

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Department on the Cooperation of Men and Women
in Church and Society
17 route de Malagnou
Geneva, Switzerland

15
May 1958

SUMMARY OF FACTS ABOUT THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN
IN THE MEMBER CHURCHES
OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

I N D E X

	Pages
The Orthodox Church and other Eastern Churches	1 and 2
The Churches of the Anglican Communion	3 to 6
The Lutheran Churches	7 to 10
The Reformed or Presbyterian Churches	11 to 16
The Methodist Churches	17 to 20
The Baptist Councils or Conventions	21 and 22
The Congregational Unions or Churches	23 and 24
The Old Catholic Churches	25
The Churches of Christ or Disciples of Christ	26 and 27
Other Churches and Bodies	28 to 31
United Churches	32
Overall Summary	33

Department on the Cooperation of Men and Women
in Church and Society
17 route de Malagnou
Geneva, Switzerland

SUMMARY OF FACTS ABOUT THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN
IN THE ORTHODOX CHURCH AND OTHER EASTERN CHURCHES
WHICH ARE MEMBER CHURCHES OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF
CHURCHES

CYPRUS:	<u>Church of Cyprus</u>
EGYPT:	<u>Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria</u>
GREECE:	<u>Ekklesia tes Ellados</u> (Church of Greece)
JORDAN:	<u>Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem</u>
SYRIA:	<u>Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch</u>
TURKEY:	<u>Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople</u>
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:	<u>Holy Apostolic Catholic Church of the East (Assyrians)</u> <u>Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America</u> <u>Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church of North America</u> <u>Syrian Antiochian Orthodox Church</u> (Archdiocese of New York and all North America)

No - The Eastern Orthodox Church consists of the clergy and the laymen. Within the clergy there are three orders, that of the deacon, the presbyter, and the bishop. To these three orders only men are permitted to enter. In this way women are only considered lay people and as such do participate in the life of the Church. (From a statement of January 1958, from a member of the Working Committee of this Department).

From about the fourth to the ninth centuries, in the Eastern Orthodox Church, women were ordained by Bishops to be deaconesses. (Kathleen Bliss, "The Service and Status of Women in the Churches", pp. 14-15). "Today in some Orthodox Churches there is a tendency to revive the ancient order of deaconesses. The Church of Greece and the Greek Archdiocese of North and South America, which is under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, have taken active steps towards this direction." (Theodorou, "The Ordination of Deaconesses", pp. 74-76). Prof. Theodorou also says that there are clear examples of the ordination of women as deaconesses, who were not regarded as being in the same position as sub-deacons, readers, etc., but as fully admitted to the sacred ministry in exactly the same way as male deacons. They received the laying-on of hands at the altar and had the right to wear the orarion - the deacon stole.

OTHER EASTERN CHURCHES
WHICH ARE MEMBER CHURCHES OF THE W.C.C.

EGYPT: Coptic Orthodox Church

ETHIOPIA: Ethiopian Orthodox Church

We have no information from these Churches, but we suppose that they follow the same rules as the other Orthodox Churches mentioned on the preceding page.

INDIA: No - Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar

Orthodox Syrian Church of Malabar Catholicate

No - Women are not ordained to the priesthood in India.

SUMMARY

Of the 14 Orthodox and other Eastern Churches which are members of the W.C.C., none ordains women to the priesthood; although it should be noted that deaconesses were ordained in the Eastern Orthodox Church from the 4th to the 9th centuries.

Department on the Cooperation of Men and Women
in Church and Society
17 route de Malagnou
Geneva, Switzerland

SUMMARY OF FACTS ABOUT THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN
IN THE ANGLICAN CHURCHES WHICH ARE MEMBER CHURCHES
OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

AUSTRALIA: Church of England in Australia and Tasmania

No - for the priesthood, but they do have deaconesses, and in Australia the Bishop licensed a deaconess to take Morning and Evening Prayer, to preach, to conduct the Sacrament of Baptism and also to conduct the Burial Service, but not the Holy Communion. (S.E.M.C. News Letter, November 1957, p. 8). The deaconesses in Australia are apparently 'set apart', not ordained as they are in the Church of England. There are also Religious Orders for women.

CANADA: The Anglican Church of Canada

No - for the priesthood, but the Church does have deaconesses. In May 1955, in a report of the General Synod Committee on Women's Work in the Church, the Sub-Committee on "The Future Pattern of Women's Work in the Church" says on p. 13: "We feel that it is most unfortunate that there is a divergence in the Anglican Communion concerning the nature of the Order of Deaconesses. In the Church of England deaconesses are ordained for life, but the Church of England in Canada (now the Anglican Church of Canada) has followed the American pattern of a conditional setting apart to be terminated by marriage."

CENTRAL AFRICA: Church of the Province of Central Africa

No - for the priesthood. We do not have the facts about deaconesses.

CHINA: Chung Hua Sheng Kung Hui (Church in China - Anglican)

No - for the priesthood, but it was ordaining deaconesses in 1948. Also, in the same year, Bishop Ronald Hall ordained a Chinese deaconess, Miss Li Tim Oi, to the priesthood, but the Lambeth Conference of Anglican Bishops later decided that it was "a most unwelcome unilateral act", and the Bishop felt obliged to ask her to suspend her priestly functions and to revert for practical purposes to her status of deaconess. (S.E.M.C. News Letter, May 1957, p. 6).

Special note

INDIA: Church of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon

No - for the priesthood, but yes for deaconesses who are set apart, (but not ordained) commissioned and licensed to work. If a deaconess becomes a member of a Diocesan Council, she shall sit and vote in the House of the Laity. In the 1948 official booklet on "The Order of Deaconesses", p. 31 it says: "The Office of the Deaconess is distinct from and complementary to the Historical Orders of Bishop, Priest and Deacon and is primarily a ministry of succour, bodily and spiritual, especially to women."

JAPAN: Nippon Sei Fo Kwai (Anglican Church in Japan)

No - for the priesthood. We do not have the facts about deaconesses.

NEW ZEALAND: Church of the Province of New Zealand

No - for the priesthood. Yes for the ordination of deaconesses, and women are members of the Diocesan and Provincial Synods. (Letter from a New Zealand correspondent dated May 18, 1955).

SOUTH AFRICA: Church of the Province of South Africa

No - for the priesthood. But in the official report of 1948 on the "Order of Deaconesses" it was mentioned that one Zulu woman had been ordained deaconess. In the Newsletter of the Central Council for Women's Church Work of the Church of England, December 1955, p. 11, it was stated that there are "four Sisters from a Community in South Africa."

UNITED KINGDOM
and EIRE:

Church of England

No - for the priesthood, but deaconesses are ordained. It is officially stated that the Order of Deaconesses is the one Order open to women, and Elizabeth Ferrard was the first woman so ordained in 1864 in England. The Order of Deaconesses is the only order of ministry for women recognized by the Church of England. It is the one existing ordained ministry for women to which women are admitted by episcopal imposition of hands. But it is not an order of women deacons. The ordination of a deaconess is to an order "sui generis". Just as no man is ordained deaconess, so no woman is ordained to the three-fold ministry. One cannot properly speak of a deaconess as not being able to advance further, since she is not in a line of ministry which has anything further to which to advance. (Newsletter of the Central Council for Women's Work of the Church of England, July 1957, No.16,p.2)

"There is a sense in which a deaconess is neither of the clergy nor of the laity, in virtue of the fact that she is not a 'clerk in Holy Orders' and yet has received ordination." (p.3) - "A vow of celibacy is not a rule of the Order, just as a married woman may become a deaconess, so may a deaconess marry." (From a statement printed in 1956 by the Deaconess Council and the Central Council for Women's Church Work, the House of St. Joseph, Hindhead, Surrey, England).

It is further stated in the S.E.M.C. News Letter (May 1957, p.2) that it is "unclear what is the nature of the Order and the differences between that and the licensed and commissioned lay-woman worker in the Church." The question of full-time women workers in the Church being able to lead Statutory services of worship has been thoroughly discussed in both the Province of Canterbury and the Province of York. "In the Province of York women may, with appropriate safeguards, be licensed to take part in the Statutory services (other than Holy Communion) and to give addresses at them. In the Province of Canterbury on the other hand no such general permission exists. (Report of the Joint Committee on the Ministry of Laywomen, Number 685, 1956, Convocation of Canterbury).

