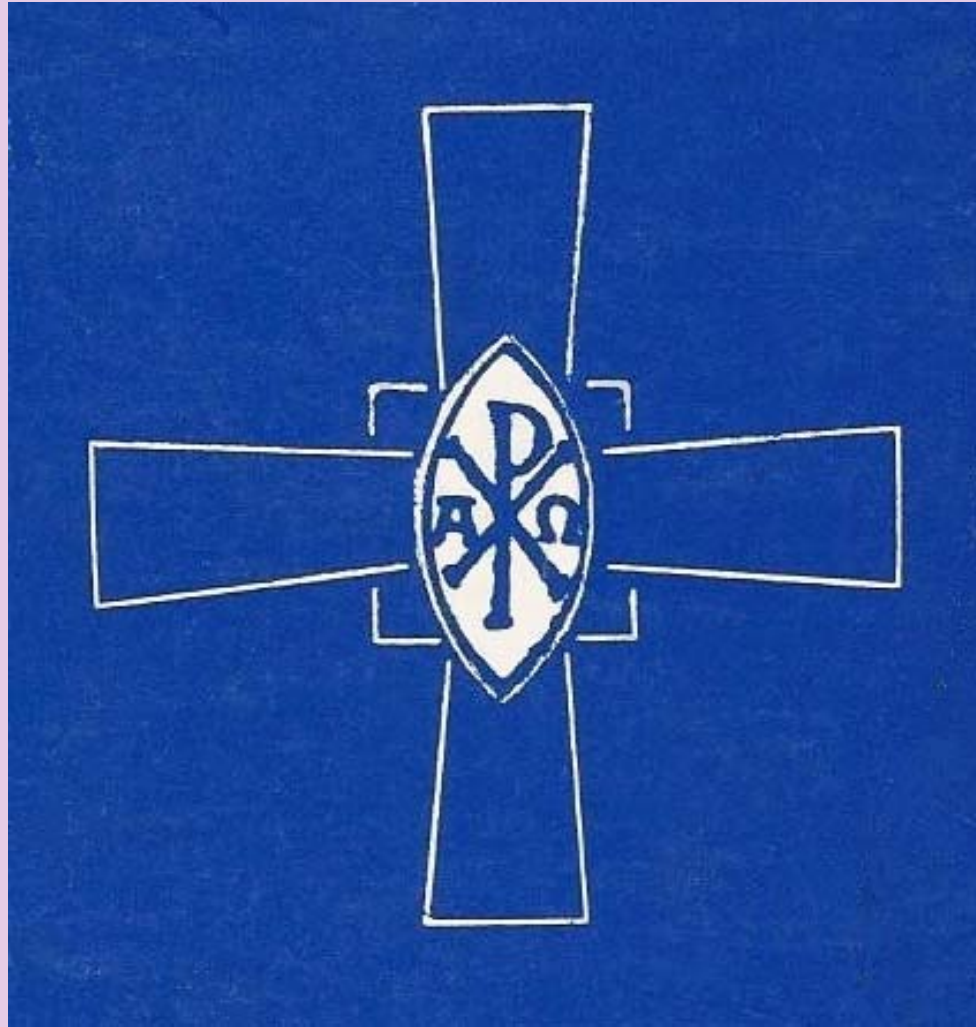


*The Most Reverend Dr. Barry Morgan
Archbishop of Wales*

**The Most Reverend Dr. Barry Morgan
Archbishop of Wales**

1976 1980 1993 1997 2008 2014

The Deaconesses



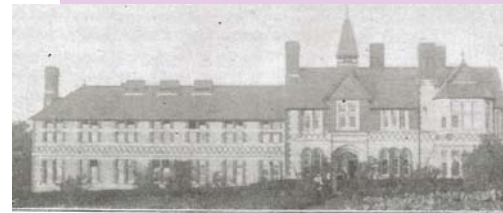
Eleanor Carbonell was the first Anglican woman in Wales to be licensed as a deaconess. She was ordained (sic) deaconess in 1884, to work in the parish of Usk, where she remained for the next thirty years. The Diocese of Llandaff, under its new bishop, Dr Richard Lewis, was then one of the earliest dioceses of the Church of England to embrace the formal ministry of women as deaconesses, licensed directly by the bishop for work in parishes. Their role was to be equivalent to that of a deacon in parish ministry, and their ordination service bore a close resemblance to the rite for deacons.

Two more women followed – ‘Sister’ Edith Thompson in 1889, and ‘Sister’ Alice Oswald in 1890 – both to work in the parish of Canton, in Cardiff, living initially in the Church House, which was furnished by donations requested from parishioners. In June 1893 Sister Edith and Sister Alice, with two others, were appointed by the bishop to establish a new Llandaff Diocesan Deaconess Institution. They took over a house in Penarth, which was now to be both a residential base for the deaconesses and a Home ‘for training ladies in all branches of Church work’. In addition to that, and their parish duties, they also resumed the rehabilitation work of the former House of Mercy. In 1897 Alice Oswald was named as Head Deaconess, a role she retained until the Penarth building was commandeered for the war effort in 1941 and the Deaconess Institution closed.

Up to disestablishment in 1920, only three further deaconesses are recorded as being licensed, all of them in Llandaff. After 1920, records are sparse, and no women’s names have come to light, until Irene Allen in 1961 and Phoebe Willetts in 1966 – again both in Llandaff. Two women came from England to work in Wales: Elsie Hedley to St David’s and Barbara John to Monmouth. Margaret Harvey was the first deaconess to be licensed outside Llandaff, in St Asaph, in 1968.

In all, the torch of formal deaconess ministry in Wales was carried for a total of 96 years by fewer than twenty women, from 1884 until a historic threshold was crossed in 1980. The five deaconesses remaining in active ministry were then ordained deacon, together with a further four women, ordained directly from training into the diaconate. The deaconesses were to be, in Bishop Richard Lewis’ words, “a band of Godly women who, after their ordination, should go forth and labour in the more populous parishes in the Diocese.” This they did for decades, with dedication and devotion. Those of us who have since followed them into ministry owe them a deep debt of gratitude.

