

Scottish Episcopal Church

Gender Audit Report

As requested by
General Synod 2009

May 2010

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Gender Audit Report

1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

1995 UN General Assembly endorses the Beijing Declaration & Platform for Action, as adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, *a journey of hope and restoration*.
www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/declar.htm

2000 **UN Millennium Development Goals (MDG)** Eight goals to be achieved by 2015 in response to the world's main development challenges.
Goal 3 *gender equality & the empowerment of women* relates to the achievement of all the MDGs. Research demonstrates that societies where women do not have equal rights with men do not develop in a sustainable manner.
www.un.org/millenniumgoals

2005 The Anglican Consultative Council 13 affirms the work of the International Anglican Women's Network (IAWN) in responding to the Beijing Platform for Action and the MDGs, thereby carrying forward the full flourishing of God's Creation.
ACC 13 acknowledges the MDG goal for equal representation of women in decision making at all levels, and so requests several actions, including:

- *all member churches work towards the realisation of this goal in their own structures of governance, and to report progress to ACC 14.*
- *a study of the place and role of women in the structures of the Anglican Communion be undertaken by the Standing Committee*
- *requests that each Province considers the establishment of a women's desk.*

This is the core of what is known as **ACC Resolution 13.31**

Mar 2009 IAWN reports to ACC 14 in particular requesting *all member churches to work towards the realisation of this goal in their own structures of governance*.
As few provinces have gender data on people, lay or clergy, in decision-making positions, the Steering Group of IAWN recommend strongly *that all provinces gather gender-disaggregated data pertaining to clergy and to all persons (clergy and lay) in decision-making positions*.

May 2009 ACC 14's response to IAWN Report:

- *urges the full implementation of ACC Resolution 13.31 across the Communion and encourages Provinces to report on further progress made to ACC-15;*
- *requests that appointments to all Inter-Anglican Standing Commissions, and all other inter-Anglican Committees, design groups, or appointed bodies, follow resolution ACC 13.31 to provide equal representation of women on each body.*

June 2009 SEC General Synod

Aware of its commitment to the MDG and to ACC 13.31, the General Synod passes the Motion:

That this Synod, affirming its commitment to the Millennium Development Goals, invites the undertaking of a gender audit within the SEC in time to report to General Synod 2010.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE

In September, 2009, the SEC Standing Committee agreed the Terms of Reference for the Gender Audit. The methodology proposed was similar to that used by the United Nations in addressing issues of discrimination:

1. collecting the data to garner evidence of the nature of women's participation in the life of the church.

2. analysing this data; exploring possible hindrances to their broader participation and ways to resolve them; setting goals or measures for their greater involvement.
3. drafting a report which would help measure achievement to aid accountability.

One representative was nominated by each Diocesan Bishop to assist in the collection of data. In October a meeting was held to clarify a common understanding of the audit, and agree on the uniform collection of the data. The group were also grateful to have the Chief Executive of *Engender* give a presentation on the significance of gender equality.

More data has been collected than this Report analyses. It had not been part of the original intention to include the congregational level, but following the Bishops' request for gender breakdown to be included in the November returns, and the sense of the group collecting the data, some focus has been given to it.

3. EQUALITY ISSUES

3.1 *Global context*

The preceding brief historical background gives a flavour of global awareness and concern about gender issues – both in the secular and ecclesiastical worlds. The recent publication¹ from United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) argues that *sustainable development cannot be achieved without gender equality*. The Elders,² the small council of retired global leaders, brought together in 2007 by Nelson Mandela, & including Desmond Tutu, recently argued that *when religious institutions exclude women from their hierarchies and rituals, the inevitable implication is that females are inferior*. The World Council of Churches (WCC) commended the SEC gender initiative when they visited Scotland in December 2009.

It is important that women participate equally in decision-making bodies not only because we are each made in God's image, but also because women's experience informs decisions about church and society, about mission at home and abroad, about best use of resources. Particularly in the current economic climate, optimum use needs to be made of scarce economic resources.

A few people have wondered at the Synod's decision to invite a gender audit, possibly thinking that the focus should have been on a more obvious injustice – such as violence against women. But these issues all weave together. This audit focuses on one specific aspect, which is a key to many of the unbalanced relationships throughout society. Does the Gospel not demand that the church takes a lead in challenging injustice, and does that not include gender justice? It is too easy for such issues to be seen as pertaining only to the developing world, but power relationships continue to be imbalanced throughout the first world, including the UK.