In May 1956 three noted Anglican theologians reported that there is nothing in Scripture which conclusively bars women from conducting Morning and Evening Prayer and preaching in case of need. These theologians were: Dr. Arthur Michael Ramsey, the Archbishop of York; Dr. H. J. Carpenter, the Bishop of Oxford; and Professor C.F.D. Moule, of Cambridge University. "There is sufficient evidence that women prophesied in the Apostolic Age and that St. Paul gave a ruling as to their proper demeanour when prophesying and praying in assembly."

There is a group of men and women, clergy and lay people, called the Anglican Group for the Ordination of Women to the Historical Ministry of the Church.

Women are members of the Church Assembly in England.

The Church of Ireland

No - for the priesthood. In a report in 1948 on the Order of Deaconesses in the Anglican Communion, it was stated that "there has never been a deaconess in the Church of Ireland."

The Church in Wales

We have no definite information.

Episcopal Church in Scotland

No - for the priesthood. But the Church does ordain deaconesses.

UNITED STATES

OF AMERICA:

Protestant Episcopal Church

No - for the priesthood. There are deaconesses who are set apart, rather than ordained, and this is different from the practice in the Church of England, the mother Church. There is a Canon Law regarding deaconesses, and according to this Canon a deaconess may "give instruction in the Christian faith, in the absence of the priest, baptize, read Morning and Evening Prayer and the Litany in Church; give instruction and deliver addresses in Church, if authorized by the Bishop."

"In not admitting women to the ordained ministry, the Episcopal Church follows the custom of all Churches for which the "Holy Office of Priesthood" (Book of Common Prayer, p. 536) is an important aspect of the Christian Ministry. Many at least would agree that Priesthood in its capacity of spiritual fatherhood is a specifically male vocation. In any case, as one of the Churches of the Anglican Communion, the Episcopal Church would not innovate in such a matter without the widespread approval of the other Anglican Churches; nor would it be likely to take such a step...without careful consideration of the viewpoints held in other Christian Communion which inherit similar traditions in this matter. It should be noted that many of the activities typical of Protestant ministries are open to women in the Episcopal Church either as deaconesses, as members of religious communities, or in other professional capacities." (From the 1953 Summary of Reports from Denominational Representatives on the Status of Women, by Mildred McAfee Horton, p. 7). "A Committee Report at the Lambeth Conference, 1930, spoke of 'a vision of a great order of ministry for women, distinct from and complementary to the historic Orders of the Church' (p. 178), which is the line along which official and perhaps general Anglican thought on this subject is, at present at least, likely to move." (p. 8 of Mrs. Horton's report).

As distinct from the Church of England, the mother Church, women are not allowed to be members of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church. "There is no basis of distinction in principle between men and women as lay persons in the Church", and it was recommended (not un-animously) by a special study committee that women should be permitted to serve as deputies to the General Convention. Though the recommendation was not accepted, there is no evidence in the report that their judgment in principle was overruled. Indeed, the clergy who would be expected to watch the theological principle involved went on record as favouring the admission of women. In this case it was the laymen who opposed it." (Mrs. Horton's Summary, p. 4)

Individual dioceses are slowly granting vestry rights in local parishes to women, the most notable being the Diocese of New York. In May 1957, as the first of the six Dioceses in New York State, this Diocese also voted to permit the election of women as delegates to future Diocesan

Conventions. Women can now serve on the vestries in at least 44 out of the 87 dioceses and missionary districts of the Episcopal Church. Also, some provincial synods now have women delegates and in 1957 a woman was elected to the Bishop's Council of Advice for the Convocation of American Episcopal Churches in Europe.

WEST AFRICA: The Church of the Province of West Africa

We have no information at this time.

WEST INDIES: Anglican Church of the West Indies

We have no information at this time.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Four dioceses of the Anglican Communion in India have gone into the new Church of South India, which is not a member of the Anglican Communion, but a combination of various denominations.

SUMMARY

There are 15 Anglican Churches which are member churches of the W.C.C.; of these only one, the Church in China, has ordained a woman to the priesthood (see CHINA), but she was later asked not to practice her priestly ministry.

Department on the Cooperation of Men and Women
in Church and Society
17 route de Malagnou
Geneva, Switzerland

SUMMARY OF THE FACTS ON THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN
IN THE LUTHERAN CHURCHES WHICH ARE MEMBER
CHURCHES OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

- ARGENTINE: Sinodo Evangelico Aleman del Rio de la Plata
(German Evangelical Synod of the Rio de la Plata)
- No - Does not admit women to the full ministry. (Lutheran World Federation).
- AUSTRIA: Evangelische Kirche A.u.H.B. in Oesterreich
(Evangelical Church of the Augsburgian and Helvetic Confession)
- No - In 1955 the General Synod of the Evangelical Church rejected an application by a group of women theologians for ordination to the ministry. The question is still under consideration.
- BRAZIL: Federacao Sinodal, Igreja Evangelica de Confissao Lutherana no Brasil
(Synodal Federation, Evangelical Church of Lutheran Confession in Brazil)
- No - Does not admit women to the ministry. (Lutheran World Federation).
- CZECHOSLOVAKIA: Evangelicka Cirkev A.V. Na Slovensku
(Evangelical Church in Slovakia, Augsburgian Confession)
- Yes - In Slovakia 9 women were ordained within the Lutheran Church from 1951-1956. (cf. Kvinnliga Präster jorden runt, by Märta Tamm-Götling, Stockholm, 1957, p. 77).
- Slezska Cirkev Evangelicka A.V.
(Evangelical Church of the Augsburgian Confession in Silesia)
- Yes - "A woman theological graduate will soon be ordained...." (Nov. 1957 Newsletter of Ecumenical Council of Churches in Czechoslovakia).
- DENMARK: Den Evangelislutherske Folkekirke i Danmark (Church of Denmark)
- Yes - In 1948 a law was passed allowing women to be ordained as priests. Since then five women have been ordained to the ministry. A woman has been Danish Ecclesiastical Affairs Minister, Mrs. Bodil Kock.
- FINLAND: Suomen Evankelis-Luterilainen Kirko
(Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland)
- No - Church Law in Finland does not permit the ordination of women, as a female ministry is held to be in contradiction to the practice of the Church and the New Testament.
- The report of the Finnish Commission regarding women theologians was published this fall and has had its first formal discussion. The majority of the Commission proposed a special type of ministry for women. It will be decided in October 1958 at the Church Assembly.

FRANCE: Eglise de la Confession d'Augsbourg d'Alsace et de Lorraine
(Evangelical Church of the Augsburgian Confession in Alsace and Lorraine)

Yes - There is one ordained woman minister in the Pays Montbéliard, who is in full charge of a parish. (Lutheran World Federation, cf. also Yvinnliga Präster jorden runt, by Märta Tamm-Götling, p. 58).

Eglise Evangélique Luthérienne de France (Evangelical Lutheran Church of France)

Yes - The Church voted in 1931 to admit women to "an auxiliary ministry as qualified (limited) assistants to pastors" (See letter March 13, 1958).

GERMANY: Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (Evangelical Church in Germany)
(Federation of Lutheran, United and Reformed Churches)

Yes
and No - Due to an obvious lack of unanimity in interpreting the meaning of ordination and the ministry, the regulations concerning the status and service of the "Vikarin" vary from one "Landeskirche" to the other. The member Churches of the so-called Evangelical Church of the Union (E.K.U.) and the other United Churches (Unierte Kirchen) follow more or less the same pattern and are fairly liberal. They all grant the "Vikarin" the right of administering the sacraments and conducting ordinary Church services within the limits of her official responsibilities. (cf. Joachim Heubach, "Die Ordination zum Amt der Kirche", Lutherisches Verlagshaus, Berlin, 1956; pp. 60f.). In the Evangelical Church of Westphalia, which is typical for the present situation in all United Churches in Germany, women are ordained without restrictions and reservations. (cf. Ordnungen und Gesetze für die Vorbildung des Pfarrers und der Vikarin in der Evangelischen Kirche von Westfalen, pp. 31-36), although the work of women theologians is especially done among women, girls and children (op.cit. par. 2). But in some places, especially in the Eastern zone of Germany there are ordained women in full pastoral work also.

