



A Partnership for God's Glory

A report on Biblical ministries available to women in the
Presbyterian Church of Australia

Prepared by the Women's Ministries Presbyterian Church of Queensland (WMPCQ)
for the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia in 2007

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INTRODUCTION

God is glorified when Christians work in partnership within the body of Christ. Women of the church are activated into service when they are respected, prepared, encouraged and given opportunities. When leaders attend to these needs they build capacity within the church. Leaders of the church can use the **PEOPLE Model** (2007) outlined in this paper as a template to implement a revised policy on Biblical ministries available to women.

Women feel respected, valued, confident and enthusiastic about serving the Lord in the church when they are being:

- Taught about spiritual gifts and using them for God's service.
- Affirmed as partners in roles by the leaders in their church.
- Recognised for their gifts, abilities and strengths.
- Provided with opportunities and given encouragement to use their gifts.
- Provided with resources to equip themselves for service to the Lord.
- Given a voice in decision making in the church.

This paper calls women to be encouraged and exercise their gifts for God's glory. This requires leaders to be active in teaching and training people to grow in the word and to use their gifts in church ministries.

HISTORY AND GOALS OF THIS REPORT

This paper reports to the General Assembly of Australia (GAA) on the findings of consultations with people throughout the Presbyterian Church of Australia (PCA). The focus of this consultancy was to review and consider the Biblical ministries available to women for 2007 and beyond. The foundation for this work was laid in 1997 when the GAA appointed a committee to "explore opportunities for a positive approach to the ministry of women in the church" (Minute 57.1). In 2001, that committee reported to the GAA and requested more time, which was granted (Minute 58). In 2004, the report of that committee, "A Positive Approach to Women's Ministry" was not

adopted. The GAA (2004) then appointed a new committee (appendix 1), the writers of this paper, to consult widely throughout Australia and prepare a report (Minute 106).

The terms of reference for this committee were clearly outlined by the GAA (2004) as can be seen in the Minute 106.

106. Biblical ministries for women

That the Assembly:

(1) Appoint a committee to prepare a position paper on Biblical ministries available to women, without entering into the issue of ordination.

(2) Request the committee to consult widely throughout the Church and to present the paper to the 2007 meeting of the Assembly.

(3) Appoint to the committee, the members of the committee known as "Women's Ministries, PCQ" as follows: Mesdames J. Langbridge, L. Eastwell, A. Pryde, C. Orford, L. Nicol, W. Henry, Misses C. Thallon and C. Butler.

(4) Appoint the Rev. J. Langbridge as Convener of the committee.

(Note: During the course of preparing this paper, Miss C. Butler resigned from the committee.)

The committee identified five aims to provide general direction to the project. These aims are stated below.

The committee seeks to:

1. Demonstrate that the love and forgiveness of Christ empowers women to demonstrate Christ in their lifestyle thereby bringing glory to God.
2. Understand more about the Bible's teaching on the role of women.
3. Facilitate the PCA to move toward and embrace the Biblical roles of women.
4. Encourage women to reach their Biblical potential in Christ.
5. Increase awareness of our own personal experience of Christ.

This paper outlines the Biblical viewpoint, other important considerations and the process of the project. The paper then explores the voices of men and women in the Presbyterian Church of Australia about Biblical ministries available to women. It concludes with implementation recommendations that would be useful for the leaders of the church to use as a template for the implementation of a revised approach to Biblical ministries for women at local, state and national levels.

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

Biblical principles concerning roles of women in the church were reviewed by the committee. In addition, several respected theologians, pastors, ministers and academics provided Biblical discussion and perspectives. Many books, articles and models of women’s ministries were discussed. Thus the committee believes that biblical principles underlying this paper are:

God created men and women in His image, yet different and complementary to one another	Genesis 1:26-27, Genesis 2:18
God equally values and attaches dignity to the roles of both men and women.	Genesis 1:26-27, 2:18, Galatians 3:26-28
The Bible affirms the principle of male headship in the family and in the church.	Genesis 2:18, Ephesians 5:21-33, Colossians 3:18-19, 1 Timothy 2:11-15
The Fall introduced distortions into the relationships between men and women in the church and in the home.	Genesis 3:1-17
Redemption in Christ gives men and women an equal share in the blessings of salvation.	Ephesians 5:21-33, Colossians 3:18-19, Titus 2:3-5, 1Peter: 3:1-7 1 Corinthians 11:2-16, 1 Timothy 2:11-15
Christ is the authority and head of the church, and within His church, authority is exercised by elders, overseers and deacons.	Ephesians 5:23, 1Timothy 3:1-11, Titus1:5-9
Spiritual gifts are to be developed and used within the authority structure of the church.	Romans 12:3-8, 1Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4:1-16
The Bible does not distinguish between men and women, as far as spiritual gifts are concerned.	Romans 12:3-8, 1Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4:1-16

