

Angela Douglas

**HISTORY OF DIACONAL
MINISTRY**

IN

**THE UNITED CHURCH OF
CANADA**

1925 - 1991

Produced by the Committee on Diaconal Ministry

Division of Ministry Personnel and Education

The United Church of Canada

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PREFACE

Ever since I began serving on the Committee on Diaconal Ministry five years ago, the "History Project" has been an agenda item at our meetings. The book has evolved to its present form through the input and efforts of many people. Our committee is pleased, proud and appreciative of the finished product as it has developed through cross-country feedback, critique and reflection, primarily from the diaconal community of The United Church of Canada. We believe this book tells our denomination's part of the diaconal story to date as comprehensively and as accurately as possible (not precluding the likelihood that the future will bring revisions and additions.)

Inspired by the life and work of many of the early deaconesses, our committee has been committed to capturing and recording this particular piece of history - and initially it was herstory - before some of it was lost forever. A resource of this kind will be invaluable in helping to form diaconal identity and raising consciousness in those women and men doing educational preparation for diaconal ministry, as well as for all of us who presently function diaconally, since a greater awareness of our roots and heritage enriches and empowers all human beings. We hope that the book will also help others in the wider church community to understand who we are and how and why we are different in our expression of ministry. I expect even long-time diaconal folk will discover some items of interest previously unknown to them as they venture through the pages of this book.

As a community within the church, diaconal people are bonded together through unique and often subtle differences of perception, interpretation, style and philosophy. These bonds weave us together in a way that inspires commitment, passion, dedication and a feeling of family or belonging which results in our sense of diaconal community. We believe this book lifts up the weaving and identifies some of the strands which have woven and bonded us together.

The Committee on Diaconal Ministry wishes to acknowledge the valuable contributions made by individuals who have enabled completion of this project. The original nucleus was a paper written by Mary Anne MacFarlane. A former lay member of our committee, Flora Crombie, undertook much research and completed another phase of the writing. Our final contributing writer was Gail Campos who also invested much time and energy in ploughing through reams of material. During this third stage of the history's evolution, when more than twenty people - in addition to committee members - agreed to review and critique the draft copy. Teresa

Jones assumed the role of the committee's liaison person with Gail and was receiver, sorter and relayer of feedback while Dorothy Mundle and Betty Marlin acted as local diaconal advisors. The Committee also wishes to thank Muriel Shephard, Susan Lloyd, and Lorna Stephen, Division of Ministry Personnel and Education staff members, for their work with format details and preparation for publication. And lastly, our gratitude goes to Willa Kernan for doing the mammoth and laborious task of final proofing. We sincerely thank you all.

I'm sure the whole committee (and former committee members) feels a sense of relief as well as satisfaction that this project is complete and publication is a fait-accomplis. We hope you will enjoy and be stimulated by this result of many people's labour; we are certain you will find this book informative and inspiring - perhaps particularly in its documentation of the many instances of struggle and injustice - even as we are aware that it is an unfinished story because the diaconal story is ongoing.

Blessed be!

Dawn Wood, Chair
Committee on Diaconal Ministry
Saturna Island, B.C.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Pre-Union Situation	1
The Methodists	1
The Presbyterians.....	2
Union and the Period Immediately Following.....	2
A Look at Women's Work in the Church.....	3
Education.....	7
The Inter-Board Committee on Women Workers ,1928	9
The Policy of Disjoining.....	10
Probationary Period	14
The Depression Years	14
The Inter-Board Committee	15
The Secretary-Deaconess	18
Ordination of Women.....	19
A New Structure: The Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers	21
The Effect of World War Two on Demands for Deaconesses.....	31
Work with the Japanese Canadian Community	35
The Woman's Missionary Society and Overseas Workers	36
Recruitment of Deaconesses	37
Education During this Period	38
Working Conditions: The Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women's Work.....	39
Furloughs.....	41
The Constitution	41
Woman's Missionary Society: Home Mission Work.....	44
Constitution: Issues of Identity and Structure	45
The Fellowship of Professional Women in the United Church	49
Looking to the Post-War Period	50
The Study of "Women's Work in the Church"	51
Recruitment For Post-War Work	61
Christian Education: Increased Demand For Deaconesses	65
Education for Deaconesses	74
Alternative Proposals for Preparation.....	79
Programmes of the Woman's Missionary Society	80

The Constitution of the Deaconess Order.....	85
The Struggle for Access to Church Courts	87
Men as Lay Professional Workers	94
Women Organizing for Change	96
Lay Professional Church Workers	101
Salaries and Benefits	118
Interim Committee on the Deaconess Order.....	118
Candidacy Process	119
Education.....	120
The Association of Professional Church Workers.....	123
Reports on the Nature of Ministry in the United Church 1968 - 1980.....	123
The Task Force on Commissioned Ministry/Diaconal Ministry	133
The 1982 Consultation	138
The Impact of the 1982 Consultation	140
The Committee on Diaconal Ministry	142
The Diakonia of The United Church of Canada (DUCC): The Beginnings	143
Changes to the Manual: Reflecting Diaconal Ministry	145
Alternative Preparation Opportunities	146
Epilogue.....	147

CHAPTER ONE

1925 - 1938

The Pre-Union Situation

The new United Church was faced with the difficult task of merging three lively and dissimilar traditions - the Methodist, the Presbyterian and the Congregational as Church Union became a fact. Within the former two, there were well-established deaconess groups with very different histories, self-understandings, working conditions and educational centres. There was no deaconess order in the Congregational Church.

The Methodists

In the Methodist Church, the orders had been in a state of crisis. In 1922, twenty-six of the forty-three deaconesses active in the work had memorialized the Methodist General Conference calling attention to the fact that, in comparison to other areas of work open to women, deaconess work was "steadily losing ground" and that it did not occupy the prominent place in the church life that it should. The deaconesses requested that, if Conference were not prepared to rectify the situation immediately, the order be disbanded.(1)

Such deaconesses were speaking out of a tradition of poor working conditions, low salaries, and no visibility, recognition or linkage to the official courts of the church. Expectations of their work were high, and their duties were voluminous and only loosely defined. Usually their work was oriented towards the endless task of social service and meeting the needs of the disadvantaged. Their activities included visiting the sick and bereaved; finding employment, housing and money for people; looking after travelers and immigrants; conducting Sunday Schools, clubs and domestic education classes for women and children; doing secretarial work; teaching reading and Bible classes; and taking Sunday services when necessary.(2) For this work, Methodist deaconesses were guaranteed minimal living expenses and provision for old age, and received only a small spending allowance in lieu of salary, often as low as eight to ten dollars a month.(3)

The Methodist General Conference responded to the deaconesses' memorial by appointing a commission composed of four men and one woman to research and report on the situation immediately. The Commission's subsequent report confirmed the deaconesses' experiences and pointed to an insensitive administration, poor salaries, and suggested that many of the problems occurred because of the way deaconesses were perceived as mere

"servants" of the church. The lengthy report concluded with twenty detailed recommendations which would enable the diaconate to continue and to develop into a "well-educated, skilled work force enjoying more self-government, a broad mandate, and a greater degree of support from the church."(4) One concrete result was the establishment of a minimum salary of \$78.00 per year.

Deaconesses in the Methodist Church received their training at the Methodist National Training School which had been established in 1893.

The Presbyterians

Evidence suggests there were problems associated with the salary, working conditions and status of deaconesses within the Presbyterian Church during this same period. Deaconesses in the Presbyterian tradition had been working for salaries for many years, and had more autonomy both in their choice of work and their personal living conditions, but they were still restricted to servant roles. They were expected to plan for their own futures, and had financial remuneration which took this into account.(5)

Deaconesses in the Presbyterian Church received their training at one of two schools, the Presbyterian Missionary and Deaconess Training Home, established in 1897, or at Manitoba College.

Union and the Period Immediately Following

Records show that negotiations between the Methodists and Presbyterians which led to the amalgamation of the two deaconess groups began in 1924 at the direction of the Joint Committee of the Churches on Church Union.(6) Each denomination submitted to the first General Council of The United Church, held in Toronto in 1925, "a concise statement as to its history, assets, liabilities, income and expenditures for the past three years, persons employed, equipment, present work and requirements."(7) In addition, each made recommendations concerning procedures for the coming year. Their recommendation that for the first year the two groups work separately but in close cooperation was approved.(8) Both statements raised concerns of the need for policy for women workers.

At the 1926 General Council the two groups gave a joint statement concerning their work and submitted recommendations that provision be made for continuing the Deaconess Order in The United Church of Canada, "of which those already connected with the existing Orders shall be members, as well as any who in the future may be designated to the office of deaconess by The United Church of Canada."(9) It was further recommended that a committee on Employed Women Workers in the Church

be appointed to, as recorded in the General Council Record of Proceedings for 1926, "study the whole question of the permanent policy respecting the scope and supervision of the Deaconess Order and of other trained women workers of The United Church and to report to the next meeting of the Council."(10) The recommendations were adopted and Winnifred Thomas, then Principal of the Methodist School, became the Executive Secretary for the Committee on Employed Women Workers. Serving on the same Committee was Jean MacDonald, the then superintendent of the Presbyterian Missionary and Deaconess Training Home. In addition to their duties on the Committee, both women went on staff of the new United Church Training School, when in 1926 there was a move to amalgamate the denominational training schools. Jean MacDonald became Principal, and Winnifred Thomas went on staff. Each woman received a salary of \$2,000.00 per year, plus living expenses.(11)

At the same time as the two Toronto Schools were being amalgamated, the Women's Department of Manitoba College in Winnipeg continued as a deaconess training centre for the United Church of Canada.

A Look at Women's Work in the Church

The Committee on Employed Women Workers in the Church began its investigative work immediately after the Second General Council. This gave the Committee two years to gather information about the work of deaconesses and other women workers, and to describe and analyze the problems which they encountered in the church. Committee members discovered and reported at the General Council in 1928 that women were working in an endless variety of places and were making an effective contribution, but were, in many situations, being treated unfairly.

The Committee located a total of 951 women employed in the work and institutions of the United Church. Over one third were employed by the Woman's Missionary Society (WMS) and worked in other countries and the balance worked in community missions, hospitals, Indian Schools, Oriental Missions and immigrant ministries in Canada. An additional 106 women worked in clerical and secretarial positions at Church Headquarters, and 212 worked within educational institutions. Of the total, only 31 did congregational work (other than secretarial). One hundred and sixteen of the women were members of the Deaconess Order. Twenty-four of the deaconesses worked in self-supporting congregations, their work ranging from Church secretary to Christian Outreach Worker.(12)

Other deaconesses, according to records of the 1920's and early 1930's, were employed in social service work in downtown areas, in hospital visitation programmes, at schools for girls, in the Toronto Strangers'

Department, and in producing Christian Education and pastoral radio programmes for isolated communities.(13) Those who worked for the Woman's Missionary Society, the largest employer of all categories of woman workers in the early years, worked in a variety of places. Though WMS records did not consistently identify deaconesses in its employ as such, annual reports show that in the 1920's and 1930's deaconesses were employed in work with people who were Chinese, French and native, as well as engaged in work among Europeans in Canada, mission work in Nova Scotia, social service ministry in Montreal, Timmins and Winnipeg, and children's work in Vancouver and Toronto. Also, many were among the over one hundred women appointed annually for overseas work.(14)

All women workers for the Woman's Missionary Society came under the organization's salary schedule, whether they were deaconesses or not. The starting salary in 1927 was \$800.00, with \$25.00 increases for each year of previous service, to a maximum of one thousand dollars per year. Salaries for overseas workers varied from one country to another, but like their counterparts in Canada, were consistently low, compared to other similar occupations for women. By comparison, nurses in Ontario were paid \$1,091 to \$1,597 per year at the same time.(15) Ordained married ministers at that time had a minimum salary of \$1,800, with a free unfurnished manse. Unmarried ministers would receive a minimum salary of \$1,600.(16)

The Committee also reported that, as well as an incredible variety of placements and jobs for women, there was widespread and inadequate educational standing and specialized preparation among workers. It stated that "On the whole the standards have been low in light of the significance and importance of the tasks assigned."(17)

The report also gave details of a varied level of salary and working conditions, some extremely bad. Individual employing bodies set their own standards for method of employment, salary, furlough, and superannuation, and such groups rarely cooperated with each other. The result was that women were doing the same work but some under vastly different conditions from others, and that there were no procedural or structural ways that such inequalities could be monitored and dealt with.(18) Women were isolated and mostly on their own as far as securing justice and fair treatment by the Church. Such a chaotic system made women the losers, and kept isolated women in places where their contributions and skills were neither respected nor valued. Analysis would lead one to ponder whether there were an unconscious decision on the part of the Church to leave women in this situation, since women's work was perceived as being temporary and therefore not in need of structural guidelines.

In light of this situation, the Committee recommended in its 1928 report that there be one set of standards for preparation and employment conditions for all women, stating that

It should result in the formulation of such a policy as regards the employment of women in the work of the Church as would place church work as a vocation for women in an established and dignified position.(19)

The recommendations put forward were all adopted.

The Committee also noted that women were remarkably absent from the Boards of most of the groups employing large numbers of women and from the courts of the Church, the places where major decisions were made about church policy, finances and work issues which affected them. The first General Council, which had received reports from both deaconess organizations, and had authorized the uniting of the two orders, had only four female commissioners, two Methodist and two Congregationalist.(20)

The conditions which the Committee so clearly outlined - the variety of work and places of employment, the lack of representation on decision-making bodies, the lack of interest of employment bodies in looking at their employment practices and cooperating with others - were to continue for years. An example of the kind of conditions which were allowed to continue is found in the description of deaconess work in St. James United Church in Montreal in 1925 and 1927. Church Historian Nathan Mair writes:

St. James was assigned two deaconesses, one to do the missionary work and the relief work and the other to work in Christian Education for her sponsor, the St. James Morning Sunday School. In another year, the second deaconess took over all the secretarial work assigned to the two so that the senior deaconess could devote more time to Christian Education... In 1927 St. James Montreal spent \$9,150.00 for its two ministers, \$1,309.00 for one and a half deaconesses, \$3,897.00 for organist and soloists, \$1,555.00 for a sexton. A part-time secretary received \$720.00.(21)

To solve what it saw as massive problems associated with women's employment in the Church, the Committee recommended in 1928 that a Diaconate be created as a second and lower part of the Order of Ministry. The essence of the Diaconate would be gender-related rather than defined by its function. It would, according to the Committee

...include all those women who meet the required standards, regardless of the special form of service they are rendering. (The creation of a Diaconate) would be the means of giving fuller ecclesiastical recognition to certain ministries already exercised by women in the Church. The authority to preach and where necessary to baptize should be given to members of the diaconate, but their work should in no way be limited to preaching, nor should those who qualify but desire to serve the Church in other ways be denied this status.(22)

As well as responding to individual situations of injustice, some members of the Committee on Employed Women Workers also saw this as a way of satisfying the requests for women's ordination which were already being made on behalf of Lydia Gruchy by Saskatchewan Conference. Dr. Ernest Thomas, the chairperson of the Committee on the Ordination of Women, in an article in The New Outlook in 1928 spoke of the plan for a Diaconate with great enthusiasm, maintaining that such a lower order would satisfy women's desire for ordination. In stirring language, he states that

The Diaconate or a separate, lower order for women is the best vehicle through which women manifestly called and adequately trained for the service of the Church (could) render their fullest service for the benefit of the Church.(23)

The Committee on the Ordination of Women, with Nellie McClung as Secretary, submitted its recommendations to the 1928 General Council. Among other things, they had been charged with ascertaining the will of the Church for the creation of a diaconate. Although the Committee recommended against the establishment of a diaconate it did state that

Your committee cannot conclude without expressing the hope that every encouragement will be given to the existing order of Deaconesses to develop their educational training, and their special aptitudes for the wonderfully valuable work they do. They hope that Deaconesses employed by congregations will be members of Official Boards and of Sessions, when that is legally possible, in order that they may be eligible for the higher courts of the Church, and that thus wisely and with regard to the harmony and well-being of the whole Church, they may enter into that larger sphere to which their gifts of insight and service entitle them."(24)

Although General Council did not approve the creation of a Diaconate, it did accept other recommendations from the Committee on Employed Women Workers. One recommendation was the creation of an Inter-Board Committee on Employed Women Workers (referred to hereafter as the Inter-

Board Committee) to replace the Committee on Employed Women Workers. Winnifred Thomas was named Executive Secretary of the Inter-Board Committee with the same salary and arrangements she had had as Executive Secretary of the Committee on Employed Women Workers.

Education

While the Committee on Employed Women Workers had been hard at work since 1926, documenting the situation of women workers in the Church, changes were happening in the educational institutions that had been created by the 1926 General Council.

As previously mentioned, the Methodist and Presbyterian Schools had been amalgamated into the United Church Training School located at 135 St. Clair Avenue West in Toronto. The emphasis in the new school continued to be on training women for a variety of roles: pastoral assistants, Christian workers, missionaries, inner city workers, church hospital nurses, secretaries, home visitors and heads of orphanages or church schools. Academic studies and practical work continued to focus on the development of very specific skills and knowledge which would be needed to work in these helping, social-oriented positions within the Church. On-the-job experience was provided through an extensive field education programme. Students worked in churches, Christian social service projects and, in this respect, often had more practical experience than did those people who were in ordination-stream theological schools.(25) The 1930 Calendar of the United Church Training School emphasized the importance of providing practical experience for all students.

Care is taken in the assignments made and the School is under obligation to ministers who undertake supervision and who report at the end of the session on the student's work. The Church is being asked by the School to make a real contribution to the training of effective leaders.(26)

The academic component of the programme included mandatory courses in Old Testament, New Testament, Christian Doctrine, Church History, Sociology, Religious Pedagogy, Gymnasium and Recreational Leadership.(27) The School also had a very powerful hidden curriculum which involved teaching women to behave like proper ladies, to be gracious, and included learning how to pour tea at formal occasions, how to socialize and engage others in light conversation, how to dress and move appropriately, and how to participate in a variety of "feminine" recreational and hobby activities. Students were required to live in residence. Formal evening dinners, and afternoon teas with the Principal on Sundays and

special occasions, were an important part of the programme and residential life in the following way:

(It) should be a real family life; each is bound up in a whole, and affects the whole - the whole re-acts upon each. Living graciously in harmony with others is a course of study and practice worthy of every resident.(28)

The effect of such a hidden curriculum on graduates was profound. One 1928 graduate, in reflecting back on her education, described it this way:

We were taught to be ladies - to be amusing, helpful and always gentle - to listen endlessly to the ideas and moods of others.(29)

From 1925 to 1939 there was a course for preparation of deaconesses at United College in Winnipeg, a union formally constituted in 1938 between Manitoba College (Presbyterian) and Wesley College (Methodist). During this period 47 women graduated from the program. Courses were held with candidates for the Order of Ministry. A non-residential program, courses were offered not only in theology but in public speaking and stenography as well. Marguerite Miller, a 1939 graduate, recalls taking courses in Old Testament, New Testament, public speaking, Christian education, group work, pastoral theology, worship, systematic theology, religious philosophy and comparative religion.

Laura Sharpe Long writes of her days at Manitoba College in Winnipeg where the Principal of the School was Dr. John Mackay.

To become a deaconess then, one was required to have senior matriculation (Grade 12) and some business or professional training. From 1920-1939 there was a course offered in Winnipeg as well as at the Training School in Toronto. I chose to attend in Winnipeg - most of our classes were held with the theology students - there were ten men and two girls (sic) in the class. The deaconess course was a two year course - I entered in 1931 and graduated in 1933. My practical work was done at Point Douglas Mission, near the CPR station. At that time deaconesses were required to work for a period of probation before being designated.. I chose to be designated a deaconess and this took place at the Conference annual meeting in June 1936 in Brandon (Manitoba).(30)

In 1930 the United Church Training School completed negotiations with Emmanuel College and signed an affiliation agreement which allowed staff from Emmanuel College to teach many of the courses at the School. At this time, the School also raised its entrance requirements and began an

extensive assessment of its curriculum. The Board of the School expressed the hope that, as soon as possible, the School could be located close to Victoria University and Emmanuel College as a visible statement of its increasing interest in cooperation with the university. The Board saw its ideal new building as including

a residence to accommodate from forty to fifty students, with common room, reception room, library, assembly hall, a chapel and other necessary rooms.(31)

The Inter-Board Committee on Women Workers , 1928

While students were studying for a life of work in the church, the Inter-Board Committee on Women Workers had been given the responsibility of caring for and directing the Deaconess Order and "for studying the whole question of a permanent policy regarding the scope and supervision of the Deaconess Order and of other women workers with training in The United Church and to report back to the next meeting of the Council."(32) This meant that, for the first time, administration of the Deaconess Order was separated from the preparation of deaconesses, and an official committee of the Church, with a paid secretary, was created to look after its welfare. Though the intent of this was to integrate deaconess work and issues into the life and structures of the Church, and to give increased visibility and importance to a marginalized group, it actually resulted in the loss of much of the autonomy, distinctiveness and identity of deaconesses within the church. The new Committee had representation from all the Church Boards, the Woman's Missionary Society , the Deaconess Order and General Council. With only two seats allocated for deaconesses themselves, there was little direct awareness of the history or distinctiveness of deaconess work within Canada.

The Inter-Board Committee's first work was to approve a uniform for deaconesses and to prepare a special service for the designation or "setting apart" of deaconesses to be included in the Book of Common Order. Both of these early tasks and decisions of the Inter-Board Committee reflected, and were influenced by, the prevailing notions of women's nature and role as being ancillary, restricted to caring, assisting and remaining submissive, unobtrusive and obedient. The uniform chosen was a dark blue dress with white stiff linen cuffs and collar, a dark navy blue coat and a matching hat. The emphasis was on plainness, dignity and practicality. The image chosen to describe deaconesses in the service of designation was that of the handmaiden.(33) Drawing heavily on the scriptural account of Mary and the Magnificat (34) and the story of the Last Judgement where Christ rebukes those who do not give assistance to everyone in need around them (35), the

service included within its description of deaconess work a wide variety of ministrations seen to be the special office of women:

To you are accorded peculiar privileges and opportunities. Released from other cares, you give yourselves without reservation, according to the will of God, to the service of the Lord and His Church, wherever your lot may be cast.... You are to go about doing good, ministering to the wants of a suffering, sorrowing and sin-laden world. You are to be angels of mercy to the poor, to visit the sick, pray with the dying, care for the orphan, seek the wandering, comfort the afflicted, save the sinning and ever be ready to take up any other duty proper to your calling. Such a ministry confers upon you a great honour, and involves a solemn responsibility.(36)

The service continued with a prayer for such women, invoking God's blessing and care for them in their work. The 1932 service in the Book of Common Order expanded the image of the deaconess as a handmaiden even further, and asked that such women be given for their work "singleness of heart, simplicity and humility".(37) All of this both drew upon and reinforced the tradition in which the Church both perceived and treated women as humble servants, constantly available and responsive to the needs of individuals and groups.

The Inter-Board Committee also had to deal with the fact that there was unwillingness to act on the proposal of a diaconate. Women workers were left with little assurance of adequate working conditions, no direct representation in the courts of the Church, and no connection to the clergy.

Another early task was to review a number of the policies which had governed the supervision of deaconesses and which had been agreed to during 1926 to 1928. Regulations that they supported included one that DEACONESS CANDIDATES MUST BE "not less than twenty-three, and not more than thirty-five years of age".(38) The Committee also established procedures for admission and withdrawal from the Order, and for methods of appointment, and reaffirmed the minimum salary of \$1,000 set by the General Council.(39)

The Policy of Disjoining

The Inter-Board Committee also continued a rule which had been previously in place, one which was a reflection of the cultural expectations of the times, but which would severely limit the recognition and opportunities for women in the future. The Committee reaffirmed the rule that deaconesses could not continue to work as deaconesses or maintain membership in the Order when they married. Formed originally when deaconess Orders were

modelled on the organizational principles of sisterhoods, and included communal living arrangements, this rule proved incredibly difficult to displace, even though deaconesses now had much more independence and were expected to provide for themselves and live independently. The regulation required deaconesses to resign from their positions and from the Order, by letter, previous to, or on the day that they were to be married. The procedure involved was called "disjoining." (40)

This disjoining rule was to remain a part of the Manual and constitution until the late 1950's (and be a heavy influence into the early 1960's). The persistence of the rule over time suggests that it was more than just a remnant of a more communal and segregated past. It was supported by a theology and a societal expectation that women could not combine a role as wife and as worker at the same time. Marriage was seen as the natural and legitimate primary commitment, and work should never interfere with it. Such expectations of retirement after marriage also applied to other caretaking professions such as teaching and nursing, though both of these professions won the concession that married women could work long before deaconesses did. The dominant ideology proclaimed that women's nurturing, caretaking capabilities were, first of all, given for family care and maintenance, and only secondarily, in cases of spinsterhood or widowhood, could they be applied to wage earning. Implied within this was an understanding that marriage itself was a calling, a job of great challenge for women, and one which, by definition, included economic, social and emotional dependence on a man, and the accompanying role of motherhood. The Church's theology supported this, legitimized and naturalized it by making it appear as God's will for women, the only way in which the world could be ordered, and by equating deviance from this role with sin. (41)

The rule of disjoining was justified by some as the only practical way of dealing with women professionals in the Church. The call system of the Church, while not applied directly to deaconesses, did have a general ideology which equated faithfulness in professional Church work with a willingness to be sent anywhere in the country. (42) While this was practical for male ordained ministers only because their wives were expected to follow them without question, it would not have been possible for married deaconesses to present themselves as equally available and therefore "faithful" servants in a society in which it was unheard of for a husband to relocate himself for the convenience and job situation of his wife. Thus, in practical terms, married deaconesses could not be accommodated either within the current theology or practices concerning professional work in the Church. (43)

Such strict regulations about retirement after marriage, while strange within the United Church today, were a part of its more recent history. They reappeared many times in relation to women's ministry and betrayed an unwillingness to see women's work as a career, as anything beyond a time of waiting, of preparation for marriage. For example, at General Council in 1962 the issue of married women's suitability for ordained ministry was hotly debated. One of the recommendations being considered by the Council was that ordination for women be open "only to those women who are unmarried or widows, and therefore not under the call of wifehood or motherhood at the time of their ordination".(44) Also, it was recommended that when ordained women married, they should enter their "special calling of wife and mother, and cease to be eligible for settlement as a minister of the Word and Sacraments." Such women could return to pastoral ministry only if their husbands died or "at that time of life when (they are) no longer required in the home as mothers and if a suitable ministry can be arranged which does not interfere with the stability of the marriage and their position as wives."(45)

Issues of workload, inadequate remuneration and pensions were not taken seriously since it was assumed that deaconess work was not a career or a long-term occupation in women's lives. It was assumed that in the short term poor working conditions and salaries could be endured because marriage was not far ahead for most women, and that their future needs would be supplied by a husband. Deaconesses were stereotyped as young, immature, less experienced than their ordained colleagues, and less serious about their work. These perceptions prevented any comparisons of salaries or working conditions with male professional workers, and kept sexism hidden in the Church.

In actuality, almost half of the deaconesses at any given period in the Church's life did not marry and ended up spending their entire lives in Church work.(46) Questions of exploitation and inferior treatment were never raised because "everyone" knew that deaconess work was temporary and the realm of young women waiting to be married. In a very subtle way, the experiences and characteristics of some deaconesses conveniently became seen as the description and role of all. The recruitment materials produced for women stated these expectations in a matter-of-fact manner, such as the following, produced in 1948:

It will be noticed that on these lists (of workers needed) a larger number of women are called for than men. This is natural, as the replacements are inevitably more frequent. Marriage and other types of home responsibility tend to make the average length of service of women shorter than that of men.(47)

The disjoining rule also benefited the church directly. Most deaconesses who married became involved in volunteer work in the congregations which they joined. They were encouraged to accept major leadership positions, particularly in Christian Education programmes and women's groups; using their educational skills and experience in a way which congregations benefited from yet for which they paid nothing. All of this occurred within a context where all women were expected to work for their church, and the variety of the tasks, though endless, kept such work hidden. Tasks included baking pies, sewing for bazaars, cleaning the sanctuary, sewing banners or curtains, catering for banquets, teaching Sunday School, babysitting elders' children, and planting gardens around the church building, to name only a few.

The volunteer work of women was at its greatest when deaconesses married ministers, as often happened from 1925 to 1955. In the early years many graduates of the United Church Training School did work for several years and then married ministers. Others married clergy upon graduation, men they had met while studying at Emmanuel College. Others attended the Training School with the intention of preparing themselves for life as the wife of a minister.(48) Because of this, in the 1940's and 1950's, the Training School was consistently referred to as "the angel factory", "the clergy reserves" and the "marriage market".(49) All who married were expected to use their skills and training as volunteers in the Church. The following quotations shows that such voluntary service by women was a source of great pride and was accepted without question.

(In the Woman's Missionary Society) the yearly casualty rate to the ranks through marriage is a continuing headache with which the organization's officers must cope. 'We prefer' says Ruth Taylor - with an unmistakable twinkle in her eye - 'that they marry some young man from the Board of Overseas Missions. The fact is that usually the husband and wife both stay and work together as a team; the Overseas Board pays the salary, and we are then in a position to send out another woman on the original salary.'(50)

Disjoining at marriage also disadvantaged women in that it kept them out of work for long periods of time and made it difficult for them to get back into deaconess work if they were widowed or divorced. A number of women left deaconess work to care for members of their families, such as aging parents, a care-taking role which was expected of all single women in society. They, too, found it difficult to return to work, as one woman suggests:

I left to fill a need in my home and when my mother died five years later I was a back number and needed refresher courses. The change

in our youth at that time made me reluctant to get back into youth work.(51)

The result of the disjoining by marriage and the role of caretaker for family members was a constant decrease in the numbers in the Order every year, and the creation of an over-all impression that deaconess work was not long-term, not seriously a vocation, and definitely secondary in importance to the ordained male profession.

Probationary Period

The second rule instituted by the Committee was the regulation that prospective deaconesses, before being received into the Order, must serve one year of probation, at the end of which, if satisfactory reports had been given about their work performance, they would be recommended by the Committee for entrance into the Order.(52) This rule requiring a probationary period, not a requirement for ordained ministry or for any other type of work in the Church, promoted the idea that deaconesses were people "in training" and that the hiring of one was, at best, risky. As the following letter from a deaconess who questioned the regulations suggests, there were a number of difficulties with the rule:

Deaconesses should be given the same privileges as missionaries and ministers in the matter of designation. They are not any more of a risk (concerning whether they turn out all right or not) than either of the other two groups. But the big reason is one's relation to the church in which one goes to work. It would have been much easier to establish myself if I had had my pin, uniform, etc. right from the beginning. Mr. McLeod didn't say a word from the pulpit about my designation because he thought the people would not understand. They had accepted me as experienced and trained, and it would make them think that I had just been practising on them.(53)

The Depression Years

Though in the years immediately after Church Union there had been well over 900 women employed within the Church, the Depression of the 1930's curtailed the opportunities for deaconesses to do the traditional types of community and benevolent work.