The Landeskirche of Württemberg allows ordained women to preach the Gospel to women and girls, and to administer the sacraments in the women's wards of hospitals and prisons. (cf. Joachim Heubach, op.cit. p.61).

Within the Lutheran member Churches of the Evangelical Church in Germany the regulations vary greatly, and in many cases the 'ordination' is replaced by a 'consecration' (Einsegnung), without any theological explanation, however. (e.g. in the Churches of Bavaria, Hamburg, Hanover, Mecklenburg, and Schleswig-Holstein).

In some Lutheran Churches the Vikarin is not allowed to lead ordinary services or to administer the sacraments (e.g. in Bavaria, Hamburg, and Mecklenburg), although the Churches of Hamburg and Mecklenburg can give special permission to do this in individual cases. More or less the same is true of Schleswig-Holstein, where in special cases provisional full clergy rights can be granted (with the notable exception of conducting marriage and burial services).

The Church of Hanover admits women to religious instruction, spiritual counselling and preaching of the Word, with the possibility of getting special permission to administer the sacraments. The Church of Thuringia allows the Vikarin to minister to women, particularly in hospitals and prisons (including the administration of the sacraments). (cf. J. Heubach, op.cit., pp.60-61).

In general it can be said that in most cases the Vikarin is ordained to a "special ministry" although there may not be many legal restrictions or differences in some of the Churches.

For a general outline of the Vikarinnen-Law see Anna Paulsen, "Die Vikarin", Burckhardthaus-Verlag, 1956, p.85f.; and the respective official regulations of the various "Landeskirchen".

In an epd-newsrelease (Evangelischer Pressedienst in Deutschland) of January 16, 1958, it is reported that the Synod of the Lutheran Church of Lübeck voted in favour of setting up a new supra-parochial ministry to women. A theologically trained and ordained woman with the official title of "Pastorin" - who has the right to preach the Word and to administer the sacraments - will be in charge of this new ministry. (epd ZA Nr. 13, January 16, 1958, p.3).

- HUNGARY: A Magyarországi Evangélikus Egyház (Lutheran Church of Hungary)
We have no definite information at this time.
- ICELAND: Evangelical Lutheran Church of Iceland
No - "The question has never arisen since a candidate has never come forth."
(From a correspondent, March 23, 1958).
- INDIA: Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India
No - Information from the Lutheran World Federation and the Acting President of F.E.L.C.I. (March 11, 1958).
- NETHERLANDS: Evangelisch Lutherse Kerk (Evangelical Lutheran Church)
Yes - In a letter of January 13, 1958, the Secretary of the Ecumenical Council of the Netherlands says that this Church admits women to the full ministry. (cf. also Kvinnliga Präster jorden runt, by Märta Tamm-Götling, p. 52).
- NORWAY: Norske Kirke (Church of Norway)
Yes - In the Church of Norway the ordination of women is officially recognized although there have been few applications. "Of the nearly 50 Norwegian women theologians, only one, Dr. Agnes Vold has received the right to baptize and to administer the Holy Communion, but may not officiate at a funeral or a marriage." (Feb. 1956, Christian Science Monitor, Boston, U.S.A. - cf. also Kvinnliga Präster jorden runt, by Märta Tamm-Götling, p. 101: ordination of Dr. Agnes Vold in 1950).
- POLAND: Kościół Ewangelicko-Augsburski W. Polsce
(Evangelical Church of the Augsburgian Confession in Poland)
We have no definite information at this time.
- RUMANIA: Biserica Lutherana Ungara din Romania
(Hungarian Lutheran Church in Rumania)
Biserica Protestanta Evangelica din Romania dupa Confesinnea dela Augsburg
(Protestant Evangelical Church, Augsburgian Confession)
No - Information from the Lutheran World Federation. Otherwise no detailed information.
- SWEDEN: Svenska Kyrkan (Church of Sweden)
No - Women are not admitted to the full ministry.
- U.S.A.: American Evangelical Lutheran Church
American Lutheran Church
Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church
Evangelical Lutheran Church
United Evangelical Lutheran Church
United Lutheran Church in America
No - In all of the American Lutheran Churches there are no official statements on the question of the ordination of women. From the answers the

Lutheran World Federation and our office have received from the various Churches, it is evident that the question has never been seriously discussed, in fact that the problem has hardly ever come up. The "Woman's Pulpit" (of Jan.-Feb.-March 1952, p.6) states that the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church voted to admit women as students in the Augustana Lutheran Seminary at Rock Island, Illinois; and also voted to permit women to aid pastors in the distribution of the elements at the Lord's Supper.

ESTHONIA: Eesti Ev. Lut. Usu Kiriku (Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church)

No information available.

*
* * *

SUMMARY

Of the 26 Lutheran Churches which are member Churches of the World Council of Churches, 6 ordain women to the full ministry; 2 ordain women with certain limitations; 15 do not ordain women; and on 3 we have no definite information. Of the 8 which do ordain women all are located in Europe.

*
* * *

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Many of the facts about the Lutheran Churches have come from the Lutheran World Federation, and we are grateful for the help which they have given us.

May 1958

Department on the Cooperation of Men and Women
in Church and Society
17 route de Malagnou
Geneva, Switzerland

SUMMARY OF FACTS ABOUT THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN
IN THE REFORMED OR PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES WHICH
ARE MEMBER CHURCHES OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF
CHURCHES.

- AUSTRALIA: Presbyterian Church of Australia
No - generally, for the full ministry; and there are no women elders, but some women deacons (e.g. the Presbyterian Church of Queensland). This Church is now studying the whole question of the place of women in the Church. (World Presbyterian Alliance, January 1958).
- BELGIUM: Eglise chrétienne missionnaire belge (Belgian Christian Missionary Church)
No - There are no women ministers, but there are women elders and deacons. (World Presbyterian Alliance).
Union des Eglises évangéliques protestantes de Belgique (Union of Protestant Evangelical Churches of Belgium)
No - "The Church has no official pronouncement as yet; although there are one or two women pastors as assistants, but they are not in charge of a parish. They were consecrated in Holland for work in Belgium." (April 24, 1958, a Belgian Protestant minister).
- CANADA: Presbyterian Church in Canada
No - Women are not ordained, and there are no women elders or women deacons. There is now a Committee on the Place of Women in the Church, which meets regularly and is studying the question. (From the Convener of this Committee, letter dated January 24, 1958).
- CHINA: Chung Hua Chi-Tu Chiao-Hui (Church of Christ in China)
We have no definite facts regarding the full ministry; in 1948, there were women elders.
- CZECHOSLOVAKIA: Ceskobratska Cirkev Evangelicka (Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren)
Yes - Women are ordained to the full ministry, and there are women elders; there is no mention of women deacons. In January 1958, there were 14 ordained women, 2 women pastors and 12 "Vikarinnen"; 14 have married pastors and work with their husbands.
The XIth Synod decided that women in the future would be accepted for the ordained ministry. (The Woman's Pulpit, USA, Autumn 1953).
Ref. Cirkev Na Slovensku (Reformed Christian Church in Slovakia)
Yes - It is reported that there have been 17 women ordained since 1953 (Kvinnliga Präster jorden runt - by Märta Tamm-Götling, p. 78).
- EAST AFRICA: Presbyterian Church of East Africa
No - Women are not ordained to the full ministry, but in 1953 the Synod voted the eldership to women.
- FORMOSA: Tai-Oan Ki-Tok Tiu-Lo Kau-Hoe (Presbyterian Church in Formosa)
Yes - There are 180 women deacons, 90 women elders, and 2 women ministers; 1 in 4 theological students is a woman.

