

Women of the burning bush: still burning 25 years on



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It was a privilege to be granted the opportunity to follow the original study of women in ministry in the PCANZ commissioned by the Rev Margaret Reid Martin and her research group completed in 1990. I would like to acknowledge the women who contributed to this first study who identified the stresses and successes of the women in ordained ministry at that time. Several women ministers in that original study have also contributed to the current report. In the first study, a tension was identified between women who were advocating for immediate changes in the opportunities for women and those women who considered that change would come slowly over time. There was considerable pain in the answers from both groups; but very little, if any, of the identified recommendations resulted in any action.

The second study commenced in 2016, 25 years later, and was financially supported by the Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership (KCML) through a Thornton Blair scholarship.

I would like to thank Rev Margaret Garland, Rev Jill MacDonald, Rev Sharon Ross Ensor, Rev Yvonne Smith, Rev Rachel Judge who provided the oversight of the development and processes of this project from the beginning. I acknowledge the pleasure of working with such a highly motivated, professional, articulate and supportive group who always managed to bring the needs of the research to the fore of very large workloads with the demands of parish and leadership roles. I have enjoyed their collegial debate, challenges and willingness to question every step of the process and their model of leadership unfocused on personal gain.

Thank you to Alison Meier for gifting the cover photograph illustrating new beginnings¹.

Most importantly, thank you to the women who provided their experiences which are the body of this report. For some of these women the historical or current information was painful to include. Others did not feel safe to have information included and anonymity was a critical factor in their involvement. Permission was given for the inclusion of all stories which illustrate important aspects of the major themes, with full knowledge that the respondents may be identified. There was a strong sense of *Call* which sustained many working in difficult situations which would otherwise have been untenable.

Following the completion of this report there have been opportunities for discussion with both women and men in leadership and training levels of the national church to develop ways to address the issues identified. Their positive response to the report and suggestions for providing safe and innovative ways in which women in the future can utilise the amazing talents, diverse leadership styles and innovative practices has been impressive.

Change for the Glory of God, needs the involvement of both women and men, young and old, and with the diversity of cultural differences. We look forward to engaging in the future with the wider church as a way of moving forward.

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FOREWORD

Each time lately, it seems, when in conversation with a senior Presbyterian Church minister in our Presbytery, he laments how male dominated our church is and is seen to be.

He's right, and it's great that it concerns him. May the studying of this new report lead many others to be equally troubled and to talk about the solutions that are waiting to be found.

This research project, led with passion and precision by Dr. Vivienne Adair, could have shown us there was now less need to worry about gender bias in the PCANZ. It could have revealed how extensively attitudes have shifted, and how straight forward it is for women to be accepted for ministry training and then to study and prepare for ordination, to be called to a ministry position, and then to move on easily to subsequent ministry opportunities. Sadly this is not the current reality for us.

The excitement of answering questions for and then reading of other women's experiences in Women of the Burning Bush has remained with us over the past quarter of a century. Our experiences and those of all connected with, or disconnected from church life, do not remain static. It was important that we took stock and re-assessed where we are now, in a new century.

It is empowering to celebrate the progress we have made, and to re-assess the challenges that confront us. Reading about our own experience is such a joy. True, live stories are powerful and challenging. Having the opportunity to be honest about our reality is freeing. Vivienne's thorough research and deep commitment to this project has been infectious. It is vitally important that the lens we use to reflect on ministry is not only a male perspective. For the wonderful news of freedom in Christ to reach new generations, we need to be confident in our God-given identity. The gift that Vivienne has given us of the opportunity to read and tell our stories strengthens our backbone, and unites us further as we do so.

I'm sure you've come across both women and men who find the freshness we unconsciously bring to our various ministry roles stimulating and engaging. We're not always aware of what we bring. We are ourselves in Christ, so grateful for that identity, and eager to shine with the light and grace of God. Our prayer is that in the relating of our stories, and our reflection together on them, that new truth will emerge, for our times and eras ahead, so that the timeless story of God's love for all may be heard and received in fresh contexts. At the same time, we yearn for women in ministry to thrive as themselves, as treasures of our abundant Creator, made in the image of God.

Immerse yourself in these women's realities. Rejoice in what you discover. Read and weep. Allow our stories to get under your skin and lead you to reflect, question and wonder. Give

thanks for the ministry of women, in all our diversity, within so many different contexts, in our Presbyterian Church.

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HISTORY

In 2015 the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand (PCANZ) celebrated 50 years since the first ordination of women ministers in New Zealand. Following this, the Leadership Sub Committee was approached for endorsement of the concept of conducting a study to determine the current perception of ordained women ministers and an application was made to the Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership (KCML). This was an important opportunity and we are grateful for the financial assistance through a Thornton Blair scholarship to accomplish this.

Prior to this current opportunity, in 1990 there had been a survey of women following a celebration of 25 years of ordination for women. At that time, a survey was commissioned out of concerns that, although there were opportunities for women to enter ordained ministry, there were still issues around their acceptance (see P.8) ²

Three issues were identified during this 1990 research project. Research participants noted some reluctance to participate because of the intensity of the time the women ministers committed to ministry life and also because the questions were mostly open ended and took a long time to complete. Secondly because it tapped into personal information there was concern about the confidentiality of the material. There was a third concern that it would all be a waste of time because *it would be buried in a committee or dismissed as the ranting of feminists* (p.9) At that time the committee chose to believe that the material included was so important to the development of the church that this would not be correct.

In the responses given there was a strong focus for some women on issues of gender inequality; but there were divided perspectives on this. Two positions were taken. One was a desire to group together in ways to speed up the process to challenge the status quo and who *did not want to wait any longer to do the job on equal terms*. (p.63) The second group did not want to be either divisive or different. They did not want to be *female against male or female against female* (p.58) and were prepared to let change happen more slowly. These two positions resulted in contradictory opinions in several questions.

However, what both groups wanted was: *acceptance, freedom and equality, a climate where gender was not an issue and the focus was developing the best ways to provide ministry for all people including each other*. (p.63)

There was a clear recognition that many of the experiences and issues raised may have identical impact on men's ministries but the opportunity to test this did not occur.

At the time of current study period the configuration of the PCANZ had changed to five large presbyteries; Southern, Alpine, Central, Kaimai, Northern with two cultural presbyteries; Te Aka Puaho and the Pacific island presbytery. There is also an Asian Mission Coordinator.

² Pages quoted refer to pages in the report Women of the Burning Bush 1991

A second change from 25 years ago has been the move from training being centred in Dunedin to internship-based training which has meant that the tight cohesiveness of the earlier training groups was lessened.

METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

A group of women³ met in Dunedin early in 2016, chaired by Rev Margaret Garland, to act as an oversight committee to develop the questions and the process with the researcher. These women were chosen in consultation to provide a mix of experience, time of ordination and type of ministry. The group was both challenging and enthusiastic and had wide experience in their initial careers and in their experience of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand.

After a month of discussion, a second meeting was convened to develop a series of questions. Initially there was a strong move to build on the questions asked in the first survey and to test the uptake of the recommendations. Unfortunately, several of the recommendations from the first survey were referred to a PCANZ Board that is no longer active. In addition, there were differences of opinion on which issues were current.

A draft set of questions was sent to three women ministers in Auckland for comment. Committee members were asked to consult other colleagues. Following this feedback the focus changed to become more pertinent to a changed environment. The oversight committee was asked to test the second draft with their input and as they made no more changes, this became the final survey.⁴

All ordained women actively engaged in ministry in the PCANZ and those who were retired for fewer than five years, for whom there was an email address, were sent the survey with an invitation to participate. When there was no response within three weeks, contact was made by telephone where possible. There were many instances where neither the provided email nor phone number was valid.

One woman replied that she did not wish to participate as she was well retired. Other reasons given for not participating were almost always pressure of work or illness. However as with the first survey, there was also concern about the confidentiality of the answers and several women asked to give specific answers orally.

The second phase was to move to telephone (10) or face to face interviews (3) when a minister did not wish to provide a written response; or following a telephone call out of office hours to encourage involvement. All such interviews kept to the questions in the survey and no probes were included. The result was a further 13 completed interviews. The transcripts from telephone interviews were provided to the respondent for validation when requested, or when particular points needed clarification.

All interviews, written and oral, were transcribed to specific questions which allowed for a thematic analysis. These were confirmed by an independent researcher. Answers were scrutinised for illustrative quotes which were identified by a number related to the order in which the interview was received. Any potentially identifying information was either deleted

³ Rev Margaret Garland, Rev Rachel Judge, Rev Jill Mc Donald, Rev Sharon Ross Ensor, Rev Yvonne Smith. Researcher Dr Vivienne Adair.

⁴ See Appendix A

or amended. When a complex answer was included as a separate Case to illustrate a particular set of information, permission was sought for inclusion. To test anonymity the draft report was examined by the oversight committee and one woman⁵.

Where there were opposing points of view in any question there has been equal exposure to both opinions. In general, the themes are discussed to give weight to the most frequent answers, however some individual answers have been used where there are important points made. The report has attempted to not over use evidence from any one individual and to ensure that most respondents have contributed to the final report.

The methods of making contact did not result in participation by any women of the Maori Synod. Although all of the women on the list supplied by Te Aka Puaho were approached by email, post or telephone, on commencement of the study on August 6th 2016, none of these attempts to make contact were successful. At a meeting of Maori women ministers August 25th: 2017 the clerk of Te Aka Puaho agreed to present a request for involvement. No response has been received at this time.

Aware of the incompleteness of a research report that does not involve the tangata whenua's story of being women in the PCANZ, the Rev Wayne Te Kaawa was invited to share the history of the role of the ministry of Maori women in this country.

These are powerful stories of engagement and commitment despite great odds.

WHO WERE THE WOMEN WHO PARTICIPATED?

Of the 81 possible participants 56 (70%) completed interviews: either written or verbal. The majority of the ministers were of European descent, five were from a Pacific island and three were Asian.

The study participants represent areas from Southland to Northland. Thirty one percent came from the greater Auckland area, nine percent from both Dunedin and Wellington. The remainder from Northland, Hamilton, Wanganui, Paeroa, Kaimai, Bay of Plenty, Pahiatua, Wairarapa, Kaiapoi, Christchurch, Oamaru, Kurau, Timaru, and Southland.

This study includes nine women who participated in the 1990 study. The responses on training cover all four programmes as sixteen trained in the Theological Hall Dunedin, five in the School of ministry, seven in the CBMT programme and 14 in KCML.⁶ Three were trained as a Locally Ordained Minister (LOM)

The dates of ordination ranged between 1975 and 2017 One women was ordained in 1975 and one in 1979; six in the 1980s. The majority were ordained in the 1990s and 2000s with 15 between 1990 and 1999 and 27 being ordained from 2000-2017. See Table Appendix B

⁵ A lay session clerk and chair of a presbytery pastoral committee.

⁶ Only 42 of the 56 women provided information on which training programme they attended.

REPORT RESULTS

The first observation is how highly experienced and diversely educated the women are. In this group of 56 respondents who gave information of their career pathways 53 had completed unrelated/initial tertiary level qualifications and there are 6 who had or consequently have completed PhDs. There is a wide variety of subject focus for initial degrees with the most common (17) being a primary or secondary teaching degree. (See Appendix B)

For some women, learning and accomplishments frequently occurred during child rearing years. In addition, learning did not necessarily result from a call to ministry but conversely lead to a recognition of a call to ordained ministry. For example, an interest or a call to study theology per se was often given as the trigger for moving into study for ordination. The influence of Laidlaw College as an entry level to the study of theology has been central to the career pathways of many women who are now ordained into the Presbyterian church.

The career pathways were diverse and include: teaching, social work, communications, secretarial, commercial business, accountant, dentist, physiotherapist, registered nurse, school dental nurse, nanny, wool handler, community outreach worker, rural women's coordinator, counsellor, philosopher, journalist, administration, human relations, business analyst, missionary, bank officer, youth minister.

For many women, church involvement with children in youth and family programmes was a starting pathway to moving into ordination. The involvement in setting up youth programmes, Kids Friendly and Mainly Music types of programmes and had eventually led to a recognition of a call to ministry. Being a full-time mother did not exclude study or intensive involvement in both local and national church involvement. The influence of supportive people in identifying and encouraging a move to apply to study for ordination has been frequently mentioned as has the effect of negative responses by people; often family and church colleagues.

Another strong message has been how clear a call to ministry has been. For some women, this has been part of their lives very early on (earliest were 13 and 17 years); a progression from exploring theology, or for others it was a clear call but had been deliberately ignored or set aside or came "out of the blue". The call was not always easy to accept; for example: *I had my first inkling of a call at 25 and my initial response was resistance with denial, anger, bargaining and finally acceptance. It took 20 years to complete the journey.* A number of women said it had always been niggling away at them and others had a clear

call related to a traumatic event; such as the breakdown of marriage, the death of a child or partner, an illness, or reassessing their life style or opportunities.

Some women ministers had received no support from their families for their decision to train for ordained ministry, including those who had male ministers within the immediate and extended family. Others had made a joint decision with their husband. Although the status of several women was recorded as “retired” this appeared to signal only a different way of serving the church; usually in a temporary position and often unpaid.

The development of the Local Ordained Ministry (LOM) position had opened opportunities for women living outside large centres to be called to ministry. These opportunities have been reported by a small number of women as leading to full ordination. Sometimes the congregations they were serving in had instigated the suggestion of further training for national ordination (NOM) having recognised the benefits of having a nationally trained minister.

YEAR OF ORDINATION

The dates of ordination into ministry for the women in this study were between 1975 and 2016 and ordination did not necessarily follow immediately after the end of training. For example:

I finished training in 1990s but went back to teaching for the following year to decide on the next step. I was licenced and called at the end of that year and ordained in the following year.

I was ordained after five years of being a lay minister.

There was differentiation and significance between the ordination to Locally Ordained Ministry (LOM) and Nationally Ordained Ministry (NOM). Two ministers' comments expressed the importance of ordination.

The process was very precious to me because I had never anticipated being ordained I never aspired to that. But when I was asked [by the church] to train I liked that they had confidence in me and I appreciated what they wanted. It was an important step in my life. It made a difference for them and an impact on the outside community to have a Rev. None of the other churches [in my area] had an ordained minister. This was significant. LOM

I was ordained in a rural community. I felt I was unworthy. It is the struggle of Pacific women. NOM

MODEL OF MINISTRY TRAINING

The majority (38%) of the women who answered this question had been trained at the Theological Hall, 12% in the School of Ministry, 17% in Community Based Ministry Training (CBMT) and 33% in the Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership (KCML).⁷ In addition, a small number had been trained in other denominational leadership or ordination programmes prior to this training in Presbytery ministry such as at Bible College, renamed Laidlaw College Auckland, overseas and one at St Johns College, Auckland.⁸

⁷ Included in the 33% who completed their training in the KCML programme are some women who started in CBMT.

⁸ Further comments on the challenges and benefits of the different models of training will be differentiated.

THE BENEFITS CHALLENGES AND SUPPORT FOR WOMEN TRAINING IN THE DIFFERENT MODELS

THEOLOGICAL HALL_

BENEFITS OF THIS MODEL OF TRAINING

The main benefits given for this model were two-fold. The first was having the collegiality, friendship, support and mentoring of other female students and of female teachers. The second was the opportunity to study in an academic environment with some very able students and staff to accomplish their goals of graduating as ordained ministers. The love of study was also very clear.

The benefits were simply those of any student –the opportunity to study subjects I loved and that challenged me and helped me grow.

It was great to study with other students and work within a close-knit community of students and teachers. Being in Dunedin expanded my worldview and build collegiality with other future prospect ministers.

It was neat to have other female/women students that I could talk to, be with, support and understanding. Some things just women can usually relate to that doesn't need explaining or interpretation.

Really appreciated the mix of academic and ministry training where one fed into the other. The support of the one woman staff member was very significant.⁹

Outstanding teaching, wonderful mentors, development of critical thinking, research abilities, opening up of theological vistas and personal abilities that could never have been imagined. And, every bit as important as the study, a community of colleagues (including a large number of women) who have become some of my closest friends and companions.

I was pleasantly surprised to be treated with equity and respect during my theological training. I really enjoyed my studies at Otago University and the Theological Hall. I embraced it with an openness and enthusiasm, unsure what to expect, because rumours of trouble at the Hall were rife at that time, but for me it was a very affirming, meaningful experience.

⁹ The appreciation for this woman has been included through a number of responses in this question and others.

CHALLENGES OF THIS MODEL OF TRAINING

Although there was a sense that women were “*treated with dignity and respect*” four women felt challenged by what they saw as different treatment of the male students and that some gender issues were becoming apparent.

I remember my first year being very lonely and unhappy at times. It was hard being around all those men all the time! It got easier in my second year onwards with friendships formed and then getting married. There was quite a movement of Christian Feminists when I trained at the Hall. I never quite felt I shared the same passion as them, but I certainly agreed with the issues they were raising around inclusive language, ways of reading scripture, and the equal ministry we have in the church etc. There was still debate in the church (and amongst some colleagues at the Hall) about whether women should be ordained for ministry which made for discomfort and self-doubt at times.

I enjoyed my time at the Theological Hall. Some men were a bit dismissive of me, but I never let it worry me.

There were some “negative” vibes from some of the male students in terms of ‘body language’, ‘dialogue/discussions in pastoral groups’, a touch of slight chauvinism from some, but not by any means intense.

CASE 1

I did face challenges from other evangelicals and even from my own mother, for whom the ministry was seen as a male domain. After one year at Knox the evangelical classmate who had years before said to me that “God did not call women” told me he had changed his mind and we laugh about it now. I do not recall any problems with the teachers/professors at Knox. If anything, they made allowances to make my journey easier. One other woman in my year was of similar age and background, and post-ordination we both spent significant time out of formal ministry roles, though for different reasons. Decades after our training this colleague revealed to me that she had had struggles at Knox and that the professors had made allowances for her in a variety of ways. I was totally unaware of this at the time and am not sure if this accommodation would have been offered if she was a man? Later – in the eighties - women ordinands at Knox faced open opposition. Gender discourse became more polarised, attitudes were more entrenched and at times insults were traded. Some male graduates began to make their opposition clear by refusing to participate in the ordination (= validation) of women; the General Assembly considered this a serious breach and passed a special regulation to ensure it never happened again. When candidates for ordination are recruited by the National Assessment workgroup today, one of the two required assents is one about participating in the ordination of women.

Being single or having a young family were both cited as providing challenges in this model of training.

Initial entry was the main challenge – being accepted as a candidate because I had a very young family. The fact was that I had excellent extended family support directly on hand.

There were some problems of our own making. I tried to make things work firstly for my husband and then for my children. The staff looked at me funnily and didn't appreciate that I asked questions about possibilities for my continuing study (with these outside responsibilities) but in the end, I had to apply for an outside course from an external pastor. Actually, they had oversold the amount of time required for that course. It was quite hurtful and difficult. The initial issue seemed to be my questioning.

I felt hugely privileged to have the opportunity for further theological education – to be full time as a student with access to a library and excellent teachers. I experienced the richness and challenges of being part of a multicultural theological college. Being an older single woman living on site was lonely at times.

HELPFUL SUPPORT DURING THEOLOGICAL HALL TRAINING

Most answers reported multiple individuals, fellow students and staff, lay and ordained people who gave support through the training period and family members. There was evidence of high levels of family support, in particular of a husband when training.

My Family.

My husband, my spiritual director, the staff, students and field work mentors.

Family support – training with my husband was very helpful for bouncing off ideas and concerns. I found the lecturers to be very supportive and inspiring. Some ministers I had worked with during training were a great support.

My husband was probably my biggest support.

My parents provided the support we needed by looking after the children. The lecturers at Knox were very supportive they were always helping us out. Some of the lecturers worked with me one on one. CPE was the most rewarding opportunity I have ever had It was such a healing process. Because we lived there on the complex, it was the centre of help.

Both individual staff members and administrative staff at the Hall were regarded as very supportive of students. There was evidence of a wide range of support.

I found supervision extremely important.

The great community of the theological hall - students and staff. The wonderful, rigorous education. I also had good supervision.

The support of [the female staff member at the time] was crucial, but I was fortunate in the support of most staff throughout. Also, the support of fellow students, which was a benefit of training at the Hall.

The interest and practical support given by APW to women in training came from local parishes and in one case by an APW group in Christchurch.

Support was made manifest in many ways and for that I will always be grateful. The wonderful support of APW, the women of the Church- nationwide, who provided us students (when in Knox) with parcels prepared and sent with love and prayers, were received with gratitude at a time when needed.

Some individual lecturers were really helpful and eventually we felt accepted in a local church. We also remember fondly the support from APW –the visits armed with produce from outlying parishes. Also key, were the summer training experiences where the people of a parish were so welcoming, encouraging and challenging.

A range of support came from ministers and parishes with whom they came in contact through a summer training course, a retreat, as a supervisor or a field work mentor. A recurring theme was the support of a network of women ordinands.

CASE 2

My support in ministry came from

Prayers and support of home parishes.

Pastoral support from members of teaching staff at times of pressure, bereavement, exams, guidance, encouragement.

Pastoral support from administrative staff, helpful, pastoral and informative at the Theological Hall.

Support from our own circle of classmates, and from spouses of classmates, a conversation, and mentoring and support from the students who were at the Hall before us. Much appreciated.