Some European churches have grasped this nettle. The Church in Iceland have a gender policy which states that *the church should promote equality as that vision is part of the message of Jesus: baptism does not distinguish between men and women*. Their General Synod also adopted a plan for 2010 – 2012 including education on equal rights, inclusive language, equal salaries and an analysis of the position of women in the church regarding work at both congregational and diocesan levels. In Finland the Church Council published an equality plan in 1998, and now most of the bigger parishes have one.

3.2 UK context

Nearer home, the SEC recently signed a unique Statement of Partnership with the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church (EMU). The UK Methodist Church has a Gender Justice Committee, and completed an audit in 2003/04, *Continuing their Ministry to the Whole People of God*.

They anticipate further work in the near future, and would look forward to collaboration with the SEC. The URC has an Equal Opportunities Policy, & is committed to positive action, rather than containing discriminatory issues.

¹ *Making the MDGs Work better for Women* UNIFEM publication Feb 2010

² <http://www.theelders.org/elders>

The Church in Wales, who seek to promote *a culture of dignity, respect and fairness for all*³ completed a gender audit in June 2008, and have a draft Equal Opportunities Policy going to Synod 2010. As well as seeking equality of access to all aspects of life within the Church in Wales, it wishes to *counteract the effects of discrimination through language*, and monitor the policy's application.

In the Church of Ireland, anti-sectarianism work led some years ago to the creation of the Hard Gospel Project, and from that emerged a further three-year project focussing on living with difference. Among other items, this project identified gender issues, particularly female participation in the decision-making structures of the Church of Ireland, as an area to be addressed. In 2009, the Hard Gospel Implementation Group was set up to progress work on a range of issues, including gender, and is currently researching these. They are interested in reading our Gender Audit, and possibly collaborating on these issues.

4. SEC CURRENT CONTEXT

The Scottish Government promotes gender equality through gender mainstreaming, so all its policy objectives have gender implications, complying with the Gender Equality Duty Act of April 2007. Independent research⁴ provides evidence that there is growing gender equality in certain areas, but persisting gender inequalities in others, notably in political institutions and public decision-making bodies. Women make up 14% of Scottish MPs, 39% of MSPs, and 22% of local authority councillors. Changes are slowly taking place, but one persisting significant disadvantage often contributes to others.

The booklet *Gender Budgets, uplifting women, men and children* produced by Anglican Women's Empowerment (AWE) quotes:

Many of us are not well versed with gender issues. And many equate gender issues to women's issues. We need a lot of training to make our colleagues aware that when we talk of gender, we are talking about men and women, boys and girls, and trying to uplift the disadvantaged gender.

This succinctly sums up the concern of this audit. Women are half the population, and more than half of our congregations – though not as proportionately more, as many think. In baptism we are each welcomed equally, regardless of whether we are male or female. So it is important that all have an equal measure of opportunity with their voices in the SEC, in line with a culture which seeks fairness and justice, and cares for all.

Gender equality exists when men and women have equal opportunities, rights, and status. In the last twenty years, the Scottish Episcopal Church has made considerable progress in its commitment to this. Legislation opening the priesthood to women was passed in 1994, and the first women ordained within six months. Legislation opening the episcopate to women was passed in 2002, but as yet no woman has been elected to that office. The closest was the short-listing of a female candidate for the recent election for the diocese of Glasgow & Galloway.

5. REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN WORK AND STRUCTURES OF CHURCH

(Please note: Data sources may contain a small margin of error.)

5.1. REPRESENTATION IN CONGREGATIONS

The College of Bishops requested a gender breakdown be included in the November 2009 Sunday congregational returns. This was completed by almost 90% of congregations, and reveals an interestingly uniform gender division throughout the Province. The average male:female ratio among communicants is 35:65, and that for adherents is 38:62. There is probably a slightly higher preponderance of females in rural constituencies. See Figure 1

³ Church in Wales *Draft Equal Opportunities Policy 2010*

⁴ *A Gender Audit of Statistics comparing the position of Women and Men in Scotland* March 2007 Scottish Govt publication