The whole Church was having serious financial difficulties, and projects and salaries were cut drastically. The struggle was then to hold the line in relief work, to continue the social work which was vital, and keep open as many as possible of the Home Mission fields across Canada. There was no immigration, no Church expansion, no frontier development at all.(54)

Though the Woman's Missionary Society managed to keep most of its projects going through these years, many of the other employing boards did not. Many large congregations cut their staff to one ordained man.

By 1932 the job situation was considered critical, and the Inter-Board Committee, which had produced a new recruiting folder two years earlier, stopped actively recruiting candidates for the Deaconess Order, stating that the number of candidates recruited (must be) determined by the number of openings in the general work of the Church rather than by the number wishing to enter this form of service.(55)

The Inter-Board Committee

The Inter-Board Committee itself was not idle during this time. The Committee's paid, part-time secretary, Mary Eadie, who occupied the position from 1932 -1937, devoted a great deal of her time to deaconess work. She interpreted church policy, screened applications, helped with the placement of new deaconesses and those wishing to change their work, and in general acted as a confidante for women across the country. She maintained contact with both active and retired deaconesses through frequent newsletters and advised them on such things as obtaining half-fare railway tickets, shared information about marriages, family deaths and other significant events in the lives of the women, and referred to herself as a friend: "Be sure to drop me a note if you need a friend at any time".(56)

Such concern and careful communication did begin to break down some of the barriers of distance and eased the feelings of isolation that many deaconesses experienced. Those deaconesses who worked in congregations or social agencies were often on their own and had little contact with other deaconesses. For some, the correspondence from the Executive Secretary and biennial meetings of the Deaconess Association provided their only contact with other deaconesses.

The Inter-Board Committee, cognizant of the difficult finances of the Church, recommended that its own work be temporarily adjusted so that the secretarial duties could be carried by a secretary who would work one-third of the time. She would continue to supervise deaconesses, to assist in appointments when they could be found, and to interpret policy, but all correspondence and interviews with prospective candidates would be handled through the United Church Training School or through the Woman's Missionary Society, the largest employer.(57)

Despite the decrease in staff time and the lack of job possibilities, the Inter-Board Committee continued its work on job conditions and remuneration for women workers. In 1934 it turned its attention to the situation of retired

Methodist deaconesses, of which there were 35 who were receiving inadequate funds for living.(58) Having done most of their work at a time when deaconesses were paid only living expenses but were promised care in their old age, they had not had the opportunity to save money for their old age. These deaconesses were now being supplied with a pension that did not provide even basic living expenses. The Committee brought the situation to the attention of the Church and worked for pension increases.

In looking at the job situation for deaconesses, the Inter-Board Committee saw a potential for women's jobs within local congregations as ministerial assistants. Thus, in 1933 the Committee began the job of convincing the Church of the value of deaconesses as congregational workers. After much deliberation, the Committee decided that there were possibilities for promoting deaconesses as Christian Education specialists, as social ministry assistants and as Secretary-Deaconesses. As a way of pointing out the value of women in these jobs, the Committee set out in an organized way "to discover the mind of some of the foremost men of the Church in regard to the question, 'Is a deaconess valuable in the service of a local congregation?'"(59) The answers to this question were included as part of the Committee's report to General Council in 1934 and were used within all publicity on the work of deaconesses over the next decade.(60)

The responses given by these ministers indicate the way in which women's work was perceived and the wide range of work in which deaconesses were actually involved in local congregations. One testimonial from a minister in Eastern Canada stated that

My experience has been unique, for I was prejudiced against deaconesses for reasons I need not enumerate. But after seven years' association with my deaconess, I am a complete convert. I simply could not have covered anything of the ground I have covered, had it not been for her always ready help and generous cooperation. I think that in two ways in particular the deaconess can supplement the minister to great effect, in a ministry to young women away from home, in dealing with adolescent girls, and in being a kind of liaison officer between the Sunday School and the homes from which the children come.(61)

Another testimonial stated that

The difference which the deaconess has made in my church is the difference between ineffectiveness, and a thoroughly organized and effective organization. She is indispensable. This is not merely my opinion, it is the opinion of the whole church. We have tried different kinds of assistants in the church. We are convinced that a good

deaconess is the best assistant that a church or minister can have.(62)

Some deaconesses saw their role as assistants as unproblematic and as prescribed by the attitudes they had towards their own identity as women. Stella Burry, who graduated in 1926, worked for four years in a New Church Development Project and then ten in a downtown Toronto church where she did counselling, organized camping for the children from poorer homes in the inner city, and many things which today would be associated with congregational ministry. She described her role and her work by saying she was an

assistant to the minister who could do a lot of things. It was easy for me to organize. If I saw a job that had to be done, and the need was there ... well, my dear, that was my job.(63)

While undoubtedly in many cases such an arrangement worked well, it also left many deaconesses subject to the whims and evaluation of one person, an individual with very different training and understanding of the Church. Ordained ministers often had little understanding of the deaconess' work in Christian Education and social service, or of her enabling and supportive leadership styles. Yet he was the deaconess' supervisor and represented her on the church committees and Board. While deaconesses could be official members of committees and the Official Board, if asked, there was nothing in the Manual which would guarantee their direct access to any of the structures of the Church. Those women who helped with Christian Education programmes and were not present for Sunday worship because of duties elsewhere were not visible or known to many people in the congregation, and there were few who had direct knowledge of deaconess work. Several congregations dealt with this by establishing deaconess committees, and by 1940 official publications on the Deaconess Order advocated the formation of such groups in every congregation which employed a deaconess. Most of the committees created assisted the deaconess in her work, and worked hard at developing strategies to publicize the work in the congregation, but their influence was limited by the fact that most of them consisted of strictly women, and were themselves removed from the hierarchy and decision-making groups of the congregation. Thus their very make-up reinforced the idea that deaconess work was gender-defined and it was natural that such women would restrict their sphere of influence to the women and children of the church.

As one publicity item stated:

Such extensive and intensive work requires many assistants, and a valuable contribution of the Deaconess is the development of an

efficient board of volunteer workers. When, in addition, there is a group of women behind the Deaconess who keeps in touch with her, supports her, and assists her in her manifold tasks, the contribution of a Deaconess to the whole life of the congregation is invaluable. (64)

Such committees acted as support and advisory groups, helped to raise deaconesses' salaries on occasion, and raised money to buy supplies needed for their work. In return, deaconesses were often honorary members of all the women's groups within congregations.

The sheer amount of work expected from one deaconess is recounted in these words by a minister from the west:

We have a very loyal deaconess. Her work is quite diversified. Among her many tasks she directs our church school work in general (Sunday and mid-week). She teaches a Bible Class; she is convenor of the Missionary Department of our school; she has secretarial duties in the church office; she visits the homes; she cares especially for the women and children of the congregation; she gives her evenings over to church and committee meetings; she welcomes people to our church services; - all of which to my mind is of tremendous importance in the life of a church. (65)

The Secretary-Deaconess

The mention of church secretarial work as part of a deaconess' duties is important to note. It had always been there, as a possibility for deaconess work, but during the Depression, its promotion as a valid job became a way to save many a deaconess' job by giving them work which was visible, indispensable in the eyes of the congregation, and typically "women's work". The college in Manitoba had taught secretarial skills as a part of its curriculum since before Church Union, but it was not until jobs became scarce that it was officially incorporated into descriptions of deaconess work and promoted under the title of "Secretary-Deaconess". (66) Though its creation did save some jobs for women, it also led to overwork. In many cases it was adding more responsibilities to a job which was already too large. Only four years after the Committee began to promote the idea of the Secretary-Deaconess, it had to add a cautionary note to its description of the position, suggesting that "Clerical work should be kept to a minimum; major responsibilities should be in the field of Christian Education and Pastoral Care". (67)

The dangers of including clerical and secretarial work within the publicity on deaconesses were more than just the possible creation of situations of overwork. Such combining of secretarial and educational functions also led

to a blurring of the congregation's perceptions of what a deaconess did and was. In some cases, it led to the perception that a deaconess was a glorified secretary, rather expensive and not particularly skilled, rather than a skilled professional with specific skills in Christian Education and social ministry. Though it had helped to save many a job in the 1930's it later became a serious impediment to the recognition of both the professional nature and specific skills of deaconess work. In the publicity folder, "Ready to Help Your Church", the task of the Secretarial-Deaconess was outlined in detail, and clearly reflected an emphasis on the record-keeping and office work rather than on the Christian Education or outreach work.

The Deaconess spends the mornings in the office. She attends to the correspondence, mimeographs the weekly calendar and the letters that are sent out to the congregation. She prepares lists for the elders and for the every-member canvass and receives the Church notices. The files are an endless responsibility; each death, marriage, birth or change of address requiring an entry on each of four or five cards, and in the midst of this office work there are even more tasks. A Sunday School Superintendent comes for help.(68)

Secretarial work, which was in a large part a form of assistance to the minister, reinforced the congregation's and clergy's perceptions that deaconesses were assistants and could only function under the direction of others.

By 1936, the scarcity of jobs for women in the Church was so great that the admission process of the United Church Training School included writing to prospective candidates, even those who were most qualified, and informing them that "the prospects of any appointment (after graduation) are not very great."(69) The staff of the School was cut back and the Principal, Gertrude Rutherford, remained the only full-time member of the academic staff during the Depression and The Second World War.(70)

Ordination of Women

In addition to the financial and employment concerns facing the Church in 1935 and 1936 much of the attention of the Church concerning women's work focused on the Remit which had been authorized by the 1934 General Council concerning the possibility of ordaining women. Each Presbytery had been asked to vote on the following question:

Are you in favour of the following legislation? That the Basis of Union be amended by adding the following new clause under the general heading: 'The Ministry' in the section: 'Pastoral Office,

including Term of Service': 'The ministry shall be open to both men and women'.(71)

Presbyteries were required to vote 'yes' or 'no', and could attach no qualifications or explanations to their vote. The debate on the issue was lively. Articles appeared in The New Outlook, the United Church newspaper, both for and against it. Fears were expressed that women would take over the Church, that the quality of ministry would suffer, and that men would leave the church in droves. Some people, in the midst of the controversy, were persuaded to support it only through seeing Lydia Gruchy as an unusual case, as removed from the nature and failings of most women. A particularly persuasive article in The New Outlook pointed out the case based on a notion of Lydia Gruchy as a special case:

There is not the slightest possibility of women ever displacing men in this calling - not that that would be a terrible calamity even if it did come. Those who urge this change in our polity do so, no doubt, with the thought that it would only be in most unusual cases, something like Miss Gruchy's, that ordination would ever be asked for or thought of and that the dangers that some people see are never likely to exist anywhere else than in their own imaginations.(72)

Others were persuaded by Lydia Gruchy's properly feminine, modest and unassuming manner, by the fact that she was willing to let prominent males plead her case and speak on her behalf. In many people's estimation, the credit for her ordination was in fact due to the combination of her modesty being overshadowed by her articulate male champions. Thus The New Outlook of November 18th, 1936, in describing the historic event, said

We have come tonight to mark a step in our church's history - a development which we owe, not to the intransigent demand and agitation of women, but in the first instance, perhaps to our revered and affectionately esteemed Dr. E.H. Oliver. His knightly and chivalrous attitude and advocacy have finally prevailed.(73)

The results of the Remit were announced at the General Council in 1936. Out of the 114 Presbyteries of the Church, 80 voted in favour of amending the Basis of Union, 26 voted against it, and 8 gave no report. (74) The remit had passed and the way was opened for the ordination of women.

Members of the Deaconess Order and its accompanying administrative Committee watched the debate on the ordination of women with great interest. While there is some evidence that individual deaconesses, particularly in Saskatchewan, actively worked to secure the ordination of women, the Deaconess Association and the Inter-Board Committee made no

separate public statements on the issue to General Council, but instead stated that their opinions had been given to the Committee on the Ordination of Women and were reflected in their report. Some deaconesses saw Lydia's ordination as signalling major changes for women's work in the Church. For example, Gertrude Rutherford, Principal of the Training School, in correspondence with Mary Eadie, secretary of the Inter-Board Committee, said the following:

Apparently Ordination of Women went through without a flutter. This is not a very encouraging sign, unless I misread it. The trouble is that women are not clamouring at the gates and for this reason the 'brethren' have little reason to be greatly excited. But there is no knowing what may develop in the next few years. In any case, the decision of the Council has, I think, a direct bearing on the whole question of the place of women in the Church - training, qualifications and the job of the United Church Training School.(75)

During the next ten years few women entered ordained ministry and Lydia Gruchy did in fact remain the exceptional woman. From 1936 to 1947 only seventeen women were ordained, and there was only an average of two ordinations of women per year for the following ten years.(76) Few deaconesses chose to change professions and become ordained. While the Church could now point to ordination as an example of its practice of equality for women, and describe itself as open to women's gifts and ministry, most women were still in 1936 concentrated in less-recognized, poorly-paid and marginal work within the Church.

The ordination advocates' strategy of women remaining silent while men presented their case to the Church was one which the women in the Deaconess Order would evaluate as effective and use in their own later attempts to work for recognition and justice. Many times they would use testimonials from male clergy to promote their work, and would ask men to speak for the need for better representation, more adequate salaries, and better working conditions in the church.

A New Structure: The Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers

The same General Council considered a recommendation from the Inter-Board Committee on Women's Work that it be disbanded and a standing committee of General Council take its place. Within this new committee would be lodged considerable power concerning recruitment, policy-making, and supervision of the working conditions of all deaconesses. The new Committee was to consist of representatives from several Conferences, the Boards that employed women, and one representative each from the Boards

of Evangelism and Social Service, Home Missions, and Christian Education. In addition there would be representatives from the Woman's Missionary Society, and two representatives from the Deaconess Order. This Committee would also have a sub-committee which would specifically look after deaconess work and would report to the whole Committee regularly. (77)

It was hoped that this Committee would help to bring the concerns of deaconesses to the whole Church. Both the Deaconess Order and the Woman's Missionary Society were relatively autonomous groups, not linked to existing structures of the Church, and therefore found that their concerns expressed to General Council and other bodies of the Church were not acted upon. By having a wide range of representation from so many Boards, the Committee was to provide that link. What was lost with the formation of the Committee was the specific voice and experience of deaconesses. Out of a membership of approximately thirty, there were only two members who were themselves deaconesses.(78) The new Committee was approved, but, as Mary Eadie suggests in her description of the session to Gertrude Rutherford, not without some controversy:

I got on the agenda on Saturday and did my darndest. I wish you could have felt the electric shock when I read our recommendation that the Inter-Board disband. Their jaws seemed to fall. It was quite dramatic. Thought you would like a line from the battle field.(79)

The new Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers began immediately to search for a full-time secretary and to publish a manual on the Deaconess Order which would both interpret the history and self-understanding of deaconesses and print all of the regulations concerning their candidacy, work and retirement in an official document of the Church. At this time, the Committee put into place a number of structures and rules which would result in closer contact with deaconesses in their working situations and which would keep the Committee informed about difficulties which individual deaconesses were encountering in their work. Deaconesses were expected to consult with the Committee concerning all appointments and transfers, to submit yearly reports of their work, to submit to yearly medical examinations, and to seek the Committee's advice on problems.(80)

A job description was created for the Executive Secretary which focused on recruitment, administration, representation of deaconess' interests on committees and boards of the Church, liaison with Church women's associations, and publicity and press releases related to deaconess' concerns.(81) For the first time, the Secretary was to sit on all of the boards and groups which employed deaconesses. It was hoped that this

direct representation and communication would allow for more direct work on salaries, employment conditions and the increasing of opportunities for deaconesses in the Church. In the area of recruitment, the job description included regular visits to universities, presbyteries, normal schools and high schools. Also, there were the necessary office responsibilities.(82)

In 1938 Lydia Gruchy, the first woman to be ordained in The United Church, became the Executive Secretary of the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers. Contributions towards her salary were solicited from women's groups across the country. People involved in promoting the Deaconess Order saw this formation of the new Committee and its financing by the women of the Church as a vote of confidence in their work and the beginning of a new and much stronger movement for women workers in the Church. It was reported to General Council in Winnipeg that

(Women's Associations) support the Committee financially, thus taking a vital part in the invaluable work being done by deaconesses and other employed women workers. In the year 1939 the sum of \$1,022 was received from them in donations ranging from \$1.00 to \$25.00.(83)

An editorial in the Christian Century in March, 1938 praised the decision to hire Lydia Gruchy:

The United Church decided to reorganize and develop the Deaconess Order and other forms of women's work. For the presentation of this project to the people from the pulpit, and for the enlistment of high grade workers, Miss, 6,21-2 seemed specially suited, and her appointment, having now been announced, is received with cordial approval.(84)

Though unfamiliar with the specific workings of the Deaconess Order, Lydia Gruchy brought with her a concern about the absence of women from leadership and policy-making positions. In an editorial in Women and the Church in 1939, she observed:

What we find is that women are active in the work of the Church but not to any appreciable extent in the formulating of its policies. Sunday Schools are staffed preponderantly by women. Yet while women are on the committees dealing particularly with Children's and Women's Work, the general boards which consider the principles governing Christian Education are composed mainly of men. The same is true of community work. All churches have deaconesses or social workers, and women are of necessity on the committees that direct the actual work as it affects the homes of the underprivileged

and oppressed members of society. But we do not find them conspicuous in the committees or assemblies that give direction to the thinking of the Church constituency concerning the basic changes needed in our economic life in order to remedy the ills they are trying to alleviate.(85)

Such observations were to be confirmed again and again in her work over the next five years on behalf of deaconesses and other women workers in The United Church.

NOTES

CHAPTER ONE

1. The United Church of Canada, *Journal of the Proceedings of the Methodist General Conference, 1922* [Journal] 331; Commission Inquiry of the General Conference, Methodist Church: Report to the General Board of Management of the Deaconess Society [Commission Report], pp 2-3.
2. For a comprehensive discussion of this period see: Thomas, John D. "Servants of the Church: Canadian Methodist Deaconess Work, 1890 - 1926", *Canadian Historical Review*, LXV, 3, 1984, pp 371-395.
3. *Christian Guardian*, 29 November 1911, 24-5; *Agenda of the Ninth General Council 1940*, The United Church of Canada, p 298.
4. United Church Archives, Commission Report (1923), pp 4-13.
5. *The Acts and Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1921 to 1924*.
6. *The First Fifty Years 1895-1945: The Training and Work of Women Employed in the Service of The United Church of Canada* [First Fifty] (Toronto: Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, United Church Training School and Woman's Missionary Society, n.d.), p 14.
7. *Ibid.*, p 14.
8. *Handbook of the Deaconess Order of the United Church of Canada* [Handbook] Toronto: Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, 1944 edition), pp 8-9.

9. *Record of Proceedings, Second General Council, 1926*, The United Church of Canada, p 163.
10. *Ibid.*, p 163.
11. *Ibid.*, p 63.
12. *Agenda of the Third General Council 1928*, The United Church of Canada, pp 160-172.
13. *First Fifty*, p 19.
14. United Church Archives, Toronto, *Annual Reports, Woman's Missionary Society, 1926 to 1935* (Toronto: The United Church Publishing House, 1926-1935).
15. *Ibid.*, 1927; By way of comparison, in 1929 the salaries for deaconesses were \$1000 to \$1200, while nurses in Ontario were paid \$1,091 to \$1,597. Salaries of women teachers in Toronto in 1930 were \$1,000 to \$2,000 while deaconesses were paid \$1100 to \$1300. Comparative statistics from nursing and teaching reported in Linda Kealey, *Women at Work 1850-1930*. (Toronto: Women's Press, 1974), pp 147 and 194.
16. *General Council Record of Proceedings, 1926*, The United Church of Canada, p 66.
17. United Church Archives, Toronto, "Report of the Committee on Employed Women Workers", *Agenda of the Third General Council 1928*, p 163.
18. *Ibid.*, p 165.
19. *Ibid.*
20. Grace Lane, "G.L.'s Listening Post", *The United Church Observer*, September 1962, p 24.
21. Nathan Mair, "Notes on Women's Diaconal Ministry: Montreal", unpublished paper, March 6, 1984; p 5, a copy on file in Division of Ministry Personnel and Education, The United Church of Canada.
22. United Church Archives, Toronto, "Report of the Committee on Employed Women Workers", pp 162-3.

23. *The New Outlook*, January 18, 1928.
24. Record of Proceedings, *Second General Council 1928*, The United Church of Canada, pp 120-21.
25. *First Fifty*, p 14.
26. Calendars of United Church Training School from 1926 onwards all had extensive statements on the purpose and practice of Field Education as part of the over-all programme of study.
27. Centre for Christian Studies Archives, Toronto Calendar of United Church Training School, 1930.
28. *Ibid.*, p 8.
29. Mary Anne MacFarlane, *Educated Ministry: Diaconal Ministry* (Toronto: Division of Ministry Personnel and Education, The United Church of Canada, 1987).
30. Courtesy Laura Sharpe Long Letter to Committee on Diaconal Ministry, 1989.
31. Quoted in *60th Anniversary: The United Church Training School 1895-1955* (Toronto, The United Church of Canada, n.d.), p 17.
32. *Agenda of the Third General Council 1928*, The United Church of Canada, p 160.
33. Forms of Service for the Offices of the Church (Toronto: United Church Publishing House, 1926), p 132.
34. *Ibid.*, p 128.
35. *Ibid.*
36. *Ibid.*, pp 130-1.
37. *The Book of Common Order of The United Church of Canada*, (Toronto: The United Church Publishing House, 1932), p 187.
38. United Church Archives, Toronto, "Report of the Committee on Employed Women Workers", p 166.

39. Ibid, 16640. *The Manual of the Deaconess Order*. (Toronto: The United Church of Canada, 1940), p 18.
41. *Agenda of the Fifth General Council 1932*, "The Meaning and Responsibilities of Christian Marriage", pp 44-54.
42. *The Manual of The United Church of Canada* (Toronto: The United Church Publishing House, 1981), pp 84-87.
43. The settlement system later proved a problem for ordained women and illustrates the difficulty of integrating women into systems and procedures which have been designed for men.
44. Grace Lane, "G.L's Listening Post", p 24.
45. Ibid.
46. Centre for Christian Studies Archives, Toronto, File on Membership Records of Fellowship of Professional Women.
47. The World Church Needs Canadian Christian Youth for its Post-War Advance, (Toronto: The United Church of Canada, 1948), pp 3-4, a recruiting pamphlet for Board of Foreign Missions and Woman's Missionary Society.
48. Centre for Christian Studies Archives, Toronto, Membership Records of Fellowship of Professional Women and Deaconess Association.
49. "Covenant College", The United Church Observer, January 15, 1963, p 10.
50. "She Views a Changing World", *The United Church Observer*, September 1, 1958, p 18.
51. Mary Anne MacFarlane, *Educated Ministry: Diaconal Ministry*.
52. *The Manual of the Deaconess Order*, p 14.
53. Centre for Christian Studies Archives, Toronto, quoted in: The Minutes of Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, November 13, 1940, 2. The United Church of Canada, p 262.
54. *First Fifty*, p 19.

55. *Agenda of the Fifth General Council 1932*, The United Church of Canada, p 297.
56. Personal files of Harriet Christie, letter from Mary Eadie to all deaconesses, April 1931, seen by courtesy of Shelley Finson.
57. *Agenda of the Fifth General Council 1932*, The United Church of Canada, p 295; *Agenda of the Ninth General Council 1940*, The United Church of Canada, p 298.
58. *Agenda of the Sixth General Council 1934*.
59. *Ibid.*, p 321.
60. Each recruitment piece or publicity folder printed had, at the beginning, an endorsement by the Moderator of The United Church and four or five quotations from prominent, male ordained ministers who had worked with deaconesses. This was then followed by a summary of the duties of a deaconess.
61. *Agenda of the Sixth General Council 1934*, p 321.
62. *Ibid.*
63. Quoted in Nancy Elizabeth Hardy, *Called to Serve - A Story of Diaconal Ministry in the The United Church of Canada*, (Toronto: Division of Ministry Personnel and Education, United Church of Canada, 1985), pp 17-18.
64. *Ready to Help Your Church* (Toronto: The United Church of Canada, 1940), pp 14-15, recruitment pamphlet of Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers.
65. *Agenda of the Sixth General Council 1934*, The United Church of Canada, p 321.
66. *Ready to Help Your Church*, pp 8-11.
67. *The Manual of the Deaconess Order*, [Manual], p 11.
68. *Ready to Help Your Church*, pp 8-11.
69. Centre for Christian Studies Archives, Toronto, Papers of Gertrude Rutherford, letter from Rutherford to Mary Eadie, September 28, 1936.

70. The United Church of Canada, Division of Ministry Personnel and Education, "Tribute to Gertrude Rutherford", Minutes of the Nineteenth Annual Meeting of Board of Colleges and Secondary Schools, May 10-11, 1962, p 11.
71. *Agenda of the Seventh General Council 1936*, The United Church of Canada, p 66.
72. *The New Outlook*, June 23, 1935, p 76.
73. *The New Outlook*, November 18, 1936, 1059.
74. *Agenda of the Seventh General Council 1936*, p 36.
75. Centre for Christian Studies Archives, Toronto, Papers of Gertrude Rutherford, letter from Rutherford to Mary Eadie, September 28, 1936.
76. Women in Ministry Committee, The United Church of Canada, Division of Ministry Personnel and Education, "Women Ordinands 1936-1985".
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78. *Manual*, pp 27-28.
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82. Centre for Christian Studies Archives, Toronto, "Report of the Special Committee at the United Church Training School", September 28, 1943, pp 1-2.

83. *Agenda of the Ninth General Council 1940*, The United Church of Canada, p 300.
84. *The Christian Century*, March 2, 1938, p 9.
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CHAPTER TWO

1939 - 1945

The Effect of World War Two on Demands for Deaconesses

Canada's entrance into the Second World War had an impact on deaconesses and other women workers in the Church. Two factors influencing the employment situation were a general shortage of male ordained personnel, created by the enlistment of church personnel in the Armed Forces, and an increasing number of resignations from the ministry during the period 1915 to 1939. These moves resulted in a shortage of ordained personnel and a willingness to employ women in jobs which had previously been restricted to male clergy. Such substitutions were agreed to, not because of a newly-discovered belief in the competencies of deaconesses and women workers or an awareness of the false barriers which surrounded ordained ministry, but because of an understanding that the war years were a time of crisis and required the use of creative, albeit temporary, measures to keep the Church functioning effectively. The hiring of large numbers of women was seen as the only way in which the crucial work of the Church could be maintained. In addition, the chaotic social and work conditions resulting from the development of massive, centralized war industries created a need for more church workers and church services than ever.

With respect to the shortage of ordained ministers, the situation was identified as critical as early as 1940. The statistics told a grim tale:

Since Union (1925) up to December 31, 1940, 1501 ministers of The United Church have withdrawn from the ministry, retired from active work, or died, and in the same period 1004 new ministers have been ordained.(1)

As early as 1939 individual churches were solving their problem of not being able to secure an ordained minister by hiring deaconesses as lay supply ministers. Such women were asked to do all of the same kinds of work that an ordained minister would do, yet were given none of the privileges of the clergy. They could not vote in Presbytery or be involved in any decisions the Church made, nor could they administer the sacraments during worship. For this an ordained supervising minister had to be called in. In addition, many of the women were expected to supervise the Sunday School, lead women's groups, and develop a social outreach programme, all of the duties normally associated with deaconesses. Though many of the women employed in these positions performed admirably and were

respected by their congregations, they were still seen as exceptional, as temporary, as "less than" an ordained minister. Though they were praised in publicity materials for "holding down the fort" while the men were away and the shortage continued, little recognition was given in either the publicity or the Courts of the Church that their work had an integrity within itself and was making a distinct contribution to the way ministry was practiced. The assumption was that when the war was over, things would return to normal, every church would want a "real" minister, and deaconesses would quickly be replaced. One woman who had exercised an effective ministry within a church for three years was officially described as " ..taking the place of an ordained minister on a Canadian pastoral charge, which would be vacant and unattended if she were not there."(2)

Other women worked as assistant ministers in large congregations which would normally have two male clergy on staff.