The Venerable Peggy Jackson



THE DEACONESS INSTITUTION, LLANDAFF.



Elizabeth Ferard, the first Church of England Deaconess

1884

1889

1893

1890

1897

1920

1961

1966

1968

1980

Church Army Sisters

Church Army was founded by Wilson Carlile in 1882. The first Church Army mission sisters were commissioned in 1887, overseen by Marie Carlile, who continued in charge of women's work for the next fifty years.

The Church Army Annual Report 1887/8 said: "A Mission Nurse finds access to every house and a cordial welcome within. She can speak to women, sympathise with them, win their confidence, and gain an insight into their characters, far more appropriately and successfully than anyone of the other sex could do, especially anyone who was above them in education and position, both social and official, which a clergyman is."

Early years saw the establishment of social work in the slums, prison missions, and mission caravans. By 1914 new initiatives included pioneer tent missions, and beach missions, which were probably the first work of Church Army sisters in Wales. By at least the 1920s, they were active in Llandaff Diocese – notably in the parish of Caerau and Ely, working from the mission hall, which preceded the Church of the Resurrection.

The Venerable Peggy Jackson

The Reverend Sister Wendy Sanderson (later Tayler) CA came to Cardiff to be licensed in 2003 as Nightclub Chaplain and Youth Evangelist. She later trained for ordination and currently serves in parochial ministry:

"Church Army has taken me all over the world, I have experienced the bright lights of the media cameras and the darkest corners of people's lives. I have spoken in conferences stretching as far as Sweden, sat with someone while they wait for the results of an HIV test, visited young offenders in prison, worked with young people who find themselves struggling with homelessness, self-harm, domestic violence and addictions, prayed with the lonely and bereaved, worked to resolve crisis at 2 and 3 o'clock in the morning, whilst also preaching, carrying out school assemblies and helping to lead services. In addition, in 2007, I co-founded 'Solace' Church, in a bar.

Church Army continues to teach me that Reverend Wilson Carlile knew what the words 'mission' and 'evangelism' really meant, when we roll up our sleeves and get stuck into the messiness and dirt of life... it is there our hearts will break because it is there that we truly find God!"



Marie Carlile, in charge of Church Army women's work from 1888



Sister Wendy Sanderson CA, in Church Army uniform

Reader Ministry

The 150th anniversary of Reader ministry within the Anglican Communion will be celebrated in 2016. But it was not until 1969 that, in England, canon law allowed women to be admitted to this office.

In the early church, women were involved in leading worship, as evidenced in the Scriptures, possibly as 'Readers'. However, as time evolved it became a predominantly male domain. In the mid 16th Century the office of Reader was briefly revived, when the Bishop of Bangor was authorised to ordain five 'lectores', but they were never numerous.

In 1866, there was a second formal revival. A licence could be issued, but this would cease, and have to be renewed, on a change of incumbent. 1884 saw the introduction of an examination to prove worthiness to hold office and the licence was extended to allow addresses to be given in unconsecrated buildings. Five years later, diocesan licences allowed exercise of the office in parishes other than the Reader's own. In 1904 the licence was extended to allow Readers to preach in churches, and in 1921 English Canon law gave full restoration to the office of Reader.

Following disestablishment, however, the Welsh bishops do not appear to have admitted any further Readers to be licensed until 1930, 1952 and 1954. Following England's move in 1969, in Wales it was the early 1970s before the first female readers were admitted. Even then, in St David's Diocese women were only allowed to wear an academic gown and scarf; they were not allowed to wear cassocks until 1983.

Today women make up almost half of the total number of Readers in Wales, and are generally accepted by both laity and clergy. But they still experience an element of discrimination from both sides, whereby women feel they have to prove themselves capable of holding such a position in the Church.

Gaynor Ford (Reader)



Licensing of Rhiannon Rowley by Bishop Wyn (St David's), with Gaynor Ford (right)

1882

1914

2007

1930

1969

1976

1983

2016

1887

1920s

Enid Morgan was admitted as a Reader in St David's Diocese in 1976.

She writes:

I had told my puzzled parish priest about my irritating sense of calling to priesthood in 1971 or thereabouts, and he arranged for me to see the Bishop of Bangor. He didn't have a clue about what to do with me but suggested I become a 'Lay Reader'. It wasn't what I was asking for, but at least some training was offered...

...they wanted me to take services around the diocese, but as I had three small children at the time, it has to be said, I was not the ideal ordinand!



We moved to St David's Diocese in 1973, where we lived in a tiny country parish and I tried to help without being a threat - not possible! I eventually wrote to the Bishop at the time, asking if I could be licensed as a Reader, since I had completed the Bangor course...

The Bishop licensed me in the Bishop's Chapel in the old Bishop's Palace in Abergwili. Initially I took Evensong fairly regularly in the Chapel of Ease at Commins Coch, which was attached to the parish of Llanbadarn Fawr...

...From about 1971 to 1978 I edited the Welsh language weekly paper of the Church, 'Y Llan', and gradually realised what a prickly nettle I had chosen to grasp. With the encouragement of Bishop George Noakes I embarked on a theology degree at the university in Aberystwyth, at the Presbyterian Theological College: 'If you're going to be any use to the Church you've got to get yourself a theological education.' At the time St Michael's Llandaff would only train priests.

1976

1984

1993

Around 1995 the Secretary General of the Church in Wales suggested that I should not take part in debates about the ordaining of women priests. "A Provincial Officer should be neutral," he said. I asked how he suggested I could do that, since my appointment to the role of Director of Mission (daft title) had been flourished as a 'step forward' in the development of women's ministry. By being there, I was evidence that women could be accepted in roles that demanded some level of competence in theology, and even in leadership.