Figure 1 Congregational breakdown by gender, Sunday November 22, 2009

	Communicants						Adherents				
	Total	Male	Male %	Female	Female %		Total	Male	Male %	Female	Female %
Aberdeen	2043	787	39%	1246	61%		3691	1487	40%	2204	60%
Argyll	880	283	32%	597	68%		1302	377	37%	825	63%
Brechin	1855	587	32%	1268	68%		3085	1120	36%	1965	64%
Edin City	3785	1496	39%	2289	61%		5907	2384	40%	3523	60%
Ed Borders	2348	846	36%	1502	64%		3231	1212	38%	2009	62%
Glasgow	5397	1892	35%	3505	65%		7773	2841	36.5%	4932	63.5%
Moray	2282	847	37%	1435	63%		3083	1215	39%	1868	61%
St Andrews	3307	1142	35%	2165	65%		4502	1641	36%	2861	64%

Note: Congregations who did not submit gender breakdown figures are **not included** above

These figures reflect the statistics noted by Brierley⁵ for national church attendance in Scotland in 2002 when the male:female ratio was approximately 40:60.

Gender statistics for some of the principal vestry posts were requested. This reveals a societal stereotypic preponderance of male treasurers, female secretaries and female Child Protection Officers.

Total percentages Secretaries: 29% male: 71% female

Treasurers: 65% male: 35% female

CPOs: 12% male: 88% female

Best practice requires that at all levels, the best person available for the job is the person who should undertake it. Gendered stereotypic assumptions short change both men and women.

5.2. REPRESENTATION AT DIOCESAN LEVEL

5.2.1 Clergy

The pool of clergy remains very male-oriented, but when we compare the current stipendiary clergy, as in Figure 3, with the commissioned & warranted, Figure 3a, male:female genders are slightly more balanced: 70:30 to 76:24. It is good to find that four of the current five curates are female.

⁵ UKCH Religious Trends No 4 2003/2004

Figure 3 *Stipendiary Clergy by gender*

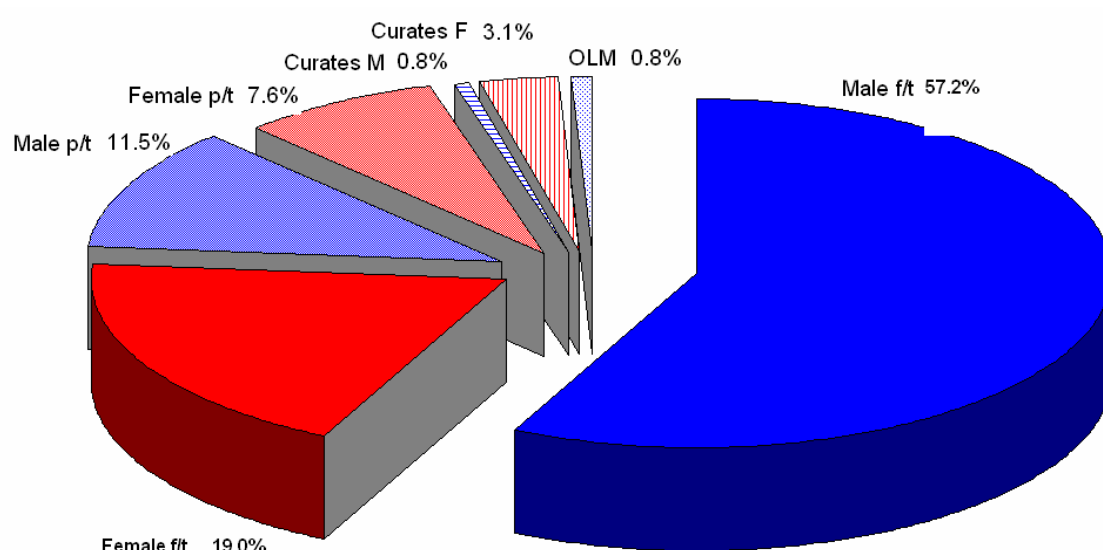
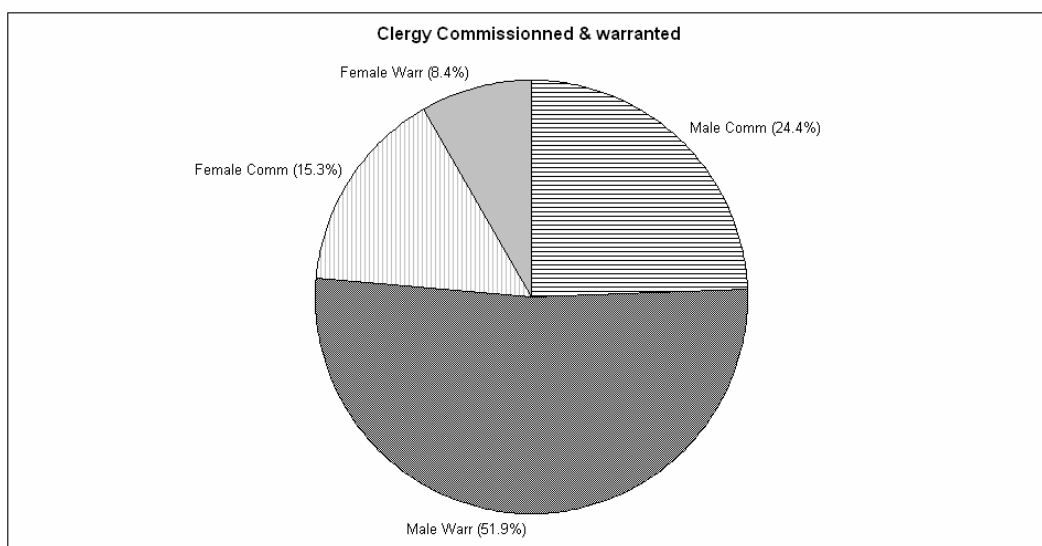


