



THE MOW REPORT

SYDNEY MOVEMENT FOR
THE ORDINATION OF
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2015 promises to be a very interesting year for MOW members. We began in February with our largest meeting for decades. The untimely death of Bishop Barbara Darling saddened us and very public concern about domestic violence linked to the "male headship" doctrine, widely espoused by our diocese, resonated with the wider community. Suddenly, it seems that now may be the time for negotiating as well as discussing. Don't just "watch this space". Check out our revamped website and/or follow us on Facebook. Editor

CAN A "STAINED GLASS CEILING" BE BROKEN?



Can it? Should it?
What if?

Sydney MOW's Public Lecture on 21st Feb. by Keith Mascord was the best attended MOW

function for many years. About a hundred and twenty people crowded the hall at All Saints, Hunters Hill to hear a very significant person in our diocese. The Rev. Dr Keith is a former lecturer from Moore College. His conversion to the view, that women may be *different* but are most certainly *equal*, has been most encouraging to all those men and women in Sydney who are convinced that women can and should be leaders within our church, both as priests and bishops.

In his address Keith dealt perceptively with the obvious theological and intellectual reasons in favour of women's ordination and the natural emotional reasons that some people find it difficult to change their minds. His rational approach looked at the reasons for and against this proposition.

He referred to the fact that other parts of the Anglican Communion do this without apparent disaster, while the rest of our society has accepted women in leadership roles as normative. He pointed to the good New Testament evidence that the ceiling should never have been created in the first place and to the

relief that modern Christians will have from not having to engage in "mental gymnastics" and "exegetical vandalism" to uphold an error. He acknowledged the very real concerns of some Christians, who feel unqualified to judge and worry that they might be disobeying God. He also referred to the natural concerns about being out of step with your peers, not wanting to look uncommitted and the possibility of professional and social disapproval. All this was considered with grace and gentle humour.

He entertained us by trying out some reverse of the stereotypes which have been so frequently put forward to justify the *gut feeling* prejudice against women in authority. Here are some.

- *A man's place is in the army*
- *Male physique is designed for hunting and fighting. It would be "unnatural" for him to do ministerial tasks*
- *Men are too emotional to be priests or pastors. Their behaviour at football matches demonstrates this.*
- *Pastors need to nurture their congregations. This is not a traditional male role. Throughout history, women have been shown to be much better at it. This makes them the obvious choice for ordination*
- *Men are prone to violence. Thus they would be poor role models and dangerously unstable in positions of leadership.*
- *Men can still be involved in church activities, even without being ordained.*

They can sweep paths, repair the church roof and perhaps even lead the song service on Father's Day. By confining themselves to such traditional roles, they can still be vitally important in the life of the church.

Isn't the last one *striking*? Keith admitted that when he first came across it, he felt insulted. "I actually did. I felt, just for an instant, what my sisters in Christ have been feeling for years and still feel."

Please read the full text. You will find it on our Website - www.mowatch.com.au



Notable MOW supporters at Mascord Lecture.

L-r. Dave Smith, Keith Mascord, Sue Emeleus, Clive Harcourt-Norton, Lu Piper- Reverends all.

THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD- CAN WE REPLACE THE PARISH LEADERSHIP WE ARE LOSING?

Over the years, one of MOW's strengths has been the support of some male clergy and their wives. It was one of the earlier fallacies in this long debate that clergy wives would be against MOW, because they saw the Movement as threatening their status and their husband's jobs. There is certainly anecdotal evidence, that this is true in some cases. However, MOW has been greatly enriched by the support of many clergy couples. In Sydney in very recent years we have had to accept the loss/retirement of clergy, who have been staunch supporters of our cause – Chris and Pam Albany, Phillip and Rosemary Bradford and this year, Gwilym and Sue Henry-Edwards from St Luke's, Enmore who have left Sydney and returned to Adelaide. On 1st February, Rev. Lu Piper, Elaine Lindsay and I attended the great parish farewell service and luncheon, as

representatives of Sydney MOW. I was delighted to speak on our behalf.