Groups within the Hall environment, provided friendship, support in different ways (e.g. members of our Maori and Pacific Islanders Student Association (MAPISA) Also pastoral groups that met on a regular basis.

Support and help from the parishes/parishioners of which we were a part, during our time in Dunedin.

Some of us were fortunate to have family in Dunedin. They were helpful and supportive.

As mentioned before, we received support from certain staff members. 131

In contrast however, three women reported that they experienced little support including little spiritual support during training. See two comments below:

There was very little spiritual support, e.g. prayer, bible study, formation, so it was a dry period compared with earlier stages of my student life. (But I didn't lose my faith...) My church provided worship and teaching, and an APW prayed for me and sent gifts.

I have never been supported by the Presbyterian church. The Presbyterian church is traditional and does not value emotional intelligence. What is valued is the power of the thinking mind. But that is not an either-or situation. We need to be emotionally rich in all forms: not just in the cognitive aspects. Participation tends to be patriarchal and to shy away from emotional stuff. They feel safer in theological knowledge and in governing bodies. It is focused on law and order and rules. I like an organisation that is compassionate in its structure.

SCHOOL OF MINISTRY

The comments on the benefits of training at The School of Ministry reflected general satisfaction with the programme. Firstly because of the opportunity to be part of a group they got to know well and which over the two years exposed them to two other groups of students: those before them and after them. Secondly a strong benefit was having both female students and some female lecturers and that both the standard of the lectures and of the support given was appreciated.

On the whole, we had a highly beneficial experience at the SOM. We had one woman as a lecturer and although our theology may be a little different she was an excellent teacher and we all benefitted from her thorough training. The opportunity to do CPE was also highly beneficial as were the several placement models in vogue at the time and the regular group context in which we learned. I felt I was on the whole trained well for the model of the time and it was not difficult being a woman in this context. There were several other women training with me and we were quite varied in our theology but it wasn't an issue as all of us including staff were respectful and tolerant.

Living in our own home for the residential course at the School of Ministry was very easy. I appreciated the relationships developed in my own year and with the years before and after, and the extended opportunities for conversation, encouragement, interaction, support.

The only challenge reported was a personal difficulty of not having prior competencies and experiences acknowledged.

HELPFUL SUPPORT DURING TRAINING IN THE SCHOOL OF MINISTRY PROGRAMME

The most frequently reported source of support came from fellow ordinands. A range of support was from female ministers, lecturers, a support person and the Mission enabler. In addition, two of the four reported that support for them was from older male ministers in the city, and from one of the new presbyteries which currently organises lunch meetings for women ministers.

Meeting female ministers/fellow trainees. I had never met a woman minister before I was accepted at National Assessment. I told my minister this and she and another minister organised a women ministers' lunch for me. Best idea ever! For me, being given opportunities to work through issues like of confidence, have been really good. Having a woman as a lecturer and later getting to know another and have conversations with them were really valuable. Also, certain men in the course encouraging me by telling me I could do things I was unsure of and giving me positive labels in a class exercise.

COMMUNITY BASED MINISTRY TRAINING

BENEFITS

The opportunity to remain at home and not disrupt families was the most cited benefit of this model. This provided stability for younger family members and for those providing the main family income. The second major benefit with the CBMT model, was the integration of practice and reflection. The "on the job training" was seen as a good model and kept the students grounded.

I was able to remain in my employment and with my family which made training possible for me as I am married to a Presbyterian Minister who at that time was based in rural Parish Ministry.

I was lucky that there were a couple of other recent or current CBMT students who I knew, otherwise it could have been a bit isolated. Having the support team in the parish was very helpful.

It was a way to keep you really grounded. I was bringing up children at this time. I had my feet on the ground in a parish for assignments. It was a good model. Occasionally I felt dislocated. Having both a supervisor and a parish minister sometimes did not work well.

The professionalism and the analysis which was required throughout the programme was backed by academic support and advice and was highly praised for both the internal and external courses. There was also high praise for two of the lecturers and some external courses.

Looking back, two lecturers' inputs were excellent. I had done the academic stuff. With her we did the systems theory and with him we did transition theory – the best training I have ever had.

In addition, the support of their own parish was an important benefit. This was most clear for those women who were practising in a rural environment or in sole charge.

There was a collegial foundation and relationships were shaped. It doesn't happen as much with block courses. In remote areas, you can't catch up with other ministers for coffee. For me there is only one other minister in town. In that situation, you may or may not have support. [Traditionally] sole charge was the expectation but it is not sustainable. I need to make sure there is a team here. I need a team around me such as another part time minister or my sanity would decline slowly.

There were no recorded challenges.

HELPFUL SUPPORT DURING TRAINING DURING THE CBMT PROGRAMME

Half of the women who answered this question had a range of support including, friends, supervisor, CPE supervisor and academic staff. Another reported that there was a range of supervision throughout the two-year academic programme and placements, and different issues required different input.

Professionally through leadership with good challenging things to discuss and learn. They brought in techniques and ways of analysing what we were doing. There was good academic support as well and advice.

We had an exegesis group started with a small group of ministers with a different range of experience. I was the only woman. Everyone found this group quite useful. An ecumenical group was not helpful. Later I was in a very supportive group and there were one or two people I could have good conversations with. It was a pretty senior group of women ministers and lay people I could "sound off" to.

THE KNOX CENTRE FOR MINISTRY AND LEADERSHIP

There were several benefits reported in this programme. Firstly, that it had a more multicultural intake and that there were block courses rather than the necessity of moving a whole family to Dunedin, which as with the CBMT programme which preceded, appeared to make it easier for a more diverse group of women to participate.

I couldn't have trained under any model aside from this as we couldn't have moved to Dunedin to do in-house training without leaving my family for two years – so I really appreciated this model being available in my time of calling.

I was able to live at home and keep family situation stable, and income stream of partner's work maintained, rather than going (again) to Dunedin for two years

(which we did when my husband trained.) Also, I preferred the integration of practice as it is better for mature ordinands, rather than being treated as a 'student' in a classroom.

Several women reported that they were treated no differently from men, there were no barriers and they were treated kindly. The Asian women also reported that their opinion and cultural experiences were valued. For the Pacific women, this was reported as a contrast to how they were treated in their own cultural setting.

I was recognised equally if not more so. I reaped the benefits of balancing the intake/contributions. At KCML I got more attention because I was the first of my ethnic group. They were encouraging and welcoming. I was no longer the invisible person in the back row. I would never dream of getting this in my own context. I had a voice to be heard and was often asked for an opinion. I don't have a mild way of saying things and those (men) who treasure the culture don't like that. Some form of civility had to be ordered. There was no barrier for me at KCML because of the different cultures.

CHALLENGES

The challenge of being treated differently with different expectations for women in learning and formal situations had been a challenge. For example:

I found it difficult to speak into conversations at block courses. Partly the technique of being heard over loud male voices and partly the lack of confidence in the formal language of theology. On the good side, I had fantastic conversations with many on the course even though our theology was often quite different. I did find that being a woman meant less debate and more listening to what was for them new ideas. I did find out that at larger gatherings e.g. Presbytery I was often left out of conversations with male ministers – never sure if it was because I was a woman, came from North of my parish, or of a more open theological approach. I was intrigued by the continuing push to align me with women supervisors, mentors and groups to make up for no women being on the staff. It was not necessary – I found it more important that there be personalities with empathy, listening skills and heart approaches: and there were.

Another was the misunderstanding of the role of a husband when it is the wife who is in training, as well as issues around the focus put on the role as a mother rather than on the role of a student.

Leaving home and flying to Dunedin was the hard part. We had just had our new child. The easy part was the acceptance of me as a woman. I felt like one of the crowd. Other ministers asked my husband "how did that feel?" (to marry a minister). He said "she is my wife who has been gifted with a call from God. It doesn't say who she is. I am married to my wife which doesn't diminish me in any way".

The challenge was that every part of the process focused on my ability to fulfil my role as a mother way more heavily than my male colleagues' ability to fulfil their role as a father. There was much criticism and comment that my husband didn't support me by regularly attending my Sunday worship services. It was irrelevant to those in the programme and my mentoring minister that while I was leading worship in one place on Sunday my husband was working for the church at the same time. I felt it was also unfair as at no time did anyone talk to him to outline the expectations they had of him. The definition of support did not take into account that he became the go to person for our children, he became the primary cook and bottle washer as he released me to focus upon the internship.

A challenge which had also been raised with regard to the earlier two programmes was the difficulties of catering in block courses for both those who had a high level of experience either academically or in leadership, lecturing, management; versus others with less experience. The following two answers illustrate the diversity.

There was a challenge whilst in Block Course, where it felt like with some of the teaching we were sitting under a 'jug-to-mug' way of learning, and I got pretty frustrated being taught how to suck eggs, continuously. It wasn't that I didn't need to learn, but much of the content I had encountered (or taught) before. I also found being supervised and advised by a younger man was a challenge at times, but we worked it out.

[My difficulty was] my lack of knowledge of study structures and I was in a foreign environment and culture.

The integration of practice, experience and reflection and the presence of a female lecturer were highly beneficial to the experiences of these women. However, there were some experiences which were not as positive such as difficulties in placement and instances where presentation and tutor competency were seen as problematic. Both issues are illustrated in the following Case.

CASE 3

There were some challenges for me with a mentor minister. In my first context, my relationship with my mentor minister became strained and confining as he was unable to acknowledge leadership style issues of control. He had a tendency to be paternalistic with me, calling me 'gal', and giving me 'supporting role' opportunities – I held the book for him while he baptised the baby, for example. There was an unspoken assumption that I would learn by watching him, rather than by doing, even less by doing it differently. Would this have been any different had I not been a woman? Maybe. In this instance, I felt that there was too much space between the good intentions of the contract between

KCML and the parish, and the reality of the relationships working. In my second parish, however, I experienced the opposite as I was supported, encouraged, given permission to explore, create and learn within a circle of reflective support. This was a huge benefit! My mentor minister was skilled, trusting and empowering, encouraging me to find my own style and rhythm, and regarding me as his colleague and equal.

At the block courses, in group discussion it was a challenge to find balance. When there was poor facilitation in a group process, there was often no space for listening to diverse opinions or allowing for a different reality than the prevailing norm. There was also a general expectation that we would learn by listening, because our lecturers were the 'experts' and we had little to offer the learning encounter. We had one session on feminist theology and inclusive language, which ended up giving the impression that language makes no real difference, and that feminist theology is a historical movement that has had its day.

HELPFUL SUPPORT DURING TRAINING IN THE KCML PROGRAMME

This group had a wider and more diverse source of support from the previous three programmes, appeared to be less focused on the reliance on other women and included the support available from parish placements.

There was so much support but what I found particularly helpful was the fortnightly supervision, support from my Tutor and support from those who I went through with, we became a tight group.

Support from KCML has been great together with the mentoring ministers and parishes where I was placed.

When I finally did decide to move forward with ordained ministry, my husband and children were 100% behind me all the time and the whole way. Each block course in Dunedin, the female lecturer opened her house to the women one evening for dinner, sharing stories and prayer. This was begun a year or two before I trained for when there were only two women in the programme amidst a group of forthright men. It was helpful not because it was for women only, but because it was the only time when we spoke freely about what God had been doing, how we were doing, what challenges we faced. And it was the only time we prayed together without worrying about having the correct theological overtones etc. My mentor minister from my second placement was and is hugely supportive. My year group of interns and some folk from the year before me grew to be mutually supportive over my training years.

We were given a church each Sunday to preach at, sometimes twice or three times, including a Bible study or kids programme, so spent the day with the congregation often, 'up the valleys'. They were very encouraging to us students, and we all greatly enjoyed this time of preaching and practical parish work during the weekends, away from the intensive academic and college work.

Family and friends. Colleagues in established denominations.

Their most valued support from other ordinands, supervisors and mentoring ministers was rated equally. Other sources of support were family members including husbands, tutors, parish placements and lecturers. Only two specified other women, one of whom has specifically been mentioned in previous groups for the care and encouragement given by her.

I was one of three women in my class of six and so being a woman was never really an issue. In some ways, I was a novelty; a single young woman (then early 20s) training for ministry. This meant I was given opportunities I perhaps wouldn't have sought out otherwise. I was asked to speak at different events and to share my views on things. Though this was a real blessing it was also frustrating at times because sometimes I didn't think that I had anything useful to say or that I had formed my views yet, or that my perspective as a young woman actually wasn't what was needed. During my time at KCML a female lecturer would get the women together for dinner and we would talk about things which was good.

Ministry pathways since training completed

Of the 43 replies which included information on full or part time employment and the financial remuneration, all except nine ministers had had full time employment at some stage of their career in ministry. Some who were job sharing with a husband started on shared full pay which increased to 1.5 salary. For others, the life stage they were at, or family circumstances, determined the amount of paid employment. In other cases, a full-time position reduced when the congregation could no longer afford to pay a full-time salary. Geographical changes with calls throughout New Zealand were common and changes from major cities to rural areas or vice versa often followed changes in family circumstances. There has been no common pathway through careers as so many decisions have depended on individual family commitments and vacancies. Some ministers have been long periods of time in each position, through their career and others have had transition situations, and short-term positions as well as longer terms. There is no clear and 'normal' pattern.

Some career pathways changed; moving from parish ministry to chaplaincy or from a considered choice to work voluntarily for some period of time.

A number of the women had moved from parish ministry to other- recognised- ministries or specialist ministries; some of which are not currently recognised by the PCANZ and the connection with the national church is tenuous.

An example of wife /husband shared:

Half of one stipend for 11 years

One and a half stipend for 12 years

One stipend for 2 ½ years

An example of sole person ministry

2/3 ministry 4 years

Full time 1 year

Full time 6 years

An example with a young family

Assistant 10-12 hours week while children were young

Stated supply then sole charge 2/3 for 8 years

Full time 7 years.

OPENINGS AND BARRIERS WHEN AVAILABLE FOR CALL.

Almost a quarter of the ministers reported no awareness of any problems when they became available for a call, and recognised the opportunities which arose with the newer training programmes which exposed candidates in training to several parishes. In addition, the mentoring of ministers by the Introduction Work Group has been seen as a successful process.

A similar number of answers to this question have focused on the barriers to a call but individually many include evidence of openings as well, sometime within a situation which has been stressful.

Barriers have been more that of me not feeling able to apply for some jobs and waiting to be asked which has actually worked well. The church I am in currently is the first I have applied for and been part of a multi-person interview process. Still I am aware that I have never been encouraged to try for the big jobs; senior minister of a large parish for example.

Most of the initial placements or changes were the result of support or an approach by a parish nominator.

I took opportunities such as the chaplaincy when a long-time chaplain retired and the job was advertised for the second time. Hadn't thought to move from my first position. After eight years in the initial chaplaincy I was approached by the nominator of a parish. Similarly, with my move to another area. I didn't experience any barriers at all.

Head Office – contacted us about a yoked parish early 1990s. Two parishes, two Parish Councils – Shared ministry between my husband and I. We travelled and met with both parishes and both parish councils, preached, and were offered a call in 1991 which we accepted.

Being single at the time of ordination possibly could have worked for or against me, depending on the parish. However, both my first two parishes were brave enough to try. When I was finished training, and preparing for ordination in my first parish the process was one of wise matching from the introduction work group. (part of the Ministry Committee?) We were interviewed each of us as exiting students and were in touch with Interim Moderators so new ministers and 'vacant' parishes were relatively easily partnered, through that process at that time.

They sent my student profile. We prayed about it and talked with the family. The children thought we would be going back to our original home and struggled with that. One child gave us big time hassles.

I don't really know. At the beginning the Presbytery worked behind the scenes. I was funded for two years to see if I could rescue a failing church.

A second pathway was the move from a LOM to a NOM in the same parish or came from a placement in a parish prior to a call to permanent ministry. Some of these processes took time to conclude with the right position.

I had very young children at the time I graduated. I was licensed but asked for a year's leave. Then I took on various part-time roles but it was almost 4 years before I got a call. I did preach for call early in that period but I felt the vote wasn't strong enough. Unofficially I think it was a mixture of being married to a man of different faith and some gender aspects. I received a positive call to a parish after doing a summer supply there. A woman colleague was interim moderator and she suggested me for the summer supply.

My husband and I were clear that I was training for National Ordained Ministry and was available to be called anywhere. As it turned out, I was appointed by a congregation where I had spent three months on a field education placement.

I had returned to where I was a lay pastor at the Union Church for 2 years and heard that both churches were looking for a minister. They were very happy that I had applied and welcomed me with open arms. There were no barriers that I am aware of in fact Presbytery was overjoyed that I had applied.

I am not sure whether a part time position was all that was available because I was a woman or because I was recently divorced or for no particular reason.

I did an internship in my own church and so was already highly involved in that.

However, there were comments within some answers which indicated that even though some women did not overtly experience barriers, they were aware that there were problems which sometimes they were explicitly told about and at other times overheard.

I think there was still some feeling around that people preferred to have a male minister than a female one, and I gather this had been the case at my first parish prior to my arrival. However, they accepted me as their minister with enthusiasm.

There were definite experiences in the nineties of not even being considered for ministry jobs, or of being considered but then turned down, because of gender. I was grateful to one Board of Nomination convenor who told me the truth about that; the Session Clerk of the church had threatened to resign if they called a woman. It clarified that the deficit was not one I had any control over. Later, after some years at this church we started getting new immigrants from South Africa in the congregation, and twice males expressed concern, in writing, to the elders that we had a woman

minister. And once at a pastors' gathering I was asked by one of the men to refill the coffee!

The barriers experienced or acknowledged for not considering calling a woman to a position were varied. One, because of supposed female characteristics, two because the nominating committee *wanted a change* as they had already had a woman minister and others where elements of the church (both women and men) did not believe that there should be women in ministry positions.

Technically, there were no barriers. Some parishes looked at us and couldn't handle the "different" situation. For example, voicing questions about how they might cope without a "minister's wife". Some would state they could cope with me being ordained because I was "under my husband's covering". Changing to full time involved some interesting questions from a few about being an "emotional female".

The initial challenge for the parish was in accepting a newly trained minister, who was a woman and hadn't changed her name when she married.

In the two years of my internship, both of the parishes where I was training were going through the calling process, and I felt dismayed at the number of parishioners who would talk right in front of me about "when the new minister comes, he'll..." and the oft voiced hope for a young man with a family to take the call. And these folks were not unappreciative of my gifts for ministry, they were just formed into a certain expectation and not aware of their own blind spots.

Confirmation of my call to this parish took four months because they were openly wanting a male minister after 20 years of a woman as minister. Ultimately the leadership discerned God's call to me in the process.

There were three men in the congregation who couldn't cope with women being in ministry when I was called and leading up to that. One confronted me and said he had a real problem with me being minister. I told him it was a bigger problem for me as well as I had always thought it was men who were the ministers when I was brought up. These two are very supportive of me now. The third asked me to Bless him when he left! I knew God had called me but it didn't seem right.

For Pacific women, this latter reason is a very strong barrier and has not resulted in a call to a Pacific Island church for any Pacific woman. There have not been barriers to being called to non-Pacific churches but this has taken real adjustment for the women ministers themselves. There were doubts expressed that the adjustment for another minister for herself, for her family and for any prospective parish, might have been difficult

When I was called by this Presbyterian Church I was quite surprised that they had opened to accept me as the first woman and Pacific Islander as their minister. This was

a huge challenge for me as the church had a highly academic membership. This was a good solid nesting ground for me. A position in the Pacific Island Church was advertised and I had applied. I was short listed from 21 applicants and my name was recommended by the Nomination Board to the session where they denied and rejected me simply because I am a woman.

Can I do this because I am a woman and one of the first women ministers [from my ethnic group] in the PCANZ? Will my family fit into this environment, culture and people? It is a different ethnicity of people. Will they understand me and vice versa?

CASE 4

Clearly, I am a young-looking woman – that is a barrier to most. I do come from a church background, but they don't ordain women – so it was a bit weird getting into ministry. Telling the wider family was not difficult but it was not a serious thing for them. My family were not opposing, but they weren't excited and supportive either. There was no genuine encouragement or support. There were a lot of vacancies in Auckland, so that was good, but some churches did not want a Pacific Island Minister (desire of Pacific Island members). So even though I was available for any call to ministry, my colour, gender and culture was always going to be a barrier. I was not fluent in Western culture, so that was also a barrier. My time in my home church helped me learn a lot about Kiwi Western culture. Wanting to grow in my understanding of Western culture, I started going to every gathering at my church of worship to make me more comfortable. I think we tend to stick to our own culture and therefore lack awareness or learning of other cultures. At first, these gatherings made me feel uncomfortable. In my culture when we eat, we eat, but the Western culture, we meet for lunch so we can talk. I had to negotiate my way through this eating and talking thing. Most times, I just stop eating all together so I can talk. When we have a prayer meeting in my culture, everyone is given the prayer topics and they all pray at once – very noisy. But in Western culture, one person prays while the rest listens, and they take turns – so it is less noisy. This was a very uncomfortable situation for me for many years. I would often avoid prayer meeting for that reason. Those, are examples of some of the differences. Now in ministry, I had to step out of my comfort zone. And I'm trying to help our young people be familiar with ministry so they don't suffer what I went through.