Figure 3a *Commissioned & Warranted clergy by gender*



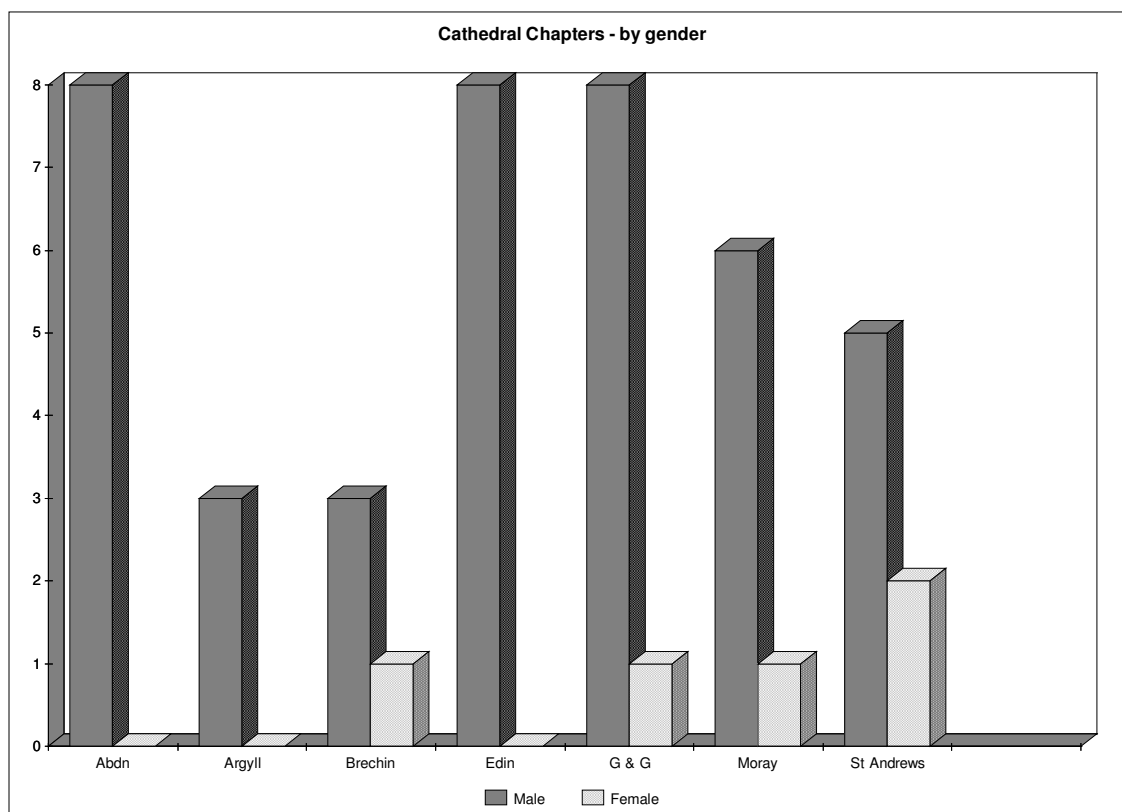
5.2.2 Cathedral Chapters

The SEC is rightly proud of its work of mission. Any organisation is best placed to fulfil its mission when all members are equally enabled to make best use of their gifts and talents fully. In this way they exercise their unique individual calling, fully valued for who they are in God’s eyes. No organisation wishes to be seen as discriminatory, and the SEC has developed much good anti-discriminatory practice. Nonetheless, while a good 60% of our congregations are female, that percentage is not reflected among those in leadership positions and some decision-making bodies.