But stepping from being a Deacon in Charge (contradiction in terms) of four little country parishes near Aberystwyth, to working with six, often incompatible, diocesan teams/tribes, and with the Bench of Bishops, who often seemed awkward, even shy, was difficult, and the job ill-defined. I concentrated on trying to build a team where officers in various specialisms would perceive their work as closely related and their relationships together evidence of their faith. It was on this basis that we developed 'Encouragement Projects' in the dioceses, where that principle of working together was shared with diocesan and parish teams. And sometimes it worked! But being 'King' of your own castle is a long ingrained clerical instinct and institution.

Working from that principle, a joint meeting of the Anglican and Presbyterian Boards of Mission was a notable occasion; and I enjoyed reporting back to the Governing Body on some remarkable international church conferences. It was a genuine attempt to share with all the churches something of the vivacity of the faith in different places. I'm grateful too, if being a figurehead for seven years gave some prominence to the possibility of women bearing more responsibility in the church and encouraged the ministry of younger women.



The Reverend Enid Morgan crossed a significant threshold when she became Director of Mission for the Church in Wales, the first woman to be appointed to a provincial officer's post.

The Revd Enid Morgan, at a joint meeting of the Boards of Mission of the Church in Wales and the Presbyterian Church of Wales, Llandudno, 1997. She stands between the Revd Dafydd Owen, then General Secretary of the PCW and Archbishop Alwyn Rice Jones

1997

Women Deacons Group

On 19th October 1984 a handful of women deacons of the Church in Wales met at Dolfor Caravan Park, near Newtown, for the first ever provincial meeting of ordained women in Wales. The meeting was organised by the Reverend Sally Brush from the Diocese of St. Asaph. So began a journey which was to lead to a wider recognition of ordained women in the Church in Wales.

The overnight stay at Dolfor forged a model which stills holds good today – an overnight conference-style meeting, beginning in the afternoon of one day and ending the following afternoon. It provides a time to share hopes and fears and to enjoy the mutual support of women in a similar situation – this latter element was essential for our survival in the early days when prejudice was rife.

From this first meeting in 1984, one representative from each Diocese was invited to attend the meeting of the Bench of Bishops in Cardiff. In October 1986 we met with the Bench again, as we did in November 1987. On 17th April 1986 women priests and deacons from across the world had an audience with the Archbishop of Canterbury at Lambeth Palace, and two days later a Celebration Eucharist was held in Canterbury Cathedral. This weekend of events was organised by The Movement for the Ordination of Women (MOW). As the representative from Wales (and wearing a clerical collar) I was amused when I was shepherded into the room marked ‘overseas clergy’!

On 15th November 1988 the Reverend Jennifer Mole was licensed as Team Vicar at Cyncoed, Cardiff.

She was the first woman in Wales to receive the title ‘Team Vicar’

The Reverend Canon
Jennifer Mole

By November 1988, I had taken over the organizing of the provincial Women Deacons Group from Sally and we had another Provincial meeting of women deacons at Trefecca. Over the years meetings were held at Dolfor again (but this time in the wooden chalets!), Llangasty Retreat House and Shrewsbury – in the Youth Hostel, much to the amusement of the staff! When, in September 1991, the vote was taken to begin the legislative process to enable women to be ordained as priests, many women deacons received hate mail from clergy who opposed the idea. As a spin-off from this, some women deacons, with the incumbents with whom they ministered, attended a Quiet Day at Bridgend.

Since those ‘dark days’ the support of women in both provincial and diocesan groups has become part of our life and ministry to each other. Now there is a definite feeling of moving on and many of the hurts of the past are, thankfully, healing with the passing of time.



Women Deacons Group meeting in Trefecca, late 1980s.
The Revd Jennifer Mole is back right

Women in Ministry Group

The Reverend Canon
Jo Penberthy

Women in Ministry was an ecumenical and interfaith group that met in the 1980s at the University of Cardiff Chaplaincy in Park Place, organised by Helena Williams and Joan James. The group met monthly and was both a support group and a ginger group. It was a place of discussion, prayer and fellowship for women involved in licensed and official ministry in various traditions, including a reformed rabbi. But, more than that, it was open to anyone who was interested in encouraging the ministry of women in whatever capacity and in making sure that moves to undergird the equality, dignity and safety of women and our participation in the public sphere were taken forward.

Helena was an assistant chaplain at the University and going forward for ministry in the Church in Wales, and Joan, then a parisioner at St Denys, Lisvane, was involved in the ministry of healing and passionate about women’s equality in general. Joan had witnessed first hand the difficulties that Linda Mary Evans (now Edwards) had experienced in the Llandaff diocese, as a deaconess in Llanishen and Lisvane, and she was determined to do something about it.

WIM was an oasis of acceptance, a place for the recharging of batteries and of the resolve to keep going, come what may. In 1986 it was the subject of a TV documentary in the series ‘Wales on Sunday’, produced by John Holdsworth, then a Church in Wales parish priest in Swansea. People came to WIM from across south Wales and it served a vital role for women, standing up for the dignity of women in a culture where that was often seen as strange or subversive.

WIM was particularly important for women seeking ordination in the diocese of Llandaff, which between 1981 and 1987, was neither willing to admit any more women to the order of deaconess, nor to ordain any women as deacons (although those already licensed were permitted to continue to serve). For me, coming from England and already a deaconess, but now given only permission to officiate, the support of WIM was a lifeline of laughter and hope, and a well in which many vocations were nourished.