The shortage of ordained ministers and the rapid development of new churches in war-industrial areas led church officials to both re-activate their recruitment policies and strategies and to create new programmes and training models which would recruit, train and place women workers quickly into both established and new places of work. The Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, which had stopped all of its recruitment activities years earlier, quickly authorized the production of folders and posters, and set up meetings across the country in high schools and universities. Both in print and in speeches, promoters of work for women used images which both militarized women's work and appealed to women's patriotism and faith. The Executive Secretary of the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, Tina Campion, in a radio broadcast in 1944, urged women to "Be a part of the spearhead of the attack against existing evils and play your full part in winning Canada for Christ."(3)

The recruitment material presented the need for loyalty and hard work to women as if such qualities were available to them only in emergencies and extremely rare circumstances. Little doubt was left in the mind of the reader that what was being asked of women in wartime was considered to be unique. The 1941 recruitment folder "A Full-Time Vocation for Christian Women" stated that

Many of these women (are now in) difficult and responsible positions which offer inducements, not of high salaries or easy hours, but of opportunity to do real work, interesting and worthwhile, with scope for vision and initiative - work which is concerned with people and their relationship to one another and to God. The present war emergency accentuates the need for a rigorous and courageous faith

and offers unusual opportunities for leadership both now and in preparation for the post-war world.(4)

Another recruitment strategy which was quickly developed involved asking former graduates of the United Church Training School to publicize deaconess work and to write testimonials about the excellent training they received. Testimonials were printed in Conference and Presbytery materials, and a typical story invited women to

...see the work of the Church as a whole, discover answers to many of the questions young people are asking, and get a vision of the Church of the future and the part that (those) who are now young should be prepared to play in it.(5)

By 1942 the shortage of clergy had worsened so much that the Executive of General Council was asked to stop the resignations of ministers, to prevent clergy from taking secular jobs, and to enlist women as assistants who could serve in large congregations (instead of a second minister) and perform specialized work. Further, the Executive was urged to

Declare that The (United) Church is in full sympathy with our war effort and is absolutely convinced that the preservation of such institutions as the Christian Church is of supreme importance, and therefore asserts that its ministry is as vital to the well-being of the nation as any war industry for which manpower is needed.(6)

Despite General Council's efforts to equate the importance of the Church's efforts and well-being with that of the military and the war industries, they were not successful in stemming the tide of ministers who wished to resign. By 1945 it was reported in the Montreal Gazette that

When all the Conferences of our Church have finished their work, there will remain more than 200 fields without an ordained minister. This does not include many fields that have already been amalgamated, nor does it include many fields served by lay supply.
(7)

One of the new areas of work created for deaconesses and other women workers during the war was work in military training camp and war production communities. Early in 1942 The United Church set up a Committee on Camp and War Production Communities (CCWPC) to establish or direct the religious programmes in new camp and war industrial areas. The CCWPC began its work in the midst of the incredible migration and uprooting of families as people moved into factory and production jobs, and into training centres for the Armed Forces. In assessing the need, the

CCWPC estimated that over 750,000 young people had moved from their homes to new forms of employment and an additional 600,000 had joined the Forces and were moved to training camps across the country.(8) The result was a chaotic concentration of people in previously small places. The Annual Report of the Committee on Camp and War Production Communities pointed out some of the problems:

In the last two years Wartime Housing Limited has built, or is in the process of completing, over 17,500 houses across the length and breadth of Canada. These new houses are located in 64 towns - sometimes as additions to the already existing area; other times they are built on virgin soil. If only a few families arrive they are easily absorbed but if they come by the hundreds every facility is taxed - houses, stores, theatres, and, not least, the Church. From such an area comes the call for the war-time workers.(9)

By 1942 requests for such workers had come from all of the new war production centres in Ajax, Belleville, Brantford, Prince Rupert, Red Deer, Fort William, Galt, Hamilton, Kingston, Orillia, Peterborough, Sarnia, Welland and Windsor.(10)

The majority of the people hired by The United Church to work in these centres were women, many of them deaconesses with a wealth of experience in Christian Education and social outreach work. Seven women were hired initially in 1942, with an additional five in the first months of 1943. Their salaries were paid by the Woman's Missionary Society and, as stated at General Council in 1944:

The success of this special wartime ministry (was) due to a large degree to the co-operation and support of that organization.(11)

By late 1943 there were 90 women at work in such communities across Canada. Initially, their work was investigative and involved:

Surveying the situation, informing the clergy of the newcomers in the area, guiding the women's groups in visiting, in home hospitality and in recreation in relation to the migrant population. (12)

Later on, as it became obvious that such communities would be in existence for a considerable length of time, the work took on a more educational and recreational focus. This included the establishment of Sunday Schools, Church Vacation Schools, Fresh Air Camps, boys' groups, girls' programmes, leadership of women's groups, as well as cooperation in such community projects as war-time day nurseries, day care for school children, home hospitality for men and women in the Forces, and recreation for

young people in war industries.(13) The Committee on Camps and War Production Communities also began to anticipate the need for work among war brides. In 1944 work began to provide welcoming programmes, social groups and cultural events for the thousands of women who would come to Canada with their new husbands, Canadian soldiers returning from war. In the same year the CCWPC also reported to General Council that there were "approximately 40,000 women in the Armed Forces" and that cooperation with the government was needed to appoint women as assistant chaplains "where there are large concentrations of women."(14) In the summer of 1944 a request came from the Federal Government that the Inter-Church Committee on the Church's Work among the Women in the Forces, of which The United Church was a member, name two women to take the training for chaplaincy work. Wilna Thomas of The United Church was one of the first two women appointed as assistant chaplains. In 1945 nine more women were appointed, including three from The United Church.(15)

Work with the Japanese Canadian Community

Boards which had traditionally employed large numbers of deaconesses also increased their work during the war, creating a demand for more trained women workers. The Woman's Missionary Society increased its work in many areas, but one of the most important was its work with the Japanese. Women's organizations, both in the Methodist and Presbyterian traditions, had a long history of work with Orientals, particularly on the West Coast and in large centres such as Toronto and Montreal. Such work included leadership in Bible Study programmes, Women's Associations, children's groups and youth rallies.(16) The Woman's Missionary Society reports during the war were filled with excitement about the involvement of Japanese people in the church and in the community, yet reflected an increasing awareness of the racism and fear which was making their lives in Canada difficult. The 1940-1941 report on Oriental Work by the Woman's Missionary Society pointed out the following:

Every Japanese community organization, young and old, has contributed to the defence of Canada fund, also to the Red Cross generously... Each group has pledged its loyalty to Canada and to democratic ways... The young men are making every effort to be given a practical share in the defence of Canada.(17)

Reports such as these persuaded the Woman's Missionary Society of the need to increase its staff in Japanese work immediately. Though criticized by some church members for neglecting critical needs in war industry areas in order to continue work with the Japanese, the W.M.S continued its commitment to Oriental Work. At the time when such decisions were being made about the deployment of workers, missionaries were being recalled

from Japan, and the money budgeted for their overseas support was diverted into Japanese work in Canada. Thus, when war was declared on Japan, women workers were already well established in Japanese communities in Canada(18), and moved with the people when they were relocated, first to the Hastings Park area in Vancouver and then to the interior ghost towns of Greenwood, Kaslo, Slocam City and New Denver. The W.M.S. missionaries recorded the destruction of Japanese culture and the total disruption of their economic and family life with descriptions such as the following:

Steveston, the largest Japanese fishing village on the west coast, was seriously affected. Immediately, precautionary steps were taken by the R.C.M.P. officers, and the fishing fleet of 1,200 boats was immobilized. Almost overnight our village changed from one of activity to one of uncertainty and restlessness. Though the Japanese language schools were closed and many local organizations were restricted from holding public meetings, we are happy to continue our kindergarten and all the work and organizations of our Japanese United Church.(19)

Reports from the W.M.S. and Board of Home Missions show that there were some interventions to the Prime Minister about the treatment of Japanese Canadians.(20) Such resolutions were supported by the General Council of the time. The work of the deaconesses was seen by many as a support to the community in times of trouble. There is however disagreement on the role and effectiveness of the W.M.S.. As Mona Oikawa documents in her thesis on the forced resettlement of the Japanese Canadians in the southern part of Ontario, W.M.S. workers tried to make the conditions of the enforced evacuation less painful, and by doing this, actually aided the government in its dispersal of Japanese Canadians.(21)

The Woman's Missionary Society and Overseas Workers

With the escalation of the war in the Atlantic and within Europe, the Woman's Missionary Society was forced to recall many of its overseas missionaries. At the time, slightly less than half were single women. As Hitler's armies started destroying Allied ships, it became a probability that some of these missionaries would find themselves captured or killed by enemy attacks. To avoid this, W.M.S. administrators plotted new and circuitous routes to and from the mission stations, and tried to keep all travel routed well to the south to avoid the main concentrations of U-boats. In addition, the W.M.S. arranged for neutral shipping firms to transport missionaries. At the time of Pearl Harbour fifteen missionaries were still in the Pacific Area.(22) Because of the careful work of the W.M.S. officials all

of them were transported to safety, and other missionaries continued to come and go by very indirect routes as illustrated below:

To go to West China via Argentina, to fly into West China over the Himalaya Mountains, to reach India by way of New Zealand, or to travel from South America to Africa on a sailing vessel - all these were experiences of Canadian women during the war years.(23)

Towards the end of the war it became increasingly difficult to find any shipping companies who would transport missionaries. They saw mission work as of little importance and, as the Woman's Missionary Society itself recorded, they saw single women passengers as a liability:

With Germany, Italy and Japan all firing off at the Allies, war-neutral sea captains were fast growing wary of single women travelling aboard their ships: how could a single woman manage herself in case of torpedoing?(24)

Other critics felt that, with such a shortage of trained church workers in Canada, missionaries' work was needed at home, not in foreign countries. As such critics became more and more vocal, there was pressure to limit the work of missionaries, and particularly single women, to Canada.

Recruitment of Deaconesses

As the immediate need for skilled church workers increased, the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers began to target specific groups of women and to develop publicity materials which would appeal particularly to them. At the Eleventh General Council the Committee reported that the need for women was urgent:

The need for consecrated young women, fully trained, to render either full time or voluntary service in the Church is most imperative at this time. The number of requests for trained workers exceeds the available supply. Never before in the history of our Committee have we been in such a position.(25)

Four Boards of the Church jointly developed special recruitment programmes. In 1943 women university graduates were inundated with promotion materials inviting them to give "one year of war-time service to the work of the Church" and offering them a shortened training time, scholarship assistance and an exciting year of professional work in the Church.(26)

The year of service such women were being asked to give included six weeks of training at the United Church Training School, three weeks of holidays and ten months of work. Travelling expenses, a war allowance and remuneration of not less than \$800.00 were provided for all acceptable volunteers. Fifteen women were recruited, trained and placed, many of them in new congested war production communities. (27) A second and more extensive plan involved an offer of scholarships at the Training School to short-term workers who pledged to give three years of service to the Church. In 1944 seven such scholarships were awarded, and in 1945, six. (28)

Jean Swan Parker, one of those who received a scholarship, would say years later that

I had long been a candidate with the W.M.S. intending to go to China, but was glad for the scholarship and the opportunity to get some basic experience in Canada first. Otherwise, I would never have chosen congregational work. It sounds very unexciting to a young person until the actual experience shows its rewards.

(...) After one year of training I felt most inadequate to be a Director of Christian Education (I never used the term "deaconess" which most of my generation hated and none of us ever wore a uniform.) In my first year at Truro, my job description called for me to work half-time as church secretary and the other half as C.E. Director. I knew how to be a good secretary, and therein lay my sense of security. I was scared skinny about the other half. But after the first year, the congregation (mainly the male minister, I think!) felt I was needed full-time in C.E., and they hired another secretary. By that time I felt ready for the job I was supposedly "trained" to do. (29)

Education During this Period

There were many appeals for short-term workers who would receive concentrated, specialized training in order to meet an emergency need for personnel in the church. While effective in staffing urgent programmes, they also created problems for long-term women workers in the Church. The introduction of massive short-term programmes for women tended to devalue training programmes. The specific responsibilities of these specially-recruited workers tended to become generalized as representing all women's professional work in the Church. Women's contributions were framed in terms of the meeting of immediate needs and as including a hasty educational programme of preparation. Such special recruitment and training programmes, while designed to meet very specific needs, became precedent-setting and were referred to many times later by ministers who

wished to secure minimal, poorly-trained assistants for their congregations at minimal expense. Thus, these war-time programmes resulted in a challenge to the professional status of women and led to the devaluing of much of their work within the Church. Though not tied in directly to deaconess work, such recruitment schemes directly affected the perception and acceptance level of such work in the Church.

The United Church Training School, the place where deaconesses and other non-ordained women workers were trained, (the school in Winnipeg had closed down in 1939) continued to operate with a skeletal staff and with few full-course students. For deaconesses, the preparation course continued to be one year for those who were university graduates and two years for all other candidates. In 1941 the number of graduates from the preparation course for deaconesses stood at four.(30)

The majority of students at the School during the war years were participants in the special scholarship programmes and were in the short training courses. Eventually the School became a home for many workers who had been displaced by the war, including a number of missionaries who had been evacuated from the Far East and were unable to return to their work. Shelter was also given to some English mothers and their children, and to a European Jewish refugee student. Late in 1942, the School gave over the use of its entire building to the Canadian Women's Army Corps, rented two houses to use for residences and offices, and transferred all its classroom work to The United Church's theological college in Toronto, Emmanuel College.(31)

Working Conditions: The Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women's Work

In spite of the high demand for women workers in the Church, the remuneration for such work was still very low. The Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, which had succeeded the Inter-Board Committee on Women's Workers in 1936, continued to be aware of the need for a concentrated effort to improve both salaries and pensions and began to work for adequate pensions for deaconesses. After studying a number of possibilities for action, the Committee recommended to General Council that all deaconesses and their employers be required to sign up for a Government Annuity to which both would contribute. In a statement issued to the Ninth General Council in 1940 the Committee pointed out the seriousness of the situation for deaconesses who were near retirement:

A canvass of the Boards employing Deaconesses reveals an awareness of the need of a Pension Plan, particularly for new entrants into the Order. However, many Deaconesses are employed by

churches that are trying to meet the needs of an encroaching "downtown" problem and in a situation which means decreasing revenue. Others are employed by the general boards of the Church which have no appropriation at present for such payments.(32)

The pension situation also continued to be critical for those women who had been deaconesses in the Methodist Church and were now retired and looked after by the Methodist Rest and Relief Fund. Even after the appeal launched earlier for donations, this Fund did not have enough money in it to support the increasing number of former Methodist deaconesses who were now past retirement. Many of these women were living in poverty, having worked for the Methodist Church for spending money and the promise that their needs would be looked after in old age. Appeals went out a second time for donations, particularly from women's organizations and individuals who had benefited directly from the work of deaconesses over the years. The materials produced to explain the appeal for donations praised the work of deaconesses, pointed out their self-sacrificing ethos, and reminded the Church of its responsibility to care for them. It is interesting to note that pensions for deaconesses were to be covered by donations and appeals, and not seen as a responsibility of the institution. Pensions for ministers were covered through the Pension Board of the Church.

Deaconess work holds an affectionate place in the regard of men and women who knew the self-sacrificing zeal of the early group of women who dedicated themselves to it with no thought of remuneration but with utter confidence in the promise of the Church that they would receive maintenance care in sickness and provision for old age.(33)

The Fund, the Committee soon discovered, was even more inadequate than it had estimated, and was being subsidized by a number of retired deaconesses who were convinced of the importance of sharing limited financial resources and taking responsibility for the welfare of their sister workers. Several deaconesses who had married after retirement had become aware of the financial problems, and were refusing their pensions, leaving the money in the Fund for distribution to others. The minutes of the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers contained several notations of this, such as the following:

Mrs. Mary Burwash has foregone her pension for the entire year and the amount credited to Deaconess Rest and Relief Fund. Letter of appreciation has been sent to Mrs. Burwash for this generous act.(34)

In other cases single women also returned their pensions for several years only to find themselves in situations of desperate need when illnesses or

accidents brought unexpected medical expenses. Thus, almost twenty years after her retirement, the family of a deaconess was forced to write to the Committee on her behalf, asking if she could begin to receive her pension. The minutes of the Committee recorded the details:

The letter asked if Miss Lake could receive a pension which the family understood was available for her. Miss Lake had agreed to forego receipt of [her] pension in order to help build up the Deaconess Rest and Relief Fund. Miss Lake had had heavy medical and hospital expenses, and as a result her resources have been completely used up. The Committee took immediate action to have Miss Lake receive her April pension.(35)

Furloughs

Also in 1940, the Committee began to look at furlough policies for women. It became obvious that deaconesses who were employed by the Woman's Missionary Society had fewer benefits than W.M.S. employees who were not deaconesses, and deaconesses who were in other positions had no possibilities for furlough and study leave at all. In an attempt to equalize the situation, the Committee reported to General Council in 1940 that it had adopted a policy of urging employers of all deaconesses to provide furloughs for their workers. The furlough policy recommended by the Committee would parallel that in use by the Woman's Missionary Society. Though it could not legislate its implementation, the Committee would take a stronger role in requesting furloughs for all deaconesses and would monitor their implementation on the following basis:

When a Deaconess has served seven years in one place of work, and when the Emergency Fund warrants it, the Committee [will] initiate correspondence with the Deaconess and her employing Board with the view to enabling her to have a three-month furlough... and the furlough allowance [will] be \$200.(36)

The Constitution

The Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers continued to work on the rules of the Deaconess Order. Their work was to be published within a Constitution and would summarize all of the conditions for training, entrance, work and disjoining of members of the Order. Eventually, it would be included in a section of the Manual (or rule-book) of the United Church. Qualifications for women wishing to become deaconesses were listed in a section at the beginning of the Constitution and included aspects of character, academic and work experience, and community and church involvement. In an effort to affirm the importance of practical experience

and training in other than academic disciplines, the Constitution included an equivalence for the required university degree which had to do with other professional training and work experience. This equivalency section has remained as part of the Constitution until today and has allowed for the recognition and admission of women who have not followed traditional academic routes. It has recognized the varieties of experience which are part of women's lives and has challenged the Church's over-reliance on academic qualifications within its leaders. Its disadvantage is that it has led to the perception, in a society which often equates academic qualifications with value and competence, that deaconesses are inferior, have inferior training and therefore should both be paid less and given less recognition in the Church.

Qualifications listed in the Constitution were "a university degree or Grade XIII plus professional or business training and at least two years of successful experience in that profession." (37) Personal qualifications were summarized as:

A rich and growing Christian experience, good health, capacity for leadership, interest in bringing out the gifts of others, concern for people and the ability to work with them. Patience, stability, resourcefulness, and a sense of humour are essential. (38)

The Constitution contained a large section entitled "Work of a Deaconess" which outlined in detail places and types of work done by deaconesses both within Canada and around the world. It reflected the increasing emphasis on congregational work for women. The information was categorized not so much by the type of work done, but by the type of employer. It had sections on work in congregations, employment by Boards of Christian Education, work in Social Service institutions, and work under the Woman's Missionary Society or other mission groups both within Canada and overseas. The section on work within a local congregation was given prominence and was the most detailed in its description of responsibilities and areas of work. It clearly stated what had been common knowledge and practice for many years, that the deaconess was to serve as the assistant to the minister. In practical terms this meant, as the Constitution and publicity materials stated, that: "She must share the viewpoint and aims of the minister and further them in every possible way." (39)

As an assistant to the minister, the deaconess was to carry out any combination or number of the following duties: development of programmes of Christian education for all ages and days of the week, recruitment and training of all leaders, assistance with the minister's visitation, welcoming of newcomers, organization and supervision of all welfare work of the church,

assistance with all correspondence, records and files for the church, preparation of the Sunday Bulletin.(40)

Such work the Constitution and other materials were quick to add, was new for many church committees and congregations and deaconesses were perceived by many congregations as oddities. Many of the duties listed for deaconesses had previously been done by volunteers, therefore the tendency in churches who were unfamiliar with the work of deaconesses was either to see the performance of these duties as not worth a great deal of money or, equally damaging, to see the deaconess as the person to whom all tasks could now be assigned, regardless of the amount of work required or the specific skills needed to perform them.

As pioneers and the first of their kind, many deaconesses had not only to do their jobs, but work hard at setting boundaries. They had to define what was to remain as tasks for volunteer workers and what could legitimately become part of their responsibilities. In addition they had to actively promote themselves as valuable workers and "worth the money" that congregations were now paying them. Deaconesses were for many an unknown quantity, and were doubted both because they were women and because their work was different, less visible, and less removed from the gathered community on Sunday morning than that of the ordained minister.

Though some congregations deliberately chose a deaconess rather than a second ordained minister because they thought that, as women, they would know their places as assistants and would be less competitive and dissatisfied with a secondary role than men would, others had many questions about their value, questions which forced the deaconesses being hired to justify and explain themselves constantly:

There had always been assistant ministers - fine young men, but men who brought to the work the same aptitudes as the senior minister, rather than a diversity of gifts and outlook; young men also whose assistantships were temporary and regarded as preparation for the real tasks that lay ahead of them when they would take charge of churches of their own. The next time a vacancy occurred, the congregation decided to appoint a Secretarial-Deaconess instead of a minister. There were some misgivings. Would she be accepted by the congregation and uphold the dignity of the Church? Could she be expected to have an insight into the deep spirituality of her tasks? One man shook his head dubiously but within a month he said, 'Aye, lassie, you've proved to us you could do it and we have tae give credit tae ye.'(41)

Woman's Missionary Society: Home Mission Work

Work under the direction of the Woman's Missionary Society continued to attract large numbers of deaconesses. In 1939 out of a total of sixty-nine employed deaconesses, twenty-nine worked for the Woman's Missionary Society.(42) Five years later there were sixty-eight active deaconesses, and thirty-one were employed by the W.M.S..(43) The Constitution of the Deaconess Order listed six possibilities for work: work with New Canadians or in a downtown church or mining area, educational or worship work on an Indian Reserve, social work or teaching among Orientals, evangelism and Christian Education in outlying areas and new communities, lay supply work on a pastoral charge without a minister, and superintendency or assistance in a social service institution.(44) Most of this work, with the exception of duties in a social service institution, was educational in focus, including establishing children's groups, training and counselling leaders, leading Bible studies and adult educational programmes, and visiting and leading worship groups.

Social service work, listed as another important area of work for deaconesses either with a congregation or on behalf of the W.M.S., was described with words which contrasted the goodness, patience and purity of the deaconess as "woman" with the evil and suffering of her surroundings. She was portrayed in images which reinforced the understanding of her as an angel of mercy or handmaiden who brings comfort and help to those in need and who somehow both transforms her surroundings and the people she helps.

'I never saw so many evil-looking faces in all my life' were the words of an authoress as she and the Deaconess were refused admission to one of the doubtful, cheap rooming-houses of the district. 'The family she was seeking had moved when a police raid had revealed the character of the house... The Deaconess visits in such rooming-houses - she goes down in the little basement rooms - she goes up to the attic rooms where people freeze in the winter and swelter in the summer. She goes to the homes of dirt - physical, mental and moral. She goes to happy homes - sometimes to rejoice with those who have found a job - sometimes to have tea - sometimes to admire the new baby - and to share the happiness of that house. She goes to the home where there is tragedy, sickness and death - always with a prayer in her heart and the knowledge that God will make her a channel of blessing and comfort and things will change...'(45)

As well as visiting in homes, work in social services, as described in the Constitution, also included interviewing and investigating calls that came into the office, distributing clothing, administering an employment service,

developing mothers' clubs, teen programmes, lunch and recreational events for unemployed women, collecting and distributing food, organizing summer camps for women and children and one-day outings for those not able to go to camp.(46) The characteristics required for such work were spelled out in the publicity materials of the 1940's. Such descriptions were an interesting mixture of a traditional view of women as those who naturally nurture and care for relationships and the immediate needs of others, and an emerging awareness of the difficulty of doing this on a long-term basis:

(She) needs to be a woman of deep spiritual insight and experience, and one who, besides this, is trained to understand the forces that play upon human behaviour and that influence it ... The Deaconess needs insight, patience and experience, and skill in dealing with difficult situations, as well as character that will commend her faith to those under her care, and lead them to open their lives to the redeeming grace of God.(47)

Constitution: Issues of Identity and Structure

The Constitution, with its elaborate description of the work of deaconesses and its itemized list of all the regulations pertaining to the Deaconess Order, was approved and circulated in 1942. It spelled out for the first time in detail the conditions of employment of deaconesses and the tasks of the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers. Unlike ordained ministers, who were guaranteed positions according to the Manual of The United Church, deaconesses had no guarantee that once they were designated as deaconesses they would be employed.(48) The only guarantee given to them was that the Committee would try to assist them by seeking openings and recommending individual deaconesses for suitable positions. Employment, once found, was to be on a yearly basis and was to continue from year to year "unless at least two months prior to the expiration of any year of employment either party shall give notice to the other of intention to terminate the employment at the end of such year."(49) Thus, deaconesses had little job security and were still perceived, in terms of the structures and understanding of "Church" as extras, as frills, as "other."

Frustration with the lack of progress in securing better working conditions for women and in raising the status and visibility of the Deaconess Order began to emerge in the 1940's. Much of the dissatisfaction with the Church's unwillingness to change what were essentially sexist and clergy-oriented practices was deflected onto the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers. By the time Lydia Gruchy resigned in 1943 from her position as Executive Secretary of the Committee to go to a pastorate in Saskatchewan, the frustration and anger at the lack of change

in the Church were so great that a total review of the work of the Committee and the rules of the Deaconess Order was undertaken.(50)

The General Council Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, in many people's opinion, had not fulfilled the function for which it had been created. Plagued by constant divisions in the Church, by disagreements within the groups and Boards which hired women, the Committee, because it had no power to legislate, was usually unable to agree upon or implement policies which would ensure fair treatment for women. With no mandate to enforce policy, the Committee lacked the power to do anything significant and gave to many onlookers the impression that there was really "nothing left for this Committee to do." (51) Others questioned the membership, claiming that the Committee was in no way representative of the whole Church, or in touch with the areas of the country where most deaconesses worked. Others believed that the problem lay with the description of duties for the paid employee, the Executive Secretary. They saw her job as far too general, and, as one critic suggested:

I really cannot see how an Executive Secretary of the Committee could feel very free to act when the duties as outlined are so lacking in specific direction.(52)

The result was a general feeling of despair, both within the Committee and among deaconesses across the Church. Both groups were aware that things were little better than in 1928, when the first report on women's work was made to General Council. Like its predecessor, the Committee had been able only to consult and recommend policies to others. Thus, the situation continued to be one in which some women were treated reasonably well while others were isolated and exploited. As the Committee reflected after its own detailed and harsh self-assessment:

(There are) great inconsistencies and disparities now obtaining. For example, we have the situation in which there is only one salary scale and employment basis for the Woman's Missionary Society. Further, all Boards of the Church, at Headquarters or in the Offices of the Superintendents of Missions and Field Secretaries, employ women on their staffs. There appears to be no uniformity of policy regarding employment. Salaries, salary increases and promotions follow no rule endorsed by the Church. No provision is given for the retirement of women who have given all their years of service to the work of the Church. Such a situation seems unworthy of a great Church like ours.(53)

As well as being totally unenforceable, the regulations for women's salaries placed them far below men's. Though comparable statistics are not available and equal education and qualifications can't always be claimed, adjustments for these would still place women's salaries much lower than men's. Well over half the women workers who were trained at the United Church Training School had previous university degrees. Many others had professional training and experience in nursing, teaching or business.(54) Yet in 1944 the salary for women congregational workers was in the range of \$1,000 for beginners to \$1,500 for experienced workers.(55) Minimum salaries for single ordained ministers four years earlier, in 1940, had been \$1,600.(56) The Committee had had constant discussions about what to do about women's salaries. In 1945 the Committee decided not to state the salary within the Constitution in the United Church Manual, but to contact all groups who employed deaconesses and inform them of the Committee's opinion that salaries for deaconesses were too low. The Committee further stated that a fair minimum salary for 1945 should be \$1,500, and that all church Boards should increase this, wherever possible, having "due regard to years of service, experience and cost of living," to a maximum of \$1,800.(57) Though endorsed by General Council, this recommendation was seldom put into practice, with most deaconesses remaining at or below the minimum recommended salary.

During the succeeding years individuals and groups of deaconesses wrote to the Committee many times asking that steps be taken to legislate fair salaries for women. Though such requests never claimed that women's salaries should be equal to those of the ordained, they did ask that women church workers' salaries be in line with those of women in comparable professions such as teaching. The most extensively documented requests came from the Montreal Unit of the Fellowship and stated that the salary offered to workers should always be comparable to other professional workers in an area, and should be backed by a suggested scale of increments which reflected years of service. Also, the group suggested, it should be pointed out to employing bodies that pensions are always geared to salaries and therefore some workers on low salaries are not only being penalized now but will also have an inadequate pension.(58)

Dissatisfaction with the Committee also involved a concern about the uniqueness and the future of deaconess work within the Church. What was it, people were beginning to ask, that made deaconesses distinctive? How were they different from other professional women? Behind this was a fear, articulated by the Committee, that deaconess work was being taken over by the religious education specialists at theological colleges and by the increasing number of well-qualified social service workers who were beginning to offer their services to the Church. In analyzing the situation, the Committee made the following observation:

Much of the social service work which in modern times is no longer associated strictly with the Church and is done through Social Agencies was formerly done by Deaconesses.(59)

Were deaconesses now merely pseudo-social workers or pseudo-ministers, with no identity or integrity of their own? The Committee spent many hours asking difficult questions about the possible obsolescence of deaconesses and about the need to abolish the Order.

Has Deaconess work become obsolete? Should the Church, wanting a Social Service Worker, go to the Social Service Department of the University; or the Church wanting a Religious Educationalist, to the Theology Department?(60)

In addition, the Committee perceived that much of the work at present being done by deaconesses had been made available not because it was believed that they were the most qualified for the job, or because they had proved their worth in particular areas of work, but because of the special circumstances created by war and the need to accept women's work as a temporary way of dealing with a shortage of ordained personnel. The report asked more difficult questions:

The present war emergency period does not give a true picture [of the work of women in the Church]. Will the situation be definitely changed when the days of peace come? When the chaplains return to their pastorates? When candidates for the ministry now in the Services resume their studies? And when there will be a definite increase in the number of students for the ministry, thus producing a larger supply of ministers? Will these conditions mean that the employment of Assistant Ministers and Directors of Religious Education will greatly reduce the demand for Deaconesses? There is a shortage of workers now, but will that be true when the men return from the militia?(61)

After considerable discussion and assessment the Committee decided that deaconess work did continue to offer something unique to the Church and that its distinctiveness had to do partly with the way in which such women worked and with their different perspective and their understanding of their calling in the Church. The Committee agreed to continue its work for the present time, but to press for clarification by the Boards of the Church of their understanding of the Committee's authority and duties and to ask General Council to "Make the necessary changes, thus enabling the Committee to function without the handicap under which it now operates."

(62) In the meantime, there was to be no new appointment of an Executive Secretary, but merely an interim appointment.(63)

A group of deaconesses from Montreal raised the question of the uniqueness of deaconesses in a different way, making links between the issues of visibility, identity, networking and self-leadership. In a letter to the Committee, they asked that the next Executive Secretary chosen be a deaconess, and that all deaconesses be involved in appointing Lydia Gruchy's successor, just "as the ministers appoint one of their own members."(64) They also raised the recurring problem of lack of visibility and identification of deaconesses. Pointing specifically to the practice in the Woman's Missionary Society in which an employed deaconess was referred to as a missionary and not a deaconess, the Montreal group asked that "in any publicity, where the person is a Deaconess, that fact be made known".(65) As a result of such requests, the Committee passed a regulation that stated

Should a Deaconess be employed by the Woman's Missionary Society the term "Missionary-Deaconess" be given to her in reports and when introduced to speak at all meetings.(66)

The Committee also reaffirmed the importance of the deaconess uniform as a way of keeping deaconess work before the public. In a reversal of a previous decision which made the wearing of the uniform completely optional, the Committee informed deaconesses that it was to be worn by all members at all public and official gatherings.(67)

The Fellowship of Professional Women in the United Church

One of the most interesting results of the discussion of deaconess identity was the development of an awareness among deaconesses that they had much in common with other women workers as well as some essential differences, and that one of the major things which prevented their recognition and fair treatment was their lack of unity as women workers. Thus, in 1939 deaconesses and other women workers began to speak of the need to form a new organization which would be national, separate from the official committees of the Church, and would enable them to share concerns, have fellowship together and work for better working conditions. Others saw the forming of an organization as necessary because the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers had not been able either to unite women workers or to see that they had better working conditions and greater status. As part of the official Church structure, the Committee was limited in what it could do, and a separate, professional organization was needed to bring about any significant changes. These women raised the strategic question of whether women were better off by

being integrated into the official structures of the Church or by building up their own separate organization and making demands from a separate political base. Though deaconesses were by no means united in their estimate of the value of a separate organization, they did endorse its formation with considerable enthusiasm.