The fact that ordination was a male preserve until less than twenty years ago means that until recently it was reasonably argued that there had not been sufficient time for women to gain the experience needed for senior ordained positions. But are there not now able women, with sufficient talent and experience, ready to be considered for senior positions in the SEC?

Cathedral Chapters are composed firstly of Deans, Provosts and Synod Clerks, only one of whom, St Andrew's diocesan Synod Clerk, is female. The additional members are either elected (by diocesan clergy) or selected (by the Bishop). These total 17 for the 7 dioceses. Of them, only 4 are women – 23.5%. While recognising that numbers are small, it might be expected that women might fill some more of these positions.

Figure 4 *Cathedral Chapters by gender*



5.2.3 Lay Readers

The only common figures for structured lay ministry are those for Lay Readers. Apart from them, what is noted varies from diocese to diocese – e.g. some have statistics for Eucharistic Assistants; some have not. Given that ordination has only comparatively recently been open to women, it is surprising that male Lay Readers outnumber female – 47 male; 35 female.

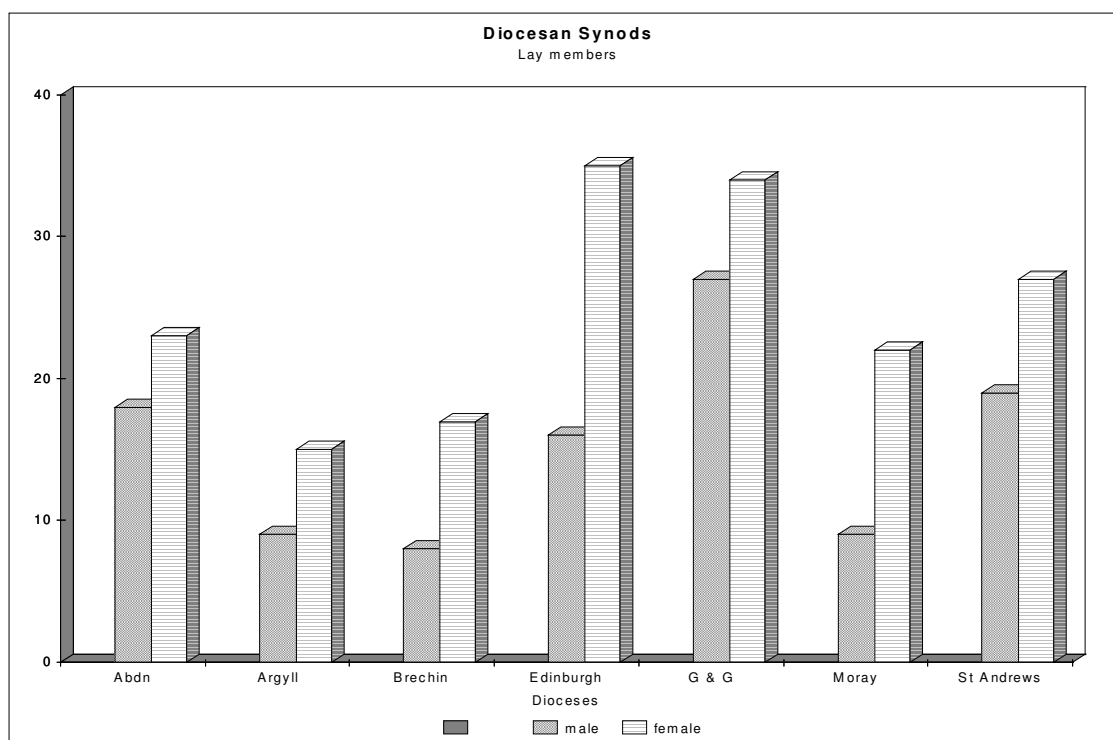
Figure 5 *Lay Readers by gender*

	Abdn	Argyll	Brechin	Edinburgh	Glasgow	Moray	St Andrews	Provincial
Male	8	5	8	7	10	3	6	47
Female	8	2	6	8	1	6	4	35
Totals	16	7	14	15	11	9	10	82

5.2.4 Diocesan Synods

Dioceses have considerable autonomy about the internal structure of their dioceses, so gauging the degree to which women are present in decision-making bodies uniformly is not straightforward. For the purpose of this audit, the lay representation of Diocesan Synods, and the gender of diocesan committee convenerships was measured.

