



CHURCH OF THE PROVINCE
OF CENTRAL AFRICA

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10th February, 1978

The Rev. Christopher Hill,
Assistant Chaplain,
The Archbishop of Canterbury's Counsellors
on Foreign Relations,
Palace Court, 222 Lambeth Road,
LONDON SE1 7LB, England.

Dear Father,

I do my best to answer your enquiry, about the ordination of women.

Firstly I enclose the documentation as I am not sure in how much detail you have this.

To interpret it is not easy. I do not think there is much passionate feeling on either side of the question and the debates both in Episcopal Synod and in Provincial Synod have always been reasoned and temperate on both sides. About the only clue I could give you is the one about every child born alive is either a liberal or a little conservative.

You would probably find the voting going much the same way on a number of un-related questions - the ordination of women, revision of liturgy, remarriage of the divorced.

On the conservative side we tend to find -

Geographically - Rhodesia and Botswana

Racially - Africans

Ecclesiastically - Clergy

In a small Episcopal Synod (9 members) individual personalities account for a good deal. We are certainly considerably more conservative now with Bishop Burregh and Bishop Mercer than we were ten years ago when their sees were filled by Bishops Alderson and Skelton.

The request of the Church of Canada, which was initiated actually by Bishop Mark Wood now assistant at Hereford, reflected partly the views of the more conservative elements, partly a strong conviction of everyone that whatever was done should be done together, so as to avoid any chance of the kind of mess that has happened in the U.S.A.

At the same time Provincial Synod was willing to accept the more liberal view expressed in (C) largely because this already had the backing of ACC and by implication Lambeth 1968.

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My own personal feeling for what is worth is that while the human race may be neatly divided into two according to glandular equipment, its psychic equipment is a spectrum with an infinity of shades and that any statement beginning "All men" or "All women..." is logically absurd unless it refers to anatomy.

My good wishes to your Conference which clearly is of even more ecumenical importance than the subject it is discussing.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "C Hill", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Archbishop