At the Winnipeg Conference of the Deaconess Association in 1940 the founding and Constitution of the Fellowship of Professional Women in The United Church of Canada were approved. Though the Deaconess Association would continue as a separate group, both organizations would have their Biennial Conferences together and would share information and tasks. The new Fellowship would unite all women workers and its purpose was to be fellowship, study of the field of women's work, promotion of the work of women, and the critique of policies and practices of the Church hierarchy towards women. Membership was open to all trained women, including ordained women, and organization and communication were through regional groups which met on a regular basis. National Biennial Meetings would include the election of officers, the receiving of reports from the National Executive, and speakers and discussions on employment, theological and social issues affecting women.(68) As recorded in its minutes, the Fellowship also had lengthy discussions about many of the specific concerns of deaconesses, including the format and wording of the designation service, the field activities of the Executive Secretary, the new design of the uniform and the need for set salary levels. The newly-created Fellowship also had lengthy discussions about the place of women professionals, particularly deaconesses and missionaries in the Church, and was later involved in the study of the World Council of Churches' materials on the cooperation of men and women in the life of the Church.(69)

Looking to the Post-War Period

In 1944 the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers began to make plans for the continued work of women after the end of the war. In a promotion pamphlet geared to women who were now working in the Armed Forces and would be looking for another profession after the war, the Committee asked the crucial question for such women: "After victory, what?" and invited military women to consider a career in the Church. Using militaristic language, it asked them to "Re-mobilize for Full-Time Service in the Church" and suggested that the Church would be in the forefront in the impending crucial battle to maintain peace in the world.(70)

After victory, what? The young women of our Armed Forces, as they look forward to demobilization, are facing this question. How can the energies so long devoted to winning the war be diverted to the no less imperative duty of maintaining the peace? The struggle must go

on if the great ideals for which we have been sacrificing-- righteousness, justice and brotherhood -- are to be established in the post-war world.(71)

The visuals supporting the text portrayed three military women standing in front of the tower of the Parliament Buildings and suggested that they were part of the "new army of workers, dedicated to the tasks of tomorrow".(72)

The Study of "Women's Work in the Church"

In 1942 the first of a series of studies on the role of women in the Church was published. Presented by a committee appointed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York in England, it was a study of "Women's Work in the Church" and was circulated widely in both Europe and North America. Surveying the involvement of women in paid and voluntary work in the Church of England, it argued for greater recognition and inclusion of women's leadership in the Christian Church. The report spoke of the ignorance of Church people about what women could do and were doing in the Church, and claimed that clergy were guilty of not making full use of the voluntary service of women. Referring more than once to the responsible work of women in both civilian life and in the Armed Services, it called the Church to account for its poor treatment of women.

At the present time, the contrast between the position and function of women in the Church and in secular society has become very marked. It is provoking an increasing criticism and discontent, not only among women, but also among men and women of the younger generation when they become aware of the contrast.(73)

The report had specific sections on recruitment, selection and training of women workers, on the background and functioning of the Deaconess Order, and recommendations on salaries and working conditions for all women in the employ of the Church. Yet nowhere did it directly link the absence of women in Church leadership to specific structures, theology or Church practices which worked against women's interests and undermined their leadership. Nowhere did it examine its own hierarchical practices which, as Virginia Woolf had pointed out years earlier in her scathing criticism of the work of the committee's predecessor, a commission on women's work, allowed salaries for English deaconesses to be 150 English pounds while those for archbishops were 15,000 English pounds. (74)

The report based its arguments not on issues of the injustice of excluding or penalizing women, but rather on notions of practicality and efficiency. Supporting an understanding of males and females as different yet

complementary in their roles and talents, the report claimed that both were needed for effective, "whole" work within the Church.

Modern society will not be won to the Christian allegiance and drawn into the fellowship of the Church by the activities, however heroic and devoted, of one sex alone. If, however, the Church officially is willing and able to provide openings of service, both paid and voluntary, for women as well as men, there is a more certain prospect of a revival in our time of allegiance to the Church and of effective witness by its membership in the world.(75)

This document had a profound effect on the Churches in North America and was studied and quoted widely as both providing a judgement against the current Church and a vision of what it might become. From a modern viewpoint its weakness was that it ignored the differential power base between men and women and glossed over issues of injustice for women. It assumed a mutuality which ignored the perspective of women and defined their work purely in terms of its benefit to the Church and to the men who ran it. This document was followed in 1945 by another report which looked specifically at the training of women for work in the Church. The document, prepared by a Committee appointed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York was entitled "Training for Service".(76) Both reports were used by the United Church Training School in its subsequent work on curriculum and educational standards during the late 1940's.(77)

The war years had provided a background for more women to begin to organize and seek their place in the Church. It saw the beginning of professional associations and investigation of women's role in the Church. In the years to come, the results of these actions would continue to shape the place of women in the Church.

NOTES

CHAPTER TWO

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CHAPTER THREE

1946 - 1964

Following the war, the types and numbers of jobs available to women workers in the Church changed dramatically. The focus shifted from work in special short-term projects and jobs sponsored by the Woman's Missionary Society to Christian Education work within local congregations. The number of churches requesting women workers rose dramatically in the years between 1945 and 1960. The plethora of jobs available for women, particularly deaconesses, was caused by several factors. First, there continued to be a shortage of ordained men after the war. Women with professional training continued to be hired by congregations who could not find ordained personnel. Also, the United Church entered a period of unprecedented growth, with new building programmes and forms of ministry being developed on a regular basis. As early as 1948, 42 trained deaconesses were being requested by congregations who were involved in new programmes of social outreach and Christian Education.(1) By 1957 there were 80 new jobs available for the twelve deaconesses who were available for appointment.(2)

In 1945 the United Church was employing approximately 45 women, 59 of them deaconesses. This was considered to represent a "greatly reduced programme which must be extended immediately. The minimum requirement will be from 30 to 40 new workers a year."(3)

In 1947 the United Church embarked on a church extension programme, called by church historians the "building boom." With the war well over, immigration was rising, and new housing developments started to appear in urban areas. Regional extension committees were set up to assess the needs of new communities for churches and to begin building programmes. They sent out divinity students to survey new housing areas about the types of recreational and Christian Education programmes required, and supervised fund-raising drives across the country.(4) In the years between 1947 and 1962, two thousand new United Churches were built, all requiring professional staff to provide programmes for their members. By 1956 the shortage of ordained ministers was creating a severe hardship on small rural congregations who could not attract experienced ministers. General Council in Windsor heard the story of a terrible shortage:

When the Conferences rose in June, 105 fields were left vacant; 172 fields have lay supplies; 63 retired ministers are serving charges; 105 students for the ministry are filling church pulpits. 195 ordained men could be sent to fields immediately if we had them. 300 in all are

needed. Overseas Missions wants 40 men in the next few years. The Church Extension programme indicates that scores of men will be pulled off charges to start new work.(5)

In 1957, the peak year for new church construction, new foundations were being poured at the rate of four per week.(6)

Membership kept pace with the building of facilities; from 1941 to 1951 the United Church "grew more rapidly than the nation itself, and its rate of growth surpassed that of the Roman Catholic Church." (7) The membership statistics from 1939 to 1958, a twenty-year period, showed a gain of adult members of 39.78 per cent.(8) With these adult members came a large number of children, all requiring Sunday School programmes, confirmation instruction, mid-week groups and vacation Bible schools. At the same time, the national Church was expanding its programmes of community work to include more extensive port and immigration work with new Canadians, the provision of worship and educational facilities for French Canadians in northern Ontario and Quebec, the production of several foreign language publications, and work on mission boats on the west coast.(9)

The most rapidly expanding of these new areas of work was the ministry of deaconesses with immigrants. Between 1945 and 1959, 1,816,000 people immigrated to Canada.(10) Many of them ended up in large cities and were attracted to large downtown churches; others settled in scattered rural communities. Where ethnic communities were large enough, special immigrant ministries were established by the United Church. Thus, Kitchener became the centre for work with Hungarian Christians, downtown Vancouver became the site for Dutch and Slavic work, and Montreal was an area for ministry with Serbian New Canadians.

Margaret Emminghaus described some of her experiences as a "port worker" to researcher Mary Anne MacFarlane, in April, 1988:

It was meeting immigrants in the name of the Church, and welcoming them. We used to receive little gifts that would be helpful to them in the long train trip across Canada -- things like toys or colouring books for the children, or even soap and a wash cloth that might be handy on a long train trip, because these people travelled in colonist's cars which didn't have many of the amenities of better travel, and there was no other way than train travel. Sometimes there were people sponsored by the World Council of Churches that we had to find and help particularly, and I remember some interesting people that we met that way. Sometimes it was just a case of selling stamps because they couldn't buy them readily and wanted to write that important first letter home, so we provided stamps. I remember, on the

coronation of Queen Elizabeth, that day, a big ship came in and of course the post offices were all closed, I ran out of stamps and I had a big bag full of letters and money to buy stamps the next day.(11)

By 1959 worship and Christian Education programmes were happening in over thirty languages in the United Church every week.(12) The purpose of such work was to provide a bridge for immigrants, a style and type of worship and education which would emerge from the language and forms of their old life, yet would help to integrate them into a new culture and world. A typical description suggested that

The children of immigrants [were] given religious and cultural activities to enable them to integrate the new and the old, and all [were] gradually linked to the regular established Churches as they moved from one community to another.(13)

Thus, the goal of much of the immigrant work was assimilation. We would now see this as highly problematic because, as Mona Oikawa points out, it both presumes a willingness on the part of, and assigns responsibility to, "those deemed racially or ethnically different to change themselves in order to be socially accepted."(14)

Many of the new churches and forms of ministry became symbols for people of the rebuilding of society and involvement in them was a part of the process of healing from the horrors of war. Churches and faith were believed to be fundamental to stability, democracy and "the good life." As early as 1943, editorials began to appear which talked about the Church as both the symbol and vehicle for transforming the world:

The World Church has stood the test of war. It has emerged as the one strong, united world movement. Leaders in both religious and secular thought see it to be the hope of the future, and recognize in it a powerful agency for creating a new order and a better world ... Our future programme calls for cooperative effort in fellowship with and under the direction of a living Church in every land ... We must prepare now by thought, prayer and study that we may be ready when the doors open again. (15)

Recruitment For Post-War Work

Recruitment programmes for women began immediately following the war. In 1946 General Council appointed a special committee to study the recruiting and training of women church workers. The secretary of the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, Tina Campion, continued to put much of her energy into the recruitment of women

workers. In 1946 she reported that one field trip made to western Canada had included: 16 visits to centres, 37 public meetings, seven church services, three Presbytery meetings, one Presbytery Young People's Rally, and 14 visits to Young People's groups.(16) In addition to focusing on church groups, she also visited universities and colleges, as the following report suggests:

At four University centres there was provision made for meeting with those interested in Church vocations. At one University centre the secretary addressed the women in residence, at one spoke at Chapel - at two centres there was an opportunity to address student nurses on the needs of the Church - and at two centres met with the Vocational Guidance Committee of the school and at one centre with the Student Council.(17)

In the same year the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers agreed to prepare pamphlets on church work for women and to make them available to every Vocational Guidance Committee in the high schools of Canada. One of these pamphlets, "The Calling of the Christian," was prepared in 1947 and outlined all types of work being done by deaconesses and other women workers. Similar in format to its predecessors, it also contained testimonials from prominent male ordained ministers on the value of deaconesses to the Church. While the pamphlet also contained a description of the requirements for ordained ministry, its importance was downplayed and the impression was clearly given that women's normal work in the Church was still other than preaching and administering the sacraments.

The language and images used in publicity during this period related to the family and the home, with the Church being described as both structured and functioning like a nuclear family, and the woman worker as "the wife". Her work and her position in the Church were compared to the interests and position of the typical wife, and the suggestion was made that she came to her work with a natural affinity for nurturing, for working with women and children, and for supporting the work of others. In discussing the work of the rural Presbytery worker, one publicity pamphlet said that

The rural missionary at large is indeed 'at large', not only in her area of supportive work but in opportunities of service... and because in her are combined the minister and the minister's wife, she has need of good health, sound training, adaptability, an ardent spirit - and a sense of humour.(18)

Deaconesses continued to be seen as those responsible for maintaining relationships, interpreting behaviour, providing love and nurturing to those in need.

The Deaconess will have to tackle family problems of unemployment, drunkenness, poor housing, improvidence and delinquency. She may use the accepted Christian Education programmes of The United Church of Canada, but always there will be other groups needed to meet educational and social needs of her special area. Her striking point will be the home. Hers is the task of interpreting what the Church offers, encouraging participation and bringing opportunity and love into restricted lives.(19)

In 1947 the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, the United Church Training School and the Woman's Missionary Society agreed to cooperate in promoting a united programme of recruiting women for the full-time work of the Church. This reflected both an increasing awareness that each group often worked at cross-purposes to the others and ended up competing for the small number of interested women available, and a realization that recruiting programmes were becoming far too expensive for each group to handle alone. Under the cooperative programme they hired a full-time Personnel Secretary, Elinor Harwood, who began the work of simplifying the procedures for recruitment by removing any competitive or redundant steps. In speaking of the reasons for the new cooperation, each group stated, "None of us are (sic) in a position to see or present the whole picture of the Church's need unless we work closely together." (20) The position of Personnel Secretary lasted for ten years and included field trips across the country, often in cooperation with other Christian organizations such as the Y.W.C.A. and Student Christian Movement. As an article in The Observer suggests, such trips included a variety of approaches and involved the close cooperation of both local groups and visiting speakers:

This journey is aimed at interpreting to Canadian women from 16 to 60 the wide career opportunities open to them... In addition to the United Church staff person, members include the Executive Secretary of the Women's Auxiliary of the Anglican Church, representatives of the national Y.W.C.A., the regional secretaries of the Presbyterian Church and area representatives of the Y.W.C.A. and the Student Christian Movement... They interviewed as many prospects as possible, interpreting job possibilities and informing them of available assistance towards necessary training. They gave newspaper, radio and TV interviews and addressed interested groups. (21)

By 1955 recruitment programmes also included strategies for interesting women already heavily involved in the Church. Radio broadcasts and

newspaper articles by recent graduates were common during the late 1950's. The Conference representatives on the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers took responsibility for identifying graduates who were working in their area and made the arrangements for speeches and articles. They also sponsored recruitment teas for university women, and asked all church youth groups to have speakers and discussions on church work as a vocation. Materials were provided for all camps and summer schools across Canada, materials which portrayed church work for women as an exciting extension of their recreational and voluntary involvement in the Church. Presbyteries were requested to have dinner meetings or week-end conferences, and to hand out literature prepared by the new Personnel Committee.(22)

Yet despite the recruitment programmes and the urgent calls for trained women workers, particularly deaconesses, recruits for this work remained few. There were barely enough new workers to replace those who retired or resigned because of marriage or family commitments. In 1957 the Board of Colleges and Secondary Schools declared that the shortage of women workers was an emergency and spent considerable time discussing what could be done to remedy the situation. In the Secretary's report, promise was made that the issue would be dealt with immediately.

The whole Church is concerned over the small numbers of students in attendance at UCTS. This year, apart from overseas scholarship students and one or two other specials, the total enrolled is 26 and the number expected to graduate this spring is 12. The whole matter of recruiting, and particularly of the recruiting of women workers, is to be under study before the spring is out. It is clear that something drastic must be done if young women are to be attracted to the service of the Church in numbers that will even begin to meet the Church's need.(23)

The "drastic" action referred to turned out to be the production and distribution of more recruiting materials. In 1957 three thousand copies of recruiting folders and posters were mailed to ministers in congregations, with the request that they seek out suitable women and talk to them about a vocation in the Church. This initial mailing was followed by the preparation of six more fliers, booklets and folders, with a total of over 79,000 pieces of promotional material being prepared and distributed in 1957 alone.(24)

While all the materials listed what were believed to be the exciting and rewarding features of women's work in the Church, they still portrayed the Deaconess Order as the traditional place for women to offer their services in the Church. The ordained ministry was still attracting relatively few women,

as noted by Harriet Christie, the Principal of the United Church Training School in 1954:

The fact that after 20 years of ordaining women only 32 have accepted this call seems to indicate that large numbers of women are not likely to flow into this part of the Church's ministry.(25)

Also, it was still assumed that deaconess work would appeal to women precisely because it was temporary, had a shorter and less demanding preparation time than ordained ministry, and therefore was thought to provide an excellent and satisfying few years for women who, it was still believed, had as their primary goal marriage and the raising of a family. Though a careful study of the statistics showed that many women worked for twenty years as deaconesses and had as much educational training as their male ordained colleagues, such information was never presented in official descriptions or publicity materials on the Order. Despite thirty years of struggle for recognition and for professional status, deaconess work was still perceived as less than ordained ministry and, because of this, the appropriate possibility for normal women who wanted to work in the Church.

Christian Education: Increased Demand For Deaconesses

During the 1950's Christian Education became a priority for the United Church and a source of many jobs for women within congregations. Education was seen as an important tool for doing the Church's work of rebuilding society and putting the horrors of the recent war to rest. Education, Church experts during the 1950's believed, led to moral behaviour and good citizenship within a democracy. Christian Education programmes would lead the way in the creation of a new way of life for Canada.

To the work of the Church, Christian Education is basic. It is through Christian Education that we pass on our Christian heritage to succeeding generations. Such teaching is done chiefly in Church Schools since day schools have deleted Christian teaching from their curriculum, and the home seems to make no serious attempt to accept responsibility but is willing to leave it to the Church School. Through Christian Education the Church deliberately and purposely passes on the Christian heritage to succeeding generations, makes her solid advance and makes her permanent advance with the constant opportunity to reach out to claim the new generation in the community.(26)

Considerable emphasis was put, during the 1950's and 1960's, on both the content of what was taught and the methods used in Christian Education programmes. Church leaders began to appropriate secular educational theory and to apply the insights of Biblical scholarship to the material taught in Sunday School and mid-week programmes. They found the materials available in the early 1950's sorely lacking both in educational sophistication and Biblical content. Articles began to appear in church publications, outlining the crucial nature of the task of Christian Education and presenting the need for expertise, for sophisticated methodology and for updated materials. The following quotation from an article in The Observer is typical of many:

In these days of awareness of the striking lack of Biblical knowledge and Christian content among people everywhere, the task of Christian Education becomes of crucial importance in Canada and overseas. (Women with training in this field) help to select and train lay leadership, develop an awareness of the need for using the best methods of education in relation to a content which contains the truth about the meaning and purpose of life, and prepare hearts and minds for the reception of the Word of God as proclaimed in preaching and sacraments. Christian Education is no longer doing nice things with boys and girls to keep them occupied during Church, or in a healthy environment after School. It is using every available means of imparting to children and young people the knowledge of our Christian heritage and providing the experience of Christian fellowship and responsibility through which they may 'grow in grace and the knowledge of God'.(27)

Thus, Christian Education programmes, within a period of ten years from 1950 to 1960, became more rigorous and standardized. The Church was in need of new curriculum materials, and, most importantly, of experts or specialists to ensure their success. Based on the model of the successful school, every valuable Christian Education programme was defined as needing a detailed curriculum, a programme of leadership training, and a director or leader. In many cases, these directors or leaders were paid positions filled by deaconesses.

During the 1950's work began on a new Sunday School curriculum and a massive plan for the training of Sunday School teachers was developed. Both initiatives had been authorized by General Council in 1952. At that time, plans were approved for a three-year cycle which was to be graded into Nursery, Kindergarten, Primary, Junior, Intermediate and Senior materials. Writers and approximately 1500 readers were involved in the project, as well as illustrators, Biblical scholars and professional educators. All of this took twelve years to complete, and involved the whole Church in

a study of the importance of the education of children in the Christian tradition and an awareness of the need for specialists trained in and working exclusively in the area of the Christian Education of Church members - adults and children. (27) While this was happening, enrollment in the Sunday School, the major Christian Education programme in most congregations, continued to climb. Throughout the decade enrollment increased yearly by 25,000 to 30,000 students.(28) In churches in new housing areas it was quite common for Sunday Schools to have enrollments of 700 and to be held at several different hours in order to accommodate all of the children who wished to come. Hi-C and YPU, the two organizations for youth, also had huge membership increases, as did women's groups and Bible Study programmes.(29) A report in The Observer credited the increases to several developments in the Church:

Determining factors include the strengthening of interest in Christian Education; the appointment of local committees of Christian Education; and the fact that more families are responding to their own need for support in the Church. The United Church as a whole is taking more seriously its responsibility in the area of Christian Education. This is shown by the large number of new centres, with greatly improved facilities; the summer camping programme; the increased vacation school enrollment. (30)

These trends created an incredible demand for women trained in Christian Education. Congregations began to write both to the United Church Training School and to the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers requesting Christian Education Directors and Administrators. At the local level, it was automatically assumed that such work would both appeal to and be the natural sphere of women. While some ordained men took positions as directors of Christian Education during this time, it was usually because the function of administering the Christian Education programme was part of the job of "Assistant Minister." Also, most such male assistants were only temporary and moved on to become senior staff in their own churches as soon as they gained some experience in the ministry. Thus, Christian Education at the local level remained largely in the hands of women, in both its professional and voluntary aspects. Most Sunday School teachers were women, particularly in the Nursery, Kindergarten and Primary grades, and most requests sent out for workers were for deaconesses. At the national level the situation was the opposite. Most positions writing curriculum, establishing policy and directing Christian Education in the National Office were held by men. This concentration of women in local education positions, and under-representation in administrative and decision-making jobs paralleled the placement of women within the secular teaching profession.(31)

The position of Christian Education Director became an established part of the Church's life very quickly and easily, and in the next revision of the Book of Common Order a service was added for the installation of a director of Christian Education, a deaconess or an assistant minister. Though the educational work of the Church was entrusted to women, such workers were in no way autonomous or able to make their own decisions about the educational life of the Church. Education was seen to be second in importance to worship, and was described as serving the purpose both of preparing children and facilitating their involvement in the worship life of the congregation. In cases where there were conflicts between educational programmes and worship events, in terms of finances or scheduling, it was usually expected that worship concerns would take precedence. Thus women workers were again in a situation where their work was under the direction of someone else, and their authority was limited to a very specific sphere, that of the education of children and youth. The assignment of church space often became a symbol of the low status given to the Christian Education work of deaconesses. In older churches deaconesses' offices were often in dark basements or up several flights of stairs, away from the offices of the minister, organist and secretary. In some churches, separate offices for deaconesses were unheard of. Such women frequently used a desk stuck in the corner of a choir room or a Sunday School office, making working conditions difficult.

The work brought disappointments and rewards. Jessie MacLeod, in her 1956 annual report to the Deaconess Committee wrote:

While there are the occasional satisfying experiences resulting from a program or event that has been successful, my greatest satisfaction comes when there is evidence of marked development in individual lives. Manifestations are varied -- I recall a recent session with a group of 'teenage' communicants who were obviously enthusiastic as they questioned and probed their way through the course: also a conversation held recently with one of our Sunday School teachers who is finding immense personal growth through her preparations to teach her class. Then, too, there is a real sense of community among the key workers in our Sunday School...

(...) There are some discouraging aspects as well. Christian Education is not an integral part of the life of our whole congregation. There is an obvious distinction made between the teaching and preaching ministry...(32)

Promotional materials prepared during the 1950's began to highlight the deaconess as Christian Education director and expert. Images used portrayed the typical deaconess as a benevolent nurturer, knowledgeable in

the development and teaching of children and youth, supportive of the voluntary leadership of others, and able to provide resources and advice for problems encountered in all the educational programmes of the church. Within this broad framework, three more specific images began to emerge in descriptions of the work of deaconesses in Christian Education. The first was that of the interpreter, as someone who took the beliefs and practices of the Church and explained them and made them accessible to the people she worked with. As such, she was portrayed as standing between the Church and the community, and as inviting outsiders to become part of the Church's programmes. An article in The Observer developed the image in an interesting way:

Because of the nature of their training and responsibilities women are free from the ongoing administrative responsibilities of the organized Church, and are therefore able to work 'at the cutting edge of the Church's life' - to help the Church reach out to those not now within her fellowship. They visit in the homes of children of the Sunday School whose parents do not attend the Church and help to bring them into the fellowship of the Church. They organize new types of work to meet the needs of people who are, or could be, part of the fellowship of the Church.... They go out to meet people wherever they are and by friendliness, counselling and invitation help to extend the fellowship and influence of the Church. Their work is personal. It is also creative and dynamic for a growing Church.(33)

The second image common in descriptions of deaconesses was that of the specialist in working with youth and children. It was often assumed that because deaconesses were women they would naturally be interested in the nurture and support of children and youth, and would have natural skills in that area. In one testimonial to the value of deaconesses, they were praised for filling in a gap, for knowing how to communicate the faith to youth in ways they could understand and appreciate:

One task not well done previously is that of helping children and youth to understand our Christian faith. Definitions of yesterday will not do. They have lost their meaning, their relevance and their life. We dare not let our youth go out from the Church without the Christian faith as an intelligible body of truth which they can understand and express.(34)

Closely related to the idea of the deaconess as the specialist was the image of the deaconess as a supervisor. Conceived of as an overseer who was responsible for one section of the Church's life, one which was secondary in importance to worship, she recruited workers, trained them, had oversight of their work, and dismissed those whose performance was not adequate.

She also chose resources, determined leadership strategies, handled problems of attendance and discipline, and set budgets and schedules. As the Recruitment Folder, "The Calling of the Christian", produced in 1947, described her role:

[Her] task centres around large groups of business women, students, young people, CGIT, Junior Church and Fireside Hour. Some of the Church's services were initiated by the deaconess to meet an obvious need, but as she trained voluntary leadership, hers became a supervisory capacity. She monitors work, looks for gaps, and accepts responsibility for all the educational programmes of the congregation.(35)

The problems associated with the job of Christian Education director were numerous. In situations where new jobs were created for deaconesses in churches previously staffed by one professional (the ordained minister), personnel committees often expected the addition of a staff person to double the size of their congregations. They often judged the value of the new deaconess' work by the number of programmes she started and the number of new families she attracted to the church. There was little recognition that the quality of her relationship with people and the hours spent in counselling and in educational support could not be translated directly into immediate increases in membership or into larger financial givings. People in the congregation and the ordained clergy frequently had little understanding of the amount of work involved in maintaining a large Christian Education programme. In some situations, the facilities for Christian Education were inadequate and Sunday School and mid-week programmes were faced with problems of over-crowding, inadequate budgets and inferior supplies. Few Christian Education workers were members of the Boards of the Church, the places where decisions about budgets, priorities and facilities were made. Typically, they were members of the Christian Education Committee, the women's groups and the Social Outreach Committee, all of whom had little power within the structure of the Church. The work of providing programmes for all ages throughout the week often proved endless, and the work was invisible or privatized compared to the public, well-defined role of the ordained minister in worship and administration. This description, which appeared in The Observer describing one deaconess' (Lily Uyeda) work schedule showed the impossible demands of the job:

At 9 a.m. every weekday, a trim little Japanese Canadian deaconess of the United Church slips into her office in Olivet Church, Hamilton. She spends the morning planning the church's Christian Education programme. Then in the afternoon she moves into the second phase of her work... She visits, recruits, comforts among the church's

people, or attends women's meetings. Four nights a week she is back at the church again with youth groups or committees. Saturdays are spent on further visiting, and Sunday involves participation in the children's Christian Education programme.(36)

As Rev. Melville Aitken's address to the Annual Meeting of the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers in 1948 showed, the roles of ordained ministers as leaders and deaconesses as assistants and helpmates were to be seen as a crucial embodiment of the Church's general teachings on women's place in the world. At the same time he points out the need for training in a specialized ministry.

Just as we read that God made the woman to be helpmate of the man so I believe our Deaconess Order can be most adequately developed along the line of a diaconate, not in terms of a miniature ordained ministry, but a helpmate to a busy ministry too crowded to give needed leadership in certain fields of effort, particularly related to women and children... We need a diaconate for women trained in the problems of home building, child developing, youth guiding, organization building, keeping in mind particularly women, children and girls, so specialized in their training that when they go out they will know where and how to begin and not become chore girls of a busy minister.(37)

Thus, women were to be given training which would enhance what were believed to be natural, God-given traits and which would enable them to carry out tasks which ordained ministers were too busy to do. Once trained, such women were to see their work as both validated by and defined by the male clergy around them. They were to be trained in specialized ministries that were seen as separate from the realm of the ordained minister.

The requests for such specialized workers were never ending during the 1950's. They came both to the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers and to the staff of the Training School. In the Secretary's Report to the Meeting of the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers in November 1953, the projection was made that the Church needed at least 160 deaconesses immediately to fill existing vacancies.(38) In the first four months of 1955 urgent requests came from 30 churches, all of them with Sunday Schools of over 700 children, and all stating that it was "absolutely imperative to provide assistance for the minister."(39) By 1957 the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers had given up trying to keep track of requests for deaconesses beyond the current year, stating that

The number of requests for Deaconesses from congregations are so far in excess of the number available that the situation is tragic. This year no attempt was made from the office to follow up on requests for Deaconesses not met last year, yet 27 urgent calls for assistance were received. Some were new this year and some were made previously and renewed this year.(40)

Many congregations eventually gave up making requests for deaconesses and turned instead to graduates of the lay-oriented Christian Leadership Schools which were becoming popular at the Lay Training Centres across the country. While such programmes were originally designed to provide leadership training, Biblical Studies and personal enrichment events for lay leaders in the Church, they were increasingly being used as a source of potential Christian Educational professionals by desperate congregations. The recruitment of Christian Leadership graduates created a number of problems for the graduates themselves, for the congregations who employed them, and for deaconesses who were still struggling for recognition within the Church. Graduates of the Christian Leadership Schools who were employed in the place of deaconesses quickly found that their training was inadequate for the work of a professional within the Church. In 1953 the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers discussed the emerging problems associated with the hiring of unqualified workers and issued a statement to remind congregations that Christian Leadership Schools did not provide training for professional service. In addition, the Committee decided to investigate the possibility of setting up a summer course for such workers at the United Church Training School.(41)

Because of the severe shortage of deaconesses, graduates were faced with an endless variety of job possibilities and were besieged with job offers. Such women, as a result, had a sense of excitement about their vocation and tended to ignore issues of payment, working conditions and status, thinking instead that because they were in such demand they would be treated fairly. Ferne Graham, one graduate who began her work in 1951, commented several years later on her feelings as a new worker:

There were strong feelings of self-worth in us old girls when we were new graduates. There was no way we could fill all the requests for missionaries and deaconesses, and we really started off feeling that we had a contribution to make to the life and work of the Church. I think that's why we didn't become concerned about low salaries - we knew that there wasn't enough money in Canada to pay what we were worth.(42)

Yet in spite of the obvious need and the concentrated recruitment efforts, recruits for the Deaconess Order did not appear in numbers approximating the vacancies. Active membership in the Order varied between a low of 59 in 1945 and a high of 147 in 1963.(43) And the majority of those women who did train for the Deaconess Order did not choose congregational work until the late 1950's. In 1953, for example, nine deaconess candidates graduated from the United Church Training School and none of them chose congregational work.(44) In 1954 14 women joined the Deaconess Order and only four entered congregational work.(45) But eventually local congregations did replace the Woman's Missionary Society as the main employer of deaconesses for the first time in history. By 1958, 31 out of 74 women in full-time work were employed in Christian Education positions in local congregations. Most were concentrated in large urban areas, in congregations which were large enough and affluent enough to afford more than one full-time professional. In 1958 an additional 10 deaconesses were employed in educational institutions and Boards of Christian Education.(46) This meant that more than half of all active deaconesses were employed in jobs which were defined as Christian Education positions. In 1959 and 1960 the situation was similar. Those not in local congregations were in the field of publications, visual aid materials, Sunday School by Mail and Air programmes, or in provincial or national positions in Christian Education. Some were Associate field secretaries, Girls', Children's and Young People's work secretaries or university counsellors.(47)

As the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers continued to receive requests for deaconesses, many of them accompanied by lists of duties which were endless, and continued to receive yearly reports from individual deaconesses on their work, it became increasingly concerned about the fact that many were being over-worked and were being undermined by unrealistic expectations from their congregations. Some were resigning in frustration, returning to their previous occupations of business, teaching or nursing. In addition, some were given vague terms of reference for their work, and often had no one to relate to in cases of problems, other than the ordained minister, who often had no conception of the work being done or the problems encountered. While a few of the problems deaconesses faced had to do generally with the hierarchical nature and functioning of the Church and were shared by male assistant ministers, the majority of them were gender-specific and had to do with an ingrained sexism and a theology which praised women's attributes as nurturers and followers, yet treated such work as if it were invisible, costless to the women involved, and less important than the other tasks of the Church. While assistant ministers knew that eventually, with experience, they could become senior ministers, and would be labelled as "lacking in ambition" if they didn't, deaconesses knew that, with rare exceptions, they would always be perceived as assistants, and would have to work for clergy who

had no training in collegiality or team work, and little understanding of the work involved in creating and maintaining a Christian Education programme.