"When Gwilym and Sue Henry-Edwards came to Enmore from Adelaide in 2004, the Sydney branch of the Movement for the Ordination of Women gained an experienced campaigner. Sue had been a foundation member and also Convenor of MOW in Adelaide and had lived to see the success of the movement in that diocese. It must have been quite a downer, to come to a place, where progress had not been made.

Sue had many stories to tell of the campaign in Adelaide. The regular Sunday evening silent payer gathering outside the Cathedral, the humorous badges and cartoons, with slogans- "God is an equal opportunity employer" – "GOD is not a boy's name." We gained the strong impression that the debate was much more civil down south, than in our Emerald City.

Very importantly, Sydney MOW got "two for the price of one", as they used to say about clergy wives. The support of Father Gwilym has been greatly valued by Sydney MOW. He also has put his time and effort where his conviction lies, in this matter- gracious in hosting MOW meetings at Enmore, and active in putting up banners and putting out chairs and welcoming us as we often invaded the rectory for our committee meetings.

As the Movement for the Ordination of Women in the Sydney diocese has persevered in the face of extreme intransigence, and people like me have got old and tired, Sue's insistence that we should "maintain a ministry of presence" has been vital. If we didn't have the energy to run big meetings, confront synod, keep talking in public - then we should just be here, so that the hurt and puzzled at least have someone to talk to or a shoulder to cry on. For a few years that is what we did- and behold- in due time a new lease of life, under a new Convenor – a priest who is a woman, Lu Piper, is at the helm, and there is some new energy and activity, in a new episcopate."

These extracts from what I said on this occasion, are in the context of losing John Cornish from St Alban's Epping later this year and my own rector, Cliff Stratton, from St Luke's, Concord next February. There is real concern about the fate of parishes whose tradition may be described as "prayer book", "stole" or "traditional Anglican"

and who are generally sympathetic /supportive of women's ordination, as they face the task of finding a new rector acceptable to the diocese as well as their congregations. We are encouraged by the more inclusive approach of our current Archbishop.

Elaine Peterson.

VALE – BISHOP BARBARA DARLING

Our readers would all have been saddened at the news of the early death of the Rt Rev Barbara Darling on the 15th February following a stroke some weeks before. Her funeral at St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne on Sunday 22nd February at 5.00 pm was steamed online and some of us will have been able to watch that. Barbara was a Sydney woman and the second Australian Anglican woman to be consecrated bishop. The sermon at her funeral was preached by Rt Rev Kay Goldsworthy, the first Australian bishop who was a woman, while the Rt Rev Glenn Davies, Archbishop of Sydney, gave a tribute on behalf of her Episcopal colleagues.

Archbishop Davies had written of her in his public statement on 16th February posted on the Sydney Anglicans website. *..Barbara Darling was a pioneer of extraordinary gifts and talents. Originally from Sydney, after some years spent as a teacher in NSW, Barbara moved to Melbourne and pursued theological studies at Ridley College under Dr Leon Morris. Her intellect and gracious disposition combined with both passion and giftedness for teaching were quickly recognised by Dr Morris, as she was offered a teaching contract at Ridley upon her graduation, and later became the first tenured female lecturer at Ridley College. Barbara was a pioneer for women's ordination, having been in the first cohort of women to be made deacon in Melbourne in 1986, and six years later among the first to be ordained priest, and then Barbara became the first woman to be consecrated bishop in the Diocese of Melbourne in 2008.*

Bishop Kay Goldsworthy's moving sermon at Barbara's funeral can be read in full on the web – we quote:-

In Mark's gospel, Jesus' disciples often misunderstood, or were blind to all God was doing in and through him. That small group of women who were part of Jesus' family, who were his friends, his disciples, his supporters were there when Jesus was crucified. They watched him die. Then when they went very early to his tomb on that resurrection morning, they found the stone rolled away. What they encountered that morning was the promise we share today with them, with Jesus' friends and followers across all the intervening centuries. Mark's gospel goes on with the angel charging those women to tell the story of the empty tomb, to go and tell the disciples and Peter that Jesus was going ahead of them to Galilee, and that they would see him there. It was a charge those women didn't keep. They were terrified and amazed, and they said nothing.