Reformed (2)

- FRANCE: Eglise réformée d'Alsace et de Lorraine (Reformed Church of Alsace and Lorraine)
- Yes - Has had women pastors and women elders for a long time. It appears that no difference is made between men and women pastors. (From a W.C.C. Staff member). But a correspondent wrote in February 1958, "They are usually granted subordinate positions."
- Eglise réformée de France (Reformed Church of France)
- Yes - Women are not usually ordained to the full ministry, although a few have been; there are women elders. The first woman ordained in this Church was in 1930 (Kvinnliga Präster jorden runt - by Märta Tamm-Götling, p. 58), and a woman pastor, consecrated in the Reformed Church of France, has been Moderator of a Regional Synod, in 1953.
- The pattern is not necessarily the same all over France. For example, one fully-ordained woman has been the sole head of a large congregation for over 10 years; but there are other women doing everything, even administering the Sacraments, who are not ordained. The permission of the Synod must be obtained in each case, which makes the situation somewhat varied. But apparently there are no theological reasons against the ordination of women. (A W.C.C. Staff member).
- GERMANY: Evangelisch-Reformierte Kirche in Nordwestdeutschland (Evangelical Reformed Church in North-West Germany)
- As far as we can tell from varied opinions, women are not yet admitted to the full ministry, although there are a few exceptions. They do not have women elders.
- A certain number of Reformed parishes belong to the Churches grouped in the Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (Evangelical Church in Germany).
- Note: This Church's membership in the W.C.C. is included in the Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland.
- GHANA: Presbyterian Church of Ghana
- Yes - There are women ministers and women elders.
- GREECE: Greek Evangelical Church
- No - Women are not ordained to the full ministry or to the eldership. (March 3, 1958, letter from a correspondent in Greece).
- HUNGARY: A Magyarországi Református Egyház (Reformed Church of Hungary)
- We have no specific information about women ministers; there are rumours that there are women elders, but we have not yet received absolute confirmation of this.
- INDIA: United Church of Northern India and Pakistan (See under "UNITED CHURCHES").
- IRAN: Synod of the Evangelical Churches of North Iran
- No - Women are not ordained; the question has never been raised. (Febr. 24, 1958, letter from a correspondent). There are a few women elders.
- ITALY: Chiesa evangelica valdese (Waldensian Church)
- No - There are no women pastors; there are women elders and women deacons. The question of the ordination of women to the full pastoral ministry is being considered, but no conclusions have so far been reached. Several women are studying theology.
- KOREA: Presbyterian Church of Korea
- No information received as yet.

NETHERLANDS: Nederlands Hervormde Kerk (Dutch Reformed Church)

No - In June 1957, the General Synod recommended: To admit women fully to the (but has done eldership and diaconate, to the pastorate only on dispensation to be so in special granted as mentioned under Section B of the conclusions. This proposal cases) has now been sent for consideration to the 'Classes' or presbyteries and will be voted upon again in second reading at one of the Synod sessions of 1958. (From a Report by a Dutch correspondent and from a letter from the Secretary of the Ecumenical Council of the Netherlands - Jan. 1958). Some Dutch Reformed women have been ordained in other countries for service there in a Dutch Reformed parish; for example, in Berlin-Lichterfelde (West). (S.E.M.C. Newsletter, May 1957, p.5). We understand that some other Dutch women have been ordained and are serving in Belgium, France, and in Indonesia.

NEW ZEALAND: Presbyterian Church of New Zealand

No - There are no women ministers, but there are women elders and women deacons. Also, there is an Order of Deaconesses, in which women can be ordained as elders of the Church, they may not administer the Sacraments, but they may preach and often serve in parishes as parish ministers. (W.C.C. Staff member in S.-E. Asia, Jan. 24, 1958).

RUMANIA: Biserica Reformata din Romania (Transylvanian Reformed Church)

No - for the full ministry, as far as we know.

SOUTH AFRICA: Bantu Presbyterian Church of South Africa

No - There are no women ministers, elders or deacons.

Ned. Gereformeerde Kerk van de Kaap Provinsie (Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa of the Cape Province)

No - There are no women ministers, elders or deacons.

Ned. Hervormde of Gereformeerde Kerk van Zuid-Afrika in Transvaal (Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa in Transvaal)

No - There are no women ministers, elders or deacons.

Nederduits Hervormde Kerk van Afrika (Dutch Reformed Church of Africa)

No - There are no women ministers, elders or deacons. This Church is studying the question, but no reports are available as yet.

Presbyterian Church of South Africa

No - There are no women ministers, elders or deacons.

SPAIN: Iglesia Evangelica Espanola (Spanish Evangelical Church)

No - As far as we know, women are not ordained, but we have no specific information.

SWITZERLAND: Schweizerischer Evangelischer Kirchenbund (Fédération des Eglises protestantes de la Suisse) (Swiss Protestant Church Federation)

Yes and No - Out of 19 Cantons, each of which has an independent Reformed Church, 6 have women ministers. Some of these give the full ministry with no limitations, 1 of these six will only permit unmarried women to be ministers; 3 of the six will not allow a woman minister to be in sole charge of a parish, instead she must serve with another minister (a man) who would be in charge of the parish. Of these 19 Churches, 15 have women elders, but in 2 Cantons women elders are not allowed to sit on the Cantonal Synods. The term "deacon" does not seem to be usual in the Reformed Churches in Switzerland.

- SYRIA:** Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon
- No - Women are not ordained; the question has never been raised (Feb. 24, 1958; letter from a correspondent in Lebanon).
- THAILAND:** Church of Christ in Thailand
- No - Women are not ordained to the full ministry at present, although there is apparently nothing against it in principle.
 "In the constitution there is nothing relative to the ordination of women to the ministry. The question simply was not examined at the time; however, from the beginning a number of women have been ordained as elders in the churches and have served in responsible positions in the Presbyteries and Councils.
 This month for the first time in the history of the Church a woman elder was elected Moderator of the Presbytery or District, as it is called. Action relating to the ordination of women in the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., raised the question here. Several prominent ministers have been quoted as saying that while a woman has not yet been ordained to the ministry, there would be no difficulties, if a suitable candidate were to be examined and ordained by a Presbytery." (Feb. 26, 1958, letter from a correspondent).
- UNITED KINGDOM AND EIRE:** Church of Scotland
- No - There are no women ministers, nor women elders - although this latter question is very much under discussion and, in January 1958, the Presbytery of Glasgow voted in favour of having women elders. The S.E.M.C. Newsletter of May 1957, p.4, states: "An overture to the General Assembly is being made by three presbyteries (Aberdeen, Kirkcaldy and Ayr) calling for the admission of women to the eldership on the same terms as men."
 On May 30, 1956, the General Assembly approved a scheme providing for the training of women with the required qualifications to be licensed as preachers of the Word. Since that time, the Presbytery of Dalkeith, in January 1957, licensed Miss Mary Lusk, B.A., B.D., D.C.S., as a preacher of the Word.
- Order of Deaconesses: The inaugural meeting of the Council of Deaconesses, established by the Assembly in 1956, was held in May 1957. See the Official Report of the Commission on the Order of Deaconesses, The Church of Scotland, May 1956, pages 790, 795, 800, 803, providing in a new scheme that "Deaconesses are to be commissioned to a Presbytery, and at the same time shall be presented for license as Preachers of the Word." This report was adopted by the General Assembly, at Edinburgh, May 30, 1956.
- Presbyterian Church of England
- Yes - They have women ministers, women elders and women deacons. The Rev. A.I. Gordon became the first woman minister, being ordained on the 17th November 1956. (S.E.M.C. Newsletter, May 1957, p.7). There are Church Sisters, who can be elected and ordained to the eldership. (Church Sisters' booklet, December 1956).
- Presbyterian Church in Ireland
- No - There are no women ministers, but there are women elders. In June 1957, it was reported that there were 17 of these.
- Presbyterian Church of Wales
- No - There are no women ministers, but there are women elders. No women deacons.

United Free Church of Scotland

- Yes - The full ministry is open equally to men and women. In June 1957, the S.E.M.C. Newsletter reported that there were 3 women ministers and 15 women elders in this small Church.
This is the only Presbyterian Church in the world which has a woman as General Secretary.

UNITED STATES

OF AMERICA: Evangelical and Reformed Church (See: List of United Churches)

This Church is now a part of the new UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST. A Uniting General Synod was held in Cleveland, Ohio, on the 25th June, 1957, and in the minutes of this meeting, on p. 125, is stated: "All Ministers in good and regular standing in the former Churches are to be enrolled as Ministers in the new Church.... During the interim the new Church will follow present practices."

In the Evangelical and Reformed Church, women have been ordained to the full ministry since 1949.

Presbyterian Church in the U.S.