The clergy in Diocesan Synods are predominantly male; in contrast, the majority of lay members in all dioceses, are female.

Figure 6 *Composition of Diocesan Synods*

Lay Members	Aberdeen	Argyll	Brechin	Edinburgh	Glasgow	Moray	St Andrews
Male	18	9	8	16	27	9	19
Female	23	15	17	35	34	22	27
Total	41	24	25	51	61	31	46

5.2.5 *Conveners of Diocesan Committees*

The gender of the conveners of four major Diocesan Committees, or their equivalent body, was requested: Standing Committee; Finance Committee; Mission / Ministry Committee; Property Committee. Given the balance in Synod membership, it is surprising to find that of a total of 28 conveners, only 4 are women. And why are all conveners of Diocesan Standing Committees and Finance Committees men?

As will be seen, this imbalance is also evidenced in Provincial Boards and Committees.

Figure 7 *Diocesan conveners*

	Abdn	Argyll	Bre	Edin	Glas	Moray	St And
St Com	m	m	m	m	vac	m	m
Finance	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
Mission/Min	m	m	f	m	m	f	f
Property	m	m	f	m	m	m	m

Out of a total of 27 conveners, 23 men; 4 women.

5.3 REPRESENTATION AT PROVINCIAL LEVEL

5.3.1 *General Synod*

In September 2006, the General Synod Review Group sent Dioceses a Discussion Paper with several recommendations, including Principles for the election of members to General Synod. Although there was insufficient consensus for any change to be proposed at that time, one of several recommended principles was appropriate gender representation.

Clergy representation

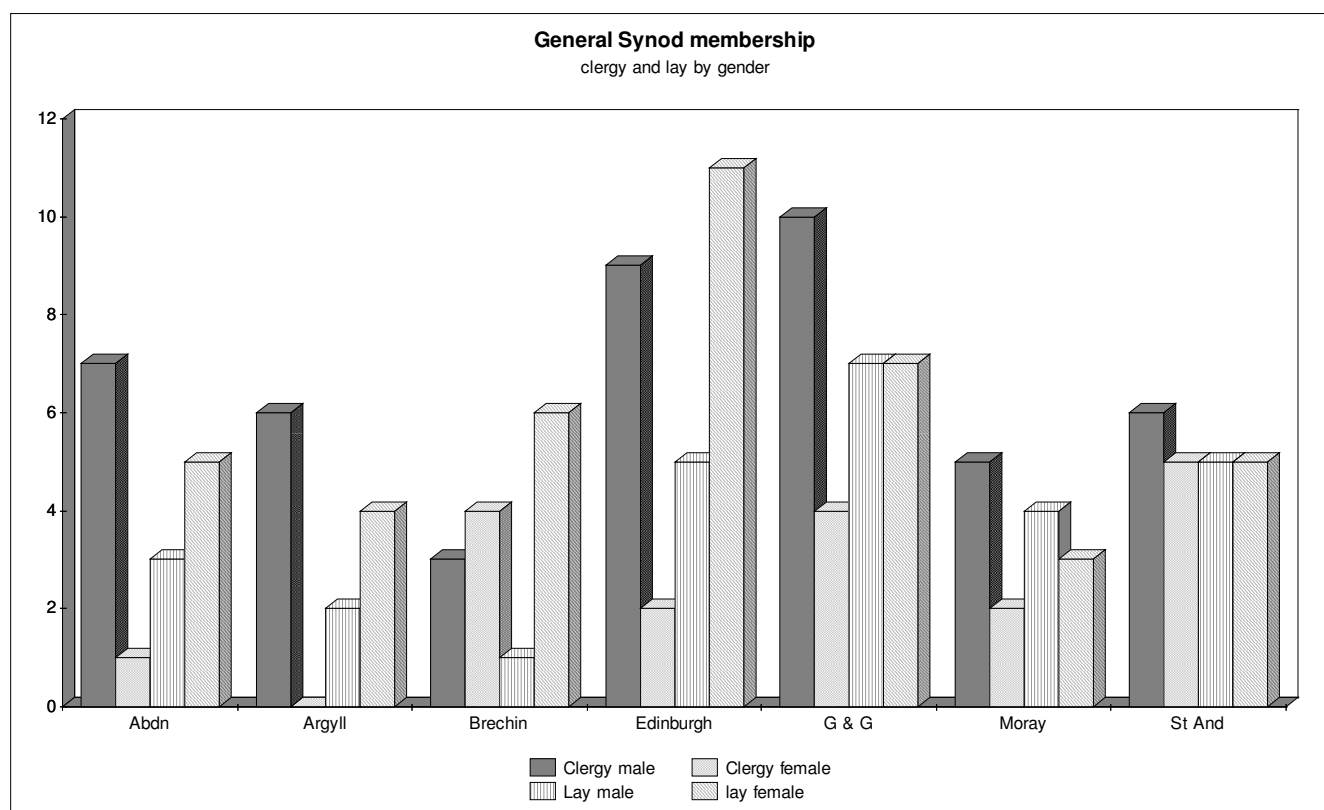
On the whole, the heavily male clergy constituency at General Synod reflects the preponderance of male clergy, with some dioceses having a more balanced representation than others. One diocese, Brechin, has more female clergy representation than male.