In 1951 the Secretary of the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers urged the Committee to begin work on a job analysis form which could eventually be used to help congregations decide on a proper job description for a deaconess. Also, the Committee hoped, it could be used by the Secretary to suggest to congregations that their demands were excessive. In explaining the purpose of the form, the Committee expressed the hope that it could be used to stop the exploitation of deaconesses within congregations which did not or could not determine what the appropriate work load should be. It would stop deaconesses from feeling they were failures, and would show instead that their jobs were impossible to do.

From such a report we would be able to make recommendations more wisely and in some cases might need to point out that the amount of leadership they were expecting from any trained woman was more than one person could give. They would therefore need to select the most urgent areas for the present.(48)

Such a form could be valuable, the Committee believed, not just at the time of the appointment of the deaconess, but could facilitate a review of her work annually and allow for changes to be made in her work load before a severe overload forced her to quit in frustration. It was hoped that a clearly designed form would facilitate a clear understanding by the minister and the congregation as well as by the deaconess about what is expected of her and about what resources and personnel would be provided by the Church to help her in her work. The form eventually decided upon included the following questions, and helped to change the perception of deaconesses from assistants for the clergy to workers who were responsible to the whole congregation for their work.

What is the relation of the Deaconess to the Session? Official Board? Presbytery? Conference? Groups in Church? What committee of the Session will be associated with the Deaconess and will be directly responsible for her work? To whom should the Deaconess report on her work, and how often? How shall the work be kept before the congregation in a meaningful way? What facilities will be necessary for the effective work of the Deaconess?(49)

Education for Deaconesses

Changes had been made to the educational programme at the United Church Training School in 1947. One change was to lengthen its course for

university graduates from one year to two. Though it was done at a time when the Church was desperately trying to find women workers and to make access to jobs for women easier, faculty and students both agreed that the present educational preparation was not long or detailed enough and that the special programmes instituted during World War Two to train women workers for special projects did not adequately train women for professional work in the Church. Students within the programme claimed that they couldn't begin to deal with the subjects presented within one year, saying that they needed more time to "master a situation and adequately learn new skills." (50) Graduates were consistently reporting that at the time of their first jobs they were inadequately equipped for the work expected of them and the opportunities awaiting them in the Church:

The woman Church worker and missionary is expected not only to have sound knowledge herself but also to be able to mediate that knowledge in a variety of ways to people of all types and ages. Further, she is expected to be able to recommend books and other resources to leaders to enable them to do their own work more adequately. (51)

Though the move to a two year programme was instituted quite quickly and smoothly, it was not without its critics, and the whole question of the level and prerequisites for the training of women were to be challenged many times as the shortage of women workers became worse.

At the same time as it was lengthening its required programme, the United Church Training School was also moving towards a period of closer cooperation with Emmanuel College, the Toronto theological college where some ordained ministers were educated. In 1950 there was a joint appointment of a professor of Christian Education, who was to have an office and be on the faculty of Emmanuel College, but was to lecture in Christian Education at both Emmanuel College and the United Church Training School. He was to share in the field work of the students and to teach in the Graduate School of Theological Studies. In addition, other faculty from Emmanuel were to teach more than half of the courses for the students at the Training School. Students with a previous university degree could, for the first time, take courses at Emmanuel College and receive credit for work done there, and students who qualified could work towards an M.A. in the University of Toronto. This scheme of dual enrolment whereby students with previous university work could earn a diploma from the School and work towards a university degree at the same time was part of a deliberate strategy to give women greater access to university degrees and the recognition which came with them, and to integrate the School's programme, wherever possible, with that of Emmanuel College. (52) In a

panel presentation by students in 1950, they described the new, more detailed programme of studies:

At the Training School we studied the basic disciplines of Systematic Theology, Church History, Old and New Testaments, Ethics and Psychology of Religion with the theological students. The practical courses of our training include Social Work, Pastoral Theology, Sociology and Missions. Along with these we have Crafts, Recreational Leadership, Music, and this coming year Religious Drama is being added to the course. These courses are taken with the Anglican and Presbyterian women who are also training for full-time service in the Church. We consider this cooperation with the other two training Colleges to be a valuable part of our training.(53)

After the war, Victoria University, of which Emmanuel College was part, offered land to the Training School to build its badly needed new facilities. The two houses which had been acquired in the 1940's had proven very inadequate, both for the number of students and the expanded programmes which the Training School had taken on. The offer was accepted and in 1950 General Council authorized a fund-raising campaign to secure money for the new school. Harriet Christie, the Dean of the School, was chosen to act as the National Executive Secretary and she travelled across the country, speaking to congregations, and particularly to women's groups, about the importance of women's work and the need for new and larger facilities for their training. Campaign Committees were set up in every Conference and Presbytery. They were typically composed of representatives of the Woman's Missionary Society, and the Women's Association, and any other men or women named by the Church as key to the success of the programme. The objective was set at \$600,000, but by February 1954, only four years after authorization for the campaign had been given, over \$700,000 had been raised, with contributions continuing to come in at a steady rate.(54)

The following story is one that was told by Caryn Douglas, who collected the story from Kay Pearson, a long time employee at the Centre for Christian Studies.

Harriet Christie Sells Bricks

The war had ended and attention in Canada was again focused on the home front. Churches were growing rapidly and the need for Christian Education workers was keeping pace with the new expansion. New vision and hope permeated the atmosphere of the United Church Training School. Into this walks Harriet Christie, the Dean of Residence. Well walk isn't quite the right word, Harriet

strode into a room. Her appearance in a room couldn't help but command your attention, she was poised, a striking woman, who carried herself straight and proud. But it was more than her physical appearance which caught and grabbed your attention, it was her whole personality. Harriet was a warm and loving woman, she especially loved "her students" as she called them and her sense of humour and love of laughter would find her smiling and at ease among her peers and with the many who looked to her for leadership and guidance. Harriet was also strong willed, intelligent, articulate, stubborn, and quite likely overly committed to the visions she could see so clearly. When she set her mind to a task nothing was going to stop her and heaven help anyone who got in her way.

Back in those days the Training School comprised two residence buildings, 25 Bedford Road and 214 St. George Street. (Occasionally students overflowed into two adjacent rooms at 188 St. George Street, which was known as "Halfway House"). Jean Hutchinson, the principal at the time, shared the dream of many of having the school all together under one roof. There was no shortage of good ideas for the building but where was anyone going to find \$600,000 to build it?

Well I don't know exactly whose idea it was but a plan was evolved and Harriet had a new job description. It was actually wonderfully simple and Harriet had the personality and determination to carry it off! Amazing when you think about it, Harriet Christie criss-crossed this entire country selling bricks for the new building. A dollar a brick! Buy a brick or two was her plea to Woman's Missionary Societies, church sessions, Sunday schools, congregations. Anyone in the Church who would invite her to speak would get the same plea, buy a brick to build a school, to shape a vision. The combination of Harriet's warmth, her presence and her dog-eared determination must have been winning because when the campaign was over she had sold 640,000 bricks.

The success of the campaign was interpreted both by local women's groups and by professional women workers as an affirmation of the contributions of women to the ministry of the Church and as reflecting a desire to take more seriously their training and preparation.

By the early spring of 1955 the new building was finished and the dedication was held in March. A three day open house brought over 4,000 visitors who toured the new facilities and celebrated what seemed to them as a new era for women's work in the Church. At the service of dedication

Rev. W.C. Lockhart summarized what many were feeling about the work of women in the Church:

Surely the appearance of this School in this place and at this time, planned and financed largely through the initiative, the ingenuity, the hard labours and the sacrifices of the women of our great Church, is indication in itself that God's Spirit broods over His Church, looking for new and creative opportunities for expression... [This School] is symbolic of a growing and developing movement which heralds the dawn of a day in the life of our Church when the unusual gifts, the qualities of the feminine mind and heart and spirit are being made available for leadership and service in the Church.(55)

Living in residence continued to be a requirement, as were Sunday afternoon teas with the Principal and formal evening meals in the dining room. Women workers learned that successful professional work in the Church involved aspects of graciousness, hospitality, highly developed listening and conversational skills, and an ability to anticipate and respond to the social and physical needs of others.

Enrollment continued to increase slowly, and in 1952 the School had its largest enrolment in history with 44 students in the programme and 27 graduates in the spring. (56) Prerequisites for entrance continued to be a university degree or training in a profession followed by several successful work years. Since the three most popular professions for women at this time were nursing, business and teaching, it is not surprising that by 1950 half of the women who became deaconesses had previous experience in those fields, and the other half were university graduates. (57)

The strong practical emphasis in the educational programme continued. Students were required to work in a local church, giving leadership both on Sundays and during the week to children and to young people. Each student had a weekly interview with a supervisor, and also had the help of the minister, deaconess or Sunday School Superintendent of the church where she worked. This programme of double supervision was instituted in 1946, and meant that each student had two resource people, two supervisors to learn from, one within her work setting and one who was an experienced deaconess or church member not directly connected with the placement. (58) Joint meetings were also held with other students. Such informal sessions provided a chance for the discussion of common problems and for peer learning and support. In 1947 the time commitment required for such field work was set at four to eight hours a week, and a second semester focusing on field work research was added to the curriculum. Regular meetings were also held with the supervisors as a way of facilitating the discussion, evaluation and revision of the recommended processes of

effective supervision. (59) The result of all this emphasis on practical training was that women workers entered their first positions with a greater wealth of practical experience and a greater awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of congregations than did their more academically trained ordained counterparts. Yet their training and qualifications were consistently minimized by a Church which looked to academic degrees as the proof of excellence and qualification for ministry in the Church.

Alternative Proposals for Preparation

In 1954 the Senate of Victoria University approved the formation of a two year course of study, including a thesis requirement, which would be given at Emmanuel College and which would lead to the degree of Bachelor of Religious Education. The creation of the degree programme was part of the increasing movement towards seeing Christian Education as an area of specialization in the Church and to provide academic professional credentials for workers who wished to concentrate on it. The Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, in hearing about the new degree, recommended that the Training School investigate the possibility of such a degree being incorporated for those students who qualified, as part of the work leading to the diploma of the School. (60)

In 1959 the relationship of the School to Emmanuel College became even more formalized when, after years of negotiations and discussions, those students at the School who were college graduates were encouraged to register in the Bachelor of Religious Education (B.R.E.) programme and to take all of the required courses for this. Thus, they could graduate in two years with both a diploma from the School and a BRE degree from Emmanuel College. One of the results of this arrangement was the separation of degree from non-degree students. It was now possible for field work seminars and community events to be the only activities which all students shared in together. With the finalizing and implementation of this agreement with Emmanuel the expectation was clearly stated that the United Church Training School would "become an institution which normally asked from prospective students a standing of college graduation." (61) Another hope of the School was that the participation of deaconess and ordained candidates in common classes would increase the visibility of deaconesses across the Church by giving to ordination candidates an understanding of who deaconesses were and how they understood their work in the Church. The programme also provided, for the first time, a near equivalency between the training of some deaconesses and ordained ministers, and opened the way to salary comparisons of those women who had BRE degrees and ordained workers with Bachelor of Divinity degrees.

Much of the discussion and work concerning status, working conditions and salaries of women workers, including deaconesses, was overshadowed by a larger question which arose about the nature and length of training needed to be a woman worker in the Church. In 1957, during the time when there were many jobs and few graduates from the United Church Training School, individual churches, Presbyteries and Conferences began to question the need for extensive training for women and to call for a lowering of the entrance requirements at the School and a shortening of the training period. They claimed that such actions were logical ways to solve the shortage problem and to attract women into church work. They claimed that there were many women available who would like to enter church work, but were barred from it both by the high educational and professional qualifications needed beforehand and by the rigour and length of the course.

In 1953 a request came to the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, to accept and provide training for women who did not have the entrance requirements for the United Church Training School, but who had other qualifications such as volunteer experience in the Church or in other large organizations. (62) Though the request was denied and the admission policies of the School affirmed, such action did not stop the questioning of the School's standards and training programme. In 1957 Maritime Conference sent a resolution to the Board of Colleges and Secondary Schools requesting the provision by the Training School of courses which would provide training for church work for young women with only Junior Matriculation standing. (63) Later, the Dominion Council of the Women's Association passed a resolution asking the Board of Colleges and Secondary Schools to study the possibility of instituting a special one year course for women workers (Senior Matriculation standard) at the United Church Training School. Referring to the precedents set in World War Two and shortly after, both the WA and Maritime Conference argued that the Church was losing out on many dedicated women who wished to serve as workers. (64) Both believed that the post-war WMS programmes of 1946 and 1951, described below, were the model which the Church should be adopting for the majority of women's work.

Programmes of the Woman's Missionary Society

In 1946 the Woman's Missionary Society had recruited women workers to give a year of service in Indian institutions and Residential Schools which included a training course at the Portage La Prairie Indian Residential School and a year's work. Teachers, nurses, matrons and supervisors were hired in this way, and were provided with travel, salary, educational expenses, and were sent to Indian institutions all across Canada. (65) In 1951 a similar programme was set up to secure qualified and experienced teachers, university graduates and business women who would work in Church

Extension and new housing areas. There they were to do survey work, home visitation, set up Christian Education programmes, and cooperate with local Church Extension Committees in new housing areas to establish congregations. The training period was one year at the United Church Training School, followed by two years of work for the Church. Scholarship money was provided to finance the year of training, and travel expenses were also paid. (66) The recruitment folder stressed both the urgency and importance of such work for women.

Every city and large town has its new housing areas in which are found young married people with little children. The United Church plans to build 150 churches in these areas in the next five years. Women are needed to help with this important work. (67)

Initially the discussion of the length and the format of training programmes required for women workers stayed within the Board of Colleges and Secondary Schools and the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, both of whom were responsible for standards, training and selection of women workers. Both in 1957 and 1958 the Board of Colleges and Secondary Schools, which was responsible for all theological training, spent a considerable length of time debating the question of the absence of women workers and the adequacy of the present training standards. During the discussions, some members of the Board expressed the fear that, unless professional church work was made more easily accessible to young women, they would get married and be "lost" to professional church work forever. Others spoke as if the Church needed two distinct categories of women workers - one highly trained and professionalized group, as now existed in deaconesses and W.M.S. missionaries, and another large, minimally trained disposable group of women who would be constantly available to meet special personnel needs in the Church. Others suggested that more jobs be made available which combined religious education duties with secretarial or social service work, and that these positions be available to women with experience in business or social work and no special training in Christian Education. The general tenor of the discussions was that, for most of the jobs women did in the Church, minimal training and skill was required. Though nothing was resolved during the heated discussions, all agreed that "something drastic must be done if young women are to be attracted to the service of the Church in numbers that will even begin to meet the Church's need." (68)

During the following months the intensity of the debate increased and participants became increasingly polarized between those who saw women as highly trained professionals and those who thought that what the Church needed was a large group of minimally trained "assistants". The dynamics of the debate kept any other issues of work load or status from being

recognized or linked to the shortage of women workers at all. Most people never looked beyond their assumptions that the only problems had to do with difficult entrance requirements and training length. Few ever asked questions about the working conditions, salaries and status of women, and those who did were silenced by comments that such issues had nothing to do with women's entrance into church work.

At the time of these discussions the recommended minimum salary scale for deaconesses was \$2800 and the W.M.S. salaries were similar. (69) Inez Morrison, in her speech to the Annual Meeting of the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers raised the issue by stating that recruitment strategies were not showing results because they were focused on the wrong issues. To be successful, they needed to be integrated with a concerted effort to improve salaries and working conditions. The Church needed to take account of the fact that "somehow we have failed to give enough prestige to the work and to make it a good life." (70) However, her speech was heard by the converted, by those who had already struggled long and hard against the exploitation of women workers, and was not heard by those who were in a position to do something about the conditions of women's working lives. The eventual result of the Board of Colleges and Secondary Schools' deliberations was an agreement to send a questionnaire to ministers in congregations, asking them to identify the areas of need for the service of women workers in their own churches. (71)

Though the requests to change the entrance standards and curriculum of the United Church Training School did not speak specifically of deaconess work, and in some cases advocates of the change were prepared to leave the training of deaconesses as it was, the whole discussion did have specific implications for the recognition and work of deaconesses. Once women were certified and entered church work, they tended to move from one job to another and congregations often did not bother to check up on whether their training was specifically related to one task or whether they had the professional course of training provided for deaconesses and W.M.S. missionaries by the Training School. Congregations tended to treat one woman worker like another, and to generalize in terms of women's competence, training and status. Thus, the discussion and the proposals contributed to the general impression that women were indeed all hastily trained and therefore deserving of lower salaries and assistant positions in churches. Thus, the discussion around education was representative of an intention to downgrade women's skills in the profession of Church work, and even though such calls for a simpler and shorter course were never acted upon, they still created a belief among Church members that women's work was not particularly valuable or difficult.

Discussion continued on this issue for several years, mostly within appropriate committees or in congregations looking at the possibility of hiring a woman worker. In 1961 *The Observer*, the United Church's new magazine, took the discussion to the whole Church and increased the intensity of the debate with the publication of an editorial entitled "Needed - a Short Course." It proposed the same solution to the problem of the shortage of women workers - the provision of a shorter course with lower entrance standards. (72) Though the article claimed to be talking about both men and women, all of the arguments given were based totally on assumptions about women's roles, capacities and goals in life. Men seemed to be included as merely an afterthought, or on the assumption that very few of them would be attracted to non-ordained, low status, poorly paid work in the first place. Based on an understanding of true femininity as expressed and completed only through marriage and child-bearing, and of work as needing to be kept from interfering with this natural desire and process for women, the article stated the following:

The ambition of the normal Christian girl is to get a good education, work for a while, get married and rear a family. And that is a high calling. Some of the best of them want professional, full-time, lifelong service in the Church. For them we thank God. Others will find marriage passes them by, and they want to make life count for the highest possible good. For that kind of service there should be adequate professional training - the kind provided by the United Church Training School now. But among the tens of thousands of young women coming out of our high schools and churches, there are many who could make an excellent contribution for a few years - like young public school teachers. And after marriage they could continue to be of great help in their local churches. But they just are not prepared for the long preparation required now. (73)

The reactions to the editorial, as reflected in subsequent Letters to the Editor, were strong and immediate. Though few criticized the assumptions about women behind the proposal, several did question the writer's assumption that Christian Education leadership was a job which required very little skill. They pointed out the dangers of the Church's tendency to define Christian Education, with its constituency of women and children and its emphasis upon process and growth rather than measurable results, as less complex or important than other aspects of the Church's life. As Margaret Moore pointed out in a letter to the Editor:

No short term training programme can begin to replace the well-trained full-time leadership which is the genius of the Protestant Church. Surely as we face an increasingly bewildering and complex world our need for Christian Education in depth is an urgent one. A

Church without such leadership is ill-equipped to play a vital role in our world... if (this plan) means that year after year the important responsibilities of Christian Education are to be placed in the hands of teenagers, I think we are being offered a plan that holds many dangers.(74)

The Observer responded to the criticism by publishing a second editorial which even more clearly identified a position that women's proper activities were in the home and that nothing should ever interfere with their prospects or their desire for marriage. Careers were only to be seen as preparatory for their real roles. In its wording it was remarkably similar to the reasons being given to bar married women, particularly mothers, from ordination, a debate which was being held at the same time in the Church:

There are many young people, mostly girls, who would like to be Fridays. They don't intend to devote their lives to full-time church work, but would be ready to spend a few years prior to marriage in such work. They can't take time for five or six years training, and then time for service too, if they are going to get married and start rearing a family in early or mid-twenties. This, of course, is based on the assumption that God's highest calling for a woman is still to be a wife and mother.(75)

A shorter programme for men who entered ministerial training at a late age was seriously questioned several times by the same editor who proposed a much shorter course for women. In an editorial entitled "A Desperate Shortage" and which gave the grim statistics about the lack of ministers, he stated the following:

It must be remembered that an increasing number of ministers in service are men without full training. To meet the shortage we have compromised our standards. More and more older men with a short course are being ordained... They are not as well trained as they or we would like them to be... History indicates that every time a church became short of ministers and lowered standards to meet the emergency, that church declined. It could happen to us.(76)

Though the Training School consistently refused to admit younger women with fewer qualifications into its educational programmes, it did eventually give in to the pressure to provide a concentrated course for older women who were already working in the Church. In 1959 the staff initiated a summer course for women over 35 who were not eligible for entrance into the School but who were interested in or already working in Church institutions and congregations. At the time the programme was announced to the Board of Colleges and Secondary Schools, the Principal stated that

she expected an enrolment of 20 women. (77) This programme represented the first significant attempt to recognize and provide for the work of older women in the Church.

The Constitution of the Deaconess Order

In 1951 work began to revise the Constitution of the Deaconess Order. With it came a lively discussion of the regulation requiring the disjoining of women from the Deaconess Order when they married. Though the Deaconess Work Committee, a sub-committee of the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, ruled to leave it in the Constitution, this was challenged both by individual members of the Order and by Harriet Christie, the Principal of the Training School, on the grounds that it reinforced outdated, rigid rules of women's roles in society and was out of step with what was happening in other areas of women's work. In a letter to the Executive Secretary of the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, the Principal voiced her concerns:

I do not see why marriage, per se, disqualifies a woman from membership in the Deaconess Order. If membership in the Order results from the call of God to serve Him, I do not see why marriage invalidates that call... Marriage in itself does not necessarily alter either the nature or the quality of work, for many married women in all vocations continue to work after marriage. I can think of no vocation where marriage automatically removes status, and do not see why it should in this case. One of the tasks of the Committee on the Deaconess Order is to work for a growing recognition within the Church of the place and contribution of women and to develop within the Church the understanding which is increasing in other areas of life that men and women are persons of equal worth in the sight of God and deserve to be so treated, with each person being judged according to his own worth. It seems to me that this clause in the Constitution contributes to the attitude that women's place is in the home, that women may be classified together rather than having individual persons considered for her own merits. (78)

The clause remained in the Constitution as a general rule, but the position of the Committee was softened in 1953, when employing congregations of individual deaconesses who were to be married, began to write to the Committee requesting that they be allowed to continue in their jobs and remain within the Deaconess Order. The first of these requests came in February of 1953, and after considerable discussion, the Committee agreed that "since it will be possible for (her) to continue to serve as a deaconess after her marriage, that she be permitted to retain her status in the Deaconess Order as long as she continues to perform the duties of a

deaconess." (79) For the next four years decisions such as the previous one continued to be made around specific individuals and congregations who wrote asking that the rule in the Constitution be waived. However, the rule remained in force otherwise and acted as a continuing powerful statement of what was considered the most appropriate for women workers. It did not really make women's continued participation in the Order after marriage any more acceptable. What it did was to delay the imposition of the rule until such deaconesses were looking for another appointment, and were unable to find a congregation which would request a waiving of the rule on their behalf. The issue of deaconess' suitability for employment after marriage would then re-emerge. In 1957 the disjoining rule was finally removed from the Constitution. (80)

In 1951, as the work on revising the Constitution continued, the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers also reconsidered the rule which required candidates for the Order to serve a probationary year before they could be recommended for membership in the Order. The Committee discovered that the probationary year, in practice, turned out to be two. Few deaconesses were able to work a full year between graduation in May and the meeting of Conference the next spring. Therefore, they were required to wait until the next Conference meeting in order to be designated. After discussing the effects of this rule on both individual deaconesses and their employers, the Committee sent a resolution to General Council in 1952 asking that it be removed and that deaconesses be admitted to the Order immediately after graduation from the Training School. (81)

This was accepted, as was the following recommendation:

The salary for a deaconess shall not be less than the existing salary scale which has been approved by the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers.(82)

The Committee was becoming increasingly frustrated with congregations' and Boards' unwillingness to raise voluntarily the salaries of deaconesses to a suggested minimum. Strategies of consultation, persuasion, and of appealing to employing groups' compassion and sense of fairness had not proven successful and had left many deaconesses with barely enough money to live on. Particularly in congregational work, church boards and sessions were noted for paying less than the minimum and justifying it on the basis of statements that the work being done was "assistance", and the women involved were single and therefore did not need much money to live on. Congregations also pointed out that such women had inferior educational qualifications or that they were paying as much money as they could afford. In 1952 the Committee did a summary of the salaries of

deaconesses in congregational work and found that half of the deaconesses were receiving less than the minimum recommended by the Committee. Out of 21 women reported on, only six were receiving \$100 or more above the minimum level.(83) In conducting its work on salaries, the Committee kept an extensive file on the salaries of teachers, and stated several times that it regarded teaching as a profession comparable to deaconess work. Yet the Committee was never able to bring deaconess' salaries anywhere near the level of those for teachers. In 1952, when the minimum for deaconesses was \$1900 for new graduates and \$2100 for more experienced workers(84), teachers in Toronto who were Normal School graduates started at \$2400, and those who had three years of university received \$3000.(85) By way of comparison, the Record of Proceedings from the Fifteenth General Council contains a motion stating that salaries for ordained, married ministers should be in the range of \$2700 with free housing provided.

Over the next few years the situation regarding deaconess' salaries did not improve substantially, with many deaconesses still receiving less than the recommended minimum. The Committee continued to receive correspondence from deaconesses who were in serious financial difficulties, and instructed the Executive Secretary to meet again with the Boards who employed deaconesses, "with a view to finding ways and means of providing adequate salaries and living accommodation for all deaconesses."(86) During 1952, the use of the deaconess uniform was also reviewed. Deaconesses in social service work saw it as a useful tool for identification and thought that it also ensured their safety in dangerous places. Deaconesses in congregations did not see it as useful at all. A committee was appointed to find a more suitable style, one which would appeal to all deaconesses. After a year of consulting with women workers, the Committee gave up on the task of finding a uniform for all. Instead, a ribbon and deaconess pin were provided as a form of identification on the job.

The Struggle for Access to Church Courts

Though visibility of deaconess work was increasing across the Church and requests for such workers continued to increase, deaconesses still had no access to the decision-making courts of the Church. Unlike ordained ministers, who were automatically members of Presbytery and Conference, and were ex-officio members of church Sessions, deaconesses had no guaranteed membership in any of these decision-making groups. As more deaconesses found work in local congregations, their inability to speak and vote in the places where many of the decisions about ministry, finances and programmes of local congregations were made, became an issue of injustice and exclusion. These women saw policies made which both undermined or

ran interference with their work and showed a lack of willingness on the part of church groups or committees to learn about or appreciate their difficult and unique work. One issue of concern was the fact that retired ordained ministers, who were no longer active in ministry, were members of Presbytery by right, yet deaconesses who were actually working in local congregations had no such "right". With these discoveries, deaconesses began to work for a voice in the courts of the Church.

In 1942 the "attendance" of deaconesses at Presbytery meetings had been approved by General Council, but deaconesses could not speak during debates unless the individual Presbytery they attended passed a motion which made them corresponding members for the duration of the meeting. Such a motion would mean that they could speak on issues and participate in committee meetings, but could not vote. Deaconesses could vote only if they were appointed as lay delegates by their individual congregations, and this rarely happened before 1946. Thus the voices of deaconesses were heard at Presbytery only if individual presbyteries chose to hear them and allowed such women to participate. Presbytery remained male-dominated, with male clergy doing most of the speaking, and lay people, mostly women, listening and following their lead.

In 1946, recognizing that the position and status of deaconesses and other women workers in the Church was far from adequate, General Council set up two important commissions, one to study the recruiting and training of Church workers, and one to study the whole range of women's ministry, including ordination, and the problem of the lack of status of deaconesses in the courts of the Church.(87) Both the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers and the Fellowship of Professional Workers began the preparation of detailed briefs, taking this opportunity to document the situation of deaconesses and to make proposals directly to the two commissions about changes in the organization and functioning of deaconess work in the Church. The Fellowship held a national meeting for the purpose of gathering material on the experiences of deaconesses and other women workers, and of preparing a brief. Energy and excitement was high, and many women workers described this as a time when they sensed that major changes were in the air, and that their ideas and concerns would be taken seriously by the two Commissions. Seventy-nine members attended the Fellowship's meeting in August 1947, and worked to prepare the material for the Commissions.(88)

The prepared statements of both the Fellowship and the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers proposed that there be a second Order of Ministry, a proposal which had been rejected in 1928. More detailed than the request in 1928, both briefs detailed the purpose, composition, status and function of such an Order, and gave elaborate

theological and historical summaries which both highlighted the work of women in the Church throughout history and pointed out the ways in which the Church had not fully benefited from the gifts of women. The Fellowship's brief described its proposal for an Order in the following way:

Such Order shall be as valid an Order as that of the ministry of the Word and Sacraments, but different in function. Members of the Order would serve as nurses, doctors, teachers, social workers, Christian Education workers, Lay Supplies, Executive and Field Secretaries, writers and editors. Membership in the Order would not be determined by function. The unifying factor would rather be a common theological training and a common commitment to full-time work in the Church. All these, if truly dedicated to Christ and manifestly called to the service of the Church, are in a real sense engaged in the Ministry of the Church.(89)

The creation of such an Order for non-ordained Church personnel, the Fellowship believed, would solve the problems of lack of status for deaconesses and other women workers. Since entrance into the Order would be by ordination, the women within it would become part of the official ministry of the Church and would be members of Session, Presbytery and Conference by right, just as ordained ministers presently were, according to the Basis of Union. Qualifications for the proposed Order would be those presently in place for deaconesses, and all women in full-time service of the Church would be invited to join. Thus, both groups, the Fellowship and the Committee, were proposing something which would unify the work of women in the Church, provide access to the courts of the Church, lead to greater visibility and recognition, yet maintain the uniqueness and separation of women's work which was other than word and sacrament.