- No - There are no women ministers, but "the 96th General Assembly, in 1956, received from a committee set up in 1955 a unanimous and strong recommendation that women be ordained as elders and deacons. By a small minority (234 to 226), the Assembly voted in favour and sent this question to the Presbyteries for consideration and ratification. It was also stated that there seemed to be no scriptural basis for limiting women's work in the Church." (Religious News Service, June 4, 1956).
The 97th General Assembly report, on page 39, states that the above recommendation was defeated (39 Presbyteries in favour, 44 against).

Presbyterian Church in the USA

- Yes - There are women ministers and women elders. The General Assembly of May 1956 formally approved the full ministry with no restrictions for women, and the first woman to be ordained was Miss Margaret E. Towner, of Pennsylvania. (Religious News Service, October 25, 1956). There have been women elders since 1930.

Reformed Church in America

- No - There are no women ministers, no women elders and no women deacons; but the question is being seriously studied by a special committee, which the General Synod of 1956 voted to continue.

United Presbyterian Church of North America

- No - Women are not ordained now, but on May 28, 1958, this Church will merge (at this time) with the Presbyterian USA which does ordain women to the full ministry.
Yes - (Feb. 27, 1958, letter from the Stated Clerk).
(May 28, 1958)

WEST INDIES: Presbyterian Church in Jamaica

- No - There are no women ministers or elders. (March 28, 1958, letter from a Jamaican correspondent).

YUGOSLAVIA: Reformed Christian Church of Yugoslavia

- No - Women are not ordained to the full ministry, but women are elders and deacons. (March 1, 1958, letter from a Yugoslavian correspondent).

LITHUANIA: Lietuvos Ev. Reformatu Baznycia (Lithuanian Reformed Church)

No information available.

GENERAL INFORMATION

UNITED CHURCHES: A number of former Reformed or Presbyterian Churches have joined in a broader, united Church, in a number of countries.

WORLD PRESBYTERIAN
ALLIANCE:

At Princeton, in 1954, the revised Constitution of the Alliance specifies that delegates to General Council shall not as hitherto be limited to ministers and elders, but "shall include communicant members, either men or women, of the membership Churches." (*)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Many of the facts about the Reformed or Presbyterian Churches have come from the World Presbyterian Alliance, as a result of a questionnaire which they sent out in November 1957, and we are grateful for the help they have given us.

SUMMARY

Of the 41 Reformed or Presbyterian Churches which are members of the W.C.C., 9 admit women to the full ministry, plus Switzerland where women are admitted in 6 out of the 19 Cantons; 2 have admitted women in special cases: Belgium and the Netherlands; 25 do not; and there are 4 about which we have no definite information: China, Hungary, Korea and Lithuania. Of the 11 which have ordained women, these Churches are located in Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America.

One other, the United Presbyterian Church of North America, will unite on May 28, 1958, with the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. which does ordain women to the full ministry.

Of these 41 Churches, 19 ordain women to the eldership, plus Switzerland where in 15 out of 19 Cantons women are ordained to the eldership; and eleven do not have women elders.

The question of deacons is much less clear, as apparently a number of Churches do not use this term at all.

(*) The World Presbyterian Alliance has a special theological study Commission on Ordination, set up at the Seventeenth General Council in 1954. This Commission will report its findings to the Executive Committee in the Summer of 1958, for consideration and referral to the next General Council meeting in 1959.

Department on the Cooperation of Men and Women
in Church and Society
17 route de Malagnou
Geneva, Switzerland

SUMMARY OF FACTS ABOUT THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN
IN THE METHODIST CHURCHES WHICH ARE MEMBER CHURCHES
OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

AUSTRALASIA: Methodist Church of Australasia

No - Women are not ordained in this Church, although there is apparently no barrier theologically; it is more a question of polity and standing where real difficulties are seen - e.g. the impermanence of tenure. (Letter dated January 9, 1958, from an Australian correspondent).

An Australian Minister has said: "I know of a Methodist Church in Tasmania which had an ordained Congregational woman as co-preacher for some years." (W.C.C. Staff member).

In 1945, a Constitution for an Order of Deaconesses was framed.

BRAZIL: Igreja Metodista do Brasil (Methodist Church of Brazil)

No definite information, except in general summary at the end of this section.

(*)

ITALY: Chiesa Evangelical Metodista d'Italia
(Evangelical Methodist Church of Italy)

No definite information, except in the general summary at the end of this section.

KOREA: Korean Methodist Church

Yes - Women are ordained. (Woman's Pulpit Magazine, USA, Vol. XXX, p.3, 1952).

A Canadian woman Minister, presumably a Methodist in Korea, the Rev. Elda Daniels, with five other Ministers, baptized 700 at Ewha University in Korea. (Woman's Pulpit Magazine, USA, autumn 1957).

MEXICO: Iglesia Metodista de Mexico (Methodist Church of Mexico)

No definite information, except in the general summary at the end of this section.

NEW ZEALAND: Methodist Church of New Zealand

(Yes) - In 1956, this Church appointed for the first time a woman as a probationary Minister. She will spend another three years on probation before she is ordained. (Religious News Service, November 16, 1956).
experimentally

SOUTH AFRICA: Methodist Church of South Africa

Yes - This Church has given full recognition in a Methodist Conference to a woman Minister, the Rev. Sylvia Aldrich. (S.E.M.C. News Letter, London, May 1957).

(*) CEYLON: Methodist Church in Ceylon

No definite information, except in general summary at the end of this section.

UNITED KINGDOM
and EIRE:The Methodist Church

No -

"The question of the ordination of women to the Ministry of the Church was the subject of a special Committee, which met for a number of years, bringing in interim reports which were sent back for fresh consideration during this period. The Conference declared emphatically that there was no bar to the Ministry on the grounds of sex only and that is still the declared position. Finally, however, the Conference of 1948 had to make up its mind, and after an exiting debate, the proposal to admit women was decisively rejected. The grounds, however, were grounds concerning the unsuitability of women for the itinerant Ministry, coupled with the fact that as far as could be seen, marriage would inevitably involve resignation anyhow. This decision on practical grounds in no way rescinded the principle that there is no absolute disqualification on sex grounds. Since 1948 the matter has never been discussed, though of course, it may come up at any time."
(The Secretary of the Conference of the Methodist Church in the United Kingdom, January 1958).

The Methodist Church does, however, ordain deaconesses, who sometimes have the same rights as a Minister, including the distribution of the Sacraments (Kvinnliga Präster jorden runt - by Märta Tamm-Götlind, p. 20). There is the Wesley Deaconess Order (founded in 1890). "John Wesley offered no objection to women preaching, as long as they did their work properly...If women ministers are good enough in character and ability for God to honour their work, then they are good enough."
(The S.E.M.C. News Letter, May 1957). These sisters give up their work when they marry.

To a memorial asking the Church for the ordination of Wesley deaconesses, granting them authority to be "faithful dispensers" of the Word of God and of His Holy Sacraments, the reply of the Faith and Order Committee was that deaconesses were not ordained to the administration of the Sacraments, but the Conference had authorized some deaconesses and lay-people to administer where otherwise a society would have little or no opportunity of receiving the Sacraments. This was referred back to the Faith and Order Committee, to consider carefully the theology of ordination.

In 1945, the general principle of administration of the Sacraments by women was accepted by the Conference, but the motion that women be admitted to the ministry was turned down, not on the grounds of principle, but of the practical difficulties involved. (S.E.M.C. News Letter, November 1957). In the Methodist Church today every office except that of an ordained Minister is open to women. Women even serve on the committee examining candidates for the Ministry.

Methodist Church in Ireland

(Yes) -

In a report to the Methodist Conference in 1955, from the Irish Auxiliary, at a meeting of the Methodist Missionary Society, Women's Department, Belfast District, it was said: "There are about ten women local preachers in the active service of the Church."

UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA:African Methodist Episcopal Church

Yes -

In 1952, for the first time in its 135-year history, the Philadelphia Conference has had a woman ordained and given a pastorate; two other women evangelists were ordained at the same time. Also for the first time in its history, the A.M.E. Church granted women permission to become local elders. The action taken at the Church's 35th Quadrennial

Conference at Miami, Florida, makes it possible for women to consecrate the communion elements. Previously women were permitted to be deacons. (Religious News Service, 14th May 1956).

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

Yes - In 1952, there were 25 women pastors, of which 15 were ordained or licensed. (Information Service, USA, 31st May 1952).