“the support of Women in Ministry was a lifeline of laughter and hope”



The University of Cardiff Anglican Chaplaincy at 61 Park Place, Cardiff, where WIM met in the 1980s

1984

1986

1988

1991

1980s

1986

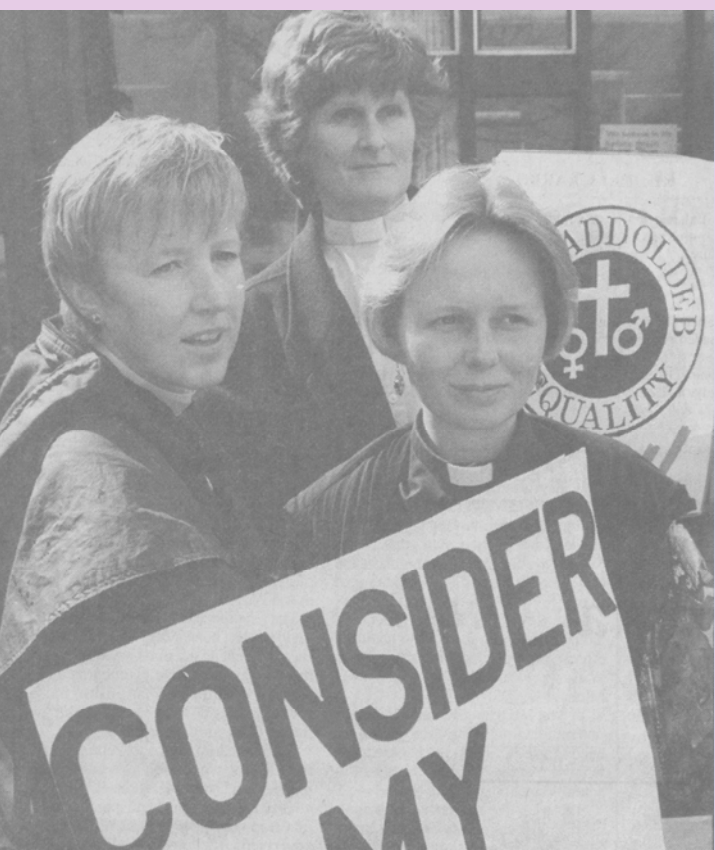
1987

The Failed Vote on Women Priests

On April 6th 1994, only weeks after the first women had been ordained to the priesthood in the Church of England, the Bill to ordain women to the priesthood in Wales was defeated in the Church's Governing Body by a narrow margin in the House of Clergy, having been passed overwhelmingly by the laity, and unanimously by the Bishops.

What no-one could have foreseen was the upset this would cause throughout Wales, both inside the Church and far beyond. It was headline news for days on Welsh TV and radio and in Welsh newspapers. Letters of protest poured in to the Bishops' offices. Within a few weeks a meeting was held in my own parish in mid Wales, at which Anglicans from all over Wales decided to set up a campaigning organisation called 'Women Priests for Wales', of which I somehow found myself the Secretary! Things moved rapidly after that, and only a couple of weeks later I was being interviewed live by Jenni Murray on the BBC radio programme Woman's Hour.

This was the beginning of two and a half years of very hard work, over and above my full-time work as a librarian and my parish responsibilities. Meetings were held and a petition organised, which garnered thousands of signatures and was presented to the Bishops. People (lay and clergy) joined, wore badges, wrote letters and produced publications, raised funds, held vigils and services and prayed hard, and simply refused to let the issue fade into obscurity.



Revs Jenny Wigley, Pat Ward, Mary Stallard demonstrating at the GB 1995. The banner in the foreground 'Consider My Call' was a conscious challenge to the Church, which had declared a year of vocation under the title 'Consider Your Call'

Women Priests for Wales

Supporters of the campaign (including me) stood for election to the Church's Governing Body and took part in its debates for the next few years. Finally, on 19th September 1996 (the date is engraved on my heart) the reintroduced Bill to allow the ordination of women to the priesthood passed its third and final reading in all three Houses and the way was finally open.

The Reverend Kathy Ferguson

The Changing of Minds

The Reverend Canon
Jenny Wigley

In the run-up to the Vote-that-Failed in April 1994, there had been virtually no campaigning by supporters of women's ordination – the bishops had specifically asked us not to, and so we didn't. The shock of that experience, of being at a meeting where the vast majority of members voted 'yes' but the bill was rejected because only(!) 61% of the clergy were in favour, changed everything.

I came out of the hall in Lampeter, walked up to the nearest TV camera and made my first campaigning speech. Within a fortnight, Kathy Ferguson, curate of Llanidloes, set up a meeting to get us organised: Women Priests for Wales was born, with Kathy as secretary and Eric Owen as chair (he and I would later become co-chairs) plus a small committee to organise meetings, handle publicity and produce campaigning materials.

As far as the people of Wales were concerned, and indeed most of the media, it was so obvious: 'The Church' was wrong, and we were right! We were

hugely encouraged by their response, and the next two years were empowering and often exhilarating – even when we were meeting on wet Saturday afternoons in the church hall in Llanidloes!

A sign that the Church was also changing came when Roy, who was then Bishop of Llandaff, declared that he was wrong to have voted 'no' – the mind of the Church was clearly in favour of ordaining women to the priesthood. That meant the bishops were now unanimous in their support and we pressed the Bench to bring a new bill before the GB as quickly as possible. They were reluctant at first – fearful of a second failure – but we felt, as a campaign, and particularly those of us who were women deacons, that we were willing to take that risk. The Church needed to be seen to put right its mistake – and soon.

The day the bill eventually went through – 19th September 1996 – was nine years to the day since I was made a deacon, and I and some 70 of my sisters were ordained as priests on 11th January 1997.



Extract from the speech given by the Right Reverend Roy Davies, Bishop of Llandaff, in September 1995, seconding the bill to enable women to be ordained to the priesthood and explaining why he had changed his vote from 'no' to 'yes':

"I am seconding the motion that the bill to enable women to be ordained to the priesthood be read a second time... I cannot go on saying 'Hold it', because things cannot go on as they are. We cannot, after last year, go on as if nothing has happened. The vote then pointed to a growing consensus. This is where my being an Anglican comes in. The danger with a stalemate is that we are going to be preoccupied with this matter at the cost of neglecting our wider mission."

1994

1996

1997

The Successful Vote

The Reverend Canon
Jenny Wigley

After two years of campaigning by Women Priests for Wales, the bill to enable women to become priests in the Church in Wales was finally passed. It was Thursday 19th September 1996; nine years to the day since I had been ordained deacon.

