

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____

Address: _____

Suburb: _____

Post Code: _____

Combined membership
of MOWatchInc and
Sydney MOW \$35.00

Concession combined membership \$25.00

Associate Membership \$10.00

Donation to MOW _____

WHAT DO YOU GET WHEN YOU JOIN?

MOWatching, the national newsletter which is always very interesting, will arrive at irregular intervals. Also the MOW report from us in Sydney, twice a year, which also has articles about recent events, people news and future events to attend. As circumstances dictate we hold discussion afternoons - and at the AGM, usually in August, we have a guest speaker and elect the committee for the year to plan events. We are always keen to have new committee members who can give us a fresh perspective on our situation!

CONTACT US

The Secretary
PO Box 202
Balgowlah NSW 2093
Sydney_mow@hotmail.com.and
www.mowatch.org.au

Sydney Convenor: Christine Middleton

Phone: 9719 9363

CONSTITUTION

The objects of MOW Incorporated, as stated in the constitution are:

- To move the Anglican Church of Australia to admit women to the ordained ministries of the Church.
- To encourage women to hear and respond to the call of God.
- To recognise, encourage and extend the ministries of women, and to see that the Church makes full use of them.
- To express women's perspectives in theology, to celebrate their diversity of spirituality and to promote the use of inclusive language in worship.
- To bring laity and clergy into closer partnership.
- To liaise with appropriate national and international women's groups.

MORE ABOUT MOW

Membership of women and men. MOW's membership is open to and includes men as well as women. Approximately 25% of members are men, ordained as well as lay.

Ecumenical participation. Communication and mutual support has grown with like-minded groups from other denominations also working to reform the place of women in church and society. This has been evident in the many conferences MOW, and now MOWatch has hosted.

THE MEANING OF THE SYDNEY MOW LOGO

The MOW logo consists of the following elements - the figure reaching out, the cross of Christ, the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove and the hand rendered "MOW Sydney". The figure is neither male or female, but represents the clergy in total. It symbolizes the ideal of Christ-centred men and women representing the Church, as equals - as is MOW's stated aim. The bird has a twofold meaning: the Holy Spirit descending on the ordained male/female clergy member (reminiscent of Christ's own Baptism and Commissioning) and the dove of peace reinforcing MOW's aim at ending inequality and suffering in the church caused by the exclusion of women from the clergy. The scrappy nature of the hand rendered lettering shows the slightly rebellious nature of MOW as well as the breath of fresh air/youthful nature of the organisation.



MOW
Sydney

SYDNEY MOVEMENT FOR
THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN

Committed to challenging and transforming the Anglican church of Australia and its role in the community

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Sydney MOW is the only remaining branch of Australian MOWatch. The name change came in 1999, when for most Australian dioceses the male only in leadership paradigm had shifted. Today only 5 dioceses of 23 in Australia do not regularly ordain women as priests. These are The Murray, Ballarat, North West Australia, Armidale and Sydney.

In Sydney in addition to a particular interpretation of certain biblical passages, the hardening of the attitude against women's full participation in the church has been further supported by a theology that proposes a quite new understanding of the Trinity. This is outlined in the 1999 document of the Sydney Anglican Diocesan Doctrine Commission entitled "The Doctrine of the Trinity and its Bearing on the Relationship of Men and Women." Accepted by synod in 1999, it leads to a theological belief that women can only ever complement men, they can never teach or lead.

Our task is to debate this view constructively. We believe that to be faithful to our calling as Christians, all women and men should be able to use their gifts, including gifts of leadership, to promote the gospel and to alleviate suffering in the world. We also uphold the hope that soon Australia will have a woman who is also an Anglican bishop!

Particularly important in our circumstance, is fellowship of likeminded people and we are looking forward to the next MOWatch conference being organised in Perth for next year by a committee, mainly of women priests in Western Australia.

