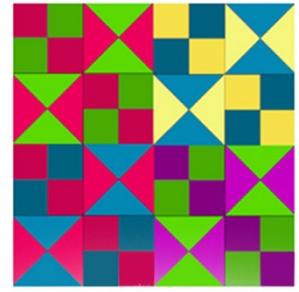


DATE: July 14, 2014

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STATEMENT COMMEMORATING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE PHILADELPHIA 11 ORDINATIONS



EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON THE
STATUS OF WOMEN

The Executive Council Committee on the Status of Women gives thanks for the ministry of all women in the Church. We especially remember the eleven women who presented themselves for ordination in Philadelphia on July 29, 1974. We give thanks for the vision of those who stood with them, and those who ordained them.

As Jesus understood, institutions must at times be confronted, and rules be broken, for the sake of God's reign. By their bold act of receiving priestly orders, The Philadelphia 11 chose to challenge The Episcopal Church to become the Church of the whole people of God. The hostilities, rejection, and limited opportunities these women faced to exercise their call to the priesthood inspire those of us who have walked through the door they opened. Our committee is one sign of their success.

We rejoice that the last forty years have seen the growth of women's ordained ministry throughout the Church. Women's ordination has transformed the Church, not only in the gender of those in ordained ministry but in how all people understand and perform their ministry.

At the same time as we celebrate the change in the Episcopal Church, we are mindful of the continuing challenges facing women in ordained ministry. As recent studies have shown, women continue to lag significantly behind their male colleagues in terms of income and church leadership. Women serve disproportionately in smaller, less well off parishes. In many places ordained women remain a novelty. Female bishops are few. Women of color and LGBT women continue to face rejection and exclusion. We have much to celebrate, but also injustices and misunderstandings to face.

We pray that our Committee's work will be faithful to the good they brought to The Episcopal Church, in the power of the Spirit, as we pursue our mission to advocate for women's ministries and speak to social justice issues particularly affecting women. May the God of justice lead us into the next forty years, so that all God's people are welcome with all their gifts.