In 1948, after two years of work, the Commission on the Ministries of Women reported to General Council. In a lengthy report which raised and detailed many of the problems associated with deaconess' lack of membership in Sessions and Presbyteries, the Commission asked General Council to begin investigating the possibility of establishing a Diaconate as an Order of Ministry. It recommended that such an Order be open to men as well as women, and that the Commission, if created, study the conditions of admission to such an order, the relation of its members to the Church courts and the training needed for such work. This recommendation was turned down by General Council, but the Commission's second recommendation was received more favorably. It involved the implementation of a policy that, in cases where the number of non-ministerial members elected to Presbytery was less than the number of ministers on the roll, the Presbytery, for the purpose of equalization, appoint

those deaconesses working in its congregations as lay delegates, "up to the number necessary for the purpose of equalization." (90) This represented but a partial solution to the problem. Though its appeal was that it didn't require a change in the Basis of Union before it could be implemented, it still meant that many deaconesses would not be members of Presbytery. Those who did not work in congregations, or who were in presbyteries where there were enough lay delegates, would be left out. And those deaconesses who would be appointed as delegates, would be constantly aware that they were only included temporarily because of the goodwill of their congregations and because of a shortage of lay delegates. Deaconesses were well aware that their inclusion could be secured only because of the exclusion of others and that they were not really satisfactory lay delegates. As paid employees of congregations, they brought a different perspective than true lay delegates would. As the Fellowship pointed out in the section of its brief dealing with membership of deaconesses in Presbytery, deaconesses were never equivalent in outlook, experience or function to the laity:

A Deaconess does not actually belong in the non-ministerial group in that she has completed the training required by the Church, for her office and work, been set apart by the laying on of hands and functions in the full-time work, carrying many responsibilities similar to those carried by the minister. (91)

In spite of the protests and discomfort of deaconesses, their exclusion from automatic membership in Presbytery continued for several more years. The Church continued to minimize their professional status and their resultant differences from lay women, who made up most of the lay delegation to Presbyteries. The majority of deaconesses still had no official voice, no way of communicating with the officials of the Church other than indirectly through their ordained colleagues or nationally through the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers. But the issue was kept alive by the Fellowship and by the Committee, who both continued to have discussions on the inadequacy of the position of deaconesses, and of the importance of an Order for all women in the Church. Both groups continued to strategize about ways to bring the issue to the attention of the Church yet one more time. (92)

Finally in 1954 the issue was put on the agenda of the National Church again. Toronto East Presbytery memorialized General Council, asking that deaconesses be made members of Presbytery. The Committee on the Law and Legislation, to which the Memorial was referred, recommended that it not be passed, saying that such an action would be contrary to the Basis of Union and therefore illegal. (93) Considerable discussion followed, and as a result of the strong opinions expressed in favour of giving deaconesses this

status, General Council decided to issue a Remit to Presbyteries. Such a Remit would ask the Church to endorse the changes necessary to the Basis of Union to allow deaconesses a place as ex-officio members of Presbytery. Thus, each Presbytery in the United Church was asked to vote on the following:

"Are you in favour of an amendment to the Basis of Union, Section 19; The Presbytery, which commences with the words, 'The Presbytery shall consist of'..., by adding thereto a new subsection - '(3) The Deaconesses in the active service of the Church within the Bounds of Presbytery'?"(94)

A time limit was given for response, and the results were weighted against change, as in the case of all remits, by the procedural rule that a "no response" or a late response by a Presbytery was in effect a negative vote, since in order to pass, the Remit needed a majority of "yes" votes.

The Executive of the Fellowship of Professional Women met soon after the authorization of the Remit to discuss strategies that could be used by individual deaconesses and by groups such as itself to secure the passage of the Remit. The Executive decided not to take the initiative in issuing a general position statement to the Church, but instead to advise individual deaconesses, if asked, to provide information to congregations and presbyteries. In order to facilitate this, the Executive wrote to all deaconesses in December 1954, asking them to study the issue. With the letter, the Executive included a packet of background material called "Statement - Deaconesses in Presbyteries." The covering letter advised deaconesses to stress that the issue was not currently on the agenda of the Church because of the militant demands of deaconesses for status. It was there because such women were being kept from making effective contributions to the Church. The Remit, the Fellowship's materials suggested, was the decision of General Council itself and

...was not sought by the Deaconess Order nor by the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers on our behalf... [we] are in accord with the Remit not because the members of the Deaconess Order want privilege or status, but because [we] have a contribution to make to Presbytery in discussion and in committee work and can gain much from Presbytery. As a member of Presbytery [we] would feel less isolated and the wider knowledge gained of the work of the Church would add considerably to the effectiveness of [deaconess] work.(95)

Such a recommended strategy was thought to be the politically expedient position to take. Several of the older members of the Fellowship

remembered that a similar attitude of reticence and humility had been praised in Lydia Gruchy and had been referred to as part of the reason why individuals voted for the change in the Basis of Union which allowed her to be ordained. Most deaconesses responded to the strategy as requested and the issue was clearly framed as one of an under-utilization of deaconess' resources rather than one of exclusion and injustice to women.

Unlike the 1934 Remit on the ordination of women, the Remit on deaconess' membership in Presbytery did not pass. Roughly one-third of the presbyteries did not reply at all, and only 48 voted in the affirmative, out of a total of 108.(96) The high no response rate was what defeated the Remit, not the negative votes. Such a high rate of no response is difficult to explain. It may have been because the work and identity of deaconesses were still not widely understood across the Church. At the time of the Remit deaconess work was still localized and the number of deaconesses was still small. In 1954 there were 64 deaconesses at work in only 27 presbyteries,(97) and much of their work was with women, youth and children, none of whom had much influence in presbyteries. The lack of visibility and appreciation of deaconess' work within the Church as a whole was something that the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers had been plagued with for years, and some progress had been made in changing the situation. But the lack of awareness of deaconess work continued to undermine the work of individual deaconesses, to force them to continue explaining themselves and educating Church members and to prevent any structural changes which would improve their professional lives. The Committee saw this lack of awareness of the uniqueness and accomplishments of deaconesses, both individually and as a group, as part of the reason why the Remit failed. They began to draft a pamphlet which would describe the history, work and training of deaconesses. Produced and quickly distributed across the Church, it was called "What and Who Is A Deaconess?"

Analysis suggests that the failure of the Remit also had to do with a general belief that women did not have the skills required to conduct the business of the Church and would not be interested in acquiring them. This lack of confidence in women's decision-making abilities and interest in procedures and debate, led to a fear that the standards of presbyteries would be lowered if deaconesses were given membership. These fears were magnified by the fact that in this Remit, unlike the one on women's ordination, there was a whole group of women being discussed, not just one individual. Thus, the issue was the acknowledgment of the ministry and gifts of non-ordained women, women who had a long history and tradition, and not just, as in the case of Lydia Gruchy, the admission of one woman into a male-defined profession. Perhaps in the deaconess Remit there was more of a threat of change, of upset in the balance of male power

in the courts of the Church. Some people opposed to the Remit saw it as an attempt by women to get into ministry "through the back door", and claimed that if deaconesses wanted the same status and privileges as the ordained, then they should take the training and apply for ordination themselves. Other reasons given by some dissenters during the discussions of the Remit reflected a complex array of sexist assumptions, misunderstandings of the identity of deaconesses, and general anxieties about the costs of change at work in the Church. Objections collected by the Executive Secretary of the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers and shared with the members of the Fellowship in July, 1956, included the following:

It would upset the balance of power and create a Professional Church. Women have nothing to say when they are in the Courts of the Church. This is merely a Feminist movement for status while the World Council of Churches is considering the co-operation of men and women in society.

Few women are able to think on a policy-making level. The Church does not need women with high qualifications; church secretaries are all that are required. (98)

Hindsight suggests that perhaps the chances of success would have been greater if the Deaconess Association, the Fellowship and the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers had taken a stronger stand and been more aggressive in its attempts to educate the Church about the need for deaconess' participation in Presbytery. Though both groups considered a wide range of possible actions, both decided to argue the case not on the basis of its being a case of the deliberate exclusion of women from decision-making processes and to talk about what effect that had on women's lives in the Church, but instead on the basis that women had different gifts to offer the Church than men, and women's gifts were not being fully utilized. The argument used by both groups, expanded in the following quotation from the Fellowship's materials on the issue, used much of the same reasoning and language as the Archbishop's report and the World Council of Churches' material on women in the Church. It suggested that the churches were missing out on the skills of deaconesses, and deaconesses were missing out on the experience of the larger Church available through Presbytery and Conference.

It has not been possible for (women workers) to make the maximum contribution because they have not been granted a satisfactory status. These women have no official means of making their contributions, born out of a wide variety of experience, within the courts of the Church. They are granted, by virtue of their office,

neither a voice nor a place in the courts of the Church, and the Church is the poorer because it lacks the contribution they should be making. They, in turn, through not being members of the Church courts, fail to receive the broad vision and the knowledge of the wider life and policies of the Church, which could enable them to make a larger and more constructive contribution in their own fields of work. In some cases professional workers are elected to the Church courts, but it is very regrettable that when so elected they replace lay representatives.(98)

While the Remit moved throughout the Church, the Fellowship continued to develop its proposal of an Order for all women - a proposal which, while in slightly different forms, had been rejected by the Church twice in its short history. The Fellowship sent a letter in 1955 to all members which asked their opinions on the proposal for one Order. Members were asked to think about whether the Order should be a Deaconess Order, how such an Order could be strengthened, and whether men should be allowed to join.(99) Time was spent at the Biennial meeting that year discussing the relationship of its members to Presbytery and in examining the political implications of having the Order open to men as well as women. Some expressed the opinion that the proposal would more likely be passed if the Order were open to men, and the Order would be accorded more respect in the Church if it were open to workers of both sexes. In March of 1956 the Executive of the Fellowship, by then aware that the Remit had not been passed by the Church, set up a committee to compile the results of the discussions and letters into a written report for the next General Council. In April of the same year the Committee decided to keep the issue before the Church by memorializing General Council, requesting that it "appoint a Commission to study ways in which the Church should recognize the call of men and women to a Ministry other than the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments, and the relationship of such persons to the Courts of the Church."(100) Though there were a number of members in the Fellowship who believed that women faced different work issues than men, and that the new Order should be for women only, those who saw men's admission as a political necessity and as an important way to ensure the success of the proposal, won the debate. One effect of this was call for a place for men in non-ordained ministry.

Men as Lay Professional Workers

From 1955 onwards the General Council and the United Church Training School began to receive requests for the provision of a place and status for men who wished to work in the Church in non-ordained positions. In 1955 the Fellowship had also begun to discuss the possibility of integrating men into the proposed order for non-ordained workers.(101) In 1958 General

Council took up the question in a more formal way and approved a Commission to study the following:

How the Church can give a place to men called to the full time work of the Church other than the ministry, what should be their qualifications, training, relation to Church Courts, minimum salary and such matters.(102)

The Commission on the Status of Lay Workers reported back to the 20th General Council in September of 1962. They had done extensive research on the kinds of work that laymen were involved with in the Church, and had made enquiries into what the needs of the Church were at the present time. In its report to the General Council the Commission stated that

(a) The Church is dependent upon the voluntary service of lay workers for the effective discharge of its total mission. If the Church is to be a vital instrument in the service of God's Kingdom there must be a large measure of lay participation in its councils and its activities.

The Commission also pointed out the following

(d) A number of laymen are now devoting their full time to the work of the Church. Some are officers of the General Council, some are employees of the Church boards, some serve local congregations as directors of Christian Education, Church managers, or Minister's Assistants. Now that this lay "breakthrough" has occurred, the trend towards employing laymen in various capacities appears to be accelerating. Opportunities for lay leadership in full time Church service will increase.

(e) Over against this picture of need and beckoning opportunity is the fact that a number of dedicated laymen have been enquiring about the possibility of this kind of service. Many of them would now be so employed if the Church had a "modus operandi" whereby they might be recruited, trained and placed.

The Commission is satisfied that the matter of prime urgency before it is that of clearing the way for men who feel so called, to serve the Church full time as laymen, and to provide that they shall be adequately trained.(103)

The report of the Commission on the Status of Lay Workers was received in its entirety by the General Council and work began on the implementation of the new category of ministry for men.

The United Church Training School, with its excellent programmes in Christian Education and Social Ministry, was seen as the logical and best place for such training to be provided. Though the plans took time to complete, in 1963 the first man was admitted to the School's programme. On completion of his course, he was commissioned as a Certified Employed Churchman, the newly created male equivalent to deaconesses.(104)

Don Reid was the first man to graduate from the United Church Training School in 1965, and began his work at the Atlantic Christian Training Centre in Tatamagouche, Nova Scotia.

Other men who had been working as full time lay workers in the Church were offered the chance to be commissioned as Certified Employed Churchmen by the process known as "blanketing in". This policy consisted of the following:

That all laymen who have been continuously employed in the full time service of the Church since January 1, 1961, as defined in I.(Policy) above, be eligible on written application and on recommendation of a Session and the Presbytery in which they are serving, to be recognized as Employed Churchmen, category A., or Category B., as of January 1, 1963; provided such applications be received for approval or otherwise by the Committee on Employed Churchmen.

That the Committee on Employed Churchmen have a wide latitude in evaluating background and experience before granting recognition when considering the initial request of those applying under this provision. (105)

It seems that the many years of experience that deaconesses had had in the United Church were helpful to the Commission, since the guidelines that the Commission had set up for training, screening, recruitment and relationships to the courts were approved with very limited debate.

Women Organizing for Change

At the time when the Remit and the work of the Fellowship on an Order for lay professional workers was being developed, the Executive of General Council set up another committee to look at other aspects of women's work, both professional and voluntary. In 1953 a meeting was convened with representatives of the two women's organizations in the Church, the Woman's Missionary Society and the Woman's Association, and of the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers. The purpose was to look at the relationship of women's organizations both to each other and

to the rest of the Church. Powerfully influenced by a number of reports coming from different denominations and from the World Council of Churches which stressed the need for cooperation and structural unity among men's and women's groups, the Committee which was subsequently formed began to look at the possibility of forming one women's organization and integrating it into the existing structures of the Church. Under such a plan, the existing independent Boards of both the Woman's Missionary Society and the Woman's Association would be phased out and women's work would become organized within a Board of the United Church. The new women's organization would "preserve within the Church all of value in present women's organizations" and "further the partnership of women and men in the Church." (106) Because of an understanding within the theology and teachings of the Church that men and women's natures were indeed essentially complementary and that one was incomplete without the other, such goals were seen as unproblematic and compatible. There was little thought given to the disparity of power relationships between men and women, and the problems this might cause in creating such a partnership. Both women's organizations received the initial plans and goals for amalgamation with great enthusiasm.

The Committee to Study Women's Work in the Church was made up of several sub-committees, one of which was to look specifically at the recruitment and status of professional women workers. All of the sub-committees created gathered information and deliberated for three years, and the whole committee reported to General Council in 1956. In its work the Committee was greatly influenced by the summary of the World Council of Churches' survey of women, "The Service and Status of Women in the Church" by Dr. Kathleen Bliss; by the Canadian Council of Churches' report, "The Life and Work of Women in the Canadian Churches"; and by Dr. Charlotte Whitten's study for the Anglican Church, "The Women of the Church". (107) All of these documents referred to the psychological, social, economic and political information available on the exclusion of women, and suggested that the Church lagged behind most fields of secular life, both in the recognition of the problems of women's exclusion, and in the development of strategies to deal with it. The Church, all reports pointed out, had done little, to date, to work for the equality of women within Church structures, rituals and social gatherings.

All of the reports, but particularly the one from the World Council of Churches, were welcomed by the United Church. The World Council Report's understanding of cooperation as being both necessitated by and based on a complementarity of the sexes deeply affected many of the political decisions made about the future structure, status and identity of women's work in the Church. All three of the reports contained many ideas which were appealing to women, and their effect was to legitimize women's

greater participation in the Church. All contained elaborate lists of the particular gifts of women, gifts such as nurturing, wisdom, and patience, and argued that these were valuable not just in traditional spheres of women's church work, but also in worship and in decision-making, those aspects of the Church's life which were dominated by men. The reports did clearly point out the under-representation and low participation of women within certain areas of the Church, and encouraged churches to consider ways to encourage women to participate more. The information provided became a tool for self-examination, and evolved, for many Churches, into a vehicle for raising other issues about the treatment of women. It enabled some Churches to examine structures, theology and procedures, all of which were weighted against women's participation. It helped individual women and groups of women to discover that the Church was for them, in many ways, a foreign and unsupportive place. While this was very painful for both women and men, the reports became important vehicles for self-discovery and new consciousness by providing language, ways of analyzing and questioning, and strategies for change which had rarely been available in public before.

Two of the reports claimed that women were provided with full rights by the structure and traditions of the Church, but had somehow not claimed those rights, and therefore what was needed was only a concentrated effort at cooperation with men in the decision-making and working of the Church. The reports did not deal with the institutionalized sexism of society or the Church that limited and undervalued women's full participation, or with the fact that when women were present on Boards and other committees their contribution was often not heard or valued.

In general the reports seem to have been well received. The United Church Training School and the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers both received the reports' framework of cooperation between men and women with great enthusiasm. Harriet Christie, the Principal of the United Church Training School, expressed the sentiments of many of her colleagues in referring to the World Council report in the speech at her installation in 1954:

The day of fighting for rights and attempting to imitate men is gone. The demand of our day is cooperation, acceptance of responsibility and use of gifts and capacities within the Church as well as outside it. The need is to discover the essential contributions of men and women and how these may be expressed in such a way that men and women may complement one another, each bringing his or her characteristics and training to the service of their Lord.(108)

Such cooperation, with its implied greater involvement of women, was to be sought because it would enrich and complete the work of the Church, according to the reports.

As Kathleen Bliss argued, women were the civilizers, the reformers, and the nurturers in the world.

The times when the Church regarding [sic] women as a lower species, doubtfully redeemable, or as ignorant and ineducable, are always the times when the Church is dead in other matters - failing to evangelize, indifferent to human suffering. As soon as quickening life returns to the Church, or to some section within it, men and women are found working at some enterprise and new attitudes begin to prevail... This is because women are essential to the balance and well-being of the Church.(109)

All of the recommendations of the reports were set within a theological framework which stressed the incompleteness of each sex when taken separately and in isolation from the other. In one section of the report the writer states that

The cooperation of men and women is not a special doctrinal issue nor a single feature of Church life or organization. Still less is it an emphasis on the interests or rights of a single group within the Church. It touches nearly all doctrinal and practical issues with which the Church is concerned. For example, we cannot overlook the fact that the Bible speaks of a very close connection between the nature of the Church and the mystery of the right relationship of the sexes.(110)

Modern feminist analysis would suggest that the recommendations of the report failed to deal with the reality that women and men had very different access to power, and that their roles were seen as rigidly defined, resulting in the exclusion of women from the leadership of the Church. Another problem obvious to the modern reader is the heterosexist assumptions throughout the reports.

The qualities which women were to bring to the Church, according to all three reports, were the traditional ones, those which had been historically attributed to and devalued in women professional workers in the Church.

A characteristic of women, whether by nature or necessity, is concern for persons, the developing and maintaining of the kind of relationships which belong to the family, a sensitivity to what contributes to or detracts from the sense of being loved and wanted,

of being responsible to a family, group or community. With compassion and wisdom their capacities can serve the Church through groups... where the members can experience the meaning of the Love of God binding them together and to Him, and when they come to know that they are part of the whole Church, they are able to go forth to transform life, secure in the dependability of God and their Church. (111)

These skills had a long history of being relegated to the sphere of work with women and children, to groups within the Church. None of the reports spelled out whether these were skills which would support women on Church Boards and Committees, and, if not, how women were to acquire the skills needed to work effectively, or how they were to combat the belief that females could not participate in discussions or make decisions clearly.

After examining all of these reports and surveying the situations of women in the Church, the Committee to Study Women's Work in the Church reported to General Council in 1956. First, the Committee recommended that the Church move ahead on the formation of one organization for all women in the Church. The intent of the new organization was

to unite all women of the churches in a concern for the total work of the Church. Some won't be isolated for mission study and others for quilting bees. The W.A. and the W.M.S. will be united and unified under one Board.(112)

This was the beginning of the Board of Women in the United Church. When the integration of all women's work came about in 1962, the Woman's Missionary Society and the Woman's Association amalgamated to form the Board of Women in the United Church. All the previous work of the Woman's Missionary Society was transferred to the two Boards of the Church concerned with mission work. The women who had been commissioned as missionaries by the Woman's Missionary Society and who had a diploma from the United Church Training School were offered an invitation to join the Deaconess Order. Their reception had been approved by the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers as part of their proposals to facilitate the change in women's work. Within two months of sending out letters to the women who were eligible to join, the Committee had received 21 requests from women who wished to become deaconesses.(113) There had been an earlier movement of W.M.S. Missionaries into the Order in 1953, because of their belief that women workers needed to be united in order to work for recognition and better working conditions. It was recorded in the Brief from the Fellowship of Professional Women in the United Church in 1955 that

A number of missionaries and women in executive positions, who had not previously joined the Deaconess Order were designated... This was a personal expression of the desire for unity among the women workers of the Church rather than an endorsement of the Deaconess Order as an Order providing in its present form, a completely satisfactory status for all women workers.(114)

This move toward unification, involving the removal of mission work from the W.M.S., was to radically affect the work and salaries of deaconesses, a significant number of whom were still working in Woman's Missionary Society jobs. As a result of the unification, all mission work, both in Canada and overseas, would be directed by the appropriate regular Boards of the United Church. And the mission money previously contributed by women through the Woman's Missionary Society would now go into mission work through the regular finances of the United Church.

Lay Professional Church Workers

The second part of the Committee to Study Women's Work in the Church's report had to do with the work of professional women in the Church. The Committee affirmed the work being done by women workers, and asked, as the Fellowship had, that a commission be set up to study the status of deaconesses and missionaries, and to clarify their relationship to the courts of the Church.(115) General Council agreed and a Commission was quickly appointed. During the next two years, while the new Commission was working, the Fellowship continued to provide a forum for discussion of what shape an Order for lay professional Church workers might take, and how it could provide for better working conditions for women. The Fellowship also spent time strategizing about what could be done if General Council continued to deny deaconesses a direct place in the courts of the Church. Some felt that deaconesses should continue to work at strengthening the Fellowship and increasing their connections with the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, which continued to be their only official voice in and link with the courts of the Church. In 1957 the Fellowship issued a statement affirming the work of women in the Church and reiterating its stand that the present lack of status hampered women's work. The statement again urged the Church to grant deaconesses membership in the courts and reaffirmed the need for an Order which would "bind its members together under the discipline of the Church, with a sense of common calling and mutual support, and would strengthen women in the particular kinds of functions they perform within the Church."(116) The Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers also held their own discussions on a possible Order and issued a statement in 1957 which was similar to the Fellowship's and which stated the following:

Historically the office of deaconess has had a dignity within the Church and presents an essential and challenging avenue of ministry and service. Those 'called of God' to this ministry should have membership in the courts of the Church by virtue of their office.(117)

In 1958 the Commission reported to General Council and pointed out the continuing problems created by deaconesses' lack of membership in Presbytery. It pointed out that there were also many other women workers who could benefit from Presbytery involvement, and recommended that the Manual of the United Church be changed so that

Lay workers in the full-time work of the Church who have been appointed by a Board of the Church and installed by Presbytery at the request of that Board, and Deaconesses, and Woman's Missionary Society Missionaries who are not otherwise members of Presbytery, shall be made corresponding members of the Presbytery in which they are serving.(118)

Though this still excluded some women workers from membership - those who were hired by congregations without the recognition of Presbytery, and who were probably in most need of the fellowship and support of the Church, the recommendation would cover most of the women professional workers in the Church, and was greeted with appreciation by both the Fellowship and The Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers. The Report also proposed, like the Fellowship, that there be a diaconate available to both men and women, that it be structured as an Order, and that entrance into it be by either designation or ordination by the Church. This diaconate, the report pointed out, should not be limited to the present understanding of the work of deaconesses, but should also include missionaries and qualified lay workers and be flexible enough both in structure and function "to meet both present and ongoing needs of the Church." (119)

General Council received the Report with its recommendations and asked the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers to begin the process of instituting these recommendations by reviewing its constitution and to bring suggestions for changes to the next General Council. This the Committee did, submitting to the 1960 General Council extensive suggestions for revisions in conditions of membership, training, pension provisions, appointment procedures, and details of employment, supervision and termination of membership.(120)

Another committee continued to look at the implications of making deaconesses members of Presbytery. Should their relationship be the same as that of the ordained? What should happen, in that case, to the

Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers? If deaconesses became subject to the same employment practices as the ordained, how could the Church be educated as to the special training and skills of deaconesses so that they could be settled in positions which would be satisfactory for them? In 1962 this second committee presented a comprehensive report on new procedures for the training, work, screening, supervision and settlement of deaconesses, and proposed that, as far as possible, the procedures for deaconesses be integrated with those already in place for the ordained. This meant that the courts of the Church, Presbytery, Conference and General Council, would assume responsibility for "receiving, supervising, designating and settlement of women candidates for work in the Church other than the ordained ministry." (121) General Council accepted the detailed proposals, authorized another remit which would again ask Presbyteries to change the Basis of Union, and authorized the dismissal of the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers as of December 31, 1962.

An Interim Committee was set up to finish the business of the Committee, to facilitate the changing of the administrative procedures for deaconess work, and to make recommendations about details which had been overlooked. (122) During the issuing of the second remit, the Fellowship had a National Biennial and discussed the implications of the new administrative procedures for women, and formulated strategies to use if the second remit also failed. The Deaconess Association which, as usual, was meeting in conjunction with the Biennial, passed a motion that it become part of the Fellowship. (123)

By 1964 the work of integrating deaconesses into the courts of the Church was completed. The Interim Committee, as one of its final details of business, had sent a letter to each Presbytery with a list of all the deaconesses within its bounds. (124) Committee members also secured time on the agenda of each Presbytery and explained the details of the transition period and discussed Presbytery's future responsibilities toward deaconesses. Though these educational procedures were relatively successful, there were still individual deaconesses and Presbyteries who were not aware of the changes and who continued on in their separate ways as usual. When the details of the remit were made public in 1964, deaconesses officially became members of Presbytery. Sixty-six Presbyteries had voted in favour, eight against, and 28 had not replied. (125) Thus, though the struggle for recognition and fair treatment was far from over, one preliminary hurdle at least had been overcome. The 147 active deaconesses of the United Church now had a way of participating directly in the discussions and decision-making of the Church. (126)

One of the immediate results of coming under the authority of Presbytery was a substantial and mandatory salary raise for deaconesses. They now became part of the General Council salary scale for ministers, and were classified in this scale as "unordained personnel". This gave them a minimum salary of \$4500 for 1965. This was compared to the \$4250 minimum (plus housing) which was in effect for ordained personnel.(127) Though the salaries of these women workers would be challenged many times in the future, and all the old arguments about deaconesses' supposed inferior education, less arduous roles as assistants, and more modest needs as single women would be dragged out again and again as individual congregations fought against requirements to pay women workers a professional wage, deaconesses had moved one giant step forward in their fight to be treated well in the United Church.

NOTES

CHAPTER 3

1. Centre for Christian Studies Archives, Toronto, Minutes of Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, April 14, 1948, p 1.
2. The United Church of Canada, Division of Ministry Personnel and Education, Minutes of the Fifteenth Annual Meeting of Board of Colleges and Secondary Schools, May 1-2, 1957, "Appendix F", p 2.
3. Re-Mobilize for Full-Time Service in the Church (Toronto: The United Church of Canada, 1945), p 4.
4. "Aftermath of Windsor", *The United Church Observer*, October 15, 1956, p 9.
5. M.B. Pengelley, "The Man Behind the Building Boom", *The United Church Observer*, April 15, 1958, p 10.
6. *Ibid.*, p 8
7. "For This We are Thankful", *The United Church Observer*, October 1, 1960, p 6.
8. *Ibid.*
9. M.B. Pengelley, "The Man Behind the Building Boom", p 10.

10. "An Editorial Measurement of the United Church's Amazing Growth", *The United Church Observer*, May 1, 1959, p 29.
11. *Ibid.*
12. *Personnel for Women's Work* (Toronto: The United Church of Canada, 1948), p 4.
13. Mona Oikawa, "'Driven to Scatter Far and Wide': The Forced Resettlement of Japanese Canadians to Southern Ontario, 1944-1949", p 10.
14. The World Church Needs Canadian Christian Youth For Its Post-War Advance (Toronto: The United Church of Canada 1943), p 2, a recruitment folder produced by the Board of Foreign Missions and the Woman's Missionary Society.
15. Centre for Christian Studies Archives, Toronto, Minutes of Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, November 29, 1946, p 3.
16. *Ibid.*
17. *The Calling of the Christian* (Toronto: The United Church of Canada, 1947), p 3.
18. *Ibid.*, p 2.
19. Centre for Christian Studies Archives, Toronto, Minutes of Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, June 8, 1948, p 1.
20. "They've Got Jobs for Women", *The United Church Observer*, February 1, 1959, p 27.
21. Centre for Christian Studies Archives, Toronto, Report of the Executive Secretary, Minutes of Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, April 14, 1955, p 10; 60th Anniversary 1895-1955: United Church Training School (Toronto: United Church Training School, 1955), p 15.
22. The United Church of Canada, Division of Ministry Personnel and Education, Secretary's Report, Minutes of Board of Colleges and Secondary Schools May 1-2, 1957, "Appendix G", p 2.