In this traditional church, people were reluctant to come forward to do anything. They all believe that the front of the Church is for the minister. There are a lot of Samoans here and they too would have this traditional understanding of church. I have tried to free them from this cultural assumption by getting the youth involved in worship on Sundays. For example; they were reluctant to do any of the prayers when I asked them. So, I wrote the prayers and asked them if they can do the prayers from the script, and they say 'yes'. Now they are on board, they are confident and can step up on Sundays to help lead the service. So, when I am on holiday now, they can do the

whole thing and keep the Church going. From my prior history with kids. I can identify voicing their opinion. I am sensitive towards them and have a passion to see them express their views as much as they can. So, I can spot young people from broken background and am always drawn to them, hoping to help them in some way. One of the things that my Presbyterian church liked about my application, was my ministry experience with children and youth. They had the potential to have a thriving children & youth ministry and were excited that I applied. My experience and my youthfulness created an opening in some way.

As well, individual difficulties were experienced for two ministers, both from Korea, who felt they were not given a chance because of their cultural background.

I'm a single migrant woman. For some churches, Korean/singleness/ a woman could be big barriers. However, I was equipped and ready to serve a multicultural church, having knowledge and experiences on migrants' life and multi-cultural church.

My Korean ethnicity, culture and gender have been great barriers to being called. Parishes seemed afraid of calling me as their minister and wouldn't give me a chance to see me as a person who has been trained as a nationally ordained minister. Invisible prejudice and presumptions are still prevailed.

Personal family circumstances sometimes proved to be barriers for placements such as needing to be in a particular place for the care of elderly parents; husband's commitment to his workplace or having a high needs child. For those women whose husband was also a minister there were additional issues that needed to be dealt with.

My biggest barrier was being married to a minister already in a parish in a small rural town where the next closest church was a good 30 minutes' drive away. However, it didn't become too big a barrier as the partner churches were keen to work with the Presbyterian Church to find a way through to ordination alongside my husband.

Any barriers have been self-imposed. I was strongly advised by the Personnel Workgroup at the Hall not to go into shared ministry with my husband but to pursue my own ministry career path, however I chose to work in a part time capacity in team ministry with him because I was aware of the benefits of that for us, for our family and for a church community. We brought very different strengths to the task which complimented each other's ministry – and it was fun!

There were no openings for me. I felt helpless as I neared the end of my training as it seemed no one knew what to do with a wife of a minister who was also a minister.

With my husband working in a major city, I was limited geographically in the areas I could work. A positive situation was that I didn't have to work full time and had flexibility because of my husband's income. One of the churches could have paid to have me there. Then I got head hunted.

Other barriers were given as marital status, being newly trained or because of theological differences.

I had a very brief conversation with another church in the North Island who claimed that I didn't seem to have a clear theology, but on further investigation the actual reality was that they didn't like my more liberal theology. I was called to the place where I had been an intern so we both knew what we were getting in each other. I do know from talking to others that it seems to be much harder for women to be approached by MSB's that churches still long for a man in his 30's with a wife and children.

An example of one minister's experience was:

I have noticed that at Presbytery there are fewer women ministers so at Presbytery meetings there is a solid block of men. It feels quite uncomfortable. When I was ministering in a Methodist church there was a predominance of women. The Methodists are much more co-operative rather than looking for someone who is the leader they can look up to. Only if men decline to do something, do the Presbyterians look for a woman. They don't ask (a woman) until they have exhausted other options. However, in crisis situations men have come to me because they have trusted me and see me in a different light. We don't have the authority and power that oozes out of the men. We tend to have a gentler approach and listen more. For example, when leading a Presbyterian gathering and talking about leadership the ministers went off with the male to lead them. This is how it all relates in our situation.

PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH DETERMINED THE TRACK FOLLOWED DURING A CAREER.

The majority of women described personal circumstances which affected their career pathways. Changing health or marital status, the age of children or other family members and financial circumstances were determining factors. For some women who were, or now are single, the flexibility they had, allowed them to choose placements which would previously not been possible, or to pursue extra study; but for others there was added stress from being the sole breadwinner.

As a single woman whose children have grown and left home, I have been able to make what to some might be risky ministry decisions, such as taking on transition ministry and moving to take up career options. I am also able to deal with gaps in paid employment/homelessness due to my singleness and years of uncertain income in previous situations, which has taught me to always have a 'slush fund'.

I have generally good circumstances to do ministry; free to go and do. My singleness (or being a woman) has lead me to consider 'safety' in terms of an accommodation and work environment.

Because I am single (widowed) I have been free to minister in different places. I don't think my personal circumstances have constrained me, perhaps the opposite.

My husband had to stop working when the youngest was starting school and I realised I had to become the sole earner. It was a God moment because all that I had been doing came together. I had not been focused on parish ministry and community but all these took me into that role when my husband became ill.

The major factor for women who were married was the consideration of employment requirements for their husband.

My husband works in a main city and so geographically this has until now, meant I have needed to be here. Also, my elderly parents are here as well.

My initial resistance to my sense of call was very much about my personal circumstances. I felt protective of my children, and my husband's travel with a heavy work schedule meant that I was often solo parenting. I didn't want my children to come second to my call, although obviously my sense of call came second to my husband's career. From the beginning, I had a sense of myself as a package deal, and my bargaining phase was very much about limiting the impact on my family but still engaging in ministry. My own theory is that in a patriarchal system, women tend to be more relational in their sense of identity than men are, so the sense of interdependence and inter-connectedness is a factor in discerning for women in a way that it does not seem to be so much the case for men. There's also obviously a

cultural power imbalance that the Kingdom community does not seem to have got an alternative handle on/model for/practice of ministry.

I have become aware of this just recently. Personal circumstances in terms of seeking another call to ministry has made me think about my husband's work and children's education. I need to consider if there is suitable work for my husband and right schooling for children.

There were a number of women who ministered in partnership with their husband which constrained the opportunities for ministry placement, but which had been deliberately chosen for the benefits and pleasure of working together. Three husbands were in separate ministries of their own.

Being married to another PCANZ minister made it easier to transition to the next two new parishes while we were offering ourselves as a couple in ministry (which probably gave us the 'advantage' of being seen as 'two for the price of one'). In the time since then when I/we have been bringing up our children, I have 'officially' been in part time ministry – even if it hasn't always felt like that.

The fact that my husband is also a minister has complicated my pathway. Although we are open to anything, I am not sure that the wider church makes sense of our calling.

Being supported by their husband's income reduced a few ministers' ability to be mobile and others had husbands who could relocate. The latter required consideration for the next position.

I've been fortunate to have been able to be at home full-time and then work part-time when the children were very young and also to have been able to step away from parish ministry when I did, because of my husband's income. Others don't have that luxury. I enjoyed working in team ministry with two different colleagues, but in the same parish. I believe that sole-charge parish ministry is now an outdated and unsafe model for our church to be using. I will not be going back into parish ministry unless it is a team ministry situation and, preferably, part-time. I am however clear that God is calling me to be part of a new way of being church. I have initiated a small 'home church' which meets in our and others homes, with those like me who are fed up with traditional congregational structures and practices or who still have just one foot tentatively still in the church. I continue to discern with some excitement, with others, what the next steps might be.

My husband and family followed me to train and then into a non-traditional ministry position which was a good fit for all of us. Later on, the opportunity to serve a wider congregation came up and I was glad to take it but I effectively went from being in charge of an innovative ministry to being in an associate role. Although I learned a

lot in this position, I wanted to be able to express more of my own style of ministry and leadership and there was a ceiling to this. My husband had continued to build his career path around mine and we both made sacrifices for this for several years. But in the end, it was difficult for him to find a suitable job that worked in with mine and I wanted to take more time off and be free to attend family events. In the end I resigned believing that more ways to serve would open up as I stepped out and we determined to trust God for the future. So yes, my personal circumstances have somewhat determined this latest turning point in my ministerial journey.

My husband was where I was as he had resigned from ministry. I kept going.

When there was an illness, accident or death of a husband this was likely to bring a major change: for example, going from a shared ministry to sole charge or relocating to a different area,

My husband had retired from his business after an accident and it was my turn to become the breadwinner. I was half way through my Bachelor of Ministry degree when he stopped work so it was pretty hard going until I graduated and we moved to a ministry position.

Having young children often determined the response to a call.

I think there are fewer opportunities and less recognition for those in part time employment. Having several children has had a significant impact –wanting to retain stability and being less available at times.

I was single when I started training for ministry, married with small children when I graduated so that slowed down my pathway into fulltime ordained ministry. The 'slow down' created opportunities for a wider experience of supply, teaching, and committee work, than I might have had otherwise. Family commitments and the need to make a living meant that I did not pursue a tertiary teaching career which I would quite like to have done. However, as it turned out 'teacher-chaplain' was ideal. At the other end of my career, a move back to Dunedin and semi-retirement, opened up writing opportunities especially in curriculum resources for the Presbyterian Church School network. The move also took me back into pulpit supply and parish settings.

CASE 5

The church is welcoming to women but for me it is social class which is difficult. This church is quite affluent and I am a girl from an area where people struggle. I struggle with God asking him what a poor girl is doing here. I am working with so many churches here: the Salvation Army etc and yet we are not even scraping the harvest. I find social class the major issue. The whole town is broken up like that. There are now two pubs (were three) one for the working class and one for the

corporate managers. I am hoping to break down some barriers. I have been to talk to people but I couldn't go alone. I have asked my husband to go with me but it is in the too hard basket when there is inconsistency. I have asked elders to come but no one wanted to. So, this is all sitting in my back pocket (everything happens in God's good timing). I have been released from the Friday night youth activities so Friday nights are now a possibility. I do feel that this in an area where the church can minister in these very pubs where people congregate much more than coming to church. There seems to be a great divide in culture between these places and what is deemed to be THE CHURCH.

SATISFACTION FROM ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN MINISTRY

There were high levels of positivity in the experiences of being in ministry, and underpinning this was the satisfaction of being able to serve God and strengthening the faith through their position as ministers.

Seeing people stretch and grow in their faith.

I don't know that I have accomplished a lot, but what I do hope is that I have been able to share the Word of God, the love of God, His grace and mercy with those whom we have journeyed and are journeying with now, through my actions the way that I live my life to the best of my ability and to give God thanks and praise.

Teaching and preaching the word of God and ministering to those in need was a given. Some of the satisfaction came from looking back at how they began and where they were now in terms of confidence and efficacy. For others, the satisfaction related to the continuance of processes and practices which had been introduced and which remained after their exit from a position.

The most satisfaction came from three main areas. The first related to seeing the outcomes of deliberately equipping and empowering people into leadership roles. This was particularly the deliberate focus on young people and members of a congregation who had previously not taken any opportunities in the church. The satisfaction came from seeing growth in personal confidence and participation, and the move for some into full time ministry.

Establishing youth ministry though the wider area and in my own parish we employed a youth worker. I have been privileged to baptise a large number of young people as a result of this ministry.

[My satisfaction is that] I lead a successful ministry to students and grow them both spiritually and in mental and emotional health. I have empowered many people with a place to serve and find their unique contribution. We now have a significant counselling and prayer ministry that is benefitting many.

When people achieve their dreams and goals and grow into fantastic Christians who put back into the community that nurtured them.

Empowering young people to lead and contribute and setting up structures here to enable effective ministry. I have put processes in place and have been pushing people to lead from the front. Now they are very confident. The youth operate and use the computers in services and the hall users have said they really appreciate it.

Things like growing a team of people who could run the holiday programme. We trained kids to develop public speaking skills and personal development in leadership. The top end of the first group have finished university and those skills have helped

them secure employment. They have learned how to lead a small group or team and how to talk to others of their age group and to older adults.

I have done a lot with youth and kids and now they are becoming adults which is a nice connection. I have been a minister in communities for a while and for long periods of time and so have had time to see results because of being part of those communities.

In Assembly, I saw two rows of people coming through from youth ministry to ordination. I was always interested to see if we could plant seeds in a declining ministry. Yes, we do see signs of life. There are people coming through having a living faith to working together to share the Gospel in the community.

Alongside this was the satisfaction of personally growing in leadership abilities.

Preaching is my passion and it gives me great satisfaction. I have grown a great deal and am still growing as a leader. I have been through burn out and I am still here! I learnt a lot about myself during that time: what I could do and what I could not: what I was responsible for and what I was not. Completing my doctorate also gave me great satisfaction.

Just being here where I am now. I am amazed at where I have come from. I used to do Bible in Schools at an intermediate school where Bibles were given out to all students leaving. I was asked to give these out at assembly and I was fearful of speaking. Now I have the confidence to be comfortable about it. God took my insecurities and weak areas and pushed me.

The second area was the privilege of being involved in people's lives in celebratory or tragic or life challenging events and feeling that they have been able to support and provide hope to those needing it. This could be a life event or a faith journey.

On good days, I look at a whole range of things I do and feel satisfaction – pastoral care from grief work and funerals; journeys in relationships, working with children and general listening. All offering a presence that remembers God is at work. Preaching and teaching, writing resources and relationships formed and developed. There is a sense of being known for good in the local community.

The funerals I have done: on average 28 a year in my community. I have in-depth relationships with other people who may not be people in the church but those who have asked for me. It is a privilege to be involved in that time of their lives and to get to know them in depth.

There is no 'big' accomplishment but a series of very special memories and moments .

The third source of satisfaction was the opportunity to be creative and innovative in worship and through liturgies. The actual writing of liturgy was for several women a very satisfying part of their occupation and enabled them to connect with particular current situations or experiences.

Being creative and encouraging others' creativity in the church (creativity being defined with the widest understanding possible). Finding connections between the wider community and the church. Enthusiasing and empowering people especially when they have been feeling they are failures or bad fit with church and with God. Walking with God, deepening my faith, often despite the people in the church.

I've loved creating worship particularly worship which taps into people's senses and /or creativity and with the opportunity for them to participate. I have always loved working collaboratively with others on projects.

Watching parishes change from an inward focus and narrow theology to lively community involvement. With openness to new ideas and appreciation of sound contemporary theology.

Collaboration with my last worship committee with spectacular results. Writing creative liturgies including liturgies following the earthquakes. Encouragement of church members to participate in liturgies, drama, music festivals and to "take people with us".

Developing creative worship leadership with liturgical, theological and musical integrity.

Ministering as part of a multicultural team and modelling the way we understand the church to be. Leading inclusive worship and sometimes being creative as well.

I would say maintaining excellent family relations in the midst of busy parish life when some of my children were living at home. I suppose too I am surprised by how well I have negotiated the past years on my own. That has been quite an accomplishment. I have greatly enjoyed preparing liturgy for worship; reading and researching for it and preparing my sermons each week. People have spoken of how that has impacted and encouraged their own faith journey.

A number of individual areas of satisfaction included:

- enlarging a church to meet church growth and community outreach
- extended opportunities through a position of moderator,
- working collaboratively on projects,
- completing a doctorate,
- working cross culturally,

- teaching CRE in schools,
- setting up a kindergarten,
- maintaining family relationships in busy parish life,
- having the trust of Session,
- setting up distance education,
- changing the perception of women in ministry,
- managing change processes and church conflict,
- growing a team e.g. to run a holiday programme,
- setting up a community chaplaincy for people with intellectual disabilities and
- lowering the average age of the parish members.

Just to have survived, was seen as cause for satisfaction. One added that she was actually thriving now and one commented that she had built a team and learned to live with her own limitations and failures.

[I am] surviving and in fact thriving. I think in terms of relationships with people of all different kinds and nurturing a relationship building culture. In the Far North that is perhaps epitomised in friendship with iwi and hapu in the wider area.

I am surviving the craziness that ministry is. Being available to help with church conflict and managing change processes.

Two further perspectives were different from any of the other answers. The first was satisfaction from working with leaders to develop their spiritual leadership focusing on the difference between leading a church and being a spiritual leader. The second was simply that the church is still alive.

CHALLENGES IN ORDAINED MINISTRY

Almost all of the ministers identified challenges which were unrelated to personal characteristics and were widely situational and diverse. There was an awareness of an underlying congregational preference for having a male minister which has already been discussed under the section on the barriers to a call.

There were three main areas identified among the frequently multiple examples of challenge. The first relates to unhelpful behaviours such as intimidation by individual lay men, by older male ministers or by women in a congregation.

The ministry role is fraught with unexpected turns in the road, from funerals and hospital visits to unexpected opposition or resignation, to personal attacks and church dysfunction....I have faced some key challenges within the ministry team with a colleague's wife interfering in the professional side of ministry and with a male youth pastor who was somewhat incompetent and unaccountable. In both cases I would not be surprised if gender played into it, perhaps unconsciously.

Many! - learning first hand how to deal with issues of sexual misconduct of a previous minister, violent and abusive parishioners, elder fraud, building issues that ended up in the High Court (not my or the parish's fault).

I have been told by a couple of retired male ministers that they don't rate women ministers. That women ministers are there to fill the roles men don't want. I have experienced disrespect again from a retired male minister who was an Interim Moderator of a church I am working with who refuses to recognise I am a minister. Because I am not in a traditional parish role I can feel a bit like a fraud. I have had my calling affirmed and I know it makes a difference in the many contexts I find myself in. But still.....

I have had more problems with other women. They have usually had a history of being the "hand maiden" to men. Women who were born at the wrong time to become ordained e.g. have been the Clerk of Rolls. Then along came (me) a young woman and getting paid to be there. Others have had a close relationship attraction. I have experienced four women in one parish who made my job hard; one was married, one was a spinster another the senior secretary and one a buddy to a friend of the family.

CASE 6

Every so often men (mainly laymen) have tried to intimidate me, physically and verbally. Mostly I think I have stood up to them or used 'clever' methods to undermine their tactics. In a recent Parish Review incident, I realised I may not have noticed some bad behaviours as harassment because I am so used to it. I needed a younger person to point out what was happening was actually 'bullying'. My first parish was the worst

for personal bullying mainly because I was unsure of myself, however the lack of workers in a small Presbytery also gave me many opportunities that have never been repeated (e.g. Presbytery Moderator). Transition work has made me tougher (and smarter at handling situations) too. Once you've closed church buildings and congregations, questioned dodgy processes, etc a few times, the next time is much easier. The thing that continues to enrage me the most is 'not being heard' in meetings. For example, I will make a suggestion, bring up an issue etc. and it is ignored. Then shortly afterwards a male voice will say the same thing and be heard. This is not often the case in parish meetings any longer.

The second challenge was having to work with congregational members both male and female who are opposed to change. Changes of leadership style when a parish first called a woman as their minister often brought challenges from both men and women, usually the older members of a congregation who had prior to the appointment effectively been running the church. Some of this was related to change in general rather than being a gender issue.

Probably struggling with older male ministers who found it difficult to accept my pathway. Elders and managers who could not listen to, or accept, different understandings as they were living in the past and were too concerned with the church's finances rather than mission. I was the first woman minister the church had ever had and I think that underneath the surface, being a woman did not help these particular elders although with a careful process, a number became Emeritus.

[I had] one serious ambush by a retired male minister who moved into the congregation during my time in a parish and worked pretty hard to undermine my leadership – ultimately lobbying members of Session to get me to resign and presenting me with a three-page list of what was wrong with my leadership. I did not resign and my ministry went from strength to strength. However, it was gutting privately that someone would treat me like that. At the beginning of the conversation when he presented me with the list he said 'I don't want to damage your tender petals'! My experience in two other vocations has been that this type will emerge to challenge me. Every time it's gutting but it's more due to the toxic individual. I've had opposition from women too of course, but didn't experience their tactics as 'evil'.

Retired male executives embedded in parish leadership roles who indulge in power playing games, and fearful older women who feel threatened by change to their traditional roles. Some are older minister's wives - perhaps long frustrated because often their leadership and contribution went unrecognised?

I think it is a challenging call these days – parishes tend to expect things to stay the same but we tend to see a need for change. Not having any answers is OK for me, but hard for parishioners.

People opposed to change; Gate-keepers extraordinaire; A belief that we 'can't' challenge bad behaviour within the church because we're 'Christians'; Lack of money to resource vision / dreams.

Just the usual dynamics of congregations such as "this is the way you do it": when I want to implement changes.

I learned when I started here to note challenges and to move on. Usually when you are the first woman the parish has had, it takes about six months before they start to forget you are a woman. I was recently asked to take a funeral service of a man who had been in the army, but his wife didn't want a woman minister so I referred them on. The minister there rang and said he was inclined to say "No" because they didn't want you. I thanked him for affirming me, but did not agree to the service being held here because I am the minister in this church.

Thirdly, several answers showed that the women were aware of the need for self-care in managing their involvements, as both family and the demands of the parish were huge.

I think these are probably like any minister with a family – juggling life and being there for people whilst retaining a healthy lifestyle.

There are huge demands from the congregation with all the various functions and roles expected of you.

Self-care, self-care, self-care! This is such a multifaceted role where there is always more to do. If I don't take special care of myself, I will be no good to anyone. Two years in and I am just recovering from exhaustion, I was doing way too much. Now I need to learn how to better do ministry in a sustainable way.

In the first two years of ministry it was brilliant. I had no regional responsibility and so no need to make space for other commitments. My priority was to teach the Word. Now I try to prioritise.

It is one heck of a job. Very wearing and such a sense of responsibility. You are relentlessly preparing for services weekly and actually have to give up weekends and especially Easters. Later in Ministry I could organise one week off a term. I am often in my office alone when others are out having fun.

Energy levels, self-care taking regular days of and annual leave. Being a uniting church entails attending both Presbytery and Synod events. It is demanding timewise when only half time. Though now that monthly Presbytery meetings have been replaced with fewer frequent gatherings, that was less of an issue.