Lay representation

The fact that diocesan lay representation is principally female – only one diocese has less lay women than lay men – goes some way to redress the dominance of male clergy.

Taken as a whole, however, does the membership of the General Synod reflect the overall membership of the Scottish Episcopal Church?

Figure 8 Bar-chart *General Synod* – ordained/lay and male/female



Male:Female Ratio	Abdn	Argyll	Brechin	Edinburgh	Glasgow	Moray	St Andrews
Clergy	7:1	6:0	3:4	9:2	10:4	5:2	6:5
Lay	3:5	2:4	1:6	5:11	7:7	4:3	5:5
Totals	10:6	8:4	4:10	14:13	17:11	9:5	11:10

Total male membership: 73
Total female membership: 59
(Alternates not included)

Total male: female ratio 55:44

5.3.2 Provincial Boards & Conveners

Given the comparative equality of representation of lay members of both diocesan and General Synod, it was surprising to find a considerable imbalance in the Provincial Boards and committees. Out of 212 places on Provincial Boards and committees, only 69 are held by women – 32%.

Figure 9 *Composition of Provincial Boards & Committees – gender breakdown*

Board / Committee	Size	No of members by sex (including convenor)		Sex of convenor
		female	male	
Standing Committee	8	1	7	f
Prot of chil & vul adults	6	3	3	f
Faith & Order	22	5	17	m
Doctrine	8	1	7	m
Liturgy	9	1	8	m
Canons	8	2	6	m
ICRC	6	4	2	f
Mission & Ministry	17	6	11	m
Home Mission	9	3	6	m
Youth Network	25	16	9	f & m (shared)
Overseas	7	4	3	m
Church in Society	8	2	6	m
Relats with Other Faiths	6	3	3	m
Ministry Development	10	5	5	f
Info & Communications	9	2	7	m
Administration	18	1	17	m
Investment	8	0	8	m
Finance	9	1	8	m
Retirement Welfare	7	2	5	m
Buildings Advisory	7	2	5	m
Personnel	5	1	4	m
Totals:	212	69	143	5f : 17m

The imbalance is partly brought about by membership of some Boards being based on the specific posts held (e.g. F & O includes all the College of Bishops). Numbers are small, and therefore the change in just one member of a committee may alter the balance significantly. Only three committees (ICRC, Youth, Overseas) are composed of more women than men; two (Protection of Children & Vulnerable Adults; Ministry Development) are evenly balanced. The Youth Network (and the largest committee) stands out with 64% female: 36% male. Several features give rise to specific questions:

- Does the SEC really only have one woman with sufficient financial competence to serve on Provincial Investment or Finance Committees?
- Why does *Church in Society* have so few women?
- Where are our women theologians to serve in Faith & Order?
- If the SEC is genuinely seeking the best people for these posts, is it really true that male Episcopalians are so much more gifted than female?

5.3.3 Theological Institute of the Scottish Episcopal Church (TISEC)

The TISEC website commendably states that their *primary aim is formation for public ministry, which is seen as engagement with God's mission*. They place an important emphasis on their students seeing education and training as part of lifelong learning. This is in keeping with current educational practice, where policies on equal opportunities are standard.

The academic staff and Board of Studies have a considerable preponderance of men. There is only one female DDO. The Provincial Selection Panel Pool is exactly balanced by gender.