23. Centre for Christian Studies Archives, Toronto, Minutes of Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, June 20, 1957, p 3.
24. Centre for Christian Studies Archives, Toronto, "Inaugural Address Given by Miss K. Harriet Christie at Her Installation as Principal of the United Church Training School", April 24, 1954, p 2.
25. Centre for Christian Studies Archives, Toronto, speech by Rev. E.S. Lewis, recorded in the Minutes of Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, April 9, 1954, pp 1-2,.
26. "Women in Other Ministries", *The United Church Observer*, 1954, p 18.
27. Mary Anne MacFarlane, "A Study of the Sunday School in Canada", an unpublished research paper, 1977, p 57.
28. "More in Sunday School", *The United Church Observer*, April 1, 1960, p 26.
29. *Ibid.*
30. *Ibid.*, pp 26-27.
31. Women teachers' associations began extensively documenting the absence of women in administrative and supervisory positions in the late 1960's and early 1970's. An excellent study, which shows a pattern similar to that of deaconesses involved in Christian Education, is Carol Reich's "The Effect of a Teacher's Sex on Career Development", done for The Board of Education for the City of Toronto in 1975.
32. Jessie MacLeod, 1956 Annual Report to the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers.
33. "Women in Other Ministries", *The United Church Observer*, April 1, 1954, p 18.
34. Centre for Christian Studies Archives, Toronto, speech by Rev. E.S. Lewis, recorded in the Minutes of Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, April 9, 1954, p 2.
35. *The Calling of the Christian* (Toronto: The Personnel Committee, The United Church of Canada, 1947), pp 1-2.

36. M .B. Pengelly and Margaret Price, "Deaconess... 1959 Model", *The United Church Observer*, November 1, 1959, p 14.
37. Centre for Christian Studies Archives, Toronto, Rev. Melville Aitken's Address, Minutes of Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, April 14, 1948, p 3.
38. Centre for Christian Studies Archives, Toronto, Minutes of Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, November 6, 1953, p 5.
39. Centre for Christian Studies Archives, Toronto, Minutes of Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, April 14, 1955, p 2.
40. Centre for Christian Studies Archives, Toronto, Minutes of Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, May 8, 1957, p 6.
41. Centre for Christian Studies Archives, Toronto, Minutes of Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, November 6, 1953, p 2.
42. Quoted in Nancy E. Hardy, *Called to Serve - A Story of Diaconal Ministry in the The United Church of Canada*, (Toronto: Division of Ministry Personnel and Education, The United Church of Canada, 1985), p 20.
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44. Centre for Christian Studies Archives, Toronto, Minutes of Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, February 4, 1958, p 4.
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CHAPTER FOUR

1964 - 1981

During the 1960's and '70's numerous changes took place that would have an impact on the work of the lay professional in the Church and with the area of work traditionally prescribed as that of the deaconess, now with a male counterpart, the certified employed churchman. As we saw in the last chapter, gains had been made in the area of representation at Church courts for deaconesses. With the official policy that deaconesses were to become members of Presbytery, there was also corresponding membership at Conference level committees and courts. It was however still difficult to have access to the General Council, since there were only limited numbers of Order of Ministry and lay people who could attend. In an attempt not to take seats away from the laity, deaconesses became eligible to attend the courts under the system of Order of Ministry delegates. Even with this system in place, diaconal ministers numbered 17 of the 217 Order of Ministry delegates in 1982.

The Church was part of a changing world. There was change in the structures of the Church itself, as well as changes in society. The system of separate boards was being consolidated slowly into the present system of Divisions in the Church.

The "Quiet Revolution" was taking place in Quebec, and the Church and the nation were looking for a more Canadian identity. The rise of a sense of nationalism is evident in the kinds of resolutions that were being forwarded to General Council. Throughout the Church there was a recognition of the need for a more just society and the beginnings of a movement that would seek to move the Church from a position of dispenser of charity to one of an advocate for justice. These changes would have far-reaching influence on the Church's method of work with overseas partners and within the country over the next decades, and have a specific impact on the work of deaconesses and certified employed churchmen.

The movement towards broadening and valuing the role of women was on the agenda. The new consciousness of women and men about their roles and value in society would be discussed and debated in the Church and in society. These debates would include the discussions of inclusive language, equal salaries for people in the Order of Ministry, and the kind of theology that the Church would seek to embrace. Women and men were becoming more analytical in their approach to issues of social justice, and this would begin to be incorporated into the preparation for diaconal ministry.

Vatican II had opened the doors for a new era of inter-Church cooperation bringing more of an ecumenical sense to the Church. In addition, formal negotiations began between The United Church of Canada and The Anglican Church in Canada with regard to Church Union. Some of the discussions around Church Union would lead to a questioning of the role of ministry and the role of a diaconate. This would influence opinion and decisions in The United Church, since different traditions had different understandings of these roles. The Church's agenda and priorities would reflect these movements, and many of the questions that would be raised around the term 'ministry' would be critiqued from an ecumenical perspective.

One major focus for deaconesses and certified employed churchmen continued to be in the area of education in local congregations. The New Curriculum [Core] was being developed and deaconesses and certified churchmen were involved in the process. Olive Sparling, a 1937 graduate of the United Church Training School worked from 1952 to 1975 with the Board of Christian Education as Secretary for Children's Work, and was involved in the training program of Observation Practice Schools and Demonstration Schools. Lois Boast and Ferne Graham were others working at the national office, writing material and preparing the Church for the Core Curriculum.

Many new graduates of Covenant College (later named the Centre for Christian Studies) found their work involved much travel and work with Christian Education and the curriculum. Such innovative programs as observation Sunday Schools and team leadership training were being carried out in different areas, mostly by deaconesses.

In the 1970's when the "boom" in the Church had subsided and there was less call for congregational Christian Education work, some deaconesses and certified churchmen found that social action ministry was opening up. Some, like Marjorie Stelk and Stella Burry would work in inner city missions. Others would do social action programming, both from a local and global perspective with the beginning of programmes such as Ten Days for World Development. Eric King, a 1979 graduate of the Centre for Christian Studies worked at the national office of the Division of World Outreach. Many others continued their work in overseas postings as well, experiencing the changes in the world with the end of the colonial period and the beginnings of liberation theology.

One Christian Education worker was Carol Stevenson Seller, employed in Saskatchewan by a cluster of rural charges. She describes her work as follows:

The first year I was congregational minister in two points and did Christian Education (mainly leadership development and training) in four pastoral charges. I teamed most closely with Ken Fisher, the minister in Kamsack, and after some deliberations and many consultations with Presbytery and other pastoral charges, we changed my responsibilities the following year. I left the congregational ministry piece and did C.E. in 11 congregations (4 pastoral charges). There was a lot of leadership development and training to do because the "new Curriculum" [Core Curriculum] had just been introduced. There was much enthusiasm and commitment to learning. I think many women, in particular, saw it as an opportunity to do continuing education connected with the faith. I would travel to a town and begin meeting with department teachers (sometimes only one or two people) perhaps beginning in the afternoon and keep scheduling meetings with those leaders at about two hour intervals until we finally stopped about 10:00 p.m... (1)

Some deaconesses continued in the area of social service. Dorothy Mundle describes her work in her first position:

I worked in the inner city, Saint John, New Brunswick, at Glad Tidings Mission. The mission was related to the Presbytery and also to a particular congregation which was attached to it. (...) I was accountable to the minister of that congregation. Most of my contact with folk in the community was through groups for women and children, including camps, visiting them in their homes, being available for emergency assistance (food, clothing counselling, support.)

It was a discouraging time for me. I felt I was not able to provide much real support to the people - the kind that would help them change their circumstances or the way they coped with their circumstances. I wasn't aware of the political issues or networks enough to be able to do much advocacy. I liked the contact with the people - at that time my most effective gift with them was my support and friendship - also leadership and imagination with regard to group programming.(2)

These comments reflect one of the struggles within the Church and society as a whole to move from an attitude of service and band-aid solutions to one of social analysis and change.

Salaries and Benefits

In 1964 recommendations from the Board of Finance set out policy that would put the salaries of deaconesses, certified employed churchmen and lay supply ministers on the Church's national scale. The salaries were set at a few hundred dollars below the minimum salaries for ordained personnel, and included provisions for travel allowances, housing costs and other benefits. In these years as well, the pension issues were being addressed. The above named employee categories were covered by the Pension Plan for Lay People. These salary and pension provisions included those missionaries who had served with the Woman's Missionary Society overseas and who had been invited, in 1962, to accept designation as deaconesses. These minimum salaries were to be put into effect no later than January 1, 1966. (3)

In 1977, by act of General Council, salaries of deaconesses, certified churchmen, and commissioned ministers (despite the fact that this name had never been officially recognized by the Church,) received parity in salaries, benefits and pensions with ordained ministers. There had been several task groups and commissions who had been studying the possibility of eliminating the Deaconess Order and the category of Certified Employed Churchmen, and having all those who were part of those groups ordained. The 27th General Council decided that

...without waiting for a decision about ordination of commissioned ministers (Deaconesses and Certified Churchmen), the personnel policies and practices for them in the areas of salaries, housing allowance, travel, pensions, telephone, heating and study leave, will be those applied to ordained ministers, effective January 1st, 1978.

.... The main motion carried.(4)

Interim Committee on the Deaconess Order

The Interim Committee ^{Tina} on the Deaconess Order replaced the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, which had been dissolved on December 31, 1962. Tina Campion, who had been involved with the work of deaconesses for many years, continued as Secretary of the Interim Committee. In a report submitted to the 21st General Council in 1964, the committee noted that it had carried out tasks related to the transfer of the Deaconess Rest and Relief Fund to the Board of Finance through the Department of Pensions and the sale of Barbara House Club, a United Church property. Provisions had also been made to turn the candidacy process over to the Central Committee on Applications, in order to facilitate the process of the presbyteries taking over responsibility for the candidacy process of deaconesses.(5)

Candidacy Process

Before 1966, deaconesses and certified employed churchmen were outside the call system in terms of seeking training and placements. Women and men who were interested in training for educational work in the Church could be accepted to the United Church Training School without the process of interviews from their congregations, Presbyteries or Conferences. This system, while being open, did mean that the Church took little responsibility for those persons who were considering full-time work in the Church. They were largely on their own in finding employment after graduation, since there was no system of transfer and settlement for them. For many years the Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers had facilitated the placement of graduates from the United Church Training School. In addition to practical considerations of training and placement, being outside the system also made it more difficult to be accepted as a person with a call to ministry, as there was no process whereby the Church took responsibility for the student.

With the inclusion of deaconesses on the roll of Presbyteries in 1964, there was a move to begin to formalize the system. The Central Committee on Applications was the governing body of this process from 1966 to 1968. The candidacy process began with the Session of the candidate's congregation and went through the channels of the Presbytery Committee on Colleges and Students. This gave the process much more recognition in the Church. The Committee on Applications, set up in 1966, while approving the principle that deaconesses should be subject to the Transfer and Settlement requirements that ordained personnel were, also pointed out that there was more demand for deaconesses than persons to fill the positions. It suggested that deaconesses be free to carry out their own negotiations with pastoral charges or boards for employment, subject to approval of the Transfer Committee. (6) The Committee on Applications remained in place until 1968, when it was replaced by a sub-committee of the Candidature Committee. That sub-committee became the standing Committee on Diaconal Ministry in 1982. By that time, diaconal ministers, as they were now called, were clearly part of the system administered by the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education.

Certified Employed Churchmen had been within the Committee on Employed Churchmen up until 1968 when their training and application system became the responsibility of the Board Of Colleges. The Manual was updated in 1971 to include the candidacy process and terms of employment for Certified Churchmen (the name being changed in the same year). This change also made Certified Churchmen "stated" members of Presbytery,

while not precluding their being named as a lay representative to Presbytery by the pastoral charge.(7)

Education

The United Church Training School had been renamed Covenant College in 1962, and then in 1970, renamed again the Centre for Christian Studies. Negotiations were going on between The United Church of Canada and The Anglican Church in regard to Church Union. As early as 1963 recommendations had been made that would provide for more joint programmes with the Anglican Women's Training College. (8)

In 1967 the Anglican Women's Training College and Covenant College began to look at the possibility of a joint programme, leading eventually to amalgamation. This dialogue between the two boards of the colleges resulted in the following statement:

That we present to our Boards the general principle of working towards a new expression of the Church in preparing men and women for lay (non-ordained) Christian vocations with a view to experimenting with closer academic co-operation in 1968-69 and, if feasible, full integration by 1969-70.(9)

This was to be implemented through a three year plan:

1. A year of extensive co-operation involving the integration of the academic policy and a common residence policy.
2. A year in which we function as one college, including integration of administration.
3. A year, based upon the experience of the previous two years, in which we legalize amalgamation.(10)

The mandate of the Centre continued to be the provision of training for lay professional work in the Church, for both women and men. The focus of ministry for those trained at the Centre for Christian Studies would be education and social service. A student representative was named to the Board in 1967.(11)

Courses at the Centre, in addition to the core requirements in theology and doctrine, included social analysis and group process skills. The number of academic and theoretical courses had been increased, and by 1970, 17 academic courses were being offered in Theology, Biblical Studies and Church History. This greater emphasis on academic courses would be

helpful in increasing the professional status of the graduates. A Community Development Course was added to the curriculum in 1970, showing a trend towards new approaches to social ministry.

Seven theological colleges in the Toronto area formed the Toronto School of Theology in 1970, and it was in that year that the College (in the process of being named the Centre for Christian Studies), ended its affiliation with Emmanuel College.(12) Part of the reason that Covenant College had to end its affiliated program was the concern of Emmanuel that it would lose its accreditation with the ATS, if there were too many students enrolled without the necessary academic prerequisites.

Marion Niven became the new principal of the Centre for Christian Studies when Harriet Christie left in 1970.

The late sixties and early seventies were a time in which students around the world were agitating for change in the education system and in society as a whole. This process was happening at colleges and universities across the globe and the theological schools of the United Church were no exception. As in any movement for change, the institutions were not eager to change and would have to be pushed into a new era.

The Centre had continued to be a place where women, especially, were trained in the social graces. Linda Ervin, a 1973 graduate, phrases it as a place to change "little girls to nice women." There was a sense among the students that the professors at the Centre were not in touch with the reality of the changing world, and that the staff saw their role as one of protecting the "girls" who went to the Centre. Linda Ervin recalls that in those years there was still an expectation that people would dress for dinner; and when guests arrived at the Centre, the students were expected to serve them.

The students pushed for clearer social analysis and more relevant studies. Weekly meetings were being held with staff and students, trying to come to grips with the issues around the expectations of both. Some of the students at the Centre had been involved in social service work and had their own experiences of the "real world." The Centre was pushed, unwillingly, to revise its view of the education and ministry of the students. Linda suggests that because the Church never really took the diaconal ministry seriously, there was little concern about the academic training or educational process. She recalls writing to her Presbytery, letting them know about the frustrations she felt as a student, and receiving a reply that amounted to "what do you want us to do?" The students organized protests and strikes, and gathered the attention of the media to their cause. Linda says "it was a hard time, we were all exhausted,.. but we were doing what needed to be done. We were involved in the process of social action,

making creative change. There was a sense of solidarity and commitment among us there."(13)

After a turbulent period between 1970 and 1973, the Centre for Christian Studies responded with the institution of a new programme of studies in 1974. The focus was clearly on providing training in educational theory and skills, although the definition of education was expanded to include social analysis and strategies for social change; as well as nurturing, counselling and leadership training techniques. The Professional Study and Action Programme combined three areas: academic studies at colleges within the Toronto School of Theology, or at the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Toronto; the Core Group, which provided an opportunity to work in a group in an educational ministry; and practical field work experience in a congregational and in a social service ministry.

Students with academic training could continue to take up to four courses at Emmanuel College (now part of the Toronto School of Theology.) There continued to be two paths to training for deaconesses, certified churchmen and other lay professionals, a diploma course through the Centre for Christian Studies or a Master of Religious Education (changed from a Bachelor of Religious Education in 1970) at Emmanuel College.

The educational philosophy of the Centre was summarized in a 1981 statement which is as follows:

Education at the Centre happens within a living community, with each person as both learner and educator. Learning is a process and discipline encompassing the whole being of the person. This is made more powerful when surrounded and nurtured in a worshipping environment.

We are committed to the joy and struggle of learning in community. We are also committed to that learning being self-directed as the means by which individuals can move to their fullest potential within community. We cherish the diversity of our community, diversity of theological convictions, concepts of ministry, academic backgrounds, personalities, ages and cultures. We have a position, but this position may continually move as we integrate new ideas and struggle with the world around us, the signs of the times which point to God's activity in the world in which we live.

We are accountable for sharing in the transformation of the world as co-creators with God. This transformation involves for us openness to constant reflection, critical evaluation, and mutual accountability within the Centre. Recognizing that we are a minority, we must learn

to face life and learning from that position to meet our ultimate goal of integration and wholeness. We are involved in educational, pastoral and social ministries as part of the prophetic mission of the Church.(14)

The Association of Professional Church Workers

This association , which was formed by uniting 5 different groups, the Anglican Women's Training College Alumnae, Anglican Deaconess Fellowship, Anglican Registered Church Workers' Association, Covenant College Alumnae , and the Fellowship of Deaconesses and Other Women Workers (UCC), came into being in 1970. They have recently produced an extensive document on the membership of the Association, which provides personal histories of the many women who have served the Church and the world.

Reports on the Nature of Ministry in the United Church 1968 - 1980

From 1968 on was a time of study of lay and ordered ministry in the Church. Several task groups would be struck over the years to try to understand and name the types of ministry that were essential for the Church, and to try to understand how the Church would prepare both laity and Order of Ministry for their work.

All of these reports would have profound effects on deaconesses, certified churchmen, and lay supply ministers. The studies and reports pushed the Church to broader understandings of ministry.

1. Commission on Ministry in the 20th Century 1968

This Commission was set up by the 21st General Council. The inclusion of deaconesses on the Presbytery rolls had raised questions as to who was and who wasn't a "minister". The nature of ministry was being evaluated as the Church and society changed. Deaconesses were represented on the Commission by Lois Boast and Jessie MacLeod.

Among the many recommendations of the report was one that would affect the status of deaconesses. The Commission on Ministry in the 20th Century seemed to have grasped the idea that ministry was more than priestly functions, and that there was indeed a place for a ministry that specialized in education in the Church. The report suggested that there be two categories within the Order of Ministry, one for ordained ministers, and one for deaconesses and certified employed churchmen, who would be commissioned and be called lay ministers.(15) This recommendation would

serve as a way for deaconesses and certified employed churchmen to have some recognition of their training in a valid ministry. This recommendation was approved in principle, and a special committee was struck to implement the recommendations of the Report on Ministry in the 20th Century.(16) This committee recommended acceptance of this position at the following General Council, in 1971.

However, a recommendation from the Committee on Christian Faith was not in agreement. The Committee on Christian Faith stated in 1971

That since most deaconesses, certified churchmen and lay supplies do in fact perform most of the functions of the ordained ministers, it is recommended that they should therefore be properly ordained to perform them and no distinction be made between these persons and others ordained.(17)

Given this discrepancy of opinion, the matter was referred back to the Executive of General Council, and was to be looked at again at the 25th General Council.(18) A special committee was assigned, (The Task Force on Ministry) to look at the implications of the report. In the interim another committee was established to look at the issues of training requirements for people in what was being called commissioned ministry. The term commissioned ministry had become part of the vocabulary of the Church from 1968 to 1978, although there had been no official approval of the term.

2. The Committee on Training For Commissioned Ministry

This committee was established in April, 1972 by the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education and endorsed by the 25th General Council of The United Church of Canada. (19) Among those on the committee were Marjorie Smith, a deaconess; Victor Fiddes, a certified churchman and Nancy Jackman a graduate of Covenant College. Jean Parker was the MPE staff representative and secretary of the committee. The committee undertook an extensive consultation which lasted many months. Interviews were held with deaconesses, certified churchmen, ordained ministers and with the congregations they served.

The terms of reference provided by the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education to this committee on Training for Commissioned Ministry were

to study the training and requirements for "commissioned ministers" (deaconesses, certified churchmen, lay supplies, and lay overseas

missionaries) and report through the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education to the Executive of General Council. (20)

It was reported by the Committee on the Training of Commissioned Ministers that

In 1972 there were 207 deaconesses and 17 certified churchmen.

The interviews and questionnaires indicate the variety of functions which deaconesses and certified churchmen are performing: 1) directors of Christian education for one or more congregations, 2) leadership development in congregations and/or presbyteries, 3) staff members of lay training or retreat centres, 4) hospital visitors, 5) congregational catalysts, 6) conference and national field staff members, 7) pastoral assistants, 8) coordinators and administrators, 9) community workers, 10) workers with senior citizens, 11) lay supply ministers, 12) overseas missionaries, 13) teachers, 14) nurses, 15) YWCA workers, 16) student workers, and 17) graduate students.

The Committee also found that commissioned personnel worked mainly in urban centres in the Maritime provinces, while on the Prairies, there were more people in positions in rural and semi-rural communities. (21)

The Committee recommended that, as far as possible, the training of ministers for commissioning and ordination be carried out together in an attempt to provide a better understanding of team ministry and that an advisory committee be established to oversee the educational process of Lay Supply, Deaconesses and Certified Churchmen candidates. The recommendations of the Committee (14 in all) were approved with only editorial changes on April 25, 1973 by the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education.

3. Task Force on Ministry Reports 1974 and 1977 ROP

The Task Force on Ministry replaced the Commission on Ministry in the 20th Century. Their purpose was to look at the implications of the work of the Commission on Ministry in the 20th Century and report back to the General Council in 1974.

The membership of the Task Force on Ministry as listed in the 1974 Record of Proceedings shows a group of seven men on the committee. Of the seven, six were ordained United Church ministers and one was from the Anglican Church. The committee did not include any women at all. The committee was expanded to 14 members by action of the General Council in 1974 and included three women, one laywoman, one deaconess and one

ordained minister. While a modern reader may be surprised by the lack of representation by women on a committee that would have serious implications for the Deaconess Order and the large number of lay women workers in the Church reaction from London Conference took exception to the formation of the committee for other reasons:

Whereas the composition of the Task Force was such that it could not possibly represent fairly the serious thought of The United Church of Canada; (9 of the 14 members were from Ontario, 6 of these living within the Toronto Conference. Only 2 were from east of Belleville, Ontario, neither of whom is an ordained minister, no matter how well qualified they may otherwise be... (22)

The issue seemed to be that only ordained ministers needed to have a say on ministry, and that other input was second class at best.

The Task Force had looked at ministry in the Church from the perspective of the conclusions of the Commission on Ministry in the 20th Century. They had made the assumption that there would be one order of professional ministry and that all that remained of their task was to make the present structure of ordained ministers and trained lay professionals fit the new pattern. The report was also written under the assumption that union with the Anglican Church would go ahead and thus adopted the model of:

"Three Orders of Ministry, which are said to be that of Bishops, Presbyters and Deacons. Our interpretation of this definition of ministry is that within the one ordained ministry of Jesus Christ, in and through his Church, there are three distinguishable functions of witness and service that are designated episcopal, presbyteral, and diaconal.(23)

The presbyteral function would be leadership in worship, teaching, evangelism, pastoral care and service in the context of the congregation as a community. The diaconal ministry would "express representatively the loving concern of the believing community for the needy in the world and to give leadership by way of education and example to the lay ministry in its service to the world." The episcopal ministry, or the ministry of oversight, would have as its aim the care and nurture of the ministry of the Church, both presbyteral and diaconal. The vision of the task force was that these three functions would be lateral, not hierarchical, and that movement between the different functions would be possible.

The final recommendations of the Task Force on Ministry, brought to General Council in 1977, included the following:

1. Each person now designated or commissioned as a deaconess or certified churchman within The United Church of Canada be offered ordination. Services for those persons electing ordination under this option shall be designed as a confirmation and extension of their designation or commissioning.

2. Those persons opting to continue as commissioned members of the Order of Ministry may do so but no new members will be admitted to this category.

3. In future, ministries now performed by deaconesses or certified churchmen will be preserved in the Church, and varieties of specialized ministries made possible, but ordination will be the service of admission to the order for all persons. (24)

Reactions from presbyteries and conferences were heard through memorials at the 1977 General Council. There was a sense that the document was disruptive and that the Church as a whole had not had time to be consulted. Some were unhappy with its view of ministry, as the report seemed to suggest that all professional ministry was the same. Others took issue with the Task Force for its lack of depth in exploring the ministry of the laos. All the memorials called upon the General Council to take no action on the report, apart from accepting it for consultation and study by the Church.

4. Project:Ministry 1977-1980

In 1977 General Council responded to the confusion and concern in the Church by establishing yet another committee. Anne Squire, Chairperson of the Steering Committee for Project:Ministry outlines the conception of the new committee:

When the 27th General Council decided to receive the report of its latest Task Group on Ministry as a "working document" it was in effect saying that it would not ask yet another group to try to tell the Church what it does believe or should believe about ministry. Instead it appointed a Steering Committee to listen to what the Church was saying as the The Task Force on Ministry Report was discussed and studied across the country, and then to try to find a way to help the Church participate more fully in the ministry of Jesus Christ.

The Steering Committee (Project:Ministry) as a whole has been responsible for devising the plan for that study/listening process, all of the members have been involved in the listening and in the analysis of the findings... (25)

Deaconesses represented on Project:Ministry were Katharine Hockin and Marjorie Smith.

Project:Ministry also tried to trace the history of the developments in the Church which led to the recommendations of the Task Force on Ministry. It found that:

As we unravelled the history of what has happened we identified a number of ambiguous and confusing actions on the part of the Church.

1. The decision (dating back to The Commission on Ministry in the 20th Century) to speak of 'one order of ministry with two categories, ordained and commissioned' with two distinct forms of entrance and recognition (ordination or commissioning) needs to be re-examined. In what sense is this 'one order of ministry'? The idea is difficult, both logically and theologically. What led to this decision? Was it motivated by desire to recognize the 'equality' of these two forms of 'ministry'? Is this the way to accomplish this? Does it do so at the expense of their specific and unique characteristics?

The problem is compounded by recent investigation of the way in which the Church had dealt with this particular recommendation from the Commission on Ministry in the 20th Century. It now appears that by some lapse or other, it has never received formal acceptance into the polity of the Church, even though "de facto" it has been integrated into our practice. This lapse in orderly procedure has been recognized, and in late 1979 some steps were proposed to the Executive of General Council to correct this, retroactively. The action of the Executive was to propose further consultation and to arrange to convene a large representative group of commissioned persons whose views will be shared with the General Council alongside the report of Project:Ministry. In the meantime the Executive postponed further action.

The writer of the report went on to say that

As we've listened to the debate in the Church we have been forced again and again to recognize ruefully that The United Church of Canada goes about the business of defining its views in a very ambiguous way. In the last decade a series of reports dealing with "the Plan of Union", definitions of "Ministry" etc. have been before the General Council, had brief debate in the Council, been accepted 'in principle' but referred back to the Church for continued 'study' as 'working documents'. One cannot say with assurance that any basic

statement has received solid affirmation through this process. A consequence is serious confusion in the Church and a high degree of frustration and misunderstanding. (26)

In the space of 12 years there had been three major reports issued on ministry in the United Church. The people most affected by the reports were women, since they made up the majority of those persons who were "commissioned ministers." One wonders if the process would have been treated in the same manner if the changes had affected the status and history of ordained ministers as much as it did the women professionals in the Church. Throughout the process there was little input from the deaconesses and certified churchmen who would be affected by the change. Their form of ministry was seen solely as a different function, and there was little recognition that it also carried a different style and philosophy about how to work in the Church. Ministry was understood as the functions of ordained ministry, administering sacraments and preaching. These functions were set apart and therefore were easily defined as a specific function of people who were set apart. Other activities, like education and social service work, that we would now understand as ministry in the broadest sense of the word, were much more difficult to articulate. The narrow definitions of ministry as priestly functions was considered to be the norm, and other forms of ministry would be measured against that norm. Although all the reports affirmed the concept of the ministry of the whole people of God, little was done in developing this concept.

The rounds of studies were causing some anxiety among those people who were called to an educational ministry in the Church. The Principal of the Centre for Christian Studies, Marion Niven, in her 1979 annual report to the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education expressed concerns of the institution with which she worked.

For many years staff, students and graduates of the Centre for Christian Studies have been coping individually and collectively with both rumours and official reports concerning the possible future of Commissioned Ministry. The question is so timely it seemed reasonable to report to a United Church body on how it affects our institution...

...We are aware of the pressure on applicants and students to gain security by following other academic and professional routes. For the candidates who remain with us there is much frustration and apprehension about their future place in the Church's ministry. The cost is high in time and energy.

We, as an institution, have always believed in the ministry of the laos. Our student body in our professional program includes those who will be volunteer leaders, and those who will be trained professionals but neither ordained nor commissioned. If lay ministry is seriously supported we would see the Church becoming officially interested in these earnest and gifted students who will be both paid and unpaid leaders.

Unfortunately the Task Force on Ministry Report does not take seriously the Centre's specialty, the educational ministry of the Church. As long as there are Commissioned Ministers we will enable them to assume responsibility in this area.(.....) If the Church decides that the history of Deaconesses and Commissioned Ministers must terminate there will need to be consultations between the Church and the Centre for Christian Studies about how this program is made available to those who wish and need it. (27)

The Church decided to host a consultation where deaconesses, Certified Churchmen and commissioned ministers would have a chance to voice their concerns. The consultation took place on March 4 and 5, 1980 at the Centre for Christian Studies. The steering committee consisted of Peter Gordon White, Deputy Secretary of Theology and Faith, Gwyn Griffith, (the facilitator and consultant for the event), Barbara Elliott, Margaret Fulton, Sylvia Hamilton, Cheryl Kirk, Janet MacPherson and Margaret Quigley. The latter six were all deaconesses or commissioned ministers.