These latter issues were particularly related to those in co-operating parishes where the pressure to be involved in both denominations could be difficult to maintain.

We are a co-operating parish and can tap into both their resources. There is a fairly high expectation to relate to both denominations. There is a challenge in which functions I go to and I have to weigh my priorities. For example, with two inductions to go to in two weeks, I put one parish meeting to another date but I couldn't do this twice. All churches want their representation from their church. Attendance at some regional things is minimal. The amount of reviews, both church and personal, keep going on and on. I have been here five years and every year there seems to be one review or another.

In a small sized church, I have to be hands on for everything. I have to know how everything functions and everything that is going on. The Lord had me up and running before I was called.

In addition, further general challenges noted were:

- when the focus of the church is off ministry and teaching to a concentration on finance and management issues
- the aftermath of the Christchurch earthquakes brought considerable challenges for ministers in individual parishes
- people's over-identification with church buildings
- tight fisted treasurers
- [my] choice of music is often challenged, some elements of worship and my enthusiasm for multicultural liturgy

Being in a multicultural church or being ethnically different from the majority of a congregation was reported as providing challenges. Ministering to a culture different to their own has been previously reported as requiring a lot of adjustment. In addition, the Pacific women are really challenged by barriers to ministry in their own cultural congregations because they are women.

I have not been accepted in a PIC Parish because of gender.

Sexism with the Pacific parishes, the very unlikely possibility of being called to a Pacific Island/Samoan parish by virtue of the fact that I am a woman. The fact that these churches would call an intern first and never consider women who have been in ministry over 25 years or more.

Women ministers working outside parish ministry have specific challenges described as:

Many of the challenges I've experienced have been to do with the almost entirely marginal role the Church has in my ministry and in Chaplaincy. This is also to do with a parish-focused state of mind. In addition, the decline and crisis faced by the surrounding parishes in our area, means that any links with them tend to be church focused — e.g. being asked to preach at services, being asked to link with their

youth ministry or be an Interim Moderator...So it's pretty isolated at times, and I don't feel the Church is able to contribute much to the mission I'm involved in.

Trying to explain why the PCANZ actively excludes people. The current exclusion regulations in the Book of Order hurts clergy and church people and their families and people from the wider community who wish to become part of the faith community. These limit ministry and are beyond the comprehension of the wider community.

A team ministry has been deliberately chosen by several married couples and has been highly recommended by others as the ideal for church ministry. However, for a small number of women these situations may need negotiation and a clear conversation about individual responsibilities.

Personally, the key issues for me, revolve around what expectations there are and the lack of understanding of what the role might be. In terms of the parish they warmed to me; but they were not sure what box to put me into. In the team situation it became a conflict of who had the primary relationship with parishioners. If you were not going to listen to some one - it would be me. I did not want to create conflict but it became difficult to get across this. For example: I planned a service and the other minister decided we needed to sing some of the holiday programme songs and he cut across me in the service. It was very under mining.

INVOLVEMENT IN PCANZ COMMITTEE AND MANAGEMENT POSITIONS

The involvement of the women participating in this survey who are on committees and management locally, nationally and internationally has been and is currently high, with 46 listing a wide range of involvement. Some have been consistently involved through a long career and others have been involved in a particular area of interest or expertise. Those who were not involved said they were “too busy in their community”, were not a committee person or were isolated and hence did not have access to opportunities. Not all women wanted to be in highly visible leadership positions.

Some of the committees cited were no longer active. The range of involvement was between one and 21 different aspects of the management and committee possibilities. Numbers reported do not represent total involvement as the positions may have been held once, or several times over years. A number of positions were in leadership or as convenors and moderators, such as to a presbytery, or as chaplain to a moderator.

The following illustrates four ministers' involvements from 2007-2016

- 1. Member of two presbytery committees, Moderator of Presbytery, Area member for local reform team, Presbytery Council member, Convenor of MSB, PCANZ parish review trainer, rural conference planning committee and PCANZ nominating committee*
- 2. Moderator of two presbyteries, convenor of Quinquennial Visitation team, member of students' committee, member of Ministry and of the Pastoral committee, executive of presbytery, convenor of regional presbytery co-convenor of church architecture reference group, member of PCANZ Doctrine committee, and Task Group, contact for Complaints Process, Ministry Development reviewer.*
- 3. I have only attended Presbytery for a short time when I went to a uniting parish. Since I was on a steep learning curve being new to parish ministry and to a rural ministry at that; new to presbytery and synod, I asked to be exempt from presbytery responsibilities for the first year. I had been on Presbytery in the Mission Resource Board before this. I am now the interim moderator for the area.*
- 4. I served one term on the National Nominating committee. Apart from that I have had a little involvement at presbytery level. In my 20 years in ministry I have only had 8 years in the Presbyterian church. When I was a chaplain. I was under the Presbyterian church but felt 'overlooked' as though I wasn't quite 'one of them'.*

TABLE 1: NUMBERS OF WOMEN INVOLVED IN COMMITTEES

PCANZ committees	14
Assembly committee	10
Council of Assembly	8
Nominating committee	7
World Council of churches rep	2
School Association	5 ¹⁰
Ministry Training board	3
Ministry development	4
KCML attachment	5
Women in Church and Society	1
Worship National Committee	2
Joint Liturgical Group	1
National Assessment group	6
Presbytery moderator	13
Presbytery council	3
Presbytery executive	3
Presbytery Committee member	20
Parish review committee	3
Local Assessment group	3
Christian Conference of Asia	1

¹⁰ This includes Boards of trustees at Presbyterian schools

SUPPORT AVAILABLE SINCE ORDINATION

Access to support since ordination was very positive and almost half (19) gave between four and nine examples, with the remainder having between one and three.¹¹ The major areas of support were:

- Clergy in general which included clergy from other denominations
- Supervision
- Friends within and outside church
- Family members
- Networks for women in ministry
- Own parishioners and session
- Presbytery contacts
- Spiritual director

I have always had excellent supervisors the last three being women. For most of my years in ministry I attended monthly Spiritual Direction with a saintly Nun. Meeting for prayer weekly with several of my elders. My Parish Council was always exceedingly supportive and an excellent Parish Clerk. Being a member of Synod has offered opportunities for support and networking. One or two other ministers who took an interest in me. Later in my ministry other women ministers took over the parishes in the town and were always supportive.

Support came from both women and men, from many denominations and from churched and unchurched. While it was important for many women to gain support from those who had trained with or worked with them, there was also an effective range of support which came from professional associations related to the areas in which they were ministering. However, for some in rural areas accessing formal support was more difficult.

For those ministers not in parish ministry, such as chaplains (school, hospital, police, custodial) an extended range of support may be available. Examples included the New Zealand Chaplains network, Religious Education teachers network and the New Zealand Counselling Association.

Women colleagues and maybe half a dozen male colleagues over the years including a spiritual director. Once I got into school chaplaincy, key support came from within the school as well as the NZ Chaplains and RE Teachers network.

The school context is quite isolating in itself, as I am essentially peripheral to the working of the educational machine, and also isolating in collegial ministry as I work in a different rhythm and with a very different set of challenges and ministry opportunities. I still have family support, and ongoing support from my second mentor minister. I am also in a couple of small groups and we meet for stories,

¹¹ 1 cited 9; 2 cited 7; 4 cited 6; 5 cited 5; 7 cited 4; 9 cited 3; 7 cited 2; 6 cited 1

prayer, communion and contemplative practices like lectio. They are mostly in lieu of a congregation.

There was some regret expressed that formalised opportunities for support which were available in the past are now no longer organised or only infrequently available: Class reunions and retreats at Teschemakers for example.

I reckon that a key factor in helping me settle and cope in the first five years were the Women in Ministry retreats that were held at Teschemakers in North Otago. Our Presbytery was a great support network. One other Presbytery I was in also had an element of this, particularly with a lay Moderator who took the pastoral care aspect of moderatorship seriously. My family. The different networks I've been involved in, rural, ecumenical, women in ministry.

The comments showed the importance placed on maintaining contact with those with whom they had trained, particularly with other female ministers, and in creating opportunities for mutual support. One group set up an informal group of women in ministry which has been reasonably regular over the past three years.

The most frequently cited key source of support was that given by other clergy. This included co-ministers in the same parish, clergy from other denominations, the local ministers' association and fellow women ministers.

Clergy in general: In a small rural area in the first year, I returned often to the SOM for support as the only other clergy was a revolving list of Catholic priests. Presbytery meetings/events became a life-line. In one position, the local Methodist and Anglican clergy and I developed a very strong relationship. In the next parish I worked closely with one Anglican vicar and she and her husband were a great support. Again, Presbytery has been important and probably why I join so many committees. Parish people: In every parish, certain people become very important for support. In my church, the Senior Elder and his wife were key.

The ongoing and weekly support of my ministerial colleague who has both mentored me and grown with me in these ministries. Prayer and small groups and the church life. Supervision and spiritual direction. Professional development, especially courses in counselling and friendships and insights made there. For a time we also had a ministers' support group but this has not functioned in the last few years. It did have a consistent monthly meeting that most ministers went to, now it is irregular and poorly attended and does not function as a supportive place for ministers.

In my wilderness time in the early days, a Methodist Superintendent gave me a temporary leadership role that helped me find joy again. Some Presbytery leaders have also been very supportive. Five years of spiritual direction which was very valuable and gave me tools I still use often. I have taken times of silent retreat.

A peer group of recently graduated ministers – we meet formally about 3 times a year. A regular women's minister's lunch. My friendships with other women ministers who has become invaluable, because they simply understand all the balls you are endeavouring to hold in ministry. Monthly supervision a definite as well. I do have a Spiritual Director but haven't gone very often, too hard to fit in, am wanting to rectify that. Oh - and I have had a Presbytery buddy, a minister who I can call about stuff – I chose her.

The church itself. The Elders. Being part of communities is very helpful to learn from others and what works and what doesn't. Presbytery is not working time. There is a speaker to learn from. General Assembly is to catch up with other ministers. It was brilliant for networking. My priority was networking.

Good ministerial associates – we support each other as friends and can complain to one another about what might be going on in our church. Once when I was having a tough time they prayed over me and the church. They stood in defence of the Gospel.

Usually colleagues and I had a good supervisor for ages. Women ring each other up which is sort of a peer supervision. If we are doing a sermon and find a really interesting passage we share it. It is all informal and natural. We now get a lot of interns – new ones in training – and they take up a lot of work. We can pick up the phone and exchange information. We (other colleagues) mutually do ministry to each other as ministers together. We need people in the parish who can keep their mouth shut. Often a session clerk.

One or two older (male) colleagues in the Presbytery took an active role in supporting and mentoring me in the early years of ministry. In those early years, there was also a group of clergy who would meet once a month for a drink and that was a helpful and supportive group. These were ministers in the local area, some from other denominations. Mostly it's been friendships formed or maintained within the Presbytery/wider church. My own systems of Supervision and Spiritual Direction have been life-savers on numerous occasions.

Presbytery Central, as well as the ministers of all the different denominations in both towns.

Family have always been my most significant support, but I have also appreciated local ministers' associations (which I now convene); in our first parish, a ministers' support group; and in my current parish a chosen elder to meet with regularly.

Supervision and spiritual direction. Professional development, especially courses in counselling and friendships and insights made through supervision have also been really useful as has spiritual direction. Friends within the church and outside also feature.

Over the years I have been involved with a number of collegial support groups – either for Presbyterians alone or a wider mix such as Ministers' Associations. I have also had regional support meetings while a chaplain. I have also had and still have some great Supervisors and friends.

We had a great support group in several areas where I was a minister They were fun and serious, life giving groups and the gift of one of the senior women as a mentor and interested commentator couldn't be overstated. The other side of this is the mutual support we had. When I started most of the women knew each other. At Assembly and such gatherings it was a pleasure to meet and have common bonds of being women in ministry. Later as numbers grew and the ratio of women and men changed you didn't know everyone. Women tended to group together in theological divides as the men did.

Close to this and alongside other supports was the requirement for formal supervision. The importance of the regularity of the monthly meetings and that supervisors be formally trained/qualified was suggested.

We need qualified supervisors and spiritual directors. Parish folk, networks within local clergy especially women clergy, spiritual directors, qualified supervisors, community networks such as Rotary, Police and emergency, services Justice of the Peace Associations, Federation of Graduate Women and Ecumenical Women in NZ and at the UN, NZ Ministry of Women, National Council of Women, various Art Societies. Other ecumenical and groups.

My supervisor saved my life during a very difficult time in my life – talking me down off the plank I felt like I was walking. Spiritual Direction too. Friends. The Trinity!

Supervision, informal lunches with women ministers, both in PCANZ, and across denominations, our class (of '87), or at least all the women and one or two of the men, took turns in sending out full letters, of encouragement and support, and sharing what was happening in our ministries and lives – seems so dated now in this Facebook age!

I have two supervisors and they ask the hard questions "Are you REALLY OK?" We had an ordination last night and we all (ministers) worked together. It is comforting and supportive to all come together. It is good to know I am part of that. Also important are friends/ colleagues in ministry and informal peer support often over the phone because of distance.

Friends and family members equally provided support for these women; some of which came from people with no or little church involvement. There was no evidence of the types of support given although a few answers referred to practical as well as emotional or spiritual support.

Networks with other women in ministry and leadership, cited as important support groups for these women, are included in some of the areas already discussed. This section relates to deliberate opportunities for the women in ministry to come together. Within these answers are comments related to past opportunities for retreats, conferences, and formal support groups compared with the informal and more casual current opportunities which depend on individuals setting up opportunities. Answers to questions in other sections of the survey¹² indicate that for most women ministers prioritisation of work commitments puts personal desires at the end of the list.

Some Presbytery contacts and particular individuals within a parish were very supportive of individual ministers. Some Presbytery meetings were cited as an important networking opportunity as much as being a supportive environment and some session clerks and elders were giving particularly helpful support. Others found that presbytery meetings allowed them to be supportive of others and to gain support for resolution of particular issues. One minister said presbytery had allocated her a buddy when she was in her first placement.

¹² The pressure of work was a recurring theme and impacted on all aspect of ministerial life.

WHAT OTHER SUPPORT WOULD YOU HAVE LIKED?

Satisfaction with the available support was reported by a quarter of the ministers although use of it was reliant on being proactive to take it up, which could be an issue. Others were grateful for assistance they had when needed.

Looking back, the difficulties I faced were just people facing changing times and clinging to old rules. Being a strong person, I did not allow these challenges to hinder my calling. I had tons of support from my home church where I had served and am grateful for that.

None. Even the Moderator of Assembly always found time for me when I asked for mentoring.

I have had mediation with a Presbytery Moderator over a team situation and that was good.

When more support would have been liked or needed, there were several areas reported. The first related to changes in career pathways such as when first in a parish or non-parish appointment, being between placements or during a time of leave for burn out or illness.

I would have liked more collegiality, more follow up after I left the PCANZ and went back to my original career after I was burnt out. No one called, no one knew, no one seemed to care.

When someone has needed vocational/ministerial guidance especially in relation to doing ministry that hasn't conformed to the norm, a place to think outside the box and think ahead, I think the system fails. The people we have trained to do reviews continue to be of older school and haven't been able to help me develop what I am particularly called to. Being in team ministry has had its challenges and especially when one member of the team does something different. In my case there seemed like a lack of regulations around what happens to ministers in teams and the Book of Order regulations are more in favour of the Senior minister than others in the team. I felt there were gaps in how the disruption to our team was handled or not handled from a national level as well as a Presbytery level and subsequently made it difficult at the parish level. There is not enough ongoing professional development made available for all ministers. Places to talk about our work in the light of changing society and culture and to garner support and ideas from one another. There is nothing like this for women in ministry and their particular needs.

The support I would have appreciated in training was for someone (or a group) to help me process and look for the 'what next' after training. This was lacking.

CASE 7

I was just reading about the Anglican women leader's development programme recently ('Anglican Taonga' Spring 2016) and feeling envious and then this survey popped up. Was it a sign I thought? I'm not sure about setting up a purely Presbyterian programme but could we ask to be part of the Anglicans one? I work with so many women across many different denominations and our stories are very similar. I don't see that we have to have our own PCANZ Network. However, we do need to find ways to support women into ministries.¹³ We have no female Presbytery CEO's and I believe they are the pool that the next AES will come from. Have there ever been any female AES's? It's a long time since we had a female Moderator; where is the next female one coming from? And what about the big churches? – we need to encourage women to apply for these jobs. And where are our young women interns? I need people to tell me I should apply for jobs, to nominate me for governance roles, and to do that we need ways to get to know each other. A friend and I, both on a national committee suddenly realised a fellow female minister could work in this role. It stuns us now that we hadn't thought of her before. Yes, it could be God's timing, but is it also us [women] being gender blind as well.

The second area more support was needed was in the more difficult situations where there was an essential need for intentional or professional assistance and personal support outside the congregation. In two instances, while support would have been available it needed to be asked for and the people involved were not in a position to activate it.

The most obvious situations where there did not appear to be any, or adequate support:

- parishioner harassment
- situations involving the NZ Police
- sexual assault complaints
- death of a husband or other close family member
- closure of a church building.
- Disruption in team ministries

At different stages, various other support would have been helpful such as advice re how to deal with procedures e.g. during a difficult pregnancy and working out leave. Also, pastoral support from outside the congregation during particularly difficult events (more than supervision) e.g. when I had a very difficult and lengthy episode with a parishioner whose complaints (to the extent of wanting me dead) involved police, church courts etc.

¹³ With time passing a few things have changed re my comments above. A Women in Ministry group has started in Christchurch called "Sustain". Its purpose is to support and encourage women across denominations. Laidlaw College is driving this.

Further need for general support was reported from women who were in non-parish based and sole charge rural ministries

When I began there were Mission Resource people with part of their role being personal contact with ministers. It would have been good if we hadn't lost that. The very occasional visit of a Moderator was a wonderful contact to have here in the outfields.

Often things come only to the big cities. People come to towns and speak to the big churches. It would be good if they could come to the little places as well. We need to be part of the resourcing role and have people show interest by coming through to talk with us and hear what they are doing. It is not enough to just advertise it somewhere. Can someone ring us up?

The third highlighted the need for training days to know how to get help. There appeared to be different support systems needed from both outside and inside the church for difficult situations. It would be helpful if timely, qualified and experienced support is available alongside collegial support. It needs to be recognised that most ministers are so highly involved with the needs of their parishioners that there is little time left to provide serious professional assistance to others.

I think the Presbytery as a whole has been poor at offering good levels of support and pastoral care to Ministers in general. I myself have been equally as poor at offering this sort of support to others. The demands of parish ministry seem so all encompassing and unrelenting that there is little time or energy left to lift your head above the ramparts and see how your colleagues are faring or to offer ongoing support. I think that the sole-charge parish minister model encourages competition and isolation from other colleagues. We seem to find it hard to open and honest with each other about our struggles and challenges and instead 'talk it up' at Presbytery.

I tried to improve the situation with support from my supervisor but this was ineffective.

The final area is to provide opportunities, as have been present in past years, to have support though regular gatherings to re charge emotionally physically and theologically.

Some kind of regular opportunity for women who are younger or in mid-life to gather and be 'fed' would be wonderful. I have thought of organising a retreat - and talked with others about it - but we don't have the capacity or energy to do so, although I've organised a few meetings in nice eating venues in my area for women leaders (various churches and ministries), which seem to have been valued. I would appreciate assistance to make this happen, as well as some kind of yearly away-time: to go to a nice place, do some yoga/Pilates/walking, have nice food and great

(intelligent, integrated, theologically-profound) women's input. There are some fabulous women speakers I've heard from overseas, and a couple from NZ, so we could do this.

I think we could do with more regular scheduled opportunities for reflection together – we get lots of opportunity through study leave etc to keep up to date, but I would like to have gatherings where we can receive and be together rather than being responsible for deciding content etc.

For me, these¹⁴ come pretty close to ideal. I don't know if I can go from the personal to the universal here, but it does seem likely that relationality is key for ministry – having people who you can tell it like it is, who will pray with and for you, who will listen to scripture with you and offer their own truths and stories of where God is at together is what facilitates the filling and emptying of my life.

Perhaps for those new to ministry within the PCANZ, being guided through the complexities of the different courts and structures of governance would be helpful as these can be quite political.

We were supposed to have a regular ministers' resourcing day but we have had it only once. Laidlaw used to do a leadership day which was interdenominational.

¹⁴ Referring to answers to previous question which asked about support available.

INCLUSION OF GENDER DIFFERENCES/ISSUES DURING TRAINING PROGRAMMES

The answers to this question are reported with relationship to the relevant training programme. These ranged from there having been extensive focus on the role of women in ministry, to no focus. There were also differing opinions with each period of time a programme was current on whether there had been any discussion/gender focus and differing opinions on how positive the discussion/focus had been.

THEOLOGICAL HALL

Several answers showed that there were strong women in the team of lecturers who contributed to the focus on inclusive language and discussion on gender issues. For one woman, the experience of being part of an inclusive environment was very positive.

Having come from a fairly conservative background I was unsure what the place of women would be in the training, however at the Hall the lecturers were very careful to be inclusive of gender, I found each of them to be very affirming and appreciative of my gifts and abilities - at no time was my gender ever a negative issue – in fact I would say it worked as a positive for me because I was encouraged to explore my faith through the lens of the feminine. I was introduced to many feminist theologians in my studies and I thoroughly enjoyed the learning experience that took place to greatly broaden my own perspectives and discoveries.

