

## **English Church accepts women bishops**

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**13 July, 2005**

## **THE ARTICLE**

### **English Church accepts women bishops**

**BNE:** The Church of England made a big and perhaps divisive decision on July 12. It voted to accept women bishops. This historic decision has shocked the Anglican world. Many church leaders fear followers of the Anglican Church will leave to join different churches. Only six bishops voted against the motion, while 41 were in favour. It will take a further four years to get the obstacles removed for the Church to finally see its first female bishop. World Anglicans will now debate the consequences of the recent decision.

The decision means the Church of England will join 14 other churches of the 38-member Anglican Church that have accepted female bishops. Conservative Anglicans are worried the floodgates will now open and the church leadership will be full of women. Tom Sharp, a traditional Anglican said: "It states as clear as day in the Bible that...God's work should be carried out by a man." Angela Evans, an Anglican churchgoer, applauded the decision, saying: "At last, after 2,000 years, women are being recognized that we too can serve God."

## WARM-UPS

**1. THE SAME:** In pairs / groups, talk about whether men and women are the same and have equal rights. What rights are women fighting for in your country? Should women be allowed to do exactly the same jobs as men? Are there any jobs in the world that only men can do?

**2. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

*Women / the church, mosque, synagogue, temple / religious leaders / sexual equality / women in religion / holy books / serving God*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

**3. CHURCH:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "church". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

**4. FEMALE LEADERS:** In pairs / groups, discuss what you think about women being leaders in the following roles. What are the arguments some people might use to oppose women in these positions?

- Church / Mosque / Synagogue / Temple head
- National men's soccer / baseball team coach
- President / Prime Minister
- Intelligence agency boss
- Army head
- Police force head
- Construction workers chief
- Firefighting chief

**5. EQUALITY:** How close is your society to having no inequality between men and women? What do you think of the following situations? What would the average person in your country think?

	You	Average person
a. A man opening doors for women.		
b. Househusbands		
c. A woman asking a man to marry him		
d. A woman buying a man flowers		
e. A female religious leader		
f. Female frontline soldiers		
g. A woman saying she's had many sexual partners		
h. A man marrying and taking his wife's family name		

Would these situations be more accepted / acceptable if the roles were reversed?

## BEFORE READING / LISTENING

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| a. The Church of England has voted to accept women becoming bishops.  | T / F |
| b. Leaders think the decision will increase the numbers of followers. | T / F |
| c. The vote was extremely close.                                      | T / F |
| d. The first female bishop will arrive later this year.               | T / F |
| e. The Church of England is the first in accepting female bishops.    | T / F |
| f. Church followers fear a flood of females will lead their church.   | T / F |
| g. Many churchgoers believe doing God's work is a man's job.          | T / F |
| h. It has taken around 2,000 years to reach this latest decision.     | T / F |

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |                    |             |
|--------------------|-------------|
| a. divisive        | proposal    |
| b. historic        | finally     |
| c. motion          | effects     |
| d. obstacles       | traditional |
| e. consequences    | alienating  |
| f. accepted        | plainly     |
| g. conservative    | barriers    |
| h. as clear as day | work for    |
| i. At last         | landmark    |
| j. serve           | allowed     |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- |                               |                             |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| a. a big and perhaps divisive | removed                     |
| b. six bishops voted          | as day                      |
| c. get the obstacles          | of the recent decision      |
| d. the Church to finally      | serve God                   |
| e. the consequences           | against the motion          |
| f. worried the floodgates     | will be full of women       |
| g. the church leadership      | decision                    |
| h. as clear                   | carried out by a man        |
| i. God's work should be       | see its first female bishop |
| j. we too can                 | will now open               |

## **WHILE READING / LISTENING**

**WORD ORDER:** Put the underlined words back into the correct order.

### **English Church accepts women bishops**

**BNE:** The Church of England made perhaps and a big divisive decision on July 12. It voted to accept women bishops. This shocked historic has decision the Anglican world. Many church leaders fear followers of the Anglican Church will leave to join different churches. Only six bishops the motion against voted, while 41 were in favour. It will take a further four years to get the obstacles removed for the Church to finally female first see its bishop. World Anglicans will now debate the consequences of the recent decision.

The decision means the Church of England other join 14 will churches of the 38-member Anglican Church that have accepted female bishops. Conservative Anglicans are worried the now open will floodgates and the church leadership will be full of women. Tom Sharp, a traditional Anglican said: It states as clear as day in the Bible that...God's work out be carried should by a man." Angela Evans, an Anglican churchgoer, applauded the decision, saying: "At last, after 2,000 years, women are being recognized we too that can serve God."

## AFTER READING / LISTENING

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'church' and 'leader'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. WORD ORDER:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers.