Christian Methodist Episcopal Church

No definite information, except general summary below.

The Methodist Church

Yes - In 1956, the General Conference of the Methodist Church passed the following legislation, par. 303: "Women are included in all provisions of the Discipline referring to the ministry." This means that no exception whatever is made in the ministry of the Methodist Church, so far as the legislation of the Church is concerned. The Discipline referred to above is the law of the Church. This provision applies not only to the ministry in the United States, but it applies also to the Central Conferences, that is Conferences organised in Mission areas. Par. 562 of the Discipline says that the Central Conferences "shall have power to decide the official status and ordination of women; provided that no action shall be taken which is contrary to the Constitution and General Rules of the Methodist Church. The Discipline of the Methodist Church for 1956 is issued by the Methodist Publishing House. (Letter dated January 17, 1958, from a Methodist Minister, U.S.A.).

Since the 1920s, women have been ordained and, as 'accepted supply' pastors, could exercise all the functions of the ministry.....In 1935...women were ordained as elders. These arrangements, however, did not cover the most crucial question in the Methodist situation, for no woman could get permission to be a member of an Annual Conference or, in other words, a member in full recognition assured of an appointment to a Church, as did men....However, in the General Conference of May, 1956, this sex distinction was completely eliminated and women are now on full and equal status with the men in the Methodist ministry. (From a letter dated Jan. 10, 1958, from a Methodist Professor of Applied Theology, California, USA).

A GENERAL SUMMARY OF THE PRESENT POSITION

The following general information is particularly in relation to the following dioceses of Methodism, including all of those in the USA, plus Africa, Central and Southern Europe, Germany, Latin America, Northern Europe, the Philippines, South-East Asia and Southern Asia.

As to full clergy rights for women, you have to realize that the Methodist Church has for many years had the ordination of women, but they remained laymen until 1956. A layman is a member of a local Methodist Church. This term also applies to unordained local preachers and to persons who have received ministerial ordination but who are not members on trial or in full connection in an Annual Conference. And this was at the 1956 General Conference the main issue. We already had ordination of women in the Methodist Church, but they were local preachers.

Everybody knows that there are most important theological issues involved. But, in addition to these theological issues, Methodism had to deal with another very important question. The Methodist Church is an itinerant church. It has the system of appointing ministers and of sending them to the various churches. It is necessary to know this fact, since receiving women into the full ministry of the Methodist Church meant that they are subject to all the regulations of our Methodist Discipline.

In order to show you the great change which has taken place in Minneapolis, I am going to quote the text of the Methodist Discipline 1952, where par. 313 reads: "Women are included in the foregoing provisions, except insofar as they apply to candidates for the travelling ministry." By travelling ministry we mean the full membership of the ministerial body of the Annual Conference, which is subject to the appointments given by the Bishop.

In the 1956 Discipline, the respective paragraph reads: "Women are included in all provisions of the Discipline referring to the ministry."

(From a letter of January 22, 1958, received from the Bishop of the Methodist Church in Central and East Europe).

UNITED CHURCHES

A number of former Methodist Churches have joined a broader, united Church, in a number of countries.

SUMMARY

Of the 14 Methodist Churches which are member churches of the W.C.C., 5 of them ordain women to the full ministry; 1 is not clear; 2 do not, although there is no barrier theologically; 1 has a woman probationary-minister; and there are 5 of which we have no specific information. Of the churches which do ordain women, these are located in Africa, Asia, Australasia, Europe and North America.

May 1958

Department on the Cooperation of Men and Women
in Church and Society
17 route de Malagnou
Geneva, Switzerland

SUMMARY OF FACTS ABOUT THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN
IN THE BAPTIST COUNCILS OR CONVENTIONS WHICH
ARE MEMBERS OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

- BURMA:** Burma Baptist Convention
No - We understand from a W.C.C. Committee member from Burma that no women have been ordained in Burma.
- CHINA:** China Baptist Council
No information.
- DENMARK:** Baptist Union of Denmark
No information.
- HUNGARY:** Baptist Church of Hungary
No information.
- NETHERLANDS:** Unie van Baptisten Gemeenten in Nederland (Union of Baptist Congregations)
No - Women have not been admitted to the full ministry, but there is no fundamental objection in principle. (Letter from the Secretary of the Ecumenical Council of the Netherlands, dated 13th January 1958).
- NEW ZEALAND:** Baptist Union of New Zealand
(Yes) - "In our Baptist Union of New Zealand there is no bar to women being trained for the Ministry and being ordained. In point of fact we have never had such an application for training for the Ministry, nor are there at the present time any ordained women Ministers in our Denomination. Training is given for deaconess work and this is done in conjunction with our Theological College." (Letter from the General Secretary of the Baptist Union of New Zealand, dated 23rd January 1958).
- UNITED KINGDOM and IRE:** Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland
Yes - There are women Ministers, as the Baptist Union makes no sex bar to any kind of Christian service. This has been true for 30 or 40 years. In practice, there are only 4 cases of women receiving recognition as Baptist Ministers: only 2 of these ordained women are in the pastoral service, and none is at present serving as a pastor. Also, there are none in training at the present time.
"What has occurred since the first World War is an increase in the number of Deaconesses and a development of their activities and status. Originally a group of women who did sick visiting and social work, they have become responsible not only for work among women and children but for the conduct of services and other pastoral and ministerial functions. Baptists would describe them, I think, as part of the Ministry of the Church, but not as Ministers... We have between 30 and 40 in active service at the present time." (From a letter from the General Secretary of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland, dated 10th January 1958).

UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA:

American Baptist Convention

Yes -

Women have long been ordained and have full clergy rights. (Letter from a Professor of Theology, USA, dated January 1958).

The Associations (geographical) do the examining, after proposal by the local congregation, and if approved the local parish ordains. They are very careful about the independence of action of each local congregation. The only polity which these local congregations accept is the New Testament as a basis for all their decisions; there is no credal basis. (A Baptist Minister, member of the W.C.C. Staff, January 1958).

National Baptist Convention of America

No definite information, but as above the local congregation would undoubtedly decide.

National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc.

No definite information; but again, as above, the local congregation would undoubtedly decide.

Seventh Day Baptist General Conference

Yes -

In 1952, it was reported that there was 1 woman pastor and 3 ordained or licensed women. (Information Sheet, USA, 31st May 1952):

UNITED CHURCHES

A number of former Baptist Councils or Conventions have joined in a broader, united Church, in a number of countries.

SUMMARY

Of the 11 Baptist Councils or Conventions which are members of the W.C.C., 3 (United Kingdom and U.S.A.) have women in the full Ministry; 3 do not, although in two of these there are apparently no bars against it; and there are 5 from which we have no definite information.

Department on the Cooperation of Men and Women
in Church and Society
17 route de Malagnou
Geneva, Switzerland

SUMMARY OF FACTS ABOUT THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN
IN THE CONGREGATIONAL UNIONS OR CHURCHES WHICH
ARE MEMBERS OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

- AUSTRALIA: Congregational Union of Australia
Yes - They do ordain women to the ministry of the Word and Sacraments. There are several women ordained now, one in charge of a parish, one who assists her husband, and one who is a hospital chaplain. In addition, at least one will be ordained in 1958. There are no barriers in principle, but so far the ministry is perhaps limited in practice. (From the statement of an Australian Minister on the Staff of the W.C.C. - January 1958).
- CHINA: Hua Pei Kung Li Hui (North China Congregational Church)
We do not have any information about this Church.
- LEBANON: Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East
No - There are no ordained women in this Church; the question has never been raised. (Letter from a correspondent in Lebanon dated 24th February 1958).
- NEW ZEALAND: Congregational Union of New Zealand
Yes - Women are admitted to the full ministry. Men and women are fully eligible for the ministry of the Word and Sacraments. The Church does not have any Deaconesses. A woman has been Chairman of the Congregational Union. (From a W.C.C. Staff member for South-East Asia).
- SOUTH AFRICA: Congregational Union of South Africa
Yes - Women are admitted to the full ministry (and to all other offices), but only two women have been ordained so far. (Letter from the Secretary of the Union dated 2nd April 1958).
- SWEDEN: Svenska Missionsfoerbundet (The Mission Covenant Church)
Yes - Women are ordained to the full ministry. (Kvinnliga Präster jorden runt - by Märta Tamm-Götlind, p. 106).
- UNITED KINGDOM
and IRE: Congregational Union of England and Wales
Yes - Women are admitted to the full ministry. There is no separate legislation concerning women Ministers. Women have been fully ordained since 1917. The denomination gives full recognition and status to its women Ministers, and there are now 24 women in full pastoral charge of churches, and an average of 2 women students a year are taken into theological colleges; these colleges will not accept them unless they have an alternate profession to which they can turn. (From a letter dated 10th January 1958, from the Secretary of the International Congregational Council).
The Rev. Elsie Chamberlain, in 1956, became the first woman Chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales.
Women Deacons serve alongside the men, and it is the rule rather than the exception.