There was so much interest in the bill that a video-link was provided to the Cliff Tucker Theatre on the Lampeter University Campus. Many of us had gathered there to watch and wait, so there was a huge burst of applause when the voting figures were announced.

...the House of Clergy voted by 85 to 40 in favour (84 votes would have been the necessary two-thirds majority)...

...while the Laity were two votes short of a three-quarters majority...

...and all six Bishops voted in favour.

The delight of those campaigning for women priests was tempered by the announcement that the Bench intended to appoint a 'Provincial Assistant Bishop'.

Canon David Thomas from the Diocese of Swansea & Brecon was consecrated as bishop, two weeks before the women deacons were ordained to the priesthood.

A document containing 'pastoral guidelines' was distributed for information at Governing Body before the vote was taken. The crucial section reads:

'The Bishops are unanimously committed to securing a continuing place in the life of the Church for those who

cannot in conscience accept the new situation created by the ordination of women to the priesthood. They wish to preserve the highest degree of unity possible in the Church in Wales for the foreseeable future. With this in mind, they propose to appoint a bishop who will undertake among other duties the pastoral oversight of those unable to accept women as priests in the Province, and to represent their views in the councils of the Church in Wales. He will be an Assistant Bishop, appointed by one bishop and authorised by all to minister in their dioceses, and will share collegial responsibilities with the diocesan bishops in the Province.'

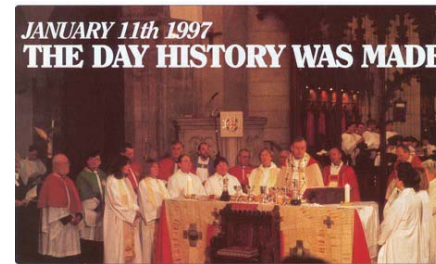


Newly-ordained priests, Bangor Cathedral, 11th January 1997

Bishop Christina Odenberg (Diocese of Lund, Sweden) dancing with Bishop Tony Crockett, Bishop of Bangor, in Llandaff Cathedral nave: 10th anniversary celebration service 2007

Women Ordained as Priests

The Reverend
Kathy Ferguson



On 11th January 1997 some seventy women became the first women to be ordained to the priesthood in the Anglican Church in

Wales. In the six cathedrals of Wales every seat was taken, as our families and congregations packed the pews to witness this solemn, historic and profoundly joyful occasion. My ordination took place in Bangor Cathedral and my entire family, plus a coach-load of local friends and parishioners, had made immense efforts to be there to support me and rejoice with me.

By the time I and my eight fellow deacons (our ages ranging from 27 to 68) entered Bangor Cathedral on that historic morning, we had been waiting for that day for between 2 and 14 years. Now, at last, the vocation we had all been aware of for so long was to be fulfilled and I cannot find the words to describe just how that felt.

As if the ordination day itself were not gift enough, the next day found us all back in our home parishes, presiding for the first time at the Church's central service, the Eucharist or Holy Communion. My first Eucharist was a joint celebration for the congregations from both our churches and the atmosphere was almost electric with excitement and joy. I had been allowed to choose the hymns and songs, and the vicar, vested

that day as a deacon to assist me, just as I for so long had assisted him, preached for me.

I truly can remember just about every detail of that morning, even to the butterflies in my stomach as I sang the priest's part of the service for the very first time. There were so many communicants that administering communion took much longer than usual. Then after the service came the photographs and the party in the church hall, with the most beautiful ordination cake, animated conversation and much laughter.

Then, for me, came the crowning moment when my broadly-smiling vicar presented me with the beautiful silver home-communion set which was the parishes' gift to me to mark the occasion. It has had much use over the years since then and I treasure it still, both as a reminder of an unforgettable weekend and as a tangible sign of the loving friendship which supported and encouraged me though all the years of my ministry in those parishes. It is the most immense privilege to be a priest, and I thank God for that privilege and the deep and abiding joy it has brought me.



Revd Kathy Ferguson (2nd left), Bangor Cathedral



From 2006 important developmental work was done by St Michael's College, under the leadership of the Principal, Revd Dr Peter Sedgwick, and a group of women representing each of the six dioceses. They organised a conference 'Celebrating the past, imagining the future', with women from the media, business and health and the Venerable Joy Tetley, Professor Mary Grey and Bishop Christina Odenberg (Diocese of Lund, Sweden). This event celebrated the tenth anniversary of the ordination of women as priests. It re-invigorated networks and helped supporters to establish priorities.

1996

1997

2007



Women Bishops – the First Attempt

The Reverend
Mary Stallard

In 2008 the Governing Body of the Church in Wales voted against the ordination of women bishops by a narrow margin in the House of Clergy. This proved to be an important turning point for our Church.

Our bishops had announced their intention to raise the issue of the ordination of women bishops, effectively as a single measure (without additional, discriminatory legislation) at Governing Body. We were proud of their courage in doing this. During the ensuing debates many amendments were proposed and there was a vote about provision of another Provincial Assistant Bishop to care for dissenters. This was voted down, but the main vote was lost by three votes in the House of Clergy.

The good news of this was the clear majority in favour of women bishops in the House of Laity. It also gave an opportunity for those who were conscientious objectors to equal ministry to take responsibility for their position: having won the vote, those opposed to inclusive episcopal ministry could no longer claim to be victims, whose voices were not heard.

This situation gave supporters of equal ministry a fresh impetus to be organised and to work towards cultural change in a Church in which those in favour of exclusive (male) ministry were focussed, funded, organised and with mainstream support. Women's and inclusive ministry was still regarded as more marginal, in a large part voluntary, less organised and much less supported.

There was a huge task to reclaim 'tradition' as something that is alive, to promote understanding of 'catholic' as meaning inclusive and 'evangelical' to mean good news for all. In 2008 the task ahead seemed uphill, but at the 2007 anniversary conference Bishop Christina had urged us to be guided by the grace of those who adapt to the movement of the Spirit, instead of being a Church that adapts around those who hold everyone else back.



