



EXECUTIVE COUNCIL of the EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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Cable Address: FENALONG, N.Y.

Lay Ministry Committee-Task Force on Women

June 11, 1976

Dear

You are one of 12 women across the nation significantly involved in the Episcopal Church in a variety of ways. We, the Task Force on Women, write to enlist your help in weighing the feasibility of a post-General Convention conference of women in late 1976 or early 1977.

Right now we do not know what impact the General Convention decisions will have on Episcopal women. We do know the decisions will affect us all. It is our belief that the post-Convention period will be one of confusion, pain, guilt, and anger. The issue which will dramatically demonstrate this is the ordination of women. But others of far-reaching consequence, such as membership on Executive Council, the presidency of the House of Deputies, recognition of the worth of the Triennial Meeting, will affect women too.

With these concerns before us the Task Force proposes a gathering of Episcopal women to talk together about their ministries--lay and ordained--in a setting divorced from decision making.

Presently we are considering a three day residential conference at a non-commercial site in the Mid-west. We would expect to provide a variety of accommodations from sleeping bag space to a private room. Food would be available at the site as well as day care.

We plan to invite all interested women to attend at a reasonable fee (and we hope for some scholarship money). In addition to an open invitation, we would particularly invite some to insure a variety of views. Opportunities for worship, for talking with each other, for sharing experiences or expertise will be built into the conference. In addition we would plan speakers, workshops, and other resources.

To help us would you call or contact at least six other women who represent varied positions and visions of ministry to find out if they would think the conference would be helpful for them and if they prefer one time or another.

Our thinking about a date in November is that the conference would have a sense of immediacy and could deal with current pain. On the other hand, shortness of time is a problem for planning and publicity, many will be exhausted from attending General Convention/Triennial and some will experience financial hardship. Would January, 1977, be better?

We would like your response and if you could take soundings for us could you get the answers to these questions from the persons you contact.

Whether we meet in November or January:

1. What needs of yours would be addressed by such a conference?
2. What could help your needs be met by such a conference?
3. What would make it worthwhile for your?
4. What reservations do you have about such a gathering?
5. At this point do you think:
 - a. You would prefer to come _____ in November? _____ in January?
 - b. You would encourage, contact, persuade others to come?

Our need for feedback from you is urgent because, with either date, we must move ahead rapidly if we decide to hold the conference. We plan to make the final decision on June 22, so a Task Force member will call you between June 18th and 21st for your answer.

Thank you for your help.

Faithfully,

Marge Christie & Jan Pierce
for the conference design committee
Task Force on Women