But Barbara did keep that charge. Barbara did tell that story of the empty tomb. She did tell people that Jesus was alive. It was the story of her life. Barbara lived her faith as a true witness to the reconciling and transforming love of God in Christ. Obedient discipleship - faithful witness. As sister, aunt, friend, she told people about Jesus. As sister in Christ, she told his story. As a trained women worker, a deacon, a priest and as Bishop, Barbara told the story of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, of his call to live and proclaim that love- unsettling, disturbing, calling, transforming. She lived it, and she taught it, and in her we saw that story come alive.

Sydney MOW members were encouraged by the gracious warmth of Archbishop Glenn's tribute, also available in full on the web, which lauded her career and her gifts as he had done in his first public statement. We have some reservations however about phrases which he used on both occasions: saying she was "a great supporter of women's ministry but she was not a militant advocate, but a gracious and winsome supporter". On objective grounds, this is a very fair statement. However, it raises old echoes of the unfair stereotype of MOW in Sydney as "too strident, assertive, unbending and angry." Let us hope that the bitterness of the past will be subsumed into a time when Sydney Diocese will embrace the acceptance of diversity on this issue which so much of the rest of the Anglican world is already happily accepting. EAP

PROFILE OF ANGELA PEVERELL

Most Sydney MOW members are familiar with most of the people on the Executive Committee. They have served at different times and ways over the last thirty odd years. However at the 2014 AGM, we enlisted a new recruit to the cause. It's time members knew a bit more about Angela Peverell, whose IT skills are enabling us to



join the social media world which reaches more people more quickly ever before.

Angela is herself, a student of Theology at Trinity College of

Theological Studies (University of Melbourne) and in addition to her involvement with MOW Sydney and MOWatch, is a member of the board of Christian Community Aid. She also has a "day job" with OfficeHQ (ReceptionHQ in the US & UK) as the Sales and Marketing Director where she heads up Corporate Sales, New Business Development and the building of brand equity through digital and physical media.

Angela has two adult children based in Sydney and an extended family in Sydney and the Hunter Valley. She attends St John the Evangelist parish at Gordon where she is an Altar Server and Intercessor. Angela is a Professed Tertiary of the Third Order of the Society of St Francis.

Angela became a member of the Sydney MOW Committee in September 2014 following her profession as a Third Order Tertiary, a very significant event in Angela's spiritual journey.

The opportunity to actively participate in the change agenda of the Movement for the Ordination of Women has also been a most exciting development for Angela who is passionate about changing the trajectory of women's roles in ministry, preaching and teaching in the Sydney Diocese. Having grown up in a diocese where a full ministry for women was not even a consideration, despite the nudges and pushes of the Holy Spirit she herself has felt since she was in her late teens, Angela wants to be a contributor to a legacy that changes this, for good.

Her greatest hope is that women and men in Sydney and all dioceses of the Anglican Communion will work together to build God's Kingdom – collectively focusing their energies, on emulating the spirit of love and forgiveness of our Saviour, Jesus of Nazareth, as witnesses, pastors and servant leaders of parishes and providing outreach to non-believers and the marginalised, whatever they believe.

MORE WOMEN FOR THE EPISCOPATE - IN ENGLAND!

In March, we celebrated the enthronement of the Rt Rev Kay Goldsworthy as the Bishop of Gippsland. In April, 2008, Kay had been the first Australian woman to become a bishop and now she is the second Australian woman diocesan bishop.



It is also pleasing to note that our "Mother Church" is catching up. The breakthrough appointment of the Rt Reverend Libby Lane as Bishop of Stockport in January this year, has proved to be no token step forward. She was followed in March 25 by the Rev. Canon Alison White as the Bishop of Hull. Then in two days later, came the announcement that the Queen had approved the nomination of the Venerable Rachel Treweek as the new Bishop of Gloucester.

The first women bishops in the Anglican Communion appeared in 1989. The long battle in the Church of England for the admission of women to the Episcopate was won in November 2014. Obviously it had held up a much needed change, which can now blessedly be achieved.

DIARY DATE:

Please mark the date for the SYDNEY MOW AGM in your diary now. Venue and Speaker to be announced.

Saturday 29th AUGUST 2015