The Vote "that henceforth in the Church in Wales men and women may be ordained as Bishops":

House of Laity

For: 52 Against: 19 Abstention: 1

House of Clergy

For: 27 Against: 18 Abstention: 1

House of Bishops

For: 4 Against: 0 Abstention: 0

The first (failed) women bishops bill 2008

The Bill was unanimously supported by the House of Bishops and passed by the House of Laity, but failed to get the necessary two-thirds majority in the House of Clergy. It fell after the amendment that would have offered alternative episcopal oversight for those unable to accept the ministry of a woman bishop also failed.

That amendment, as proposed by the Select Committee, stated that 'the Bench of Bishops will provide pastoral care and support for those who in conscience cannot accept the ordination of women as priests and bishops through the ministry of an Assistant Bishop or Bishops.' In fact, not even all the members of the Select Committee were in agreement that the amendment should specify provision to be made for those unable to accept women as bishops.

Reviewing the Role of Women

The impetus for reviewing the role of women in the Church in Wales came from outside the Province. In 2006 the Reverend Joanna Penberthy and the Reverend Canon Mary Stallard represented the Church in Wales at the United Nations Conference on the Status of Women in New York and reported back to the Governing Body. They recommended that the Governing Body of the Church in Wales acknowledge the Millennium Development Goal of equal representation of women in decision making at all levels and the commitment of the Anglican Consultative Council to strive towards this in all Anglican Provinces. As a result it was decided in September 2006 to set up a working group to review the representation of women in the work and structures of the Church in Wales and to make recommendations about the ways in which the Province could work towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Representation of Women in the Church in Wales

The Working Group examined carefully the issues of equality and the representation of women in the Church in Wales and was of the view that the Church is best placed to fulfil its mission when all of its members are enabled to fully acknowledge their gifts and duties, and to exercise their unique talents and vocations as individuals. The Working Group identified a number of concerns: the pattern of deployment of ordained women within dioceses; the lack of any senior appointments of women in the Church;

the continued ordination of those opposed to the ordination of women. And they became aware of the existence in some parts of the Church of a culture of discrimination, bullying and deliberate exclusion of individuals because of their gender. The Working Group also identified a large deficit in the representation of women in committees at provincial and diocesan level and a lack of commitment to addressing the issues of gender equality.

The recommendations of the Working Group to address the identified inequalities were accepted. In 2011 the Working Group met to review progress and was delighted with the sustained commitment of the Church in Wales to address the issues of equality and the representation of women over the three years 2008-2011, as illustrated by the significant progress made.

Dr Gill Todd



The Venerable Peggy Jackson (left), installed as Archdeacon of Llandaff, 2009; The Very Revd Dr Sue Jones (right), installed as Dean of Bangor, 2011

In late 2013, however, it was considered that even though the Church had approved the appointment of women bishops, equality issues had slipped down the agenda, as the Church worked to implement the Provincial (Harries) Review. Progress in making fundamental changes in organisational culture is often associated with ups and downs, but it was agreed to review the situation in depth. Early findings in 2014 indicate that the implementation of ministry areas, the very small number of women in senior positions, and the lack of representation, are all contributing to a decrease in the role of women in the Church in Wales, which is disappointing and will need robust leadership to address.

2006

2008

2009

2011

2013

As a Deaconess

Whilst teaching in the 1960s I decided to explore whether it was possible for a woman to minister in the Church in Wales. After some confusion, as I had no idea how to proceed, I saw Bishop Bartlett at St Asaph, who said 'We have to start somewhere, so let's start here!'

In England at the time women had to spend at least two years as Parish Workers before consideration for deaconess ministry, but not so in Wales! Bishop Bartlett decided 'We can do better than this!' He adapted the Ordering of Deacons and in October 1968 I was made Deaconess straight away.

For the women who had trained with me and had become Parish Workers in England, the question was whether they would be allowed to preach. When I had asked the Rector of Flint if he was willing for me to preach, he replied, "Yes of course. Why do you think you are coming here?" So I began by preaching on the evening of my first Sunday, having been made Deaconess in the morning! "So what do you want me to do?" I asked the elderly Rector after Morning Prayer the next morning. "Well girl," he answered, "just look around and see what needs doing. Don't do anything silly. And tell me about it afterwards."



As a Priest

The most exciting part of the ordination weekend in 1997 was what happened the next day. In my parish, at the end of the Sunday morning Eucharist, people said, "We didn't think it would be different – but it was! Now we understand what you've been saying. It isn't your meal – it's ours!"

As a Deacon

Ordination to the priesthood was not really on the agenda, but in 1980 the Governing Body voted to allow women to be ordained Deacon. Having been a deaconess for twelve years, I found it difficult to explain to other people (and to myself!) what difference it would make. In 1986 I moved to Corwen and Bishop Alwyn asked me to be 'Deacon-in-Charge' of Bryneglwys. Initially I was cautious about the long-term use of pre-consecrated bread and wine for parish Eucharists, but I realised that the banquet was God's, and I could leave him to handle the complications! My job was simply to love his people.

The years as Deacon-in-Charge were very rich but sometimes frustrating. Years of debate and discussion, letters and votes at GB sometimes led to hurt and bewilderment. However they enabled us to ponder the meaning of 'priesthood' and the Eucharist, and demonstrated the need to develop creative thinking and action; during this period someone helpfully spoke of the task of the priest as being to 'develop a priestly congregation'.

Margaret Harvey was the first deaconess to be licensed outside Llandaff.

Women together – a forward agenda

We first met – just six of us, lay and ordained – for 24 hours at Llangasty, in August 2010: a group of 'senior women', concerned about women's roles within the Church in Wales. We worshipped together, shared stories, issues and concerns, and asked what we could and should do, to help both the Church in Wales, and women within it, to realise their full potential for ministry. We identified common ground, and set ourselves a forward agenda – to speak and work with bishops, with the structures of the Church, and through local networks with the wider numbers of women in ministry. The major issues were: women's support groups, women in senior positions, clarity in church structures, women's roles in leading structural and cultural change, and associated training needs.