Six women said they had had no discussion on gender or that they couldn't remember having had any.

At first not at all. Then when a female lecturer began teaching she attempted to address gender issues in Christian education. It was early days and I think the staff in general tried to acknowledge gender issues but didn't quite know how to go about it. My perception, from a distance, is that it got much worse later. Theological issues during the 1990's to present day were initiated by men who argued theologically against feminist, post-colonial, queer, etc theologies. The political became very personal. As a result, my perception is that the world of theology and therefore models of ministry narrowed.

I am not sure that it was. Goodness I recognise how blind I was then!

The involvement of strong women in the lecturing team was attributed with bringing changes in focus. It appeared that there was no formal structure for curriculum emphasis but there was a strong movement to acknowledge gender differences.

By having strong women staff a presence at the Theological Hall was a big plus. The language used was inclusive e.g. Mother God, I have never heard this in my Pacific Island Church, it's a NO. No. No.

One female lecturer gathered women students together and organized retreats. Academically, a male lecturer provided a paper on women in the New Testament at a time when feminist scholarship was making its mark. Generally, there was both acknowledgment of gender issues, and opposition from some, to those of us who were overtly feminist.

Lots of discussion/arguments in my time at the Hall around inclusive language of God and people. One of those situations where people went to a bit of an extreme end of the spectrum in order to bring about change in the middle ground. I felt that a real effort was made by staff at the Hall to be inclusive and acknowledge the equality of ministry of men and women.

As I respond to this question, I would like to acknowledge with gratitude the women and all those who established, confronted the barriers and prepared the way, provided the opportunity for those of us who are now able to train for the ministry. Thank you for their courage, their faith and their commitment and for all those who helped and supported. I think at times, gender was brought to the fore by certain actions, comments by some of our female students. At times during discussions, lectures, a female perspective was sought to clarify a point, activate a point of discussion.

However, the focus on gender inequality was not universally appreciated by all women.

It was acknowledged which was good, but being on the more evangelical spectrum I felt pressure to conform with the other women leaders and lecturers who were in a different theological space. My first experience on arrival was at the powhiri whereby I was shunted down the back to sit on the concrete floor outside Knox College, whilst my husband (not a student) was ushered down the front to sit in the chairs. Great!!! Clear message there.

It was a very heady and challenging time. Gender issues were very much in the forefront of community life and within the curriculum (sometimes, but not always, positively).

It was raised to make us aware of it. Some of the group were articulate but angry. I get anxious and nervous of that. Some of the women were prominent in the feminist movement. It was all news to me. I have never felt held back by that. I had a father who was positive and affirming.

SCHOOL OF MINISTRY

Only three of the five women who trained in this programme commented. Two said it was not positively presented if at all, and one remembered a session on inclusive language

Not sure it ever was positively. It was negative or ignored. I note that with one female lecturer leaving there will be no women on KCML staff, and she was an adjunct. When I was there, the two women lecturers were seen as in the lesser roles especially by the male students.

There was a session on 'inclusive language' in the worship paper.

There was no discrimination at Knox but staff assumed I would drop out when I got married.

COMMUNITY BASED MINISTRY TRAINING

Three women who trained in the CBMT programme said gender per se was not specifically addressed at the time of their training, two said it was not an issue for them at the time and one said: *they were good at the gender stuff.*

The group I trained with was mostly women. In my group, this was not specifically addressed. We were all juggling female responsibilities. There were some discussions on sexuality and how that pertains to ministry and boundaries.

Gender has never been an issue for me. I don't see myself as female first and a person second. I am a person first and foremost and just happen to be female. To be honest there were times when 'addressing gender' became like a 'not again' event.

Not sure it was particularly. We were there in the early 2000 and there were women up front as role models. It was not male dominated; there was a balance. There were limitation in terms of the tertiary studies for Presbyterians. At OU there was no sense of appreciation for women. I came from another career and was struggling with children. There were enormous sacrifices to be made and I am not sure it was worth it.

KNOX CENTRE FOR MINISTRY AND LEADERSHIP

It appeared that there were very little, if any, opportunities to address gender differences or issues. This was attributed by the women who answered this question as being because there were mostly male lecturers. In contrast however, one male lecturer *did some good teaching a couple of sessions.* The sole female minister (adjunct) was cited several times for being a good role model and for having hosted a women's dinner at each block course which was appreciated by many women. Two women reported not having gender addressed in their training programme.

We had some specific discussions about it during some of our classes. On whether women worked out of a different framework to men. I felt somewhat that if we fully go along with that, we continue a stereotype. I believe our personalities make more of a difference.

When I was trained, most of KCML lecturers were males apart from one female adjunct lecturer who was European¹⁵. Gender was not mentioned or acknowledged as such.

There had obviously been a session on feminist theology and inclusive language which was reported as being disappointing as two women commented that the focus was on appropriate clothing

There was a disappointing session on feminist theology and inclusive language. The issue of what to wear so that we didn't draw attention to our bodies (so that people could focus on what we say, not on our legs). We had several sessions on the Genesis creation accounts, aiming to underline the mutuality and equality of both genders.

My experience is that our lecturers knew that women would have a harder time finding a church (tending to end up in chaplaincy). We had a session about clothing. But for me gender has become more of an issue since my training has finished.

Two said they appreciated the struggle but it was not an issue for them

I'm not sure that it was. The training was from a basis of being a priesthood of all believers, so gender difference was not an issue. Also, having been educated in a school where gender was not considered to preclude one from any workforce or study, and having come from a family whose mother trained to be a doctor then dentist in classes that were mostly male, yet didn't stop her development, I haven't really given it much thought.

I appreciate the struggle and the perseverance of some people. I am not there. For me although gender does affect how I approach things it is not my baseline measure. I always remember when I was overseas and an Italian (male) said "Men confront women compromise". He was talking about leadership style and he wanted me to confront him and tell him what I wanted him to do.

For Pacific women, the gender issue is also a cultural issue and concern was expressed that there was little education on this.

¹⁵ This is a particularly fraught issue for non European women.

There was one issue at KCML for both culture and gender. Some of the other students were both loud and dominant. It was ideal when the lecturer directed student involvement. If they did not, there was more from older outspoken men. It was intimidating at times.

It was touched on briefly but from a Pacific Island woman perspective there was very limited education on gender from a Pacific Island view.

EXPECTATIONS OF CONGREGATIONS OF WOMEN IN MINISTRY

Not one of the women reported that their congregations had expectations different from those they would have for a male minister. The focus of expectation was on the qualities of:

- leadership
- pastoral care
- teaching ministry
- working collaboratively

Several said they were seen as “their minister” not as their “woman minister”, however for others who trained some time ago, the change has taken some time.

I think for most, they have had me as their minister for long enough to be beyond it being gender defined... I am their minister, rather than their woman minister –it has taken some time to get there though... and there are always times when I am reminded of it not being so normal when new people come and comment on my gender.

The emphasis was on the personal qualities and experience brought to the role and that they were the “right person” for the position.

They expect good leadership, they are pretty good really. My husband is not expected to do the cooking or provide scones and morning tea!

I’m not aware of expectations of me based on my gender in my current role. It’s a pretty level playing field with some women doing extraordinary things in leadership roles.

The expectations don’t seem to be based on my gender as much as the role I have within that community.

I do feel that I have been accepted for who I am, and am praised or criticised on that basis, without gender being consciously a part of it. One or two women have noticed with approval the way that we use inclusive language in liturgy, but we have not made a big thing of it, simply gone ahead and done it.

For two women who worked in partnership with their husbands their experience was that there were no different expectations for each of them.

My current Session and Parish’s expectations of me are no different than they were of my husband. I am assessed on merit not gender. It is an exacting community with high expectations and I enjoy that. Many of them have been involved in business and work situations where women have been in senior management. They seem to enjoy that I bring woman’s perspective to ministry and we work as a team, listening carefully to each other. When I began ministry in my first parish 20 years ago, some

of the older women told me that the previous minister's wife could bake a 5" high sponge cake – could I do that? I replied, I didn't know, I had never tried - I was there to minister not to bake! But in my experience, expectations on women in ministry have changed considerably over the last 20 years.

We are blessed with our church family, whose expectations of me as a woman in ministry, is to fulfil my responsibilities as a minister of word and sacrament, preaching the Word, pastoral care, involvement in the community, outreach, faith education. Their expectations are not just placed on my husband and I, they are very much participants in our journey of faith (e.g. taking Sunday services when we're away, active involvement in Bible Study, music, one of the home groups have just completed a series of Alpha which they have lead and taken responsibility etc...) We feel their expectations are placed equally on the both of us and we will try to do the best we can, but together with our folk with their giftings and commitment, we put our faith in the Lord so that in all we do it is to the glory of our God. My husband and I also try to gauge the things we do, male -wise and female-wise. We get feedback as well which is helpful. We have really appreciated their openness to certain things we have done that would be quite different for them in terms of worship.

Again, cultural expectations were emphasised by two Pacific Island ministers.

As Pacific regional secretary for Council for World Mission, it was important for me to wear my clerical collar when meeting with Pacific churches in formal gatherings because it was a rare thing for people to see an ordained women minister in many Pacific countries. I was encouraged to promote the leadership and empowerment of women at every opportunity.

It is different as I serve in a full kiwi parish with no Pacific Islands involvement. The reason for this is where I am situated it is very rare to have Pl's in this location. The current ministry does not seem to be fazed by me being woman and sees me as first foremost minister of word and sacrament. But this would be different if working in a Pacific Island context.

A range of examples illustrate the opinions or experiences of individual women.

This newly-formed parish has some very strong women who in many cases have kept things running. Some of the older men have been intimidated by a competent female but I am only here for 6 months, so they are coping. As a stated supply, I think their expectations were low. My next parish, is unknown. I think some as least want me to 'save them'/'start a revival'.

I believe having a woman minister was very good for my last parish, they had some years before coped with a parish split as the minister had left and begun a Pentecostal Church in the town. I think the motherly touch and lots of grace was helpful for them.

I am about to begin at a different church in a months' time. I think it will be good to have a woman on the ministry team.

I don't feel any particular expectations of my congregation on myself as a woman minister. They expect me to do everything a minister has to do. But if there was, I observe that people easily ask to visit them or to do pastoral cares especially for elderly. ... Motherhood types of works?

I have noticed I am respected as a minister when preaching in other congregations but am ignored in my own church. The men who preach each Sunday are "the ministers". I am not.

Not sure – it is an issue? They were appalled a few years ago when a visiting couple arrived after we'd started worship and were busy at the welcome desk – and then the husband suddenly realised it was a 'woman' preacher and ordered his wife "out" immediately!

I don't know if there are any expectations of me because of being female. But I understand that before I came here and the committee was discussing who to get as a minister and they were asked " Did you think of having a woman?" They were mostly farming men and were happy to consider me. I understand the women were quite excited. I apparently focus on the finer details for example in the communion services. Women have noticed differences in the presentation and tidiness. When I am away I try to get men to fill in for me for a change for the congregation.

I don't think about it. I am just there and do the Christian work. I have not noticed anything but I don't look for it either.

I have had several [problems] before. Here there are no different expectations. I guess I get involved in certain things, but they may not be skills that men have. For example when they were painting the manse I had no expectation to participate. I don't -feel I have to attend Women's Fellowship. I keep to areas I have skills in.

HOW GENDER AIDS OR HAMPERS MINISTRY

The answers to this question showed that gender both helps and hinders women in ministry. Overall, the weight of answers indicated that these women believe that being a woman was more helpful than a hindrance.

I think that it aids my ministry in that I bring a different perspective to my theology. There are times though when working with other cultures that I feel I am not taken as seriously as a male counterpart would be.

It has been a great help in pastoral situations and when there have been difficulties with some males. I'm able to sort out the issues without being threatening to them.

In many ways it aids me, certainly in my style of ministry, as it opens up doors, and leads me into many situations without a fuss where I can offer ministry.

It has aided me tremendously. I am able to talk with women and get alongside people. Males (have to be?) are very cautious about getting alongside women in the parish. I hear through ministry development reviews and training that women and men have a very different approach.

Being a woman has its advantages and its hindrances. You have a deeper insight into things that some males are unable to comprehend although on the other hand your emotions can get the better of you.

Lots of times it is really good. I have felt I am not a threat particularly in leading meetings. I could side step the conflict and work around the egos. I can be a little subversive if necessary.

It was also suggested that the style of ministry and personality differences could be the defining factor, rather than gender. There was acknowledgement that it is difficult to separate the effects of gender, generational status, theological viewpoint and personality from experience.

I believe my gender was helpful, although not just my gender but the breadth of experience I brought into ministry. I was able to accept people with grace and calm. Also I believe that Spiritual gifting's came into this as well, so gender was not the only helpful aspect.

Over the years I have come to believe there is a fine line between my gender and my personality when it comes to how I exercise ministry. I have learnt to embrace my low key visibility. There are advantages to being under-estimated!!

This is a hard one to answer because it is hard to differentiate between the characteristics of my personality and my gender.

Because of this, many of the women suggested that the ideal was team ministry and to have a balance of genders. It was considered that the individual differences and needs of both women and men in a congregation or environment could be well served from a mix of styles of service and ministry.

There are two of us in ministry together which I hasten to add is a real strength. It means I can concentrate when needed on women and their challenges. I never need to think of visiting a man I am uncomfortable with on my own.

There were however, some women who considered that there were different styles attributed to being a woman and that these attributions could both aid and hamper ministry. Those which had a positive effect were suggested as that women:

- were more approachable,
- can discuss emotional and sensitive personal topics
- provide a “mothering” focus
- are able to deal with conflict

Different expectations

My natural bossiness has been softened by societal expectations about how women work, therefore my being tough can be a surprise, and also, I can temper it and be more pastoral (I hope) than those with my personality trait usually are. I can cry and talk about emotions. I can touch people with much more safety. Despite all my advantages of race, education, etc I have still experienced being ‘other’ enough to empathise with everyone else who is classed as ‘other’. Experience as a female has taught me to multi-task, to do the mucky things (e.g. clean toilets, change nappies), and to bring practical applications to big ideas.

I keep having to train my business background elders (men) that I just might know what I am talking about when it is about finances or building and if I don’t I’ll ask.

I’m not sure it does. I think possibly those I come in contact with think it might, and then are surprised when it doesn’t. I think it can be a blessing as not much is expected, and then when results come in, there is a quiet amazement.

Some of the attributions above which hinder ministry were:

I get categorised into boxes I don’t fit or I don’t want to fit into. Like being an assistant, invisible, good at baking and making cups of tea, etc. In new places, I have to prove my worth because of the boxes people have put me in. I feel I have to be ‘perfect’ so I don’t prove that women are useless. I hesitate to follow someone successful because it is easier to be accepted when there is no choice.

Being the second pastor both alongside and under a charismatic and long term senior minister I have seen that people will choose to go to him for weddings and life events because he is male and his gender seems more acceptable to them in those circumstances. Feeling as though I am not given the space to be taken as seriously as the main minister.

My gender hampers me in giving pastoral care for male issues. When I started my ministry in my present church I observed an imbalance of leadership with the numerical superiority of women. So, I have tried to encourage male leadership in worship on committees and Parish council.

Several women reported on the boundaries they have placed around working pastorally with individual people in sensitive or intimate situations. It was commonly reported that both women and men need to be aware of pastoral boundaries.

Helps me communicate to the women in the congregation, but can affect intimate and delicate conversations with men. I don't usually go there. I am open and encouraging of others and I like to use consensus leadership ... not sure if this is because I am a woman or because it's just me.

I believe that generally it aids me, as I know male colleagues can feel hesitant in connecting with females with boundary issues etc. I think being female in this regard is a little easier, but there are of course boundary issues with male parishioners. I think families of my parishioners find it quite intriguing to have a woman around, and quite enjoy it! People in general seem to have some odd ideas about what ministers are like.

There are obviously some situations I avoid –e.g. visiting a male parishioner late at night but then my male colleagues avoid visiting female parishioners late at night so it isn't a one gender issue. I wonder whether female parishioners feel more able to greet me with a hug than they would a male minister.

It was noted that there are specific opportunities open because of gender such as working in female environments chaplaincies at girls' colleges, women's prisons and other areas where a balance of gender is seen as important.

General opinions:

In terms of uplifting women, it has always been a benefit to be female. Also to be a female whose husband does not attend church. It has normalised for a lot of people their situation as a person who counts within church. Hampering would be mainly the working, business relationships with some men, usually older than me, who have not moved in spheres where working in partnership with women is normal.

Working as a woman minister on local marae is an interesting situation to consider. As female, I am with the women, as minister, I stand to do karakia. There is respect for the ministerial role, and also respect in terms of protective concern for me as female. For women, the presence of a working age woman minister has I think been an encouragement of “mana wāhine”, that girls can do anything, as the catch phrase use to be.

As to church and Christian students at conservative churches, I know for sure that currently there is a strong backlash concerning women in leadership, even if not explicitly stated. This has meant that I have not been approached or invited to speak at most student-led groups, nor in city churches even though I have been told that I am OK presenter/speaker. This has been a discouragement at times. However, in the positive front there are opportunities in secular organisations which have opened up because I am a woman. Crazy!

GENDER ISSUES WITHIN THE PCANZ STRUCTURES.

Twelve women said they were not aware of any official issues in the structures of the church. Either they were not aware of any, or hadn't experienced any themselves. One woman said:

Structure is not the issue. It is the use people make of them. The structure has moved with the new presbyteries because a lot of checks and balances have been moved. It is run by a group of men who have become a cartel in a closed system. They reinforce each other and challenges get blocked.

The strongest theme of the remaining answers was concern about the predominance of men in significant roles, with the imbalance in particular in leadership at national level committees, assembly and in the training institution.

Although there have now been women moderators of the General Assembly, and many more at presbytery level, there still seems to be a male dominance. Large church gatherings of ordained often feel like a male club, with women on the outer.

The voices of women need to be heard once again in all the courts of the church and where ministers are trained. Too often male voices are the only ones heard at meetings. Meetings are held at times and places not suitable for women in full time employment and travel and accommodation is expensive in the larger presbyteries. The changing nature of work in the wider community and lack of inclusion means 'in house' decisions made by fewer people.

No moderator of GA for ages; no KCML staff; imbalance in a number of areas. One of the greatest issues is the mindset - thinking we have done the necessary work, or have a good history or practice when we don't. It's not 'trickling down'.

Men still dominate in all the significant roles. Women don't speak out as much at Presbytery and GA. There is still an Old Boy's Network alive and well in the Church.

I think we still go automatically to the male at national level, e.g. Moderator and Assembly Executive Secretary in particular. In Presbytery, this doesn't seem to happen anywhere near as much. On MSB's parishioners still talk about ministers as 'he'. Even when the convener is a woman minister!

I think it has gone back. This generation of ministers have not thought about gender equality. They don't know what to do about it. The men form little male groups and never think to ask women. We don't take any notice of anything from Wellington that we don't agree with. In our presbytery, all women had withdrawn because there is no place for us. It has been dismantled as all power seems to be concentrated in two groups.

There were three exceptions to the above answers; the first from a woman who was satisfied with the current situation:

I appreciate PCANZ's committee nominations system which intentionally considers the gender balance. For example. On National Assessment, I was one of two co-convenors, one of each gender. Dialogue groups, the move to vacancy applications, and the Introductions workgroup are all initiatives that have helped with diversity management. Looking back, I wonder why no one challenged the (evangelical) Presbyterian senior ministers that their group only included men.

The second from a woman who indicated that the imbalances were situation specific.

- Oh my – did you see all our public worship sessions at the latest General Assembly. White middle-aged men everywhere and no woman leading us in any form of public worship. I know that we have issues at a local level where the narrative is that men really lead us and women fill in if we can't get a man. At a national committee level we have great balance and in local churches in committees every time. (Sorry a hot topic for me at the moment). I think the issue is that we are denying there is an issue. Women find it hard to be called to a parish straight out of KCML unless it is in a context where they have done their internship and the church 'has gotten to know them'.

The third highlighted a commonly asked question:

That is a very big question. There has not been a female moderator or Executive Officer for a long time and that is very concerning. Having said that people should not get jobs just because they are female. But there have been a huge number of males. Why? Because the Council of Assembly has a clear idea of what it wants. A masculine type of leadership. To be fair, women have brought their own gifting which does not fit. With wider presbyteries people with a national profile one way or another might have an advantage. You would need to be well known in the wider church. It is "read the blurb and then vote as you can". It is probably less likely now that Pacific Islanders and Maori will do well. Being in larger churches may also affect perceptions.

Effects of the perceptions of several women have been to train to fit the existing model, to challenge women to be proactive and men to step aside.

I have trained myself to be heard. One classic case on the Board of Ministry [he] was running a discussion and writing on the white board. But he didn't write up my suggestions. I had suggested that there was double dipping as some were being paid by the university and also on calls. He ignored it. He had heard me but didn't respond. Another participant pulled him up. So, is this sexism? I now sit deliberately at a table in an effort to be able to catch the eye of any convenor. I have trained to work out how to get heard. At postgraduate seminars, I listen hard to practise how to be included. This has helped me for participating at Assembly.