SCOTLAND: Congregational Union of Scotland
Yes - Women are admitted to the full ministry.

UNITED STATES
of AMERICA: Congregational Christian Churches of the U.S.A.
(See: List of United Churches)

This Church is now part of the new UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST. A Uniting General Synod was held in Cleveland, Ohio, on the 25th June 1957, and in the minutes of this meeting, on p.125, is stated: "All Ministers in good and regular standing in the former Churches are to be enrolled as Ministers in the new Church... During the interim the new Church will follow present practices."

In the Congregational Christian Churches of the U.S.A. women have long been ordained and have had full-fledged clergy rights.

UNITED CHURCHES

A number of former Congregational Churches have joined in a broader, united Church, in a number of countries, e.g. the United Church of Christ, Japan.

SUMMARY

Of the 8 Congregational Unions or Churches which are members of the W.C.C., 6 have women in the full ministry (1 in Continental Europe, 1 in South Africa, 2 in the United Kingdom and 2 in Australasia); one does not; and we have no definite information about China.

Department on the Cooperation of Men and Women
in Church and Society
17 route de Malagnou
Geneva, Switzerland

SUMMARY OF FACTS ABOUT THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN
IN THE OLD CATHOLIC CHURCHES, OR OTHER CATHOLIC
CHURCHES, WHICH ARE MEMBER CHURCHES OF THE WORLD
COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

- GERMANY: Altkatholische Kirche in Deutschland (Old Catholic Church in Germany)
No - Women are not ordained to the priesthood. (Feb. 25, 1958; letter from a correspondent).
- NETHERLANDS: Oud-Katholieke Kerk (Old Catholic Church)
No - They do not admit women to the ministry, nor to the pastorate, the local presbytery or the local Church council. (From a letter of the Secretary of the Ecumenical Council of the Netherlands, dated Jan. 1958)
- POLAND: Polski Narodowy Kościół Katolicki (Catholic Church of Poland)
No information.
- SWITZERLAND: Christkatholische Kirche der Schweiz (Old Catholic Church)
No - Women are not ordained to the priesthood.
- UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA: Polish National Catholic Church of America
No information.

GENERAL REMARKS

We understand that the Old Catholic Churches do not ordain women to the priesthood.

SUMMARY

There are 5 Old Catholic Churches which are member churches of the W.C.C.; of these, none has ordained women to the priesthood, as far as we know.

May 1958

Department on the Cooperation of Men and Women
in Church and Society
17 route de Malagnou
Geneva, Switzerland

SUMMARY OF FACTS ABOUT THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN
IN THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST OR DISCIPLES OF CHRIST
WHICH ARE MEMBER CHURCHES OF THE WORLD COUNCIL
OF CHURCHES

- AUSTRALIA:** Federal Conference of Churches of Christ in Australia
Yes - Women are ordained to go to the mission field, but they only have a pastoral and not a preaching ministry. No church of this denomination in Australia has a woman pastor. (Letter from an Australian correspondent, dated January 9, 1958).
- CANADA:** Churches of Christ (Disciples)
Yes - They definitely ordain women to the full ministry and to the eldership. This Church forms one communion with the same denomination in the U.S.A., which also ordains women. (From a Canadian correspondent, January 1958).
- GREAT BRITAIN
and IRELAND:** Churches of Christ in Great Britain and Ireland
No - Women are not ordained. (Feb. 25, 1958, letter from the Secretary of the Central Council).
- NEW ZEALAND:** Associated Churches of Christ in New Zealand
As far as we know there are no women ministers in this Church.
- UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA:** International Convention of Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ)
Yes - Women have long been ordained, as there has been full sex equality from the time of the founding of the Church. There is the full ministry, as well as women elders, women deacons, and women members of Church Boards. (From "Women in the Church", a symposium on the service and status of women among the Disciples of Christ, 1953, p. 25).
In 1955, it was reported that there were 293 ordained women, but of these only 39 were then holding pastorates. (The Christian Evangelist Magazine, November 30, 1955, p. 8).
The Rev. Jorgelina Lozada, of Buenos Aires, Argentina, was ordained in this denomination in Argentina in 1930.

GENERAL INFORMATION

"The universal practice of the Disciples of Christ is to use women in the office of the ministry whenever and wherever a local congregation or a service agency of the Church desires to call women. The standards for such service are exactly the same as those used for men. In other words, we make no distinctions.

We in this Christian Brotherhood have assumed from the beginning that 'there is neither male nor female, bond nor free' in the fellowship of the Church. Our ministry actually has the status of lay persons who are called and set aside for Christian service, whether it be in the preaching ministry, teaching, administration, etc.

In other words, our philosophy on the matter rests with function rather than status." (Executive Secretary, International Convention of Christian Churches, letter dated February 12, 1958).

UNITED CHURCHES

A number of former Churches of Christ have joined in a broader, united Church, in a number of countries.

SUMMARY

Of the 5 Churches of Christ or Disciples which are members of the World Council of Churches, 2 (in North America) ordain women to the full ministry; one, in Australia, ordains women for the mission field; one in Great Britain and Ireland does not; and we have no definite information about the other one.

Department on the Cooperation of Men and Women
in Church and Society
17 route de Malagnou
Geneva, Switzerland

SUMMARY OF FACTS ABOUT THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN
IN OTHER CHURCHES AND BODIES WHICH ARE MEMBERS
OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

THE CHURCHES OF INDONESIA:

- No - Geredja Kalimantan Evangelis (Church of Kalimantan)
They do not have women ministers, but they do have women elders.
- No - Geredja Keristen di Sulawesi Tengah (Central Sulawesi Church)
(at this time) because there have not been any candidates; but the church order does not explicitly exclude women. They do have women elders.
- No - Geredja Keristen Djawi Wetan (East Java Church)
(at this time) The church order does not specifically exclude or include women, and so far there have been no candidates. They do have women elders.
- Yes - Geredja Masehi Indjili di Minahasa (Church of Minahasa)
They have both women ministers and elders.
- Yes - Geredja Masehi Indjili di Timoer (Protestant Church of Timor)
They have both women ministers and elders.
- No - Hoeria Keristen Batak Protestant (Batak Church Sumatra) (Member of Lutheran
World Federation)
They do not have either women ministers or elders.
- No - Geredja Geredja Keristen Djawa di Djawa Tengah (Javanese Christian Churches
in Central Java)
They do not have either women ministers or elders.
- Yes - Geredja Protestant Maluku (Church of the Moluccas)
They have both women ministers and elders.
- Yes - Geredja Protestan di Indonesia (Protestant Church in Indonesia)
They have both women ministers and elders.
- No - Gereformeerde Kerken in Indonesia
They do not have either women ministers or elders.

With the exception perhaps of the Batak Church, all of the above Churches in principle have accepted the full ministry of women. There seem to be no canonical or theological barriers against this. Some Churches, however, because of practical and sociological reasons, have not yet ordained women, but some others have. (From the General Secretary of the National Council of Churches of Indonesia, January 1958).

Mrs. Catherine L. Manusame-Manuputty, from the Island of Ambon, was ordained by the Protestant Church of Western Indonesia, the first Indonesian woman to be ordained to the full ministry. (January 1954 issue of "LISTEN" Magazine, published by the International Committee of Christian Literature for Africa). She was a graduate in 1954 of the Djakarta Theological College. She is now full Rector, or President, of the Theological School of Eastern Indonesia, at Makassar in the Celebes, where 90 students (men and women) are preparing to become ministers or professional church workers. (The 1956-57 Report on the Ecclesiastical Status of Women, by the Rev. Dr. Hazel Foster, USA, p.13)

Apparently, there is no limitation placed upon women at all in the ministry, providing they are graduates of Theological Schools which prepare for ordination. In principle, there is no difference in the Batak Church, but in practice no women have yet been ordained to the full ministry, although some are now taking the full theological training. (A W.C.C. Staff member, January 1958).

