



Women and the Church  
Affirming ✦ Challenging ✦ Transforming

# A Report on the Developments in Women's Ministry in 2016

# Episcopal Appointments in the Church of England

<b>Diocesan Bishops:</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
	2 women	0 women
	2 men	3 men
<b>Suffragan/Area Bishops:</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
	5 women	3 women *
	9 men	4 men

\* Karen Gorham, Bishop of Sherborne (Salisbury)  
Jo Bailey Wells, Bishop of Dorking (Guildford)  
Jan McFarlane, Bishop of Repton (Derby)

At Suffragan/Area level 43% of those appointed were women, a small increase on the previous year's figure of 38%.

**We are disappointed that no women were made Diocesan Bishops in 2016.**

Given the confidentiality of the appointments procedure we cannot know whether this was due primarily to the dioceses themselves (Leicester, Lichfield and Oxford) or to the decision-making processes of the Crown Nominations Commission. We will be watching future appointments closely to see whether a pattern emerges.

## **House of Bishops - Participant Observers**

Since 2013 eight women, elected by the senior women of each region, have attended meetings of the House of Bishops as 'participant observers.'

In June 2016 the House of Bishops 'agreed changes to its Standing Orders to give six female Suffragan Bishops rights of attendance at the House, in addition to the female members of the House, replacing the arrangements for the Regional Representatives.'

It is unclear (a) what level of participation these 'rights of attendance' confer; and (b) whether or not these arrangements will change as more women are appointed to Suffragan or Diocesan Sees.

**It also means that some areas of the country have no women's voice in the House of Bishops at the moment, as not all areas of the country have women suffragan bishops.**

## **Archdeacons**

In 2015, 44 out of 132 archdeacons were women (33%)

# Women Clergy & Readers

The Church of England statistics released last year show that in 2015, **27% of stipendiary clergy were women. The same proportion of chaplains were female (27%)** however, **women made up 52% of licensed SSMs.**

## Numbers of women clergy

A headline from the publication of these tables, was that the **numbers of women and men being ordained is now roughly equal.**

Numbers ordained		
	Female	Male
2012	225	269
2013	216	268
2014	246	253
2015	232	258

However, if we look at the title posts to which they are ordained, differences begin to emerge. **A significantly higher proportion of men are ordained to stipendiary posts, and the difference is increasing.**

Stipendiary Posts		
	Female	Male
2012	44%	60%
2013	46%	70%
2014	47%	67%
2015	55%	72%

(NB these numbers do not add up to 100% as they are a percentage of all the ordained women and all the ordained men, so we are dealing with two separate groups of figures for each year.)

In other words, each year around **half of the women ordained will not receive any financial support from the church for their ministry,** and in many cases will not be expected to take on leadership responsibilities outside their local church. There is no evidence to indicate that this gender imbalance in stipendiary ministry will change.

## The worrying discrepancy between numbers of men and women under 40 who are ordained

Even more concerning are the figures for young female ordinands published in 2016 in a report looking at ordination trends over decades. One of the clearest findings is that despite all the investment and work put into encouraging young vocations, **hardly any young women are being selected and ordained.** The shockingly low number of young women selected for ordination training remains very low.

**In 2015 :** 11 women **under 30** were ordained compared to **37** men

37 women **between 30 and 40** were ordained compared to **81** men

This pattern of women ordinands being in a significant minority until the age of 40/45 is the same every year. The importance of recognising this discrepancy is highlighted by a short introduction to the report by a Diocesan Director of Ordinands

*“Put simply, the figures show that show that:*

- ◆ *male candidates predominate in stipendiary ministry - especially up to the age of 42*
- ◆ *whereas female candidates predominate among NSM candidates generally and in every single age band over the age of 42*

*Surely we need to ask ourselves why? What is putting young women off exploring God’s call to ordination? Could it be that ministry in the Church of England is seen as inflexible with rigid expectations of working patterns and opportunities? Could part of the reason be because career breaks, available in many professions are not easily available to women in the church, especially when your housing is tied up with your post?”*

### **Numbers of stipendiary clergy (see page 7 for complete table of dioceses)**

The overall proportion of women in stipendiary (parish) ministry has risen each year from 2012-5, but only by one percentage per year. In 2015 it was 24%.