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. STUDENT WOMEN AND RELIGION SURVEY:** In pairs / groups, write down questions about women and religion.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

**6. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- perhaps
- accept
- fear
- favour
- obstacles
- consequences
- join
- floodgates
- traditional
- day
- man
- serve

## **DISCUSSION**

### STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. What did you think when you first saw this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- c. Do you go to church / mosque / synagogue / temple?
- d. Do you think there are different roles that men and women should stick to in religion?
- e. What roles do women play in your religion?
- f. Do you think women should sue their religions for being sexist?
- g. Would you consider joining a different religion?
- h. Do you think religion creates sexual inequality?
- i. Do you think God minds whether a man or woman is a religious leader?
- j. Is God a man or a woman?

### STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What did you think about what you read?
- c. Are you a religious person?
- d. Would you prefer male or female religious leaders?
- e. Do you think women should be allowed to do any jobs that men do?
- f. If it says in the Bible that men should carry out God's work, shouldn't the church accept that?
- g. Why do you think it has taken 2,000 years to reach this decision?
- h. What is the biggest problem with religions?
- i. Are there any strong female role models in religious books?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

**AFTER DISCUSSION:** Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

## SPEAKING

### ARE YOU SEXIST?

In pairs / groups, answer the above question. Put a percentage on how sexist you think you are - 100% non-sexist to 100 % sexist.

Talk about the situations in the table. Are your feelings (i) the same, (ii) situation 'a' is more acceptable than situation 'b' or (iii) situation 'b' is more acceptable than situation 'a'? Place a check/tick in the box that matches your feelings.

SITUATION	(i) Same	(ii) "a" more acceptable	(iii) "b" more acceptable
(a) A woman works, a man stays at home. (b) A man works, a woman stays at home.			
(a) A man flies the airplane, a woman serves the food. (b) A woman flies the airplane, a man serves the food.			
(a) Male nudity on TV. (b) Female nudity on TV.			
(a) A male religious leader (i.e. Pope). (b) A female religious leader.			
(a) A man cries at a sad movie. (b) A woman cries at a movie.			
(a) A man takes a woman's family name after marriage. (b) A woman takes a man's name after marriage.			
(a) Male nurses. (b) Female nurses.			
(a) A man carries a pink handbag and wears make-up. (b) A woman carries a pink bag and wears make-up.			

After you have finished, talk about whether your answers suggest you are sexist. Do you have eight checks/ticks in the "same" column?

Do the situations above say whether or not someone is sexist?

## **LISTENING**

Listen and fill in the spaces.

### **English Church accepts women bishops**

**BNE:** The Church of England made a big and \_\_\_\_\_ decision on July 12. It voted to \_\_\_\_\_ women bishops. This historic decision has shocked the Anglican world. Many church leaders \_\_\_\_\_ of the Anglican Church will leave to join different churches. Only six bishops voted against the \_\_\_\_\_, while 41 were in favour. It will take a further four years to get the \_\_\_\_\_ removed for the Church to finally see its first female bishop. World Anglicans will now debate the \_\_\_\_\_ of the recent decision.

The \_\_\_\_\_ the Church of England will join 14 other churches of the 38-member Anglican Church that have \_\_\_\_\_ female bishops. Conservative Anglicans are worried the \_\_\_\_\_ will now open and the church leadership will \_\_\_\_\_ women. Tom Sharp, a traditional Anglican said: It states as \_\_\_\_\_ day in the Bible that...God's work should be \_\_\_\_\_ by a man." Angela Evans, an Anglican churchgoer, applauded the decision, saying: "At last, after 2,000 years, women are being recognized that we too can \_\_\_\_\_ God."

## **HOMEWORK**

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find more information on women in religion. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

**3. RELIGION:** Do religions promote equality? Choose any one of the world's religions and make a poster about its treatment of the sexes. What kinds of women are there in the religion's holy book? What roles do they play? Show and explain your posters to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you find out similar things?

**4. LETTER:** Write a letter to the head of the Church of England to tell him what you think of the decision to allow female bishops. Read your letter to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

a. T      b. F      c. F      d. F      e. F      f. T      g. T      h. T

### SYNONYM MATCH:

a. divisive	alienating
b. historic	landmark
c. motion	proposal
d. obstacles	barriers
e. consequences	effects
f. accepted	allowed
g. conservative	traditional
h. as clear as day	plainly
i. at last	finally
j. serve	work for

### PHRASE MATCH:

a. a big and perhaps divisive	decision
b. six bishops voted	against the motion
c. get the obstacles	removed
d. the Church to finally	see its first female bishop
e. the consequences	of the recent decision
f. worried the floodgates	will now open
g. the church leadership	will be full of women
h. as clear	as day
i. God's work should be	carried out by a man
j. we too can	serve God

### WORD ORDER:

#### English Church accepts women bishops

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