The word “ministry” can be used as a gift-based term indicating the servant-hood of Christians.

John 13: 1-17, Philipians 2:1-11, 1 Peter 4:10-11

Women in the Bible were held in high esteem for their work and support of Christ and the apostles.

Luke 8:1-3, Romans 16:1-16, Acts 1:14

Within gospel churches, women have significant roles to play.

1Corinthians 12, 1 Peter 4:10-11

OTHER IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

As the project progressed the committee became very aware of four issues that were of concern to many people. These will be briefly discussed for clarity rather than debated.

Gifts

There is a universality of gifts in the body of the church. Men and women exercise these gifts for God’s glory. Gifts equip people for tasks and roles in serving Christ (i.e. ministries). Gifts are not allocated to humans by gender, are not specific to holding office in the church, and are endowed by God to individuals. As it is God who endows gifts according to his purposes, church leaders should plan ministries around the gifts available to the church.

The committee found that the terms “gift” and “office” were not well understood and were used inconsistently throughout Australia. Offices, while requiring gifts to fulfil them, are related to authority within the church. Individuals holding a particular office do not have every spiritual gift. Therefore, God provides people with gifts to be part of the body and fulfil the needs within the church. The general tenor of the New Testament is that no one gift or category of gifts is the exclusive domain of those appointed to offices. God’s people are created to serve Him using the gifts that they have been given. Some people are appointed to offices of authority in the church. A conceptual distinction can be made between gifts that are imbued on a believer by God’s Spirit, and the offices that some are called to and appointed to fill (for example, Ministry and Eldership).

Gifts lead to ministries. Not all gifts lead to offices and therefore a small number will have gifts that lead to offices within the church.

More than women

The committee has become aware that many of the issues raised within the discussion of this paper apply equally to men who are not elders, as they do to women. This finding indicates a wider issue for the church, but this committee's focus was on opportunities available to women.

To make lists or not to make lists of what women can or can't do

Use of lists was avoided throughout the consultation process. The committee was convinced opportunities for service available to women in the church needed to fit within the context of wise application of Biblical principles rather than a mere list. Within the communion of the PCA there are significant differences of practice in this matter. Appendix 2 contains suggestions of useful resources on ministries for women.

Ordination

While the focus of the consultation was on the broad spectrum of roles available to women in the church, the committee found that the issue of women's ordination is still important to some people in the church and acknowledge the hurt that such people feel.

THE PROCESS

The GAA's instruction for this committee to "consult widely" throughout the PCA was taken very seriously. After much prayer and examination of possible methods, it was decided to design a project that would give representative and reliable information.

A survey with seven questions was developed as the tool to collect information. This survey was placed in a purpose-written consultation discussion paper that was used to encourage discussion. The discussion paper was disseminated to every Presbytery and other significant groups within the church. In addition, invitations to participate were advertised nationally in church media – paper-based and electronic. The consultation paper was then used as a basis for collecting information in

two ways: Focus Groups and individual responses. Some responses came from groups of people, for example churches, Presbyteries, study groups, women's groups etc.

The committee used the Women's Ministry Presbyterian Church Qld (WMPCQ) website throughout the project to enable people to communicate with the committee freely and easily. If people did not participate in or have access to a Focus Group, they could submit survey responses by post, email, fax or in person.

Simple demographics of the participants were considered to ensure that there was a true representation of the church as a whole. People were invited to participate from large, medium and small churches, and from city, rural and remote churches. While both men and women were involved, the majority of participants were women. Different age groups, marital and family statuses were represented.

Focus Groups were facilitated throughout Australia by committee members who attended training to facilitate focus groups. Area coordinators helped organise the Focus Groups and invited people to attend, based on the committee's guidelines. There were 12 focus groups in total. These were held in Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Perth, Hobart, Brisbane, Toowoomba, Yamba, Armidale, Townsville, Canberra and Bendigo.