The second meeting in January 2011, at Hawarden, resulted in the name (from St Deiniol's Library) and determined a semi-formal structure – viz. that we should limit our numbers to just four members from each diocese, drawn by invitation but including both lay and ordained, together with the national president of Mothers' Union in Wales, and any female provincial ministry officers in post. In this way we have continued since, meeting twice a year on average, for discussion and prayer, seeking to discover and strengthen women's voices within the Church in Wales.

Thanks first to the Representative Body, and then to the Isla Johnston Trust, we organised two day-conferences, open to all ordained women in the province, to examine and assist with their particular development needs through this period of change. We provided resources, support and encouragement to those engaged in the women bishops debate in Governing Body, and subsequent discussions on the Bishops' Code of Practice.

In September 2014, we hosted the 'Crossing the Threshold' Conference in Llandaff, to celebrate and mark that momentous threshold – 12th September 2014 – when at last women became eligible, on equal terms with men, to be bishops in the Church in Wales.

"It's the first real opportunity I've had to meet with ordained and lay women from across the province, since the days of Women Priests for Wales."



St Deiniol's Group meeting, Gladstone's Library, 2014





Women Bishops – The Second Attempt

The Reverend Canon
Jenny Wigley

The Church says 'Yes'!

After the failure of the first Bill in 2008, the Bench of Bishops presented a new Bill to the Governing Body in 2012 which proposed a two stage process: (1) the principle would be agreed to permit women to be ordained as bishops; (2) this would happen only after provision for those who were opposed had been agreed.

A number of those who campaigned for women in the episcopate were unable to support the prospect of 'legislation' for those unable to accept women as bishops. We were also concerned at the prospect of interminable delays. Three of us – Canon Jennifer Mole, Archdeacon Peggy Jackson and I – met to put together an amendment for the Select Committee examining the Bill. We had the idea of preserving the stages – but with a fixed time frame. This way, stage two would see the Bill coming into force after a year without any preconditions. And we were absolutely determined that whatever provision was to be made, it would be in the form of a code of practice, rather than something enshrined in canon law.

Eventually the amendment was written and put forward jointly in Peggy's and my name, as Jenny Mole was no longer on the GB. We were convinced of the need to raise awareness of the issues beyond the confines of the GB meeting, so we asked a formal question at the April 2013 meeting about what amendments had been received by the Select Committee. This put our amendment into the public realm – an essential move, because the Select Committee considered it, and then declined to accept it.

The only way forward was for us to move it ourselves, as an amendment to the bishops' Bill at the Committee Stage, when it came before the GB in

September 2013. It was scary stuff! We emailed a letter explaining our case to every clerical member except those we knew to be definitely opposed, and asked them to forward it to any lay members they knew. Whatever the outcome, at least people would be well-informed.

The GB met in Lampeter on Wednesday 11th and Thursday 12th September. The evening before the vote we invited anyone who wanted to explore the issues to an open meeting in one of the college seminar rooms. We talked and talked. A number of people were fearful that we would blow our best chance of getting women bishops, and said that if the amendment failed, we should support the Bill rather than abstain. But there was an observer present from the C of E – who said simply that if we thought the Bill was wrong, we should just vote 'no'.

I don't think many of us had much sleep that night, but Peggy and I made it clear to everyone that we would be voting 'no', if the amendment wasn't accepted. There was a lot of angst – and a lot of pressure on us to back down. If the Wednesday evening had been tough, the Thursday morning was even tougher. Peggy moved the amendment, and I seconded it. The meeting voted. We needed only a simple majority and it was carried easily.

When finally the vote was taken 'in houses' on the amended Bill for women bishops, the majorities in favour were huge.



CANON TO ENABLE WOMEN TO BE CONSECRATED AS BISHOPS

(Promulgated 12 September 2013)

WHEREAS the Law and Constitution of the Church in Wales has hitherto not permitted women to be consecrated as bishops

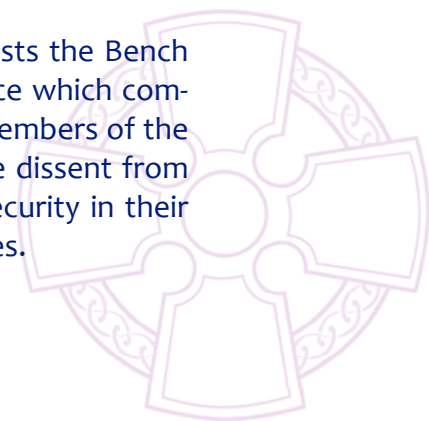
AND WHEREAS it is now appropriate in the Church in Wales that women be eligible for consecration to the Holy Order of Bishops

AND WHEREAS the Church in Wales intends to continue the ministry of the universal church in its threefold orders of Bishops, Priests and Deacons and to remain part of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church

AND WHEREAS the Church in Wales, subject to the provisions of the civil law relating to equality and other relevant matters, wishes to respect those who in conscience cannot accept that women be eligible for consecration to the Holy Order of Bishops

BE IT HEREBY ENACTED as follows:

- 1 Henceforth in the Church in Wales women may be consecrated as bishops.
- 2 Wheresoever in the Constitution of the Church in Wales, the Book of Common Prayer for use in the Church in Wales or any form of service lawfully authorised for use in the Church in Wales reference is made to a bishop the reference shall be deemed to include women who have been consecrated as bishops.
- 3 The provisions of this Canon shall come into force one year after the promulgation of this Canon.
- 4 In approving this Canon, the Governing Body entrusts the Bench of Bishops without delay to agree a Code of Practice which commits the Bench to making provisions such that all members of the Church in Wales, including those who in conscience dissent from the provisions of section 1, may have a sense of security in their accepted and valued place within the Church in Wales.