If women need to be involved [women] put your hand up! Men look at your roles. Some of the men in their 50s and 60s such as in the KCML have had enough time

there to push things through and need to sit down. Find other ways to offer what they bring to their roles. We keep on giving these roles to the same people. It is generational not gender. I am very heartened by [Malcolm] being there. He holds the torch for a lot of people.

I think I can only express this as a question: why the predominance of males, male ministers in particular, in leadership in PCANZ, and generally the greater visibility of males? There does seem something stereotypically masculine in policy and decision-making – more about strategies and structures than networking and relationship building. I have in many ways pulled aside from organised church, except in so far as it assists and is necessary for supporting and developing the life of parishes here in the provinces, to enable them to be an active gospel presence in their communities well in the future. The other time I come out of the wood-work is in support of people who are being excluded from official church.

CONTEXTS WHERE WOMEN ARE MOST AWARE OF GENDER

Again, in similarity to the answers from previous questions, there were positive opportunities reported as being available for women ministers through alternative leadership styles, pastoral service and a female perspective of liturgy and the Word.

I am probably most aware of it when I have carried out functions as Moderator of the Presbytery in some of the more conservative churches within Otago and Southland. Some are not used to women ministers, let alone a woman Moderator. However, I have been quite pleasantly surprised at the unsolicited positive feedback after an induction, for example. And as I finished my term as moderator, a couple of men who I thought would have not been so keen on women ministers, came up to me to say they had appreciated my leadership and specified particular things they enjoyed or appreciated.

Positively I have been in settings where women work well together and creatively in a way that is comfortable (e.g. Kids friendly stuff) AND have occasionally enjoyed working with good men in committees and other stuff. .

I am always very aware of my gender. I love being a woman! I am able to enter into an intimacy with people in times of grief, which may be held back from a male counterpart. People seem to worry less about appearing "strong" in front of a woman at such times and yet don't become dependent on me. Have found over the years that women in the church are pleased to engage in liturgy that is inclusive. I have discovered that there is less competitive banter at Session meetings and more space is made to listen to one another and respect the other point of view.

In parish ministry, I have worked a lot with women and children. I have great opportunities men would not have there. For example, a monthly communion with eight women is good. We feel we all belong together.

It is in the "tough stuff" particularly when outside members of the public are involved or when there was dysfunction within a parish that one woman was most aware of gender.

I am most aware of being a woman when there is a dissolution of a parish. Especially when they are small or dysfunctional. I was in one process when a church building was being sold and the whole community got involved. It felt like a very masculine way it was being dealt with. The people heading the community group got involvement of the media. It was probably more about the propriety of the assets than the building. I had to meet with these people so I took two blokes with me who had been in business.

The more formal occasions such as presbytery, business meetings and the institutional church appear to be the contexts in which most of the issues arise. Also when officiating as

a moderator to more conservative churches and at board meetings. In these contexts, contributing at national assemblies and some presbyteries was reported by some women as being confronting, competitive and not conducive to good experiences. The difficulties appear to arise when a leader of a group only values a patriarchal style of leadership and does not recognise a more collaborative process for making decisions. As one woman said *"I find the expectation of only one style of leadership difficult. Do I have to be outspoken and brash to be a woman and a leader?"* Others said:

At General Assembly when most leaders are men and most speakers are men and it's a fairly confronting and harsh environment.

In my early days, it was Presbytery which was an uncomfortable place for women. Even when I joined a major city church I felt the male egos in decision making were very powerful with everyone having their say and getting nowhere. Women are hopefully more collaborative. The larger Presbyteries (now) have removed some of this but unfortunately many will not attend resource groups because they are not doing 'business'. Women enjoy being together and growing together.

Presbytery meetings - so I rarely attend! The fact that I am a woman chaplain is a cause for celebration in my place of work. The church could learn much from other organisational proactive diversity policies.

Often attending church meetings including elders' meetings, prayer meetings etc., there are references to "The ministers" and the male ministers are named and mine is not included. I have had congregational members to turn to me and saying "I thought you were one of the ministers". This happened twice when a person leading function stated that none of the ministers were available and I was there.

When there are few or no other women present, the situations above can be a lonely place for some women:

I am aware that my style of leadership is quieter and 'from behind', empowering and collaborative, but people look for directiveness and positivity and in some sense 'noise' in terms of vision and direction. At times, I have been the only female present at minister's meetings or fraternals. I haven't attended the one in my area for this reason. It is a lonely place to be. In general, though most committees are reasonably well balanced.

In Board or group meetings when women are not represented or when 'other'/different ways of thinking and relating are not valued or integrated around the table. I don't want to be aware of or to harp about my 'gender' – I just want to minister as the person I am and to help others fulfil God's call and fullness of life. We need this to be the people of God.

For Pacific women ministers, there is a particular continuing issue which impacts on the opportunities for serving within their cultural group. This can also impact on ministers with women from Pacific Islands in their congregation.

When I am asked by the Minister's Fraternal to preach at a gathering of Samoan community. For example, the Samoan Independence Celebration. I remembered a comment made by our moderator (man) this is the chance to expose you to such community and you need to convince them that you can preach like a man.

It is during the time of preparing sermons and of preaching that, I am aware of my gender. Sometimes my understanding of the Word is different from male theologians/ministers because of my gender. As a woman, I would see another aspect of the Word that male theologians cannot see. In this sense, I give thanks to God for calling me as a minister of church. In multicultural church contexts, I see people have different perspectives on women in leadership which has been shaped by their own culture. When they ask some questions on gender issues in the Bible or when they share their own stories on woman leadership, I confirm the importance of gender identity as a woman minister. On Mothers' Day Sunday, Samoan people said to me, "You are a mother of our church." At that moment lots of thoughts came up to my mind; "Who am I? What are they expecting of me? Mothering only? ... so on."

Pacific Island congregation contexts when the natural default for prayer or leadership seems to go to the male minister present, even if I'm the one representing Presbytery.

There are some differences in rural areas which may be generational as much as gender related.

Working with men on local church committees. In a rural context, this was particularly noticeable. Many of the men in active leadership have been of an older generation to me, and a number were not accustomed to working with women as equals, and even more taking advice and direction from a woman. This is less now, but it persists with some.

Older farmers here don't relate to women well. When I run into an 'ambusher' who probably hates women [it can be very difficult]. Holding babies at mainly music!

For a small number of women, the decision on appropriate dress code has produced some awareness of gender specific constraints.

Finding a good way to dress – in such a way that how I dressed was not a distraction. I think this is less of an issue for men... maybe.

Visiting in the hospital, especially older men, has led to some slightly awkward exchanges, not with the member of the congregation, but with other men on the

ward. When it is explained that I'm the minister, I get comments like 'if my minister looked like that I'd go to church!'

In Sunday worship – I have to think of what clothes I need to wear that will have pockets for sound equipment. In leading public services i.e. funerals – because I don't wear an alb I need to think of how to be recognised as the one leading – how do I stand out from the crowd so people can follow me (especially since I am short).

When a retired CEO 'pats' me on the head... When a young adult male discusses marriage counselling and gently asks if my husband and I work together to offer couples marriage counselling. I am very aware of my gender.

POSITIVE DISCRIMINATION AND BIAS

This question attracted the lowest level of engagement with 29 either not answered or unaware of any positive or negative bias. For example,

Not really, I think you can look for these things and probably find them but I am a person who gets on with it and does not allow myself to be affected by bias.

I don't see consideration of balance on the basis of gender, ethnicity etc being positive discrimination... it is just how things should be.

However, for others there were examples women attributed to positive discrimination. These were committees; the national Nominating Committee and a Presbytery Council which were identified as ensuring that there is equal representation for men and women.

I think at a local level, congregations don't easily call a woman unless the Settlement Board Convenor actively helps them to think that a woman is a realistic option. I also don't think we believe that a woman will be a good PCANZ Moderator. Positively I believe the national nomination committees works hard to have good female representation on our national committees.

The nominating committee works really hard to balance those accepted to train. Members are very well aware of providing a balance.

Two recipients of scholarships assumed that they had received them because they were women; one after an application was not available to her because it was designated for men only.

Some time ago I applied to Knox for a study grant, to help with my overseas trip. I was shocked to hear back that the endowment from which that grant was awarded was specifically for men and I couldn't be included. However, months later I received a generous grant from another source for which Knox is also the trustee. They had felt so bad they had dug around till they found something that could legally be utilised and the amount was about four times what I would have got from the other fund. Positive discrimination!

I'm very thankful for the scholarship I got, supported by the Church, to study overseas. I'm sure that was more likely given to me as a woman.

There has been concern expressed in a number of preceding questions regarding issues for Pacific women ministers. The quote above is of a Pacific woman who said she was shoulder tapped/pushed. In this section, one minister has raised the issue for Maori and Pacific women ministers

I have fought hard for positive discrimination in relation to Te Aka Puaho and the Pacific Island Synod in policy making situations because their voices are not heard. There seems to be positive discrimination toward white males in the voting process for Moderator of GA as the number of women, Maori and PI moderators we've had you can count on one hand.

One interesting example of a different focus on gender balance follows.

I do think women clergy still have to work harder – especially as it's not always men who are the gatekeepers. I think we often have to juggle family in ways secular employment doesn't i.e. not just evenings but full days... even with the full support of your spouse. Not sure of positive discrimination – unless the discussion I had a few weeks ago fits – as I was left with these words although they were not specifically used: my days of usefulness / best days / most productive days were past because my children had left home and they were no longer around for me to build the youth of the church up with. Therefore, articulating a positive discrimination (not only found in my parish) is for young (it is usually men) clergy with families to build the 'future' of the church.

There were individual examples of bias.

Committees where white males are dominant and women are the token female/s. Still happens. Maori, Pasifika, and people of Asian descent may also experience the same.

I don't feel the LOM situation works in our church although it may in other areas. I have had a minister saying to me that I entered ministry "Through the back door" as I obtained a B. Min through BCNZ!

CASE 8

Presbyterian women of Aotearoa New Zealand have been through a time of transition restructuring and transformation. This has not been celebrated or acknowledged by the leadership of the wider church. The United Nations Special Consultative Status that PWANZ has had since 1998 is also not recognised or celebrated by the national church. The voice of Presbyterian women in national and international forums is valued nationally and internationally. PWANZ has its own new newsletter called Bush Fire but many Presbyteries and parishes do not relay the information to the women in the church. Why?

There was criticism by one minister regarding the focus of some of the questions in this section of the survey, who correctly commented that most answers will reflect individual

experience. That was the intention of the survey; but the answers also provide evidence of where change in the future could occur¹⁶. The full text is as follows:

I find myself uncomfortable with the feel of some of these questions, as if they are an opportunity to uncover stories of victimisation by the oppressor whether they may be particular people or the structures we have created. Generally, the only solutions we can come up with then involve changing who gets oppressed. Can you ask questions that will help us think beyond these categories of victim and what actually has to change to be transformed before we can hope to participate in a community of equals with mutual regard for one another?

¹⁶ See answers to final questions as a starting point for future discussion

WHAT STYLES OF GOVERNANCE WORK WELL OR LIMIT INVOLVEMENT IN THE PCANZ

The styles of governance discussed were mostly focused on General Assembly and Presbyteries. There was a strong preference for collaborative and participatory consensus decision making style of governance.

As a Moderator of Session, and Presbytery and as the Convener of a national committee I worked for consensus and an informal gathering except where there was significant polarity – there rarely was. I made sure everyone in the meeting got a voice and avoided allowing dominating individuals to monopolise the meetings. I don't like adversarial stuff – I like 'getting to yes'. It's nice to have the authority to influence governance styles.

Round table dialogue and advocacy works well for women.

Ones which are collaborative and participatory; where input is encouraged and acknowledged. Smaller groups rather than large plenary's for discussion.

Smaller group discussion tends to involve more women. Consensus decision making works well. When a convener or chairperson is particularly skilled in drawing people into making a contribution, this works well for women. Confrontational / adversarial approach doesn't usually appeal to women.

I haven't found this to be an issue particularly as a woman, but I think we as a church are at point where governance structures need to change throughout to enable flexibility of participation by as many people as possible.

This preferred model was described as being an open, inclusive, listening environment, with collaborative processes where the focus is on resolution rather than process,

An open inclusive listening environment is always better. Maori have a lot to teach us. An upfront directive manner is abhorrent!

Collaborative teams are the core polity for both my denominational loyalties –. These approaches often involve women and reveal competencies that have lain hidden. But business talk and CEO models favour commanding and controlling leaders who do the visioning for the people. I prefer engagement through teams and workgroups, but as with many female leaders this can be interpreted as weakness. Although I am not wired for hierarchical or military models, when required I can make leadership decisions quickly and with awareness of context.

A more consensus style would be more helpful for women I think. At Presbytery when things get sticky men focus on the process, 'point of order' etc that seems to be very combative.

I personally find the endless committees wearying and somewhat confusing. Decision making seems very diffuse, except when the book of order is called upon as a reason either to do or more often (it seems) not to do something, and at times it feels like decisions are handed down from some committee which was formed and met in secret. I'm sure this is not the case, but this is how it seems. There is an impenetrable air to the governance structures – again, more a feeling than based on particular evidence. I think it's possible that the issue is not around structure, but around wisdom, discernment and humility. Until we actually start embodying gospel imagination and community in our fellowship, in our spiritual life individually and corporately, then how can we hope for any different outcomes?

It was clear that there were concerns at being able to fully engage women in both large and small groups where there was a confrontational, adversarial approach. It was suggested that when a meeting is well chaired s/he will control speaking time, limit the number of times anyone is able to speak to an issue, encourage wide participation and not allow bullying. In contrast, a CEO model with “*commanding and controlling leaders*” is not a model in which some women were comfortable.

The adversarial nature of current General Assembly business is not helpful. I am a confident speaker in most places, except there. Part of it is the futility of speaking out because I think people are not prepared to listen. Partly because of the desire to move the proceedings on and not wanting to have just another voice. Dialogue Groups are better but again if one is asked to be the clerk they won't be able to speak out easily. Competent females do secretarial work? Any groups that are organised enough to have all information circulated prior to a meeting are good. Well chaired meetings are also very helpful as no-one over-stays their speaking time or is allowed to get away with bullying. E.g. Synod of Otago and Southland meetings were usually very good because of the above (and a really nice lunch to develop relationships) Talking-stick discussions give the quiet a chance to have a say. Alpine Presbytery retreats seem to be opening up women's participation – perhaps because there is no formal agenda.

The legalistic and political structures that surround the PCANZ processes e.g. at GA do not work well for women like me. Unless you are loud and outspoken, confident on your feet and prepared to foot it in this climate you will not be heard. Women operate better and contribute more in collaborative contexts.

Definitely team styles rather than hierarchy. The small Presbyteries (or their UDC equivalent) that I have been in, operate with a model that shares the load and encourages wide participation in order to attend to tasks that have to be done. Ministry in rural contexts gives more opportunities for woman in governance and church support systems. The track record is of women on the land getting on and doing things on the farm and in the local community.

I have noticed that there is often a dearth of women who will take part in the plenary sessions of General Assembly especially when the debate disintegrates. I think that this structure of debate is outmoded and not gender friendly. I have refused to be nominated as a moderator of presbytery several times because of the difficulty I perceive in my being taken seriously across other cultures. I think some church courts can traditionally make it difficult for the women on them to share their wisdom because of the combative approach to discussion. The adversarial connotations of "church courts" can often make it a less friendly environment for women to engage freely and honestly without fear of put down.

My observation is that as women we don't engage heavily in debates at presbytery level – staying silent until we vote. That combative nature doesn't seem to resonate with our style of communication.

I think we are a consultative denomination in 'background' – and that works for me. I like the 'session' or Leadership Team approach. I think there are glass ceilings – but I am not convinced that is a product of the style of governance?

Westminster adversarial discussions. The way on which decisions have been made in the past. Some women are just too scared to get involved or to speak and some are just frustrated.

Being able to speak up can restrict contributing. At times, we ask ourselves "can I be bothered?" The weight of men's ego and voices is so great.

There were individual answers which suggested that it may not be a gender issue but a generational or cultural one and that inclusion of all people is dependent on competent and inclusive management of meetings.

I haven't found this to be an issue particularly as a woman. I think we as a church are at a point where governance structures need to change throughout to enable flexibility of participation by as many people as possible.

In other areas, there is much less appreciation of gender. In Youth Ministry, there is not an issue. Transitional ministry which happens from being involved in ministry to ordained ministry flows. Probably because they have inherited the results of past challenges to equality and never occurred to them that they will be restricted.

Any styles of government are OK if people check the power around those speaking. Our system is pretty good. However, it is not standing the test of time to do with bureaucratic activity. I worry that the larger presbyteries have disenfranchised people but we had to do something.

WHAT (IF ANYTHING) PROHIBITS WOMEN FLOURISHING IN MINISTRY?

The answers to this question were the most diverse of any of the previous sets of answers and give some indications of what may be useful in supporting women to fully use their gifts in the future. However, there were women who were positive about the current status of women in ministry.

I think women are flourishing in ministry in the PCANZ. I am pleased that we have some very capable women who have offered their wisdom and discovery to the church. I am proud of the way women are given equal status, opportunity, pay and respect generally in the PCANZ.

None in my opinion, providing the person is competent.

A few comments indicated a belief that women can flourish but it takes more effort.

I believe women can flourish if given the opportunity but it takes more effort. For many parishioners a male is accepted more readily. This is as true for women parishioners as well as men in a congregation.

I think there is still a sense that women are accepted in ministry when they are performing very well, whereas men are freer just to be ordinary.

Being able to speak up. At times we ask ourselves "Can I be bothered"? The weight of men's ego and voices is so great.

Feeling they have to fight a battle before they get anywhere.

There were some suggestions that this might be changing

Aging churches refusing to accept change and wanting things to be as they always were – this is changing though as people get older. I found in my church that it was the fundamental arm of the church that was the most difficult to manage. Allowing ourselves to be put down – we need to stand tall and work within our gender being proud of who we are and treating all with generosity and grace.

We need to attend to our gospel and to our formation and transformation of language, listening and embracing of diversity with humility and love. Actually, I'm not sure that many people of either gender are thriving in ordained ministry. We all need things to change.

Maybe in some places with the predominance of men the attitude is that "Women can't quite do this the way men can". There are more women in ministry so it is changing.

There are plenty of opportunities out there now. It has to come down to their personal challenges. A quieter shy person can manage in their own church. The sheer weight of the process we go through sometimes inhibits what we need to do.

There was a fairly narrow range of (categories) which were attributed to affecting women flourishing ministry and again there was difficulty with separating the effect of a specific theological belief, from gender.

I wonder if it is the movement towards people wanting dynamic and visionary leaders ra ra!! There seems to be a notion that we need leaders in mission who come from a certain mindset/theology and it mainly seems to be men. I know that women can and are dynamic, visionary, missional as well, but somehow it seems to more fit the male domain. Perhaps this is more of a theological thing.

The lack of generosity in the current culture of the Church, in so many areas. This has exacerbated a risk-averse reaction, especially towards new, experimental ministries and patterns of ministry which often involve women in communities - in favour of a minister-centred mind-set and operation. Theologically there is also a continuing polarity that is incredibly unhelpful, as it tends to act out according to the tired 'liberal vs evangelical' dichotomy.

The perspectives of the majority of women seems to be that women are prohibited from flourishing in ministry by upholding patriarchal views on Scripture as they were/are taught continually.

There is now a new wave of neo orthodoxy in the church leadership.

The general work load and work roles were cited by a number of women as a barrier to flourishing and this was seen as applicable to men in ministry as well. It has also been commented on in the answers to other questions.

The current 'machinery' of the church which can suck up so much time and energy from those who are involved as they do their best to keep the institution afloat; diverting time, energy and resources from listening to what the Spirit is saying to the church and joining in God's mission in today's context. The resistance to change which has the same effect as above.

Too high a workload, but that is for men as well as women.

Not sure. I am trying to juggle a lot of things. We are in a time of huge change. There is conflict struck in the position of moderator. Parishes cannot afford to pay a minister and get financially stretched. Most ministers don't go into ministry to deal with conflict. There are ways we want to do things vs the reality of being in the group. There is the need for Christian leadership and worldly leadership. We need both.

Getting side-lined into part-time, temporary jobs that do not have the mana and contacts that other roles do. One great bit of advice I got (from a male minister) was never accept a part-time position, because as a woman it will permanently make me less marketable. I have felt my work as a Transition Minister has put me out of the main-stream too.

There were a number of individual suggestions which were given in order to assist women to flourish in ministry: and which may initially require both women and men who have status in the church to be proactive were:

- Be aware of openings and publicise them
- Present and support women for leadership opportunities
- Mentor women new to ministry, especially in large gatherings.
- Actively give women from minority cultural groups opportunities to move out of traditional confinement.
- Give women ministers opportunities to speak, preach, pray and the like in public gatherings
- Actively support women to develop confidence in dealing with conflict
- Increase the visibility of women as role models
- Not allowing women to be put down and being proud of who they are

As one woman said; *I wouldn't want to be in a ministry situation where there weren't a number of other women ministers close at hand to provide support and encouragement.* In rural areas in particular, but not exclusively, this may not be the norm.

For some cultures, people misunderstand the Bible Passages in 1 Corinthians 14: 34 'Women should remain silent in the churches.' So, they still don't want women to preach or to take a leadership in groups or meetings. From my experience, some male ministers who have conservative and patriarchal perspectives prohibit women's participation in the structures of church.