Dioceses with the lowest proportion of women among stipendiary parish clergy are:

Chichester (10%)

London (12%)

Winchester (15%)

Blackburn (15%)

Diocese with the highest percentage of women stipendiary incumbents/incumbent status:

Ely (43%)

Hereford (34%)

Truro (33%)

Seven other dioceses have percentage of women incumbents ranging from 30% -33%

The statistics show the proportion of women working as stipendiary clergy in each diocese. For a fuller picture of the role played by all ordained women in the Cof E, more detail about the hours worked by SSM clergy and the sort of ministries to which they are licensed are needed.

### **Senior Staff**

The numbers of women on bishops’ senior staff is significant as this is one of the key diocesan decision making groups. The latest published statistics enable us to work out which diocese had no women on senior staff in ex-officio roles (Bishops, Archdeacons and Cathedral Deans). What they do not show is whether any dioceses invite other women onto senior staff.

In 2015, 13 dioceses still had no women ex-officio on their senior staff teams

Blackburn

Coventry,

Durham,

Ely,

Hereford,

Leicester,

London,

Peterborough ,

Rochester,

Sheffield,

St Albans,

Winchester, & Sodor and Mann

22 of the dioceses who do have women included on senior staff ex-officio only have one woman.

### **Lay Ministry**

Statistics for active lay ministers are much harder to collect as many lay ministries are authorised in different ways, so the only published national statistics are for Readers and LLMs.

The figures published last year show that 49% of those still in active ministry are women and 51% are men. However, all other groups show women as a smaller proportion: 46% of licensed LLMs and Readers at the end of 2015 were women; and women made up 34% of those admitted as Readers/LLMs and 39% of those in training. This indicates that the pattern among licensed lay ministers is similar to that of clergy: a significant proportion of local ministry is offered and maintained by older women (over 70 in the case of LLMs)

# The House of Bishops' Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests

## Developments this year

### a) General impact

All ordinands and clergy moving to new posts are still asked to assent to 'five guiding principles' outlined in the House of Bishops' Declaration.

### b) The work of the Independent Reviewer

No complaints were received by the Independent Reviewer in 2016

## The work of the Transformations Group

WATCH has two members on the Transformations Steering group; the group tasked by the House of Bishops to reflect on issues of concern for ordained women. The group made a presentation to the College of Bishops in September focusing on the recent research analysing the lack of women incumbents in the Large (usa300+) churches. This report highlighted the continuing concern that women are entering training for ordination later, that caring roles (especially but not exclusively child care) impact on women's career path in different and negative ways to their male colleagues and that the lack of part time posts makes flexible working around caring roles difficult. The steering group is represented on The Transformations Implementation and Research Group (TRIG). Two senior women, one from each province will be seconded to TRIG for a day a week to focus on implementing strategies to encourage more young vocations from women, to look further at the large churches research and to work towards consistent good practice across the diocese in HR matters that impact on women. The Transformation Steering group will continue to identify areas for research working with ministry division and reporting to the College of Bishops.

## **Working for Gender Justice**

WATCH and Christian Aid co-hosted a fringe meeting at the York General Synod in July on the theme of Gender Justice. Launching WATCH's Gender Justice Policy for the Church of England, Hilary Cotton commented, 'Now is the time for the Church of England to embody and promote gender justice both in its internal structures and in its external engagement with the world.'

