

## PREFACE

The Committee on the Status of Women is pleased to present this report, “Reaching Toward Wholeness II, The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Survey” that updates the 1987 action research study prepared by our predecessor committee, The Committee for the Full Participation of Women in the Church.

We are deeply grateful to all the people who made this report possible: to the 1997-2000 Executive Council for funding the initial phase accomplished in the previous triennium; the 2000 General Convention for funding the remainder of the action research; the Presiding Bishop for his support and encouragement and his staff, especially Ms. Patricia Mordecai; Dr. Adair Lummis of Hartford Seminary who directed and guided the committee in the research; and The Rev. Virginia Brown-Nolan, Rector St. Luke’s Church, Washington, DC for her superb job of editing.

We are especially grateful to those bishops whose dioceses participated in the survey, to the diocesan chairs and their committees, to the many survey respondents and to those of you who will read and use the findings from this survey. Eighteen dioceses participated in the survey, nine from the original study and nine new ones, representing a cross section of our church.

The Committee wishes to reiterate a statement from the preface of the original report for its timeless value.

“An essential part of the Gospel itself is the breakdown of barriers that so often separate people. Conversion is never merely a religious experience, it is the ways in which we become members of that new community where people find their identity in Christ rather than in race, social status or sex.”

*World Council of Churches Pentecost 1982*

The results of this survey show that we have slowly begun to break down some of those barriers. Attitudes are changing, conversion is happening, but there is still much more work to be done. We hope the data will be a valuable resource for all those engaged in mission initiatives and program development. The committee’s prayer for the Church is for *baptismal parity*, “the welcoming of all baptized persons into the Body of Christ, where all are included equally and the grace and gifts God has bestowed on each are recognized and fully utilized.” (Blue Book Report 2003)

Marjorie A. Burke, Survey Project Chair

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