YEARS TO REMEMBER

1983: The Australian Movement for the Ordination of Women is founded, based on the United Kingdom MOW, which began in 1979. Our foundation president was Dr Patricia Brennan.

1989: Sydney Diocese ordains its first women deacons.

1992: 7th March. Perth diocese ordains the first women priests in this country. Also, on 11th November, the English General Synod voted to accept the ordination of women to the priesthood.

21st November. Australia's General Synod votes to permit the ordination of women to the priesthood by any diocese that wishes to do so.

1995: July. Bishop Penny Jamieson, Bishop of Dunedin visits Sydney. Although she could only function as a deacon while in Sydney, she preached to packed congregations at St James' King St, St Stephen's Newtown, St John's Darlinghurst, St Alban's Epping and All Saints' Hunters Hill.

1996: November. Julia Baird, Co-convenor of Sydney MOW and Justice Keith Mason propose a compromise motion to Sydney Synod which would allow for women to be come priests but not be in charge of a parish. The motion put to Houses in a secret ballot was lost as follows: Clergy, 79 for; 151 against; Laity 200 for; 210 against. MOW saw 49% support by the synod laity as a considerable encouragement.

2003: May. A successful 20th anniversary dinner held in Sydney to celebrate the foundation of MOW in 1983. The speakers were the 4 national presidents over that time.

2006: 12th August. Sydney MOW AGM supports the proposal of Rev Chris Albany to take our cause back to Sydney synod, by attempting to re-introduce the 1992 canon permitting women's ordination to the priesthood.

21st-24th August. MOWatch holds a very successful conference in Melbourne – theme "Women in the wings – Waiting for Purple." The keynote speaker was the Rev. Canon Dr Jane Shaw. Adding to excitement at the conference was the fact that recently in the US. Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori had been elected as presiding bishop of the Episcopal church.

October. The Rev. Chris Albany and Carolyn Boyer attempt to take the issue of women's ordination to Sydney synod again. The debate and subsequent voting on the issue of whether to even discuss women's ordination, when compared to the 1996 figures for the acceptance of the 1992 ordinance itself, indicates the present swing in synod towards the viewpoint of our current archbishop. Clergy, 31 for; 165 against, Laity, 114 for; 235 against.

However, since 1992 women around Australia have continued to be ordained priests. There are now about 500 priests who are women around the country.

WHY THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN MATTERS?

Some people have asked why I am still so involved in MOW? What is it that compels a priest in this most conservative of Dioceses to continue to battle away at what seems to be a lost cause (at least as far as Sydney is concerned)?

At one time my answer would have been simply that it is a matter of justice and injustice, once perceived, must always be exposed for what it is and unceasingly worked against. I now see an additional equally important imperative. This is a missiological imperative. The church, the Body of Christ cannot fulfil its mission unless all its constituent parts play their part in exercising to the full their gifts and talents in ministry. Whilst ever women cannot be priests and/or bishops it is impossible for those women called to such ministry to so offer themselves. Thus the church is not able to properly be church and its mission is impaired, incapable of fully being offered to the world. To those who would argue that women cannot be so called to positions of leadership, I would say reread the New Testament particularly the picture it gives of Jesus in relation to women. Against the norms of his day he relates to women in a remarkable way, associating with those of questionable character and even gentile background. The status and recognition he offers is that of a person of equal value and worth. He even allows a gentile woman to change his understanding about the scope of his mission, i.e. the woman teaches him! He appears first to women after the resurrection, giving them the responsibility of being the first witnesses to that reality. The central role of all Christian preachers/teachers is to proclaim Resurrection faith. How can we deny that function, in any way, to women when Jesus himself first gives it to the women of the Gospel accounts of the first Easter.

So why am I still involved. Justice? Yes. But also because the mission of the church demands it. Because the church is flawed, unable to be what God calls us to be without women and men together living out our calling as co-equal disciples. Selfish really, because I cannot fulfil my calling within God's people whilst ever some of my sisters are prevented from fulfilling theirs.