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God Calls, Man Chooses: A Study of Women in Ministry

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extended tolerance in the face of even radical uniqueness. Stress-related difficulties could be reduced significantly, the general level of people's self-esteem raised appreciatively, and relaxation experienced regularly" (112). "I can honestly say that I saw signs of health and principles of behavior among the people behind that locked door which, if embraced by people on the other side, could contribute to the enhancement of life in an open society" (125).

Although Gaddy did not enter the ordained ministry wishing to "serve as the Messiah", he notes significantly that "my actions revealed a 'messianic mind-set'" (129). "Who but the Messiah sees herself as indispensable in every ministry of the church, imagines that he never requires relaxation and rest, insists on being present at every meeting within a fellowship, determines to give leadership in all realms of an institution's life, always wants another challenge, refuses to acknowledge limitations, gives no thought to the needs of herself? Actually, no one, not even the Messiah" (130). Ironically, "efforts to do more and more are met with abilities to do less and less" (131). Gaddy's word of wisdom: Take seriously what is recorded in Exodus 18:17-18 and in Mark 9:24!

Some of the practical advice Gaddy offers to churches is: Be realistic in your expectations of ministers; remember that perfect pastors are as difficult to find as perfect parishioners; insist that your pastor participate in regularly scheduled experiences of continuing education and relaxation; practice love and grace (162-164). His counsel to ministers, which he inclusively calls "advice to adults" is: Trust God alone; remember that deception destroys more than it preserves; do not ever say "never"; be a friend; play; take care of yourself and your family; keep in touch with reality; ask for help (150-159).

In a day when many are the ministers who are feeling stressed, lonely and/or depressed, "the confessions" of C. Welton Gaddy have much to offer. I have a hunch that we all can find ourselves described somewhere on these pages, and in that recognition there may be some wisdom here for meaningful living and helpful service.

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God Calls: Man Chooses. A Study of Women in Ministry

Grace M. Anderson and Juanne Nancarrow Clarke
Burlington, ON: Trinity Press, 1990
167 pages

As the title indicates this book is a study of women in ministry based on a questionnaire sent to 1985 female graduates of Eastern Canadian seminaries and other institutions providing training for full-time ministry in the

Anglican, Baptist, Presbyterian and United Churches. Although this study did not include Lutheran graduates, nevertheless, many of the insights and statistics apply. The findings of the study were presented with information from other sources such as books on related materials and the results of studies from other professions.

God Calls: Man Chooses presents the realities of women ministers' lives at this point in history. While it touches upon the hopes and vision that many of these women hold for the church, it also addresses the areas that are challenging and frustrating for them.

The statistics show that there is a marked underemployment of women ministers. Furthermore, they are frequently placed in positions as assistants or in the less prestigious calls or in areas traditionally associated with women such as christian education, youth work, and visitation. However, the women in the study expressed a desire to be fully involved in all ministries and positions within the church.

The strengths that women ministers offer include an emphasis on emotionality and caring, social concern, particularly for the marginalized, interest in counselling and healing, inclusivity, the use of different symbols, ways of talking about God, and an interest in deepening spirituality.

The effect and price of tokenism upon women ministers is set out in a direct manner. Exceptional performance is expected leading to a drive for perfection at a cost of time for family, social life and self resulting in a high rate of burn-out.

A rather dismal statistic is the 98% reporting sexual harassment, the major offenders being male colleagues; 95% experienced discrimination on account of gender in various ways. On the other hand, women ministers found their greatest support from other women in ministry and through their inner spiritual practices.

Almost a quarter of the women graduates had left the church for secular employment because the demands were too excessive in addition to coping with a general lack of acceptance or appreciation. There were also those who had returned to secular employment because their spouse's position required the family to remain in a certain location and women pastors could not find a call there.

While women ministers want equal numbers of women and men in all areas of the church's ministry and decision-making committees and boards, this desire is frustrated by the lack of experienced and qualified female candidates because too many women ministers are going back to secular employment. This situation, in turn, is related to the fact that they do not get suitable positions within the church or they find the demands and time requirements too high.

In the placement of women graduates, some denominations were more intentional than others. The Baptist Convention was the most unwilling to accept women ministers and thus were losing them to other denominations. The United Church was the most organized and deliberate in seeing that all their graduates would be placed.

God Calls: Man Chooses is an honest consideration of women in ministry within the Canadian context. It provides an overview of the present lived experience of women in ministry. It raises particular issues, attitudes and practices that need to be examined and adjusted within the various denominations in order that women ministers can answer the divine call into ministry as fully and in as healthy a way as possible. Only then can their gifts and capabilities be properly exercised as God intends for the building up of the church and its mission to the world.

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Aids to the Psalms: Cycle C

Hugh H. Drennan

Lima, Ohio: C.S.S. Pub. Co., Inc., 1991

152 pages

This book proposes to assist the church leader in fostering spiritual growth through increased use of the psalms.

The third in a series of three books, Drennan develops themes in the psalms appointed for Cycle C of the Common Lectionary. Each psalm appears in the New Revised Standard Version of the biblical text followed by an "alternate image" and a brief "reflection".

The "alternate image" segments are set in the context of a singer, troubadour, or minstrel throughout the book. There is a healthy balance between female and male images. Some images are quite innovative such as Good Friday's troubadour with AIDS (Psalm 22). Other image sections are unimaginative expansions of the psalm's existing image. The "reflection" sections exhibit less excitement and sometimes offer facile answers to some of the psalmist's honest scepticism.

The book consistently ignores the thematic movement through the seasons of the church year, e.g., Drennan misses the clarion call of Advent, "For you I wait all day long" (Psalm 25:4), Advent 1. However, he takes several opportunities to point out the theological significance of several Hebrew words, e.g., *hesed* (p. 36), *hallel* (p. 101), *gahal* (p. 138). A glossary of key Hebrew words (p. 10) assists the reader in plumbing the depths of the nuances of important Hebrew concepts.

Preachers looking for creative contemporary images will find some useful material here. In this reviewer's opinion, however, the book falls short of its stated purpose to provide personal spiritual growth opportunities for today's pastor.

Potential readers should be aware that the psalms appointed for the Common Lectionary correspond reasonably well from Advent 1 to The Holy