In the year ahead we aim to have the General Synod debate this policy, **asking the Church of England to make specific commitments to promote the full inclusion and equal participation of women and men at every level of the church's life**, and to speak and work prophetically on these issues in the wider world. We will be asking the church to begin this process by commissioning a Gender Audit that will, on a recurring basis, monitor and evaluate the church's progress towards achieving these aims.

## **Celebrating Lay Women**

WATCH organised two days for lay women in London and Exeter to celebrate and reflect on their contribution to the church's mission and ministry. The programme for both days included – shared stories with a panel of women sharing their different experiences of church and living out their faith.

## **WATCH at Greenbelt**

The dreaming project was launched at Greenbelt this year. We focused on longings in the church while recognising that we must not forget there is much we can also treasure. So creatively we got people to record their longings (on clouds we hung in the tent) what they would ditch (adding to our large dustbin) and what they would treasure (on silver coins in a treasure chest). We recorded information for each of the 150+ people contributing which is currently being written up.

## **A new Chair for WATCH**

At the AGM in November, Emma Percy was elected as the new Chair of WATCH. Hilary Cotton was warmly thanked for her wise and inspiring leadership during the previous three years.

## **Resourcing the Church**

We are continuing to compile a wide range of inclusive theological and liturgical resources that are freely available on our website:

<https://womenandthechurch.org/resources>

## **Footnote: An international story**

Bishop David Hawtin recently wrote to WATCH,

'In January this year, as part of the Porvoo Communion, I was asked to go to Norway north of the Arctic Circle, to Bodo, for an episcopal Consecration - the first woman being consecrated in that diocese. I stumbled on the fact that I was the first British Bishop able to share in the Laying on of Hands - following on our approval for women to be bishops in the Church of England - on the grounds that you can only do elsewhere what you're authorised to do within the C of E.

That was of course precious for me - but more important, it was a real moment of healing for a woman consecrated before our approval, who had had to accept that the English bishop from her twin-diocese in this country was not able to share in the Laying on of Hands for her. We chatted a lot - and I believe she felt that through my participation at Bodo something lacking in her consecration had at last been received. It's a story remote from the day-to-day life of the Church of England, but I'm aware of how many women - and some men - were damaged

in the long struggle for inclusive ministry. I thought of them, as I found myself caught up in this precious moment of healing, and prayed that the damaged people here might also know some sort of healing.'

<b>Women Incumbents/Incumbent Status Percentages by Diocese for 2012-5</b>				
	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
Bath and Wells	27	29	29	29
Birmingham	23	23	24	22
Blackburn	12	13	14	15
Bradford	16	6		
Bristol	14	17	15	19
Canterbury	17	17	19	21
Carlisle	20	19	17	19
Chelmsford	23	23	24	25
Chester	24	25	25	26
Chichester	5	6	9	10
Coventry	13	19	19	20
Derby	23	25	27	27
Durham	20	23	24	28
Ely	39	41	42	43
Exeter	20	20	19	19
Gloucester	23	28	29	30
Guildford	22	21	21	24
Hereford	37	38	38	34
Leeds	27	26	27	28
Leicester	27	28	28	28
Lichfield	19	19	18	19
Lincoln	21	23	25	28
Liverpool	23	25	28	29
London	11	11	11	12
Manchester	27	30	31	32
Newcastle	25	24	24	23
Diocese of Norwich	18	20	24	25
Oxford	24	24	25	25
Peterborough	25	30	28	31
Portsmouth	23	25	29	31
Ripon and Leeds	20	38	50	
Rochester	19	19	21	20
Salisbury	25	26	30	32
Sheffield	22	29	30	29
Southwark	19	21	23	24
Southwell	29	31	30	32
St Albans	29	28	29	29
St Edmundsbury & Ispwich	28	30	29	32
Truro	21	21	32	33
Wakefield	13			
Winchester	12	12	13	15
Worcester	23	23	25	27
York	20	19	20	23
Sodor and Man	20	18	18	18
Diocese of Europe	7	11	11	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>

RED Below average percentage GREEN above average percentage



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