THE FRIENDS' WORLD COMMITTEE FOR CONSULTATION
(QUAKERS)

CANADA: Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends

Yes - "The Friends do not have any ordination procedures as such; they hold the belief known as the 'priesthood of all believers', by which is meant that service in the ministry is laid upon us all, men and women alike. It is true, however, that certain members of the Society of Friends, in whom the ministry is particularly developed, are often officially registered as ministers of the Society of Friends. The gift of ministry is, of course, recognized as being likely to reside in women just as much as in men." (A W.C.C. Committee member's letter of January 1958).

UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA:

The Religious Society of Friends, which includes:

Five Years Meeting of Friends, and
Friends General Conference.

Yes - In the Book of Discipline, the chapter on Christian Practice, part II, page 19, it is stated that: "Women equally with men share in the Christian ministry and have a special contribution to make." They are "recognized" or "recorded", but the Friends do not "ordain" as other Churches do.

*
* *
*

THE CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA:

Yes -

The official position of this Church in 1958 is that "women may be permanently licensed (not ordained). However, if the woman minister is asked to become a pastor of a church, she may then be granted the privileges of an ordained minister to serve as a pastor." (From the study on the Functions of an Elder, 1957 Annual Conference, p. 8).

"In the Church of the Brethren four women ministers are serving as pastors at the present time." (From the Director of Ministry and Evangelism, General Brotherhood Board, Church of the Brethren, in a statement of January 1958).

*
* *
*

THE MENNONITE CHURCHES

GERMANY:

Vereinigung der Deutschen Mennonitengemeinden (Mennonite Church)

No -

Women have not been ordained to the full ministry. (See letter of March 10, 1958, from a German correspondent).

NETHERLANDS:

Algemene Doopsgezinde Societeit (General Mennonite Society)

Yes -

Women have been admitted to the full ministry for many years, and among the approximately 100 ministers there are at least 25 women. (S.E.M.C. News Letter, May 1957, p. 5).

There are not only pastors, but also women members of the presbytery. (From the Secretary of the Ecumenical Council of the Netherlands, in a letter dated January 1958).

*
* *
*

THE MORAVIAN CHURCHES

GERMANY: Evangelische Brüderunität (Moravian Church)

We have no information at this time, except for the general statement below.

UNITED

KINGDOM: Moravian Church in Great Britain and Ireland

Yes - (in principle) but not yet in practice. See the general statement below.

UNITED STATES

OF AMERICA: Moravian Church in America (Northern Province)

Yes - (in principle) but not yet in practice. See the general statement below.

Moravian Church in America (Southern Province)

Yes - (in principle) but not yet in practice. See the general statement below.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The General Synod of the Moravian Church, which is the highest legislative body of the world-wide Moravian Church, met at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, USA, in August-September 1957, and adopted the following resolutions with regard to the ordination of women:

"...in principle ordination is permissible and may (in certain cases) be of great service to the Christian Church' as including also the Church of the Unitas Fratrum."

"Resolved that General Synod affirm the liberty of each province to take such steps as seem essential for the maintenance of the ministry of the Word and Sacraments with due regard for the spiritual and ordered life of the congregations."

(From a letter dated January 16, 1958, from the President of the Moravian Church in America - Northern Province - and also from a U.K. correspondent, letter dated February 25, 1958).

THE SALVATION ARMY

Salvation Army International Headquarters

London, England.

Yes - All offices are open to men and women alike. The Salvation Army is run on a basis of equality between the sexes.

*

* *

UNION OF FREE EVANGELICAL CONGREGATIONS

(Bond van vrije Evangelische Gemeenten in Nederland)

NETHERLANDS:

No - Does not admit women to the ministry, the pastorate, the local presbytery or the local Church council. (From the Secretary of the Ecumenical Council of the Netherlands, in a letter dated January 15, 1958).

*

* *

THE ARMINIAN CHURCH

(Remonstrantse Broederschap)

NETHERLANDS:

Yes - Does admit women fully into the ministry, the pastorate, as well as the presbyteries. (From the Secretary of the Ecumenical Council of the Netherlands, in a letter dated January 15, 1958).
About one-third of the parishes have had women ministers from time to time.

* * *

EVANGELICAL UNITED BRETHREN CHURCH

UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA:

Yes - (in principle) Prior to the union of the Church United Brethren in Christ and the Evangelical Church in 1946, the United Brethren Church had throughout its entire existence licensed and ordained women to the ministry. Many of these women were appointed to charges on the same basis as men. With Church union, the matter was laid on the shelf since the former Evangelical Church had never licensed or ordained women. However the present Church Discipline does not in any way invalidate the ordination of women, but since 1946 so far as my knowledge goes, no woman has been licensed or ordained.
A committee is at work now which is supposed to bring some recommendation or memorial to our General Conference, which will be held in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, October 1958, dealing with this matter of the ordination of women. (From February 26, 1958, letter of a staff member).

SUMMARY

Of the 23 Other Bodies which are members of the W.C.C., 14 do admit women to the full ministry (two of these in principle); 8 churches do not; and there is one about which we have no definite information.

Department on the Cooperation of Men and Women
in Church and Society
17 route de Malagnou
Geneva, Switzerland

SUMMARY OF FACTS ABOUT THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN
IN THE UNITED CHURCHES WHICH ARE MEMBER CHURCHES
OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

CANADA: United Church of Canada

Yes - They have ordained women to the full ministry since 1936; they also ordain women elders. In 1956, there were 36 women ministers. (Kvinnliga Präster jorden runt - by Märta Tamm-Götlind, p. 38). In January 1958, it was reported that there had been 45 to 50 women ordained to the ministry of the Word and Sacraments, and of that number approximately 30 are still in the active ministry.

INDIA: Church of South India

No - They do not ordain women to the full ministry, but they do ordain deaconesses. (An Indian clergyman of the Church of South India, Jan. 1958). There is an Order for lay women, in addition to the deaconesses. (S.E.M.C. Newsletter of January 1955, p. 5).

United Church of Northern India and Pakistan

No - As far as we know, no women have been ordained to the full ministry; but two women, ordained to the full ministry in the Congregational Church in the U.S.A., have gone as missionaries to this Church, where their ministry has been accepted. (From a WCC Staff member, Jan. 1958).

JAPAN: Nippon Kirisuto Kyodan (United Church of Christ in Japan)

Yes - They do ordain women to the full ministry, and in 1956 there were 197 ordained or licensed women. (The Christian Century Magazine, U.S.A., January 29, 1958, p. 131). They also have women elders.

PHILIPPINES: United Church of Christ in the Philippines

We do not have any information.

UNITED STATES

OF AMERICA: United Church of Christ (which includes the Congregational Christian Churches in the U.S.A. and the Evangelical and Reformed Church)

Yes - A Uniting General Synod was held in Cleveland, Ohio, on the 25th June 1957, and in the minutes of this meeting, on p. 125, is stated: "All Ministers in good and regular standing in the former Churches are to be enrolled as Ministers in the new Church...During the interim of reorganisation, the new Church will follow present practices." Up till that date, both uniting Churches had ordained women to the full ministry.

SUMMARY

Of the 6 United Churches which are member churches of the W.C.C., 3 (two in North America and one in Asia) do ordain women to the full ministry; 1 has accepted women ordained in another Church; 1 does not ordain women; and we do not have definite information about the other.

Department on the Cooperation of Men and Women
in Church and Society
17 route de Malagnou
Geneva, Switzerland

O V E R A L L S U M M A R Y
OF THE 168 MEMBER CHURCHES OF
THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

48 Churches admit women to the full ministry	}	approximately
9 Churches ordain women to a partial or irregular ministry		38 % (of those we know about)
90 Churches do not ordain women - or approximately 61 % of those we know about		
21 Churches: no definite information		

The above, of course, does not take into account at all the
size in membership or in parishes of any of these member Churches.