House of Laity

For: 57 Against: 14 Abstentions: 2

House of Clergy

For: 37 Against: 10 Abstention: 0

House of Bishops

Unanimous

2012

2013

Crossing the Threshold Conference

The Reverend
Jan Gould

Press Release



Bishop Gayle Harris and Bishop GERALYN WOLF with the Conference Group

4th September 2014

Following the historic vote in September 2013 when the Governing Body of the Church in Wales passed the Bill to enable the Episcopate in Wales to be open to all who were called to that ministry regardless of gender, the final hurdle was crossed one year later when the Bill became law. To mark that occasion a conference was held in St Michael's College, Llandaff, entitled 'Crossing the Threshold'.

A number of senior women from other provinces, denominations and careers played a key role during the conference, sharing their own experiences of leadership, with all its ups and downs, so that we in Wales might learn from them as we crossed the threshold to a transformed leadership within our own Church. Messages of goodwill and blessing had been received from Bishop Victoria Matthews from Dunedin, Bishop Catherine Roskam and Bishop Sue Moxley from USA, connecting us with other provinces across the Anglican Communion. The keynote speakers were the Bishop GERALYN WOLF (retired Bishop of Rhode Island, USA) and the Revd Prebendary Jane Tillier (one of the eight women in the Church of England then elected to attend House of Bishops' meetings). They both spoke very movingly about their own journeys in ministry that had led them to where they were now.

Delegates were then split into groups for reflection on key questions: in the light of the Bill becoming law what are our hopes? ... our fears? ... Our expectations? The responses from the group work led us, in the afternoon, to a panel discussion chaired by the Revd Mary Stallard which included, in addition to the keynote speakers, the Rt Revd Gayle Harris (suffragan Bishop of Massachusetts); the Revd Dr Jennie Hurd (Chair of the Methodist Synod Cymru); Baroness Eluned Morgan; and Dr Gill Todd (Chair of the gender equality working group of the Governing Body). Discussion proved to be very lively at times, as speakers tapped into the deeply held feelings of some conference delegates.

Conversations continued over dinner, before everyone headed up to Llandaff Cathedral for a celebratory Eucharist, at which Bishop GERALYN WOLF presided and the Revd Mary Stallard preached a sermon which was both moving and challenging. The service ended, just like the one held to celebrate the 10th anniversary of women's priesting – with people dancing in the nave, and some weeping, clearly moved by the Spirit. The day was rounded off with a party back at St Michael's College, with a specially made mitre-shaped cake to go with the bubbly!

USA bishop makes history at Llandaff

While President Barack Obama sat down to dinner at Cardiff Castle after the first day of the NATO summit, a co-patriot of his made history just a mile away at Llandaff Cathedral. Bishop GERALYN WOLF, retired Bishop of Rhode Island, became the first woman Anglican bishop to lead a service at Llandaff Cathedral last night (4 Sept). The public service was part of an event called Crossing The Threshold, held to mark the start of new legislation in Wales allowing women to be ordained as bishops.

She was joined by another bishop from the United States – Bishop Gayle Harris, the Suffragan Bishop of Massachusetts, who made history on Sunday by becoming the first woman Anglican bishop to preside at a service in the whole of Wales when she visited St Asaph Cathedral. The legislation to ordain women as bishops in Wales comes into effect on 12th September, exactly one year after it was passed by the Governing Body of the Church in Wales.



Bishop GERALYN WOLF speaking at 'Crossing the Threshold' Conference



Sanctuary party, Llandaff Cathedral celebration service



Revd Prebendary Jane Tillier speaking at 'Crossing the Threshold' Conference

4th September 2014 Llandaff Cathedral celebration service. Rt Revd GERALYN WOLF presiding, Canon Jennifer Mole deaconing



Panel session at Conference. L to R: Bishop Gayle Harris, Baroness Eluned Morgan, Dr Gill Todd, Revd Mary Stallard (Chair), Revd Dr Jennie Hurd, Bishop GERALYN WOLF, Revd Preb Jane Tillier

The question that we are now left with, after what was a very inspiring day for all present, is ...
when will we see our first female bishop in Wales?

1884

2014

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(L) Bishop Gayle Harris and Bishop Geryl Wolf cutting the Mitre Cake, St Michael's College Llandaff, 4th September 2014, with Revd Mary Evans, the most recently-ordained woman present

(Ch) Yr Esgob Gayle Harris a'r Esgob Geryl Wolf yn torri'r Deisen Feitr, Coleg Mihangel Sant Llandaf, 4 Medi 2014, gyda'r Parchedig Mary Evans, y ferch ddiwethaf i'w hordeinio ac a oedd yn bresennol

(R) The 'Mitre' Cake created for the 'Crossing the Threshold' Conference and celebration

(Dde) Y 'Deisen Feitr' a luniwyd ar gyfer dathliad a Chynhadledd 'Croesi'r Trothwy'



(L) Revd Kathy Ferguson after ordination as deacon, 1988

(Ch) Ordeinio'r Parchedig Kathy Ferguson yn ddiacôn, 1988



(Above) Ordination of Women to the Priesthood. Brecon Cathedral, 1997

(Uchod) Ordeinio merched i'r Offeiriadaeth. Cadeirlan Aberhonddu, 1997.



(L) Revd Margaret Harvey after ordination at St Asaph's Cathedral, 1997

(Ch) Y Parchedig Margaret Harvey ar ôl ei hordeinio yng Nghadeirlan Llanellwyl, 1997.

CONGRATULATIONS: Yesterday was the momentous occasion that Rev Margaret Harvey had waited almost 20 years for. And there was no shortage of well-wishers outside St Asaph Cathedral waiting to celebrate her big day with her, as Rev Harvey became one of the first 70 women to be officially ordained into the Church in Wales, after striving for years to attain equal status with their brothers in the ministry. It also meant yesterday that she was able to serve her parishioners in Bryn Eglwys, near Corwen, as a fully-ordained priest for the first time. *First among equals - Page 3* PHOTO: PHIL MICHELL

(R) Retreat at St Non's for women deacons about to become priests at St David's, 1997

(Dde) Encil yn Nhanolfan y Santes Non i ddiaconesau sydd ar fin dod yn offeiriad yn Nhyddewi, 1997.