The purpose of the consultation was to hear input from deaconesses and certified churchmen and commissioned ministers, who had been largely absent from earlier decisions. The event proved to be a trying one for all present. Barb Elliott reflects on the 1980 consultation:

It all centred around the controversy about the name "commissioned minister" which had somehow gotten adopted unofficially.... MP&E took a motion to General Council about the name commissioned minister and some of us wrote letters of objection stating that this was never a solid term that had been approved by General Council and that we thought that those of us who had been designated deaconesses, those already in the field should have some say in what our name was, that all of the stuff around that shouldn't just be put on us, or without the Church somewhere having had some motions about this that were official. And so after discussions at General Council Executive about this they decided they could indeed consult with these people involved and call a one day consultation in Toronto. This was the first time in many years, the first time ever, really, that this mixed group of deaconesses, certified employed churchmen, and

commissioned ministers had come together to try and talk to each other. And it was a very traumatic meeting... we realized that as a group we did not have an understanding of common ground, that we were suspicious of each other from different generations, that there were gaps. It was a very painful day. The time was not long enough, we were being forced to come up with recommendations which we were not really ready to make., and we went home to our various conferences wondering what had really happened, what had hit us. General Council Executive, in its wisdom, read the pain in the report and said that they would not act on this report. (28)

Further reaction among those persons most affected by the Task Force on Ministry was recorded in the Report submitted to the 28th General Council in 1980 from Project:Ministry:

Among the deaconesses, who are one group among the commissioned ministers, the most characteristic response is one of disappointment and frustration - and sometimes, anger. This comes from their feeling that the Church does not seem to recognize or appreciate this form of 'ministry'. The deaconess 'order' or 'movement' has deep roots in Christian history beyond, as well as in, The United Church of Canada. It gained recognition among us through long struggle, and has made a significant contribution in many areas of the Church's life. To suggest that they now be ordained seems to many of the deaconesses a 'clericalizing' and 'homogenizing' action which they find particularly surprising at a time in the Church's life when we claim to be wanting to recognize the variety of gifts and assignments that the Spirit generates in the Church. Even when the point is made that the direction of the Task Force is to recognize varieties within the category of ordained ministry, many feel that this is not the best way to symbolize and give expression to the variety they wish to see recognized. Many deaconesses see themselves in a form of unordained 'ministry' and believe it to be a valid and valuable witness which the Church should cherish and recognize rather than extinguish. Some have pointed out that ordination had been an option for women in the United Church since 1936. Even though there was some resistance to women in ordained ministry, if it had been the form of ministry to which they believed themselves called, they would have received the appropriate training and been ordained. (29)

The consultation had influenced the Project:Ministry report that was forwarded to General Council in 1980. The Report of Project:Ministry ended the section of commissioned ministry with the following recommendations:

Concerning Commissioned Ministry Project: Ministry recommends:

- 1) that the United Church, while abandoning the terminology which speaks of "commissioned ministry" as a "category" in "the one order of ministry" affirm the place and role of the commissioned members of the community;
- 2) that the United Church affirm that there is a variety of "assignments in Ministry" which it recognizes and honours;
- 3) that among this variety there is assignment to:
 - a) pastoral 'office'
 - b) teaching 'office'
 - c) diaconal 'office'
 - d) oversight 'office'
- 4) that those presently in "commissioned ministry" should discern where their sense of call and their gifts find appropriate expression in relation to these assignments;
- 5) that those members who are duly commissioned by the Church may covenant with the community in any of b) c) d), either in the congregation, in the presbytery or in other areas of the Church, in the Conference, or in the national Divisions of the Church; but those who sense a summons to a) should seek ordination;
- 6) that salary and other considerations of call and entitlement for those entering the covenant relationship with a congregation, in presbytery or in other areas of the Church, should be arranged with regard to training, experience, and justice; and not on the basis of ordination or non-ordination;
- 7) that the Church should take careful note of the development of the deaconess fellowship and 'order', its history, its distinctive contribution to the life of The United Church of Canada, its present status, and what is now happening to it. There are lessons to be learned about how best to encourage and support such "pioneering" manifestations in ministry in the Church in the future.(30)

The Sessional Committee which looked at the recommendations of Project Ministry recommended that items (1) (2) and (7) be accepted, but that items (3) through (6) be deferred:

(3) (4) (5) (6) In the light of the report of the Sessional Committee on Diaconal/Commissioned Ministry by the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education and the continuing study which these matters will require: we recommend that no action be taken on these recommendations and that the information and insight gathered by Project:Ministry become a part of the ongoing study.

The Task Force on Commissioned Ministry/Diaconal Ministry

The Task Force on Commissioned/Diaconal Ministry was set up in 1980 as another result of that consultation. The Task Force included Barbara Elliott, Margaret Fulton, Sylvia Hamilton, Cheryl Kirk, Eric King, Janet MacPherson, Margaret Quigley, Glenys Huws (Co-deputy Secretary, Division of MP & E.)

The Task Force was given the responsibility of "making recommendations to appropriate bodies concerning the issues identified by the [1980] consultation and other CM/DM's, " and " To begin to change attitudes and to educate the Church at large" about the commissioned/diaconal ministry. (31)

Barb Elliott makes the following comments on the Task Force:

They (General Council Executive) asked the steering committee that had planned that one day consultation to continue as a task force for two years, and then come back to General Council with some recommendations. And that group did work for those two years, there were six of us on it and it was a marvellous experience. We got groups set up in the Conferences with contact people, we sent out questionnaires, we compiled data and most importantly of all, since we were a task group that represented different generations and different approaches, we struggled and grew in our understanding of each other.... We took a few recommendations to the General Council in Halifax in 1980, which established that there would one order of ministry made up of those ordained to Word, sacrament and pastoral care; and those commissioned to a diaconal ministry of education, service and pastoral care. We asked that what we would be called in terms of what kind of minister and other references be left until after we had had a full consultation which we were in the throes of planning. (32)

The six recommendations that had been taken to the 1980 General Council and that were subsequently adopted were:

I. This 28th General Council agrees that, consistent with current understanding and practice, there is one Order of Ministry, called to proclaim and enact the Word, and this order consists of persons:

(a) Ordained to the Ministry of Word, Sacrament and Pastoral Care, and

(b) Commissioned to the Diaconal Ministry of Education, Service, and Pastoral Care.

II. That all persons who were earlier "Commissioned as Missionaries" by General Council authority, and who, at the time of that commissioning had the educational qualifications of deaconesses, be offered inclusion as commissioned ministers in diaconal ministry. The appropriate Divisions shall contact the missionaries concerned before the 29th General Council.

III. that General Council declare that for the present, entrance into the Order of Ministry other than by ordination, shall be by an Act of Commissioning by a Conference to a diaconal ministry of Education, Service and Pastoral Care; such commissioning to be understood as including fulfillment of the intent of the Basis of Union's provision for a designation of deaconesses. (IV, 22b)

IV. That a person commissioned to diaconal ministry:

(a) If appointed (on an annual basis) by a Presbytery, is to be termed "Commissioned United Church Supply" analogous to "Ordained United Church Supply" and "Lay Supply".

(b) If settled/placed/called by or through a Conference is to be considered in ongoing pastoral relationship with a pastoral charge or special ministry.

V. That acknowledgement be made that a major revision of the Manual will be required in relation to the naming of, and administrative provisions for, those in the Order of Ministry, but that this will be delayed until such time as the issues needing further clarification have been resolved, and that this clarification be done in time for action by the 29th General Council.

VI. That in the interim, clauses presently in the Manual, referring to Commissioned Ministers, Deaconesses and Certified Churchmen, retain those same terms, pending further consultation. Where editing is done, and the intention is to be inclusive for those currently

ordained, commissioned, or designated, the term to be used is "Member of the Order of Ministry" or "Order of Ministry".(33)

There had been some struggle among the deaconesses, certified churchmen and commissioned ministers as to whether or not they were leaving behind their identification with the laity. Some described their position as being "between a rock and a hard place" as they made the decision to become part of the Order of Ministry. The choice at that time was a strategic one, which would ensure that the trained professional who exercised diaconal ministry would be recognized by the courts and polity of the Church. Much work had been done with the goal of achieving more self-understanding for diaconal ministers and that style of ministry and this would continue over the next years.

In the next year the Task Force on Commissioned Ministry/Diaconal Ministry would work at setting up the Cedar Glen Consultation in February of 1982. That consultation would begin a new era for deaconesses, certified churchmen and commissioned ministers...soon to be called (by their own decision) diaconal ministers in The United Church of Canada.

NOTES

CHAPTER FOUR

1. Response to Research Questionnaire November, 1989.
2. Ibid.
3. The United Church of Canada, *General Council Record of Proceedings 1964*, p 263.
4. The United Church of Canada, *General Council Record of Proceedings 1977*, p 72.
5. The United Church of Canada, *General Council Record of Proceedings 1964*, p 440-41.
6. The United Church of Canada, *General Council Record of Proceedings 1966*, p 154.
7. The United Church of Canada, *General Council Record of Proceedings 1971*, p 50.

8. The United Church of Canada *Year Book 1963*, p 159.
9. The United Church of Canada *Year Book 1969*, p 159.
10. The United Church of Canada *Year Book 1974*, p 182-3.
11. The United Church of Canada *Year Book 1968*, p 151
12. The United Church of Canada *Year Book 1970*, p 168-9.
13. Interview with Gail Campos, December 1989.
14. Excerpt from Policy Statement "Educational Stance, Centre for Christian Studies", 1981.
15. The United Church of Canada, *General Council Record of Proceedings, 1968*, p.228.
16. *Ibid*, p. 92.
17. The United Church of Canada *General Council Record of Proceedings 1971*, p 283.
18. *Ibid*, p 67.
19. The United Church of Canada *General Council Record of Proceedings, 1972*, p 152.
20. Report of the Committee on Training For Commissioned Ministry, The Division of Ministry Personnel and Education, April 1973, p 3.
21. *Ibid*, pp 14-15.
22. The United Church of Canada *General Council Record of Proceedings 1977*, p 135.
23. The United Church of Canada *General Council Record of Proceedings, 1974*, p 267.
24. The United Church of Canada *General Council Record of Proceedings, 1977*, p 529.
25. The United Church of Canada *General Council Record of Proceedings 1980*, p 645.

26. The United Church of Canada *General Council Record of Proceedings* 1977, pp 697-8.
27. The United Church of Canada *General Council Record of Proceedings* 1979, pp 85-6.
28. Response to Research Questionnaire, November 1989.
29. The United Church of Canada *General Council Record of Proceedings*, 1980, p 698.
30. *Ibid*, pp 698-9.
31. Memo to: Commissioned Ministers in Diaconal Ministry (Deaconesses, Certified Churchmen and Commissioned Ministers) October 17, 1980, courtesy of Betty Marlin, personal files.
32. Response to Research Questionnaire November 1989.
33. The United Church of Canada *General Council Record of Proceedings*, 1980, pp 956-7.

CHAPTER FIVE

1982-1989

The year 1982 would prove to be a turning point in the history of deaconesses, certified churchmen and commissioned ministers. The first major event for this group would be the February consultation that was being planned.

Cheryl Kirk, a Centre for Christian Studies graduate (1979) was among those on the steering committee. She had been chairing the Task Force on Commissioned Ministers/Diaconal Ministers and resourced the sessional committee at the 1980 General Council that dealt with that area. Part of the process in preparation for the consultation was the establishment of Conference groupings. These Conference groupings held regional meetings to discuss the concerns, such as the name, transfer and settlement, and sacraments. In this manner, people would have more time to talk over issues before the national meeting. Support was received from the executive of MP&E, and funding provided for the process.

She recalls that there had been much anger at the previous consultation as deaconesses had been largely left out of the process to date. The steering group spent time putting together lists of people whose names had been lost over the years, women who had been taken off roles when they married for example. They spent time wrestling with the question of whether deaconesses, commissioned ministers should even exist, whether there was a valid ministry for them. Cheryl says that the Task Force on Commissioned/Diaconal Ministry went through several stages, one was of self-understanding, recognizing the importance of hearing from other women in different eras, (younger folk not having much of an appreciation of the deaconesses that had come before, their struggles, the "feistiness" of carrying on without much recognition or support.) (1)

The 1982 Consultation

The 1982 Consultation took place February 16-19, 1982, at Cedar Glen in Bolton, Ontario. The consultation dealt with the issues of ordination/commissioning, support systems and education of the Church, sacraments, the theological base, description, and definition of the name, and education for commissioned/diaconal ministry, including basic training and Continuing Education. More than 60 people attended the consultation that Glenys Huws describes as a "watershed experience."

Barb Elliott picks up the story:

I do think that consultation was a highlight for many people. There was a high attendance, and we worked very hard at decision-making. We used the consensus model of decision-making and when we couldn't reach consensus, (and by that I mean consensus in the best sense, not that everyone had to agree, but that everyone agreed to go along with it.) We took care... we gave people time. We put them in small groups, once they had heard the ins and outs of it. And it took us a day to make five major decisions. I think it knit all of us together...(2)

Cheryl Kirk, who co-chaired the decision-making process with Barb Elliott feels that the gathering at Cedar Glen was held together by the need to make decisions about the future, as people were being pushed by reports that deaconesses, certified churchmen and commissioned ministers should be abolished. Cheryl says that

the process of modified consensus was the most creative process I had ever seen. The name almost didn't get done, but people who were not happy with the name decided to go along for the sake of the community, to show that the group could hold together and take a stand on their future. There was a lot of caring for each other in the group...(3)

An audio-visual resource prepared by Kay Heuer, entitled *Waiting as Fast as We Can*, was shown to the group. It proved to be an excellent resource on the history of the diaconal ministry in The United Church of Canada. The group managed to accomplish what had been impossible just two years earlier at the consultation in 1980. The recommendations were agreed upon, and taken to the 1982 Annual Meeting of the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education.

One of the recommendations would result in a study of the meaning of ordination. It read as follows:

Whereas the Task Force Report has clarified certain issues about Commissioned/Diaconal Ministry, and

Whereas the Commissioned/Diaconal Ministry have chosen a name that focused on their function rather than on the rite by which they are admitted to the order of ministry, and

Whereas the consultation discussion about the possibility of being ordained to the Diaconal Ministry raised many question about the meaning of ordination and the term "ordained ministry"

It was moved that the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education conduct a study to clarify our understanding and use of the term "ordination" consistent with 1980 General Council as soon as possible and report no later than 1985.(4)

Another recommendation taken to the Annual Meeting of the Division of MP&E was in regard to the decision that the name of diaconal minister "be used to refer to those members of the Order of Ministry who are commissioned to a diaconal ministry of education, service and pastoral care, and who have been previously known as Commissioned Ministers, Certified Churchmen and Deaconesses." (5) This issue of selecting a name was perhaps one of the thorniest, and the one that required the most process. Much of the debate centered around issues of relating to the laity, and how ministry was perceived. Some deaconesses were reluctant to give up their traditional lay positions, and felt that changing the name would remove them from the laity. Others were concerned that as professionals in ministry, the name must be changed in order to receive the recognition that study and call deserved. In the end, the decision referred to above was arrived at, and is just one example of the deaconesses' and commissioned ministers' commitment to each other and their calling. Other recommendations based on decisions made at the consultation on such matters as sacraments, the Manual, education and support were approved by the Division.(6)

The Impact of the 1982 Consultation

Two recommendations arising from the 1982 consultation went to the 29th General Council in Montreal the same year. The following were carried.

That the 29th General Council request the Manual Committee to integrate all sections of the Manual referring to Diaconal ministers under the category of order of ministry. Within the category of ministry, distinctions between Ordained and Diaconal ministers should be made only when necessary."

and

That, consistent with the spirit of the report's recommendations regarding the sacraments, there be created a new section in the appropriate place in the Manual to authorize Conference in this regard.(...) Further, that the proposed wording be as follows: That upon application by a Presbytery or its Executive, a licence to administer the sacraments for the duration of the pastoral relationship or appointment may be granted a Diaconal minister if:

(a) the Diaconal minister is part of a team where the administration of the sacraments is seen as part of the shared functions of the team.

(b) the Diaconal minister is the only order of ministry person on the charge.

(c) the Diaconal minister is involved in pastoral-care functions such as chaplaincy in hospitals or other institutions or visitation to shut-ins.

Further, that an additional item (d) be added:

(d) or the position description and the needs of the context in some other way are deemed to warrant it.(7)

This policy seemed to have been seen as a threat by some people and was challenged by Belleville Presbytery, the Bay of Quinte Conference in 1984, in the form of a memorial to General Council. The memorial, which was subsequently defeated, seemed to raise the concern that the granting of sacramental privileges to Diaconal ministers had:

(T)ended in practise to remove any actual differentiation or distinction between Ordained and Diaconal Ministry;

Therefore be it resolved that the Belleville Presbytery, through the Bay of Quinte Conference, petition the General Council that permission to a Diaconal Minister to administer the Sacraments be granted by Conference, at the request of a pastoral charge, through Presbytery, only in cases of extreme geographic isolation, when the Diaconal Minister is the only Order of Ministry person on, or available to the pastoral charge.(8)

It was also in 1982 that diaconal ministers came within the transfer and settlement guidelines of conferences and the national Church, bringing them into the system more completely.(9) Diaconal ministers were aware of the fact that their style of ministry was not always well known in the Church, and felt that they should be present on committees that dealt with settlement. This would ensure that pastoral charges were aware of the availability of diaconal ministers, and would be able to make more informed decisions about the type of minister they were seeking to serve their congregations. A petition from Saskatchewan Conference had asked that ... a minimum of one person in Diaconal ministry be on the Pastoral Relations and/or Settlement Committee of each Conference.(10)

This petition was defeated but an alternative was agreed upon: That the General Council establish a policy that a minimum of one person in Diaconal

ministry be on the Pastoral Relations and/or Settlement Committee of each Conference wherever possible.(11)

The Committee on Diaconal Ministry

The Committee on Diaconal Ministry began its work as a standing committee of the General Council Division of Ministry Personnel and Education in the fall of 1984. The existence of the Committee came into being through the efforts of a sub-committee of the Candidature Committee and its recommendations to the Division. At the same time the Women in Ministry Overview Group made similar recommendations with regard to establishing a Standing Committee for Women in Ministry. At the November 1983 meeting of the Executive of General Council permission was given for 2 half-time staff persons, one to relate to Women in Ministry and one to relate to the Committee on Diaconal Ministry. In February 1984, at the Annual Meeting of the Division of MP&E, a motion passed to have the Committee on Diaconal Ministry become a full Standing Committee of the Division. (12) The first chairperson of the committee was Carol Stevenson Seller who served for 4 years.

Glenys Huws, staff for MP&E recalls:

The impetus for a half-time staff person came from the Cedar Glen consultation. In some of the discussion there was a sense that the same staff could have been used for Women in Ministry and diaconal people. Then there was an initiative from the Women in Ministry Overview Group that the proposal for the half-time person not be allowed to go ahead, a full-time staff was needed. There was further discussion around the different needs of diaconal and ordained women, a move then to 2 half-time positions, recognizing differences among the needs of the groups.(13)

The earliest tasks of the committee were ones of making presbyteries and other groups more aware of diaconal ministry as part of the Church. One member remembers seeing a pamphlet from a presbytery in recent years that still referred to deaconesses and certified churchmen. This lack of knowledge about diaconal ministry convinced the committee that much more educational work was needed.

Lori Crocker, a member of the committee for several years, says that the committee had to work hard at articulating its identity. As a minority in the Church and in the Order of Ministry, diaconal ministers are often in the position of explaining their role and style, more so than ordained ministers, who are considered the norm.

The Committee on Diaconal Ministry has also worked on a series of projects that would raise the profile of diaconal ministry in the Church. These have included the production of resource kits, entitled "Diaconal Ministry: All About Diaconal Ministry in The United Church of Canada", and the slide-tape "Called to Serve". Part of its role is capturing and reclaiming the history of diaconal ministry within the Church, through oral history projects and publications such as this one.

Since 1984, the committee, with Virginia Coleman as staff person, has been involved with numerous consultations within the Division of MP &E in the area of educational programmes for diaconal ministers. One such project was entitled Educated Ministry: Diaconal Ministry which looked at the history of diaconal ministry, its Biblical roots, a discussion of the essential elements of both diaconal ministry and educational preparation, and proposal for expanding access to preparation to other parts of the country. The project was carried out in consultation with the Committee on Theological Education for Ministry.

The committee also evaluates educational proposals for diaconal ministry and continues to work with other sectors of the Church in order to ensure that diaconal ministry is seen as a part of the Church's history and reality.

The Diakonia of The United Church of Canada (DUCC): The Beginnings

The consultations of the early eighties led many diaconal ministers to understand that they needed a professional association that would speak and advocate on their behalf. Glenys Huws, a lay professional, comments on the need for the DUCC:

The original mandate of the Committee on Diaconal Ministry was for five years, there was not a sense that a long term commitment was important. Diakonia is needed to provide the ongoing support, lobbying and networking, and advocacy. History had shown that the Church would not "take care of everything for [diaconal ministers]".(14)

A national development committee was formed to pursue the organization of what would become the Diakonia of The United Church of Canada (DUCC). Members of that committee were Mary Ellen Nettle, Ann Marie Allen, Barbara Vavasour, Eric King, Betty Marlin, and Kathy Toivanen. In addition to the task of setting up the national organization, the development committee found itself being invited to consultations and asked to make position statements even before the actual association had been formed. In a letter to regional contact people, Betty Marlin wrote that

One of the things that keeps happening to us is that several groups seem to be: i) interested in diaconal ministry and ii) assuming we are the association. We are not unhappy about these actions for we believe it shows interest and some ownership by the Church. It does however leave your development committee in a slightly awkward position. We found ourselves i) being called in on consultations; ii) invited to consultations; iii) expected to write position papers or otherwise make statements about diaconal ministry. We see no creative alternative but to respond to these situations and to keep you informed about what we are doing.(15)

The statements that were produced as founding policy go far to explain the self-understanding of diaconal ministers. The statements dealt with diaconal ministry as a style, more than a function, and affirmed the process of collegiality. The association was set up to allow for a national forum for professionals to be able to publicize and advocate on behalf of their members, and to increase the Church's awareness of diaconal ministry. The association would also act on behalf of its membership in areas of concern to diaconal ministers, such as education and policy decisions.

As part of the process of establishing the national association, regional groups were asked to meet together so that they could be better represented at the founding meeting. The founding meeting was held at Five Oaks, Paris , Ontario June 15-17, 1984.

The following are excerpts of a statement from the national committee meeting in April 13-15, 1983;

Diaconal Ministry Association

1. Working Style of Diaconal Ministry
 - i. Takes seriously the ministry of all people
 - ii. offers variety and diversity to the Church
 - iii. has the primary function of empowering others
 - iv. sees service as our primary focus
 - v. works within and/or outside the Church structures

We are called with all of God's people to be:

agents of change
agents of support and caring
agents of reconciliation
agents of justice and mercy encouraging all to fullness and wholeness

This statement was used as a working document and was revised and affirmed as part of the policy statement in 1988.

The Association also laid out its philosophy on the educational model for diaconal ministry which would put emphasis on education as a lifelong process, and one that was best carried out in community. The educational process should take seriously the needs of the individual and the community with whom they interact.

Barb Elliott....

It's been a little difficult these last few years to work out from that how we pick up from that [1982] consultation. We then moved into the next stage to set up a task group that moved us into becoming a diakonia association and one of our problems is that that, plus the national Committee On Diaconal Ministry, plus a staff person for diaconal ministry all came into being in the same year. They had all been needed and it was great to have all of them happen but there has been therefore some unclarity as to how the roles get carried out in those groupings. But certainly there is now a lot more self-determination possible if diaconal ministers care to work at it and to take responsibility and to help shape policy and so on.(16)

In spite of the initial lack of clarity, time has proven that there is a need and a place for all the various efforts for diaconal ministers. To date four national meetings have taken place for Diakonia, and there is still a struggle to be clear in its role as an association. There is some tension between the role of the Committee on Diaconal Ministry and Diakonia, since having two organizations tends to diffuse energy. The dynamics of complementing each other's work are still to be worked out, but each national meeting of the Diakonia has affirmed the idea that both groups are necessary. The 1988 meeting of Diakonia gave diaconal ministers an opportunity to focus on the meaning of their ministry. It seems that one of the learnings was the articulation of the concept of diaconal ministry as a style, and that diaconal ministry was carried out by many people in many places. Those who are named diaconal ministers are people who have made a choice to engage in this kind of ministry in a professional capacity in the Church, but diaconal ministry is a much wider concept.

Changes to the Manual: Reflecting Diaconal Ministry

Much work had been done by Virginia Coleman and the Committee on Diaconal Ministry in regard to the Manual. At the 32nd General Council in 1988 changes were made to the Manual of The United Church of Canada.

The changes were in response to a remit that would write diaconal ministry into the Basis of Union. The first was

That the Basis of Union under the section on Doctrine be revised as follows:

2.17 Article XVII. Of the Ministry. We believe that Jesus Christ, as the Supreme Head of the Church, has appointed therein *an Ordained Ministry of [the] Word, [and] Sacrament[s], and Pastoral Care and a Diaconal Ministry of Education, Service and Pastoral Care* and calls men and women to [this ministry] *these ministries*; that the Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, recognizes and chooses those whom He calls, and should thereupon duly ordain or commission them to the work of the ministry.(17)

The motions were carried. (Note: The deletions are enclosed in square brackets[]. Words to be inserted are italicized). Other changes were made to the Manual that would reflect the presence of diaconal ministers and their commissioning to the Order of Ministry.(18)

After many years of struggle for identity and recognition, diaconal ministers were now included in the official Church documents.

Alternative Preparation Opportunities

Over the years, there had been some agitation from people in other parts of the country to set up a preparation programme for diaconal ministers outside Toronto. In Alberta and Northwest Conference, women like Margaret Short and Marilyn Carroll, both of whom were active in the Church and had an interest in preparing for diaconal ministry, began lobbying for a western based programme. There proved to be a number of women and men who for family and other reasons were not able to leave their homes to engage in a course of study. Diaconal ministers Betty Marlin and Dorothy Mundle worked on the concept from the beginning, and a planning committee of diaconal ministers, staff from St. Stephen's College in Edmonton, and persons interested in participating in such a course was formed. After much negotiation and extensive consultation with the Centre for Christian Studies, a one-time western field-based education programme for diaconal and lay professional ministry was approved by the Division of Ministry Personnel and Education and opened at St. Stephen's College in 1989. For the first time since 1939, when the Manitoba College closed its preparation courses for deaconesses, women and men interested in preparing for diaconal or lay professional ministry had a chance to study outside Toronto.

The five year, field-based programme has three major components:

1. An integrated community learning component in which participants meet each year in order to determine their own needs and to plan programmes to meet those needs.
2. Fifteen to 20 hours of field education which includes 10 hours of supervised field work per week, some of which is academic and some of which grows out of the needs of the group.
3. An academic component that includes 18 academic courses, some of which are through regular semester sessions and five-day concentrated sessions.

The course includes the basic academic requirements, as well as extensive learning in the field, facilitated by supervisors. As of the course's commencement there were 30 people from four Conferences enrolled in the programme. A second entrance class into the programme was approved and began in the fall of 1991.

Epilogue

The future of diaconal ministry in the United Church is not clear. Many diaconal ministers feel that their style of ministry is still undervalued by the Church. Several, in response to questions, have stated that they see the budget cutbacks as dangerous for their work. With their salaries being at the same level as those of ministers ordained to Word, Sacrament and Pastoral Care, there is a tendency among congregations to get, as one diaconal minister put it, "the real thing" for the same amount of money.

In spite of many years of struggle, the story of diaconal ministry is not familiar in the Church. Students who are offering themselves for ordered ministry frequently have no clear understanding of diaconal ministry, and often the committees they encounter along the way neither offer this clarity nor encourage the students to consider diaconal ministry.

Many diaconal ministers see their role in the institutional Church as one of agents of change. They believe that the institutional Church must radically alter itself, or be transformed in order to be the Church in the future. They are also aware that change does not happen without pain, and that their ministry of service will become more of a challenge in the years ahead.

Eric King, a diaconal minister, expresses his vision for diaconal ministry in this way:

I see diaconal ministry constantly pushing the edges of the Church to be responsive to the needs of the world at present and what we can anticipate future needs might be....Diaconal ministers, because of our tradition of being mostly women, have a gift for nurturing community in the Church and in the broader community. This nurturing is not a docile attribute, but a courageous characteristic that challenges death, suffering, disrespect..(19)

The history of diaconal ministry in The United Church of Canada is one of struggle for respect, understanding and change. Underlying the movement have been women and men who are committed to a new understanding of service in the Church and in the world. The United Church has been privileged to have had such people of vision as part of its heritage.

NOTES

CHAPTER FIVE

1. Interview with Gail Campos , December 1989.
2. Response to Questionnaire, November 1989.
3. Interview with Gail Campos, December 1989.
4. The United Church of Canada *General Council Record of Proceedings* 1982, p 146.
5. *Ibid*, p 146.
6. *Ibid*, pp 142-8.
7. *Ibid*, p 75.
8. The United Church of Canada *General Council Record of Proceedings*, 1984, p 556.
9. The United Church of Canada, *General Council Record of Proceedings*, 1982, p 94.
10. *Ibid*, p 447.
11. *Ibid*, p 95.

12. Letter from the Committee on Diaconal Ministry, August 9, 1988, courtesy of Betty Marlin, personal files.
13. Interview with Gail Campos, December 1989.
14. Interview with Gail Campos, December 1989.
15. Letter to Regional Contact people from the Diaconal Association Steering Committee, courtesy Betty Marlin, personal files.
16. Response to Research Questionnaire, November 1989.
17. The United Church of Canada, *General Council Record of Proceedings 1988*, p 115.
18. *Ibid*, pp 115-160.
19. Response to questionnaire, November 1989.

INDEX

Association of Professional Church Workers,	123
"blanketing in",	96
Campion, Tina,	32, 61, 118
Candidacy process,	118-9
Centre for Christian Studies,	116, 120-2, 120-30
Certified Employed Churchmen,	96, 115-9, 123-4, 130
Christie, Harriet,	58, 76-7, 121
Commission on Ministry in the 20th Century,	123-128
Commission on the Ministries of Women,	89
Commission on the Status of Lay Workers,	96
Committee on Camp and War Production Communities (CCWPC),	33-5
Committee on the Deaconess Order and Women Workers, ...	21-23, 33, 37,
.....	39-41, 45-50, 61-4, 67, 71-74, 79-82, 85-93, 96-103, 118-9
Committee on Diaconal Ministry,	119, 142-5
Committee on Employed Women Workers,	2,3,6,7
Committee on the Ordination of Women,	6,21
Committee on Training for Commissioned Ministry,	124
Committee to Study Women's Work in the Church,	97, 100
Constitution of the Deaconess Order,	11,41-47,85
Covenant College,	116,120-1,123-4
Deaconess Order,	2,3,10,11,15,18,21-24,41,44-6,51,64,71,73,85,
.....	91,94,100,118,126
Diakonia of the United Church (DUCC),	143,145
disjoining,	10-14, 85-6
Emmanuel College,	8,9,14,39,75,79,121-2
Fellowship of Deaconesses and Other Women Workers,	123
Fellowship of Professional Women in the United Church,	49-50
Gruchy, Lydia,	6,20-1,23,45,92
Interim Committee on the Deaconess Order,	103,118
Inter-Board Committee on Employed Women Workers,	6
Manitoba College,	2,3,8,18,146
marriage,	11,13,64,83-5
men,	12,19,43,52,67,83,89,94-6,102,119-20,146
ordination of women,	6,12,19-21,92,131

pensions (for deaconesses),	12,39-40,47,118
presbytery membership,	87-90,102-2,115
Project Ministry,	132
recruitment,	12,21-23,32-3,37-39,51,61,63-4,70,72-3,81-2,96-7
remit,	19,20,91-4,96,103,146
salaries,	1-2,4,12,14,18,21,23,34,39,46-7,51,72,80,82,86-7, 101,104,115,118,147
secretary-deaconess,	16,18
Task Force on Commissioned Ministry/Diaconal Ministry 1980,	133,135
Task Force on Ministry,	125
The 1982 Consultation (Cedar Glen),	135,138-9,142
United Church Training School,.....	3,7-8,13,15,19,21,33,38-9,52, 63,67,72-6,79-83,94,96,98,100,119-120
United College,	8
war work,	31-5,38,48,52
Western Field-Based Program.....	146
Woman's Missionary Society,	3-4,9,13,15,22,34,37,41-44,49,63, 73,80,96,100-2,118