Perhaps not being given the same opportunity to speak, preach, pray and the like in a gathering that determines "who" it should be and "when" it is appropriate. Sometimes in cultural settings: stereotypes, perceptions get in the way. Sometimes understanding within the cultural context makes it unacceptable in one and quite understandable and acceptable in another – More conversation/ dialogue.

A lot of women don't cope well with the conflict that happens. A lot withdraw and do their own thing in their own corner.

WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE THE PCANZ TO KNOW ABOUT YOU

There was an expression of gratitude for the opportunities in ministry and statements about satisfaction regarding life as an ordained minister.

As a person in Christ, I am just as competent and just as called as any male clergy... even when I worked part time.

This is a hard question to answer because the Presbyterian Church has opened doors to me - a woman, a Pacific Island woman, to exercise my God given call.

That even though I am drawn to the places and work in less main-stream (e.g. rural, transition) my ministry is as valid as others. That I have a multiplicity of experience and skills that are not known or appreciated, and that in the desire to promote young people, maturity is under-rated.

I am grateful to the PCANZ for the opportunities I have had and will still have in serving my friend Jesus Christ and I would like them to know that. I would also like the PCANZ to know that I have worked hard for the church, believe in the church and desire that we learn more about grace rather than law, in our dealings with one another. I think there is a relational void in the church where ministers can easily become isolated in their parishes and particular challenges. When we gather such as at General Assembly we continue to be pushed into isolation by our processes. I am not sure who pastors the pastors or expresses encouragement or interest in their development or situation. It would be nice if there were more women invested in "that the world may see that we love one another".

I am grateful to have found my niche in chaplaincy and for the support to enter that field. I am grateful to my clergy colleagues who offered support and encouragement and especially the women ministers who opened doors along the way. I wish the church as a whole could be as positive and affirming of its leaders and ministers as the school environment I worked in, was of me.

I want them to know that effective ministry can happen at the local parish level in quite ordinary ways as we seek to encourage people in their faith and serve our communities. It isn't about being competitive as to who is doing the best.

That I love the PCANZ but their expectations of what a minister does might just lead me to burnout. I am grateful for the role they have played in my formation.

That I value them. I have wonderful colleagues to work with: both men and women. I haven't felt hurt by them. Presbyterian men have felt careful of language more than in other denominations.

In contrast, there was again some suspicion about why this question was being asked and where the information would go.

For what purpose? I am a multifaceted person therefore I am assuming the information would be dependent on what and why the PCANZ wanted to know about me.

My first response is: Who is the PCANZ? And my second is: what will the Moderator do with the knowledge? What could it benefit them – whoever they are – or me to offer this most important information?

I don't think I do [want the PCANZ to know about me]. I just want to get on and help people. I have done all sorts of things I was asked to do. I want to be in the right place at the right time to do what God wants me to do.

The issue of isolation was raised as a major theme and this related generally to being in a rural area, being a single person, in out-of-parish ministry or being in sole charge. This isolation also included a need for support and came from young and old. Isolation was not necessarily geographical but also relational.

That I've always been grateful for the training I received and the opportunities to serve the church that I've had. That I'm hanging in there by a bit of a thread, feeling like I'm on the edge of things now that I'm not in parish ministry. I believe deeply that new life will come out of the dying institution of the PCANZ and I'm trying to be open to what God might be calling me to in that regard.

Retirement does not mean invisibility. Skills and wisdom do not disappear overnight! Sometimes I wonder why the wider community values ministry skills more than the church.

As a minister who serves a rural local small parish, I want the PCANZ to know about me as one who is working hard by utilizing all her experiences (a migrant, mother and former teacher) at the front line in a spiritual battle field where resources and the level of energy are very low.

That I feel marginalised. That although the PCANZ says that it is gender equal it is not what I feel or what I see or what I experience. And I am frustrated that the PCANZ doesn't seem to want to have a discussion about the reality.

There are times I feel so tired I don't want anyone to know about me. But we do need a shakeup sometimes. We need to re look at gender issues. We are still teaching youth songs with "he" (for God) in.

I resigned for health issues. Since I stepped back I find it isolating. I feel that I am invisible. The church has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars training. There has

been no follow up or debrief. There is supposed to be. It feels like we have disappeared.

For me in my situation (rural) I need relational collegial colleagues gathering people on board. National business meetings will not sustain ministry. We all need to be drinking from the same well. We need to make real space for the young to exercise leadership. When I go to gatherings I yearn for my colleagues to make space for emerging young leaders.

SUGGESTED CHANGES TO DEVELOP A COMMUNITY OF EQUALS WITH MUTUAL REGARD FOR EACH OTHER

The majority of answers focused on a need be Christ centred, to trust each other, listen to each other, and have respect for each other. This includes accepting diversity.

I think there has to be more recognition of how rich and varied models of ministry, styles of ministry, language of ministry can be without losing credibility. Ministers are called out to the crossroads – the streets where God is working – flexibility and creativity are of great importance. God is Trinity therefore God is relational – if we could focus on that and then start talking and connecting we might get somewhere

As we take time to listen to one another's stories, perhaps we will be more able to celebrate God at work in each one of us.

We all need to see that the church is made up of a huge variety of ministers and elders– different in gender, theology, personality, approach to mission. If we have a limited understanding of who is in the church, we have a limited understanding of the God we seek to serve, and we all miss out.

If we truly believe we are all one in Christ (Galatians 3:28), through bible studies on a local level and a new scholarship on a national level together with ongoing communications about these issues in Church will bring changes in the end.

Acceptance of diversity of God's creation. Acceptance of God's calling different people to minister his grace within his church. Trusting that God has 'got it right'. And laughing with God's humour, crying with God's sorrow, and rejoicing in God's ever-renewing love of his creation.

Respect and love one another in the Lord because I am always conscious that Christ allowed me into his service. He has never left me and has made to life in abundance. Be here to help one another. I would like women in the church to be utilised. I have experienced amazing things with God. We absolutely have to listen to each other. Everyone can talk and talk and talk, but are we really listening? Any dialogue can assume but did you listen??

CASE 9

These are actually things that are already happening I think, but let's find ways to grow them. Stop generalising. It's not us women against those men. Men have been some of my best mentors and encouragers to be who I am. Listen. (And do I find this difficult!) We all have gifts and insecurities. Watch our language. I think the words we use are intimidating and excluding for all sorts of people, not just women.

Experiment. Instead of the well-thought-out legalese of the BOO and GA let's play a bit and see if another process might work. Run assertiveness/recognising bullying courses. And do it with more than just women ministers. This is happening all over the church, to all sorts of people. I sometimes worry that like the abused becoming the abuser, I am guilty of bullying in the same way I have been bullied.

The second suggested change was to the formal opportunities for discussion such as in the General Assembly and the lack of diversity in the people in positions where change could be addressed. These were seen to limit opportunities for listening to and connecting with each other. All of this focuses both on the processes by which meetings are conducted and the people who are in positions of power who will influence decisions.

People who have power need to let it go and encourage others to come through.

I think Patriarchy came in with 'the fall' so maybe it is our need for humility recognising that we need one another. Although I am grateful for the "Book of Order" as it does keep us safe as a church, there are some who use it as a law book, fighting for rights and forgetting grace. I think this applies in all areas of ministry – women do tend to do things differently and this needs to be celebrated and embraced by the whole church – let us learn from one another.

How we relate to one another counts for more than who is right and who is wrong.

Our debating structures at GA level need to change– dialogue groups go some way towards this. Also figuring out ways in which people can participate fully if English is not their first language, and where agreement is reached via ways other than debate. I think it is a process which suits white males best... or women who can behave like white males.

Change the way we gather. It is still too formal. There is too much business as the interactions are not happening.

The hierarchy. A lot of men around seem to have the need to feel important. That ego gets in the way. People who love to talk are greedy and take a lot of "air time" getting attention and to feel important. They are hungry for air time. Women are not immune from that. It limits us from being a community of equals

I think there need to be some women who take a fighting stance down a bit. Just get on with things. In general have a "fight the battle" stance is destructive but I think that attitude is not as strong now as it used to be.

Three specific challenges to the church came from one non-parish minister and two parish ministers who raised important considerations.

More preparation needs to be done with immigrant communities coming into the PCANZ in terms of their expectations of women – their cultural expectations of their own women as well as women in leadership in the church. It would be great if we could relax and just be who we are in God – thoroughly loved and acceptable- and allow others the space to be who they are. Less competition and more compassion!

I wish we could join the world wide huge passion for women that our young people are involved with. I would like to see men fighting for equality for women. I would like permission to voice what I stopped talking about some time ago (2-3 decades) because I didn't want to create division. I buried it because I wanted to get a job.

We ought to be aware of the challenges of declining and aging membership and while some are aware of the opportunities to rethink what it means to be church and how we understand mission engagement in our own back yard, the structures and imagination of the PCANZ make it like a big ship with a very small rudder. It cannot change direction with any speed. In the church, we do expect it to happen quickly. We expect that we share the same aims and values and language – but we don't. We expect that others will change quickly once they catch on – but they won't. There is an urgency to our need to change course – but it cannot be forced.

General concluding words from some of the women who participated in this survey:

I apologise for leaving this to the last minute but I don't always find surveys such as this easy to fill in as I know I am often a minority voice “who has no understanding of the issues we face as women evidently” to quote from another woman minister. I therefore tend to ignore surveys and simply get on with what I am doing.

My years of ministry have had their ups and downs, the highlights and low lights; I have seen injustice and domestic violence; I have seen people fighting for the right to die their own way (and I am not talking about euthanasia) and families unable to “let them go”. I have heard language I didn't know existed and seen random acts of senselessness, taken funerals for people who in Jesus' day would be labelled sinners and tax collectors. So many things my training never prepared me for but not once has my gender been a consideration for how I ministered. Ministry is above gender and I follow where I have been called.

I was surprised at how cautious I felt about answering the questions because I was not sure if the committee and the church would have access to my personal information or how or where this would be archived. I have learned in the church to be careful and cautious about who I trust. Sad really as I do not feel this way in community organisations.

I led a service for a girls' college and asked women who had been to the UN from PCANZ to speak of their experiences and what they had learned. It was a good service

but I was shocked and dismayed: blindsided, when our session clerk (an older woman) wrote this in the next parish newsletter. "There is a danger that another person might take advantage of their captive audience to pursue their own agenda as happened at a recent service when we were subjected to a political discourse. Of course, we have had some brilliant speakers over the past year (named several men). Perhaps better communication throughout all levels and all congregations at this church would prevent such a thing happening in the future". When I asked her about her comments she said that some of the men in the congregation had felt very uncomfortable in the service. She seemed completely unaware that she had slammed the contribution of three women as political while giving a big tick of approval to three men.

I really think that the whole area of bullying needs to be investigated in the church. The bullying behaviour of some parishioners towards ministers and sometimes the bullying behaviour by ministers towards their parishioners. This is for both men and women in ministry. This sort of behaviour should not be tolerated at all. But it is generally ignored or endured. I have had first-hand experience of the massive stress and upset that violent behaviour toward me from a parishioner can inflict.

I had always thought there were no gender issues in the church until I started my training for ministry. I feel that I was so naïve.

We have a long way to go in our recognition of equality of genders within the church. In the last Assembly, very few women appeared in leadership roles; yet again the guest speaker was male; and the language and comments were too often condescending and belittling. One of the worst examples was a group of people being introduced to Assembly – all the men were presented as the Rev X or Y and the woman minister as 'a young lass whose father was a respected minister". This has to change. Aware as I am of music and worship at this time I found it difficult to sing words of inclusiveness and being 'one people' as those words were sung out by those who had just resolved to exclude others. The Assembly was exhausting, emotional, frustrating and occasionally deeply moving. In the end, there was Jesus Christ amidst a deeply flawed and broken people – and it was so obvious that we cannot do this "being church" by ourselves. We can only find hope in the person and love of Christ.

The older generation is often perceived as the "difficult" generation and not open to change. Well, many of the older folk are quite embracing of a new and different way of doing things; not denying that there is also the mentality still alive and well that "this is how it was done in my day..." There is also the challenge of how to cater across the board-or should we channel our energies and concentrate on one group? Challenges for sure, but the rewards/learnings are also readily imminent.

A HISTORY OF THE MINISTRY OF MĀORI WOMEN IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

Introduction:

In any situation in the Māori world all proceedings must begin with the voice of a woman and subsequently end with a women's voice, without the women's voice nothing can happen. In korero purakau (traditional Māori story telling) women have an esteemed place as the carriers of knowledge, genealogy and prayer. In both the Maui and Tawhaki cycle of stories when they set out on quests they turn first to their grandmothers for guidance on matters that confront them often when they are at an impasse. The advice from their grandmothers equips them to achieve their goal of improving the quality of life for their community. I often attend many different hui (meetings) and wananga (schools of learning) and in the introductions successive male participants will often state that they were taught by their grandmother. The stories and practices of old are still repeated today.

In Te Aka Puaho, the Māori Synod you will often see this principle of the women's voice being heard and obeyed before any other voice is heard still being practiced today. In this reflection on the voice of Māori women within the Presbyterian church as part of the wider project by the Leadership sub-committee I will share some of the history and stories of Māori women ministers and leaders, their struggles and celebrations. I have been privileged to have known and been mentored by some of the people of whom I write of while others I have walked alongside as a journey partner and teacher.

In 1843 the first Māori mission was established in Te Awahou (Foxton) yet it would be another one hundred and thirty-five years before the first Māori woman was ordained as a minister of Word and Sacrament within the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand. The plight of Māori women struggling to be recognised within their own church as leaders and break the yoke of white male patriarchy which was first challenged by Sister Alison Spence and Mrs Emare Poraumati.

The annuals of history have not been kind and as a church we too often have suffered from collective amnesia when it comes to Mrs Poroumati who even in the Māori Synod is not known or recognised. In 2005 when I was organising the fiftieth jubilee of the Synod I came across a photo of Mrs Poraumati that said she was part of the Māori missions working in the Taupo-Tokaanu mission station. Records of her involvement in the Māori missions were few but I did find that she was employed at a minimal rate as an assistant to the missionary Henry Fletcher. In 2007 we assisted Dr Lachlan Paterson to research the Deaconesses within the Māori Synod and further records were found on Mrs Poraumati and her struggles within the Mission. In September 2017 a book *He Reo Wahine, Māori Women's*

Voices from the Nineteenth Century written by Dr Paterson and Dr Angela Wanhalla was released at the Hocken in Dunedin and I was asked to bless the book. I opened the book to page 286 and saw Mrs Emare Poraumati mentioned several times and used words from one of her letters to bless the book.

What I can tell you now from her own letters is that she was from the Te Arawa confederation of Iwi in Rotorua. She was born in 1868 and converted to Christianity joining the Salvation Army in 1892. She was trained as a missionary by the Salvation Army and became a noted letter writer to the Salvation Army Publication *The War Cry* where she discussed her conversion to Christianity to encourage other Māori in the Salvation Army.

In 1907 the Presbyterian Māori Missions Committee decided to experiment with employing Deaconesses as mission workers to work as assistants along-side its sole missionary in Taupo the Rev Henry Fletcher. Both Mrs Poraumati and Sister Alison were successfully employed with Rev Fredrick Augustus Bennett who went on to be the first Bishop of Aotearoa supporting Mrs Poraumati.¹⁷ Emare although a keen evangelist was not trained at Deaconess College in Dunedin but had received training with the Salvation Army. She concentrated her main mission work on the southern end of Lake Taupo based in Tokaanu. If the crops failed then the people in Tokaanu would go without food. Her mission was to care for the sick and to feed the hungry often to the detriment of her own health. With what little remuneration she was given she spent on feeding the hungry and the Missions committee authorised a small fund to assist her in feeding the hungry. Working with the sick eventually took its toll on her own health and she wrote:

*I feel very much run down but while I stop here I cannot have proper rest, I must go out and help my people.*¹⁸

Two years into her mission with her health failing the Mission Committee under took a review of the Taupo mission and decided to close the Tokaanu mission and Mrs Emare Poraumati disappeared from our Presbyterian memories.

Possibly the greatest achievement of Henry Fletcher was the establishment of Turakina Māori Girls College in in 1905. The school lasted for one hundred and ten years before closure in 2015 but in that time, it fostered many young Māori women who find a calling in the church. One such women was Horiana Te Kauru from the Ngāti Kahungunu and Ngāti Porou iwi in the Nuhaka and Tikitiki areas. Horiana was educated at the Turakina school and was the first student to return to her old school as a teacher. In 1918 she

¹⁷ Both the Bishop and Mrs Poraumati were from the same Iwi in Rotorua.

¹⁸ Letter, Mrs Poraumati to Ryburn, 10 September 1908, PMMC inward (1908), ARC-PCANZ, Dunedin.

answered a call from the Māori Missions committee for missionary teachers in the Waiohau valley amongst the Ngāti Haka, Patuheuheu people of Ngai Tuhoe. Three women who successfully selected Miss Webber, Miss Johnston and Horiaana. They began their journey to Waiohau travelling by horse driven coach and one on the same coach was a young John Laughton on his way to his first posting with the Māori missions in Maungapohatu. When Horiaana arrived in Waiohau an influenza epidemic had swept through the community taking many lives and people were found under trees either alive or dead. Along with her two colleagues she helped establish the Waiohau school which is still in existence today and the Waiohau Mission station which still functions today as a Church and health clinic. Three years after meeting Laughton on the coach they were married and living in Maungapohatu where she became a dominant figure as the Missions evolved into a Synod.

It would be another thirty-six years before another Māori woman would enter leadership in the church, Miss Jean Ngatai also of Ngāti Porou and Ngāti Kahungunu. Aunty Jean entered Te Wānanga a Rangi, the Māori Theological College in Whakatane to train as a Deaconess in 1954. Deaconesses had been integral to the growth of the Māori missions having pioneered the majority of Mission stations in rural Māori communities often living in substandard accommodation and at a lesser remuneration than their male 'ordained minister' colleagues. Aunty Jean was the first Māori woman accepted to train as a Deaconess. At the Wānanga a Rangi she attended the same classes, completed the same assignments, sat the same exams and completed the same practical component as her male counterparts. It was hoped that others would follow her example and discussions commenced with Deaconess training where the Whakatane based trainees could spend one year at Deaconess College after completing studies at the Wānanga a Rangi. By her second year she married fellow student Tom Hawea and her Deaconess training finished as a requirement was that you had to be single. Uncle Tom mentioned to one of our many korero that although Aunty Jean did not complete her training they in effect exercised a joint-ministry. Together they ministered in Ruatahuna, Te Whaiti, Wellington, Kawerau and Tuatapera where Aunty Jean died in the early 1980s.

Meri Kahukura followed Aunty Jean into the Wānanga a Rangi and completed her Deaconess training in Whakatane and at Deaconess College in Dunedin. Aunty Meri is the daughter of Puhi Tatu who Vincent Ward based his movie *Rain of the Children* on. Aunty Meri was adopted by the Missionary teacher Irene Paulger and brought up in Maungapohatu where Irene was based. Aunty Meri has stated on many occasions that this was the happiest times of her life with Miss Paulger who ensured that Meri was educated at Turakina Māori Girls College and is one of the eldest surviving students as she nears her ninetieth year. Aunty Meri became the first Māori woman Deaconess in 1963 and assisted Tom and Jean Hawea to establish the Wellington Māori parish while resourcing Wellington Presbytery as their

bicultural mission advisors. Eventually married Pene Taka also a Wānanga graduate who would become Moderator of the Māori Synod. After Pene 'Uncle Ben' died Aunty Meri took up ministry in Auckland where she was ordained as a Minister, the first Māori woman minister in the Presbyterian church and the second Māori women minister in any denomination. The first Māori woman ordained as a minister was Puti Murray of the Anglican church who was ordained three months before Meri. Both Meri and Puti knew each other and encouraged each other in their journey and attended each other's ordinations.

Rev Meri served in Auckland with her second husband Eric Caton and the Bastion Point occupation was at its height with the tragic death of Joe Hawkes daughter. Aunty Meri received a call from the family requesting that she be the officiating minister at the tangi and funeral of the young girl. She accepted the invitation and conducted her first funeral service. Never in the history of the country had a Māori woman stood on a marae to conduct a funeral service and for many this was a challenge to culture and male patriarchy but Aunty Meri's reply was that 'all things are possible in Christ.' Often Aunty Meri would quietly challenge other Māori women who were afraid of taking services on a marae as it was against protocol with the response to stop hiding behind your culture. It had been explained to Aunty Meri when she was a minister that once the bell rings on a marae this is Gods time and the marae is under the mantle of the minister, male, female, young or old and as she was the presiding minister the time was hers.

Aunty Meri moved to Wellington and along with her husband and other established the Te Kakano o Te Aroha Church Marae in Moera. When the Lange Labour lead Government were sworn in as Government in 1984 Aunty Meri was invited by the Tai Tonga MP Whetu Tirakatene-Sullivan to be the first kaikaranga in Parliament she later repeated this when Sir Paul Reeves became Governor-General. Now having a kaikaranga at Parliament is the norm. In the mid-1990s Meri retired and moved to Whakatane where she lives today still actively involved in the life of the Whakatane Māori parish and the life of the Māori Synod.