Figure 10 *Theological Institute of Scottish Episcopal Church (TISEC)*

Sub – groups	Posts	male	%	female	%
Academic staff	Ministry Development Officer & Pantonian Professor	1	100%		
	Lay Learning Officer (half-time post)	1	100%		
	Module Co-ordinators	6	66%	3	33%
	Seminar Conveners (Tutors)	3	100%		
Board of Studies	3 Sem Conveners + diocesan reps from other dioceses (3 male, 1 female) + MDO + student reps (1 male, 1 female)	8	80%	2	20%
	Including 2 reps from York St John's	10	83%	2	17%
Diocesan Staff: Convenors:	Coordinators	4	57%	3	43%
	Advisers	13	57%	10	43%
	IME (4 male 3 female)	4	57%	3	43%
	CMD (2 male; 3 female; 2 vacant)	2	40%	3	60%
	Lay Learning (2 male; 3 female; 2 vacant)	2	40%	3	60%
Director of Ordinands	DDOs (1 vacancy)	5	83%	1	17%
Support Staff	Administrator			1	100%
Prov.Selection Panel Pool		5	50%	5	50%
Students	Ordinands in training	10	59%	7	41%
	Lay in training	5	62.5%	3	37.5%

6. LANGUAGE

The cultural history of the church is one of male-dominance. This is slowly changing, but gendered stereotypical assumptions still prevail – shortchanging both men and women into unequal relationships. This is reflected in the way we use language. Although language was not a specific remit of this audit, it is the use of language which defines, to a large extent, our understanding of our world. Therefore choice of language plays an important role in liturgy and it is vital that ways are found to make worship more inclusive. The Liturgy Committee has made important strides in this regard, adapting language as liturgies are updated and ensuring that the words used in new liturgies reflect both the church as it is now and our contemporary understanding of the nature of God. These changes are very welcome, and hopefully may lead towards fully inclusive language as soon as possible.

7. SUMMARY OF RESULTS

7.1 *Introduction*

Several principles undergird the thinking of this audit:

- Each woman and man is named equally in baptism
- Each is called to a unique ministry as a Christian disciple

- The church is a more whole & healing community when everyone is able to contribute to the best of their talents
- Gender equality is not an ordination issue, but an issue of right relationships, and of men and women working together as equals, not in dominance or discrimination.

7.2 *Summary*

The data about gender representation in the Scottish Episcopal Church in November 2009 may form a baseline against which change may be measured.

The data shows that:

- the average male:female ratio among communicant members is 35:65, and that for adherents is 38:62.
- at Provincial level only 69 out of 212 Board / committee places were occupied by women; and at Diocesan level, only 4 of 27 main committee conveners were women
- while the overall membership of General Synod was heavily male, the lay membership was predominantly female
- lay membership of Diocesan Synods was more female than male, helping balance the mainly male clergy
- out of 41 places on Cathedral Chapters, only 5 were occupied by women
- vestry posts reveal a societal stereotypic preponderance of male treasurers, female secretaries and female Child Protection Officers

7.3 *Key Issues and Recommendations*

7.3.1 *Equality of Representation*

The SEC is committed to modelling Equal Opportunities best practice because it is a Gospel imperative to care for the less privileged; to ensure resources are shared fairly; to enable us all to be the best possible disciples.

This Report makes the following recommendations:

- Recommendation 1: That there should be greater equality of gender representation on Provincial Boards & committees
- Recommendation 2: That there should be greater equality of gender representation on diocesan committees.
- Recommendation 3: That there should be greater equality of representation of women on Cathedral Chapters and generally into senior clerical posts.
- Recommendation 4: That there should be a continuing commitment to inclusive language in the liturgy.
- Recommendation 5: That the Standing Committee give serious consideration to the writing of appropriate equality policies for the Scottish Episcopal Church.
- Recommendation 6: That a working group be set up to examine gender & other areas of possible discrimination.
- Recommendation 7: That the annual congregational returns continue to reflect gender, and that another gender audit be conducted in November 2012 for which this snapshot will be a base line for establishing trends.

Membership of Group nominated by Bishops to collect data:

Diocesan Representatives:

Aberdeen & Orkney	Mrs Audrey Masson
Argyll & the Isles	Dr Peter Kemp
Brechin	Miss Hilary Gibson
Edinburgh	Rev Marion Chatterley
Glasgow & Galloway	Mr Gib FitzGibbon
Moray, Ross & Caithness	Mrs Norma Higgott
St Andrews, Dunkeld & Dunblane	Mrs Charmian Paterson

We wish to express our thanks to the above group, to the Standing Committee, College of Bishops, diocesan secretaries, and other staff who have helped so willingly and generously with their time in the compilation of this audit.

Dr Elaine Cameron with the Rev Marion Chatterley

May 2010