

Women in the Episcopal Church

with Diocese of Massachusetts firsts in italics

1785

First General Convention of the Episcopal Church

1835

Men *and* women are members

1845

Episcopal sisterhoods

1872

Women's Auxiliary

1874

First Triennial meeting of the women of the church

1877

Girl's Friendly Society: *First American chapter organized at St. Anne's Church, Lowell, Mass.*

1884

Society for the Companions of the Holy Cross

1885

Daughters of the King

1888

Church Periodical Club

1889

United Thank Offering: *Established by Ida Whittemore Soule and Julia Emery of Massachusetts*

1897

Clara M. Carter “set apart” as first deaconess in Diocese of Massachusetts

1921

Altar Guild

First woman elected to Massachusetts’ Diocesan Council: Eva D. Corey

1922

Diocesan Convention votes to allow women to serve as lay delegates

1941

First woman hired to teach in an Episcopal seminary: Dr. Adelaide T. Case at Episcopal Theological School, Cambridge, Mass.

1946

First women seated as deputy to General Convention

1949

Women denied seat, voice and vote at General Convention

1970

Canons changed to allow women to serve as deputies to General Convention

Women ordained as deacons

First woman elected to serve on Massachusetts’ Standing Committee: Rosemarie Krenitsky

1971

Episcopal Women’s Caucus

1972

First woman ordained deacon in Massachusetts: Elsa Walberg

1973

First Massachusetts woman as lay deputy to General Convention: Theresa Gillett

1974

Irregular ordination of 11 women in Philadelphia

1975

Irregular ordination of four women in Washington

1976

General Convention approves ordination of women

1977

First woman in Massachusetts ordained priest: M. Jeanne Sproat

1979

First Massachusetts woman as clerical deputy to General Convention: Elsa Walberg

1980

Episcopal Women's History Project

Black Women's Task Force

311 female priests in the Episcopal Church

1983

Council for Women's Ministries and Journal of Women's Ministries

First woman rector in Diocese of Massachusetts: Elsa Walberg

1985

Committee on full participation of women in the church

First lay person and first woman elected president of Massachusetts' Standing Committee: Jean Szen

1988

Committee on Status of Women

1989

First woman consecrated as bishop in the entire Anglican Communion: *Barbara C. Harris, in Massachusetts*

1,089 female priests in the Episcopal Church

1991

First woman elected president of House of Deputies: Pamela Chinnis

1992

Anglican Council of Indigenous Women

1997

General Convention declares women's ordination canon is mandatory.

1998

Women bishops at Lambeth Conference for the first time

2006

First woman elected presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church: Katharine Jefferts Schori

2008

18 of the Anglican Communion's 21 female bishops attend the Lambeth Conference

2009

Episcopal Church celebrates 20 years of women in episcopal ministry

3,756 female priests in the Episcopal Church

--Modified from Episcopal Church Women timeline, with thanks to Sheryl Kujawa Holbrook, Suzette Phillips, Margaret Gardiner and Tracy J. Sukraw.