When I became Director of Amorangi ministry training in 2005 four people became my tuara my backbone. One was Aunty Meri, the others Rev Erana Manihera and her husband Tiakina (Jack) Manihera and my mother Mrs Millie Te Kaawa who was also Moderator of Synod. Aunty Meri attended every training event and graduation at Ohope marae for the thirteen years of my term until April 2017. Like Maui and Tawhaki every time I reached an impasse or needed advice on a teaching matter I would always refer to my tuara Aunty Meri. In accordance with our cultural practices I would always ensure that Aunty Meri always had the last word in any class. Aunty Meri's words of wisdom to all our students was simple 'as an ordained minister it is always a privilege to stand in the place of Jesus Christ and represent him, never take it for granted.'

Rev Meri is a role model for every Māori women who has entered ordained ministry in the Presbyterian church. One such person is Hariata Haumate of Ruatahuna and like Meri educated at Turakina Māori Girls College in the 1950s. Aunty Hariata became a teacher and after raising her children she became an Amorangi minister in the year 2000 and ministered in Murupara. She wanted to go further in her ministry and entered what is KCML today and spent two wonderful years furthering her skills and knowledge of ministry. She graduated from KCML in 2005 as the first Māori woman graduate of those hallowed halls. She returned to Murupara for a further year before becoming the fulltime minister in Wellington at Te Kakano o te Aroha church-marae in Moera. She eventually retired home to Ruatahuna and in true fashion we say in the Māori Synod 'there is no such thing as retirement' she continues to minister today.

Conclusion:

It has been a 173-year journey for Māori women ministers within the Presbyterian church from the days of non-existence, to invisibility to partial-visibility as the 'wife' to ordained ministers claiming their own voice. What once was a trickle has become an over-whelming flood as twenty-four Māori women have become ordained Amorangi Ministers of Word and Sacrament within the Presbyterian church since 1980. This constitutes 40% of all our Amorangi ministers throughout history. This century we have also broken the last bastion of male dominance and patriarchy by electing women Moderators beginning with Mrs Mona Riini, Mrs Millie Amiria Te Kaawa and this year Ms Marina Rakuraku. On each occasion, each person was offered the opportunity to become ordained Amorangi ministers but each declined the invitation satisfied with being ordained Elders as they believed this is an ordained ministry in its own right. These trend-setters have not only changed the church but they have changed society. Where it was once unthinkable to have a Māori woman minister it has now become the norm.

To end this reflection, I wish to conclude by offering a challenge to the Presbyterian church to reflect upon. Our records show that in our history we have had twenty-five Māori women ministers, sadly only two have every been paid. In ministry they have been wives, mothers, grand-mothers, beneficiaries, working mothers, solo-mothers, educators, weavers, cooks, kaikaranga, singers, dish washers and cleaners on the marae, baby-sitters, nurses, carers, advisors and teachers. What monetary, resource and collegiality value, does the church give to specifically support Māori women ministers or does their voice continue to go unheard and do they remain to minister in isolation?

IN SUMMARY

As with any survey, capturing the richness of the experiences has needed to be balanced with ensuring that the information included will provide inspiration and opportunities for the future while protecting the integrity of any respondent's answers. Some information given will not appear in this report because the women had no confidence in the processes of the church to deal with serious incidents. There have been concerns expressed about the safety of being involved in the survey and how the information will be used.

In order to maximise confidentiality, all authors of the Cases and of a number of individual answers, have given their permission for these to be included. Keeping anonymity has been more difficult for some respondents, mainly in answers from out of parish and non-European ministers. Having such personal and honest answers from all respondents has meant that a lot can be learned from the varied experiences.

The overall impression is of a highly committed strong and resilient group of women who are passionate about the path to which they have been called. The calls into ministry have been strong and persistent, and dedication to these calls has been balanced with family commitments such as to partners, children and elderly parents. In addition to all of the teaching, preaching and pastoral commitments, a commitment to ongoing learning has been a focus for many of these ministers, with an impressive number of women completing high level academic degrees. There was however still some dissatisfaction with the status of women in the church.

The differences between the answers in the earlier and current studies were mainly in the increasing acceptance of women as competent ministers with different ways of ministry and in the number of women who are satisfied with their current positions and their career accomplishments. However, there are still significant leadership areas in which women are not visible; although there are some women who have suggested that this may be less a gender than a theological or generational issue.

Responses to several questions show that relationships built with other ministers through a common understanding of ministry challenges and the benefits of others' experiences is supportive and highly valued. Opportunities for women to meet together and to have role models of other women in the initial teaching phase of ministry development and in leadership positions is also highly valued.

A new issue for the church, is that although there has been an inclusion of Pacific and Asian women into ministry, the opportunities to find their place in leadership is considered to be restricted because of cultural constraints or perceptions.

The positive opportunities women now have, are a central theme in this report. Although these bring satisfaction within individual ministry situations, there are still areas of ministry which have a negative impact on the opportunities for women to utilise all the gifts they bring.

Five areas which were of concern emerged in the answers: These were

- the safety of women to say what they believe and feel
- the emotional and physical safety of women in the church
- the lack of women in training and leadership roles
- the need for women to be seen in places of leadership within regional and national bodies
- the need to address inequalities of systems which benefit some and exclude others

With regard to these points, the safety for women¹⁹ both emotionally and physically in both parish work and within the courts of the church is of concern. There does not appear to be a safe process to which a complaint can be directed. When serious complaints have been laid, the experiences of the women who reported them were that they were not safe processes. In contrast however, references to quality chairing of meetings have been reported as providing some control in Presbyteries when there is proactive recognition of breaches of behaviour.

There is evidence through this report that it is difficult for women to be actively involved in discussions at General Assembly. Behaviour which intimidates, or is disparaging is bullying and unacceptable. Current styles of business and theological discussion in the governance/courts/processes of the church are not conducive to the participation of many of the women ministers who work well within a more collegial, collaborative and consensus model of decision making. Women recognised that their styles of leadership and preaching may be different from those of men, but are equally valid. Acknowledgement of the strength of diversity in governance and leadership would increase their valuable contributions which are presently underutilised.

There have been suggestions throughout this report that those women who are confident in leadership and governance roles need to be aware that other women may not be as confident and need mentoring. It is important that access to information which may lead to opportunities in decision making committees is available to all women and not only to those already in positions of responsibility. What is also important is providing assistance for newly ordained ministers to navigate through the political processes of the national and local church meetings.

Although the move to a training programme with block courses has many very positive features such as being able to remain at home with a family, working in a range of parishes and access to good teaching and library facilities; there are some perceived disadvantages. The main concerns are; the lack of women lecturers currently in the training programme., and a lack of diversity in training and in national and local leadership. This is reported as important in encouraging and validating alternative ways to lead and minister. In addition, the opportunity to develop collegial relationships with other clergy through longer-term training in a residential situation is limited. The relational aspect of opportunities through training and ministry is frequently cited as being a strong source of support. Once in a

¹⁹ Examples of misconduct, both emotional and physical, by parishioners and male ministers were reported in confidence but not recorded in the report.

ministerial position, the pace and commitment of work precludes time to organise informal or formal opportunities for discussion with other women clergy. There was a universal desire for gatherings at which women meet, apart from business focused meetings.

There were situations when timely assistance of an independent professional nature was needed and was not easily available. These were usually where there was a breakdown of relationships within a church, a marriage breakdown, inappropriate behaviour by clergy or parishioners or there was a proposed church closure. Management training and access to information about appropriate external agencies would provide a valuable resource.

Pastoral support from the church in general and targeted inclusion for those in rural and out of parish ministers is an important consideration as there were differences in the ways in which presbyteries were involved in actively supporting and mentoring new and isolated women ministers. For out of parish ministers, there is a similar need, as unintended exclusion from the church in general could occur. For a small number of ministers, the relevance of belonging to the PCANZ has been questioned; particularly the membership of a Presbytery.

The rise in the numbers of youth in some churches through targeted programmes with strong youth leadership and opportunities of preparing young people for church leadership figures strongly in expressed high levels of satisfaction in ministry. Training diverse ethnic groups in a congregation into leadership and encouraging cross ethnic co-operation has also been a highlight for other congregations. It is fortunate that some women in this survey have provided valuable insights into ethnic differences which will assist in a better understanding of others' perspectives. Perhaps these targeted models would work for mentoring more women into ministry.

Women ministers in general are highly satisfied that they are where they are called to be and are able to make a difference to those who are the recipients of their ministry. There is evidence of commitment and innovation in their teaching and preaching and in their approach to service. Some women ministers work outside the confines of their parish and/or within secular institutions and all are committed to spreading the love of God.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This research report has a great deal of positive and encouraging words from many of the women regarding their experience of ministry in the PCANZ. However, there are still a number of issues that are concerning for them as a church and in consultation with others, the oversight committee has developed the following statement of intent to work together to use this research to develop a plan of action as follows:

We realise the important role of education and exemplifying behaviour in making people aware of what are often unintentional or unthinking language and behaviour that marginalises groups within our church. We are heartened by the realization of the need for change and hope that this research report will encourage conversations about what is and is not appropriate if we wish to truly exemplify a fruitful church of diverse and equally valued ministry.

In putting forward these recommendations, we recognise the issues are relevant not just to women but also to the wider church and will, when addressed, contribute significantly to the wider health and safety of the whole body and the ministry within it. Cultural insensitivity, lack of mentoring, inequalities, bullying, processes that empower dominant groups apply to all aspects of church life and need to be addressed. We lament the presence of the marginalization of women and others in the PCANZ and seek to work with the whole church to change this.

We also recognise the need for a suitable platform for the input of men into the issues and recommendations this research report has raised. This report is not intended to be the final word but rather a platform for further dialogue and conversation. While we identified the need for different parts of the church to accept the lead responsibility for these necessary changes in attitude and process, the real cultural change will come not from edicts or committees but from a movement of those who have a genuine concern about gender and cultural inequality and a desire to make a difference. Women and men who not only agree with the need for change but also have an understanding of the ways we must amend our behaviour will be the catalyst for change at all levels of being church

The following recommendations have been designed to facilitate learning through dialogue and discussion in order to engage the whole diversity of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand.

RECOMMENDATION 1 THE REFORM OF GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT PROCESSES.

It is apparent from the research that a number of women find the processes for debate and decision making within the national, regional and parish church unhelpful and sometimes unsafe. The ability to speak into an issue is not in question but rather the way in which the process becomes adversarial and divisive for the church. Too often a

particular platform is adopted rather than people listening and discerning what the Spirit is saying to the church. We believe that this form of decision making marginalises not just women but also the tangata whenua and other cultural groups of the PCANZ.

We would recommend that the church moves from the current model of decision making to one of respect and listening and discernment by:

- **Identifying models that implement collaborative and participatory decision making.**
- **Adopting and promoting a model at all levels of church courts where decision making processes ensure a safe and encouraging context for women and men, cultural groups and differing personalities.**
- **Asking Assembly Business Committee to review processes in light of the report**

RECOMMENDATION 2 IDENTIFICATION AND COMPLIANCE WITH HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES.

Unsafe practices are occurring within the church for some women. The acceptance of gender equality is not universal and, while a good number of women feel comfortable challenging that behaviour, for others it can lead to abusive or demeaning relationships within ministry. It is important to recognise where our processes, language and polity support this continuing disenfranchising of groups within the church and seek to change it. Any form of bullying or inequality within the PCANZ is unacceptable - we would seek increased awareness of the issue and tools with which to recognise and prevent such behaviour. We recommend that the church moves to identify unsafe practices and change the culture of the PCANZ to make it a safe place for all people by:

- **Providing bullying recognition and assertiveness training at Presbytery level and an expectation that such behaviour will not be acceptable**
- **Implementing practices and attitudes at training institutions, and at national church, presbytery and parish levels that will comply with the regulations and standards on equality agreed to by the church.**
- **Requiring national and regional staff to have compulsory training in gender equality and bullying recognition practice.**
- **Updating and expanding the handbook on the use of inclusive language in worship (KCML 2011) to address the language in the church as a whole.**
- **Providing adequate mentoring and pastoral care for all ministers; especially to all rural, sole charge and new ministers within Presbyteries.**

RECOMMENDATION 3 IDENTIFICATION AND SUPPORT FOR ADDRESSING ISSUES SPECIFIC TO WOMEN MINISTERS OF MAORI, PASIFIKA AND MIGRANT ETHNICITY

This recommendation is the beginning of a conversation that is still to be held. There were sufficient responses to indicate that there were issues for Maori women of resourcing and recognition and for Pasifika women of recognition and status within their own cultural context. To go any further than identifying possible conversations would be inappropriate in this context but it is obvious that there are concerns regarding gender behaviour for some women. We recommend that these issues be further explored by:

- **Supporting and encouraging research for and by Maori women to explore their ministry role.**
- **Supporting research for and by Pasifika women into issues facing them within their own culture including the lack of call to Pasifika parishes.**

RECOMMENDATION 4 VALUING AND INCREASING THE CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN IN CHURCH LEADERSHIP AND TRAINING.

The number of women in leadership roles does not reflect the ratio of women in ministry and we would ask why this is? It was very obvious at the 2016 Assembly, both in the opening worship and through the duration of the Assembly that there was an imbalance. It may be that the style of polity or the high level of commitment is an influence in women not putting themselves forward and this needs to be actively explored. Awareness of the value of having diverse voices representing our national and regional church bodies can only make for a healthier and more vibrant body.

It is clear too that, while the support for gender equality is widespread, the understanding of what this actually means requires education and guidance. Insult not intended is still insult received and we need to respectfully explore better ways of interaction.

We recognise that the concept of equality is wider than the issue of gender and so we feel strongly that, as a church, we should be fostering codes of practice based firmly on the understanding that in Christ we are one people.

We recommend a leadership that reflects the values of equality and diversity throughout all the structures of the church by:

- **Achieving a gender balance in national and regional leadership in the church**
- **Researching, encouraging and supporting women to take on leadership roles.**
- **Foster a theology of equality as a way forward for addressing some of the ethnic and gender inequalities operating for women in ministry.**

RECOMMENDATION 5 MENTORING WOMEN INTO AND THROUGH MINISTRY

While this is an issue for all people in leadership, the research report raised the varying supports needed that are particularly relevant for women. The different nature of societal expectation on women, particularly in parenting, that prevail in our culture can prove a stumbling block for entrance into and the exercising of the full gift of ministry within the PCANZ. Working less than full time carries an expectation of lesser authority in some cases and it would be interesting to research statistics regarding the role of women in team ministries. This also impacts on women even considering the call to nationally ordained ministry. More flexible ways of exercising ministry would encourage women to use their talents and gifts in ways that grow and bless the church.

We recommend that women are mentored into and through ministry by:

- **Targeting youth networks for beginning conversations**
- **Providing leadership opportunities within congregations**
- **Intentionally identifying and encouraging women with the appropriate skills and abilities to consider discerning their call to ordained ministry.**
- **Widening understanding of opportunities for ministry models beyond the fulltime one parish mode**
- **Encouraging women to actively seek collegial support by attending local women's groups, conferences, seminars, events for women such as the annual Presbyterian Women of Aotearoa NZ Delegation to the United Nations in New York**

RECOMMENDATION 6 THAT TRAINING INSTITUTIONS DEMONSTRATE AND TEACH GENDER EQUALITY

One of the most positive aspects of this report is the value of the respective training institutions for most ministers. There has been concern over time that the predominance of pakeha men in teaching positions needs addressing and we would encourage active engagement of the church to ensure this happens. It is at this time of formation and training that many candidates face challenges to their understandings in a new way and are required to engage fully with other thinking. The ability to discuss issues and hear new voices impacts future ministry and so it is very important to raise the issue of equality in all the facets that this report addresses. We would encourage ways of teaching that allow the stories of women and other marginalized groups to be shared in person with those in formation for ministry.

We recommend that training institutions demonstrate and encourage discussion on gender equality by:

- **Preparing and implementing an action strategy ensuring diversity in teaching staff**

- Seeking inclusive language and gender equality as part of regular 5 year reviews of training institutions
- Supporting methods of training that engage the students with the realities of gender and other inequalities in the church.

There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3;28

APPENDIX A

SURVEY QUESTIONS

Women in ministry 2016

If you participated in the research 25 years ago please tick here.....

1. Please describe your career background and pathway to the decision to train for ministry?
2. Please identify the model of ministry you trained under? (e.g. Theological Hall, School of Ministry, KCML, CBMT, Amorangi, other)
3. What challenges and benefits did you experience as a woman training in this model? (List or explain)
4. In what year were you ordained?

Ministry:

1. What has been your ministry pathway since you completed your training? Please list and indicate if the positions were fulltime or part time: Paid or unpaid. If applicable include your active involvement since retirement.
2. What openings or barriers existed for you when you were available for call?
3. What committee or management positions in the PCANZ have you been involved in since ordination?
4. To what extent have personal circumstances determined the track you have followed in your ministry career?
5. What key challenges (if any) have you experienced in exercising ordained ministry?
6. What accomplishments are you most satisfied with in your ministry?

Support in ministry:

1. What support was helpful for you during ministry training?
2. What have been your key support networks since Ordination?
3. Was there any support you would have liked to be available to you?

Gender

1. How was gender acknowledged and addressed during your training?
2. What expectations does your current ministry community (eg congregation, chaplaincy) have of you as a woman in ministry. How does your gender aid or hamper you in your ministry?
3. What (if any) gender issues are there currently within the structures of the PCANZ?

4. In which ministry contexts are you most aware of your gender? Please explain your answer or give examples.
5. What styles of governance work well or limit involvement for women in the PCANZ? Please give examples.
6. Are you aware of any positive discrimination or biased practices within the church? Please explain

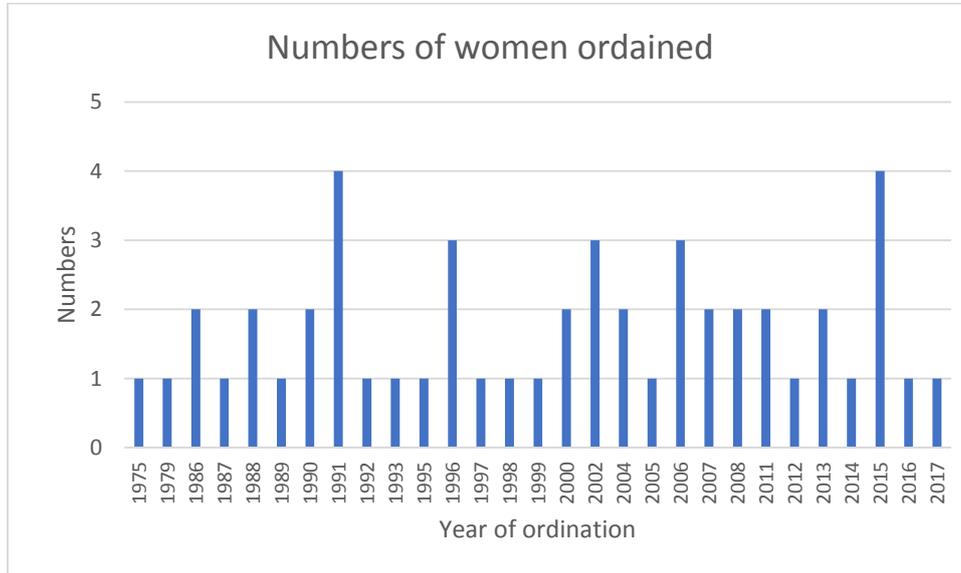
General

1. What (if anything) prohibits women from flourishing in ministry?
2. From your experience, what do you most want the PCANZ to know about you?
3. What has to change so that we can all participate in a community of equals with mutual regard for one another?

If there is anything further you would like to add please write it here.

APPENDIX B

TABLE 1: DATES OF ORDINATION



APPENDIX C

PRIOR TERTIARY QUALIFICATIONS

Primary and secondary education

Social work

Accountancy

Physiotherapy

Agricultural Science

Counselling

Healthcare

Dentistry and dental nursing

Science

Divinity

English

APPENDIX D

WOMEN IN MINISTRY WITHIN TE AKA PUAHO:

Women Moderators:

Mrs Mona Riini	1998-2003
Mrs Millie Amiria Te Kaawa	2005-2011
Ms Marina Rakuraku	2017-

Women Ministers:

Rev Meri Caton	Rev Naomi H Koia	Rev Erana Manihera
Rev Awatea D Tupe	Rev Wairata Marshall	Rev Bertha H Tautau
Rev Merita Taukamo	Rev Rehia Rangitauira	Rev Kay A Taitoko
Rev Hariata Haumate	Rev Patricia Kingi Koia	Rev Messina Roberts
Rev Tukua Tuwairua	Rev Marino Sherwin Grey	Rev Heather Mataamua
Rev Rangiaukume B Sanderson	Rev Minnie Tahuri – Wilson	
Rev Amiria Judy Hunia-Te Whiu	Rev Horiana Hayes	Rev Judy Katipa
Rev Shirley Wiki	Rev Pane Matthews	Rev Libia Rua
Rev Whaitiri Rangihika	Rev IdaTe Pou	

Māori Women Graduates of Knox Centre for Ministry and Leadership:

Rev Hariata Haumate

Women Administrators and Clerk of Synod:

Mrs Millie Amiria Te Kaawa
Ms Katarina Irving
Ms Tania-Rose Taitoko
Mrs Faye Apanui

Māori Women Deaconesses:

Miss Emare Poroumati
Miss Meri Kahukura

Māori Women Missionary-Teachers:

Miss Horiana Te Kauru

Māori Women Graduates of Te Wānanga a Rangi and Deaconess College:

Miss Meri Kahukura

