

Chronology of Events Concerning Women in Holy Orders

1862 The Bishop of London orders a deaconess with the laying on of hands.

1885 Deaconesses are ordered in the Episcopal Church.

1889 General Convention directs deaconesses to be "set apart."

1920 Lambeth Conference (of all Anglican bishops) concludes "ordination of a deaconess confers on her holy orders."

1930 Lambeth changes its mind, asserts deaconesses are *not* in holy orders.

1935 A Church of England commission reports it finds no compelling reason for or against ordination of women, but affirms an all-male priesthood for the church of that day.

1944 Bishop R. O. Hall of Hong Kong ordains Li Tim-Oi as priest. In the face of world-wide censure, she ceases to function as a priest for many years.

1964 General Convention changes the canons to read that deaconesses are "ordered" rather than "appointed," and they may marry.

1965 Bishop James Pike formally recognizes Phyllis Edwards as a deacon because of her ordination as deaconess.

1966 U. S. House of Bishop receives report on "The Proper Place of Women in the Ministry of the Church" and asks the next Lambeth to consider the ordination of women to the priesthood.

1968 Lambeth refers the question of ordaining women to the member churches of the Anglican Communion for further study. It endorses the principle that deaconesses are within the diaconate. Hong Kong, Kenya, Korea, Canada ordain women to the diaconate.

1969 Special General Convention votes that women may be licensed as lay readers and be allowed to administer the chalice.

1970 At General Convention in the House of Deputies the lay order passes but the clergy order rejects ordination of women as priests. The bishops do not vote on the

issue. Convention declares deaconesses are within the diaconate and that women should meet the same standards as men for ordination to the diaconate.

1971 The Anglican Consultative Council, an international lay and clergy body meeting between Lambeth, declares it is acceptable for a bishop to ordain a woman with the consent of his national church or province. The Bishop of Hong Kong ordains two women. Episcopal bishops commission another study on the ordination of women as priests. Episcopal women begin to be ordained as deacons.

1972 The House of Bishops votes 74-61 in favor of the principle of women's ordination as priests.

1973 The Anglican Consultative Council reaffirms its 1971 position. The General Convention rejects ordination of women to the priesthood and 56 bishops issue a statement expressing distress at Convention's action.

1974 *February:* Presiding Bishop - Elect John Allin meets with women deacons and seminarians. *March:* Bishops meet to discuss women's ordination but reach no conclusions. *June:* Sermons preached in Cambridge, Philadelphia and Syracuse call for ordination of women to the priesthood. *July 10:* Bishops, priests, deacons, and laypeople meet in Philadelphia to plan an ordination. *July 20:* Plans for an ordination are announced to the church and the press. *July 29:* Service at Philadelphia's Church of the Advocate. Two retired and one resigned bishop ordain 11 women deacons to the priesthood. A diocesan bishop is present but does not ordain. *July 30:* Some of the women priests are inhibited by their bishops from priestly functions, some inhibited as deacons; others agree voluntarily to refrain from priestly ministry. *July 31:* Presiding Bishop John Allin calls a special meeting of the House of Bishops to deal with the questions raised by the ordination. *Aug. 15:* The bishops meet in Chicago, decry the action of the four bishops as a "violation of collegiality" and declare the ordinations did not fulfill the necessary conditions for validity. The 11 women state they cannot accept the bishops' action. Dr. Charles Willie resigns as vice president of the

House of Deputies in protest. *August:* Many Episcopalians are dismayed at the bishops' actions and petition for a special General Convention. Charges are filed against the Philadelphia bishops. *October:* The House of Bishops reaffirms its 1972 endorsement of the principle of women's ordination, 97-35, but agrees almost unanimously not to act until an affirmative action of the next General Convention. *Oct. 27:* The Rev. Alison Cheek, the Rev. Carter Heyward, the Rev. Jeannette Piccard publicly celebrate an Episcopal Eucharist in New York's Riverside Church. *November:* The Rev. Alison Cheek celebrates at St. Stephen's and the Incarnation in Washington at the invitation of the Rev. William Wendt who is charged and later tried for violations of the canons. *December:* Two women priests celebrate at Christ Church, Oberlin, Ohio at the invitation of the Rev. Peter Beebe who is charged and later tried for canonical violations.

1975 *January:* The Rev. Suzanne Hiatt and the Rev. Carter Heyward, ordained in Philadelphia, are appointed to the faculty of the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Mass. *April:* Board of Inquiry reviews charges against ordaining bishops — declares the matter is doctrinal and should be handled by the House of Bishops. *July:* The Church of England's Synod approves the principle of women's ordination. *September:* Bishops of the Church of Canada endorse women's ordination. *Sept. 7:* Bishop George Barrett, resigned Bishop of Rochester, ordains four women deacons at the Church of St. Stephen and the Incarnation in Washington, D.C. They are the Rev. Eleanor Lee McGee, the Rev. Alison Palmer, the Rev. Elizabeth Rosenberg, and the Rev. Diane Tickell. *Sept. 19:* The House of Bishops meeting censures the actions of the ordaining bishops in Philadelphia.

1976 *September:* General Convention approves the ordination of women to the priesthood and episcopate, and agrees that the previous ordinations may be regularized, not repeated. *November:* The Church of Canada begins to ordain women priests.

1977 *Jan. 1* marks the date that women may be ordained to the priesthood under the canons of the Episcopal Church.