Ethical principles were adhered to during the information collection to ensure the anonymity of respondents. Names and any other identifying information from responses were removed. Further, Christian love was shown and demonstrated by the committee to all participants.

The main limitation of this consultation design is that not every person in the church was contacted. Hence, there may have been some people in the church wanting to participate who did not receive the information and therefore were unable to respond.

Information collected was collated and reviewed by the committee. Themes emerged, forming the basis of the committee's discussions and deliberations for meetings for most of 2006 and 2007 and this paper.

DISCUSSION

Generally, the committee members and the discussion paper were widely welcomed and accepted by men and women of the church. As Focus Groups reports were discussed, it became evident that women in the PCA were grateful for the opportunity to have a voice and participate in this project. Much love and trust was shown to this committee who were overwhelmed by the response to the paper.

Some women were very positive and full of praise for the encouragement, affirmation and opportunities for service available to them. They indicated they were content with the variety of women's roles in the church. On the other hand, many responses were not so positive. Some reported negative experiences and believed that the leadership of the church had 'let them down'. These differences appear to be related to the outlook of individual church eldership teams and, in some cases, Presbyteries. However, all women indicated they hoped for positive outcomes as a result of this project and report.

A general conclusion by the committee is that when the church leadership actively encourages women and approaches Christian service as a partnership, the church thrives and hurts are healed.

A few people missed the opportunity to answer the questions about women's gifts and roles within the church, as they were distracted by trigger words, such as "ministries", "wisdom" and "gifts", or certain biblical texts. This tended to cause people to respond in theological debate and disagreements over the minute detail of the Biblical texts rather than provide responses about the general concept of the roles of women in the church.

The consultancy responses gave insight into the voices of the women in the PCA. This mosaic of voices provides the GAA with direct insight into the needs and desires of the hearts of the women of the PCA. This insight can help design women's ministries for the future. While around 600 people participated in this consultation, collectively the responses can be arranged into five voices.

Voice one: Women are encouraged

Women who reported positive experiences in churches made reference to their local church leaders. They indicated that their minister and elders valued their input and encouraged use of their gifts within the congregation. Women reported opportunity to serve and to share God's love with others, with many opportunities to be involved in church activities.

Elders encouraging women to use their gifts and become involved in church activities seemed to be a key issue when mobilising women into service in churches. Many women reported that they were encouraged and excited about this project and the knowledge that the church was looking at Biblical ministries available to women. Others mentioned they were encouraged to see that the GAA recognised and valued women sufficiently to set up this committee and establish this process.

Encouragement and affirmation for these women came from various avenues, including the following: roles of women in the Bible, the Holy Spirit, mentoring, pastors, elders, ministers, congregational members, family and friends.

Voice two: Women want a voice in the church

This voice was heard in several Focus Groups and in many individual responses. Women want to have an opportunity to be part of the conversations that inform the leadership in decision-making. Being invited to consult about church matters promotes recognition, value and worth in the

partnership. Women who believed they were adequately consulted also reported involvement in church activities.

While some women spoke positively of affirmation in this way, many women stated the opposite. In fact, many women around Australia expressed they had no voice in their church or church activities. Feelings of hurt, rejection, disappointment and frustration were heard from many women.

The committee considered why these women don't have a voice in the church. From the responses it appears that traditional church government structures are not perceived to encourage the consultation of women in decision-making processes. While this may not be deliberate in many churches, it is a real issue that stifles the active service of many women and the possibility of new effective ministries in the church.

The challenge for the PCA is to find ways to resolve this hampering effect. Some churches are already trying new approaches as seen in the following example:

- The Session sets the general direction and goals of the church (Ministry Plan).
- Committees are then established to address these goals.
- Members of the congregation are invited to belong to a committee where their gifts support the ministry plan.
- Members may be offered training, equipping or encouragement to be involved.
- These committees plan ahead (preferably twelve months) and submit a programme for the approval of the Session, along with a budget to the Committee of Management.
- Once approved, the committee is free to get on with the job.

In this model the Session maintains its ruling role and sets the direction of the church while the Committee of Management maintains fiscal responsibility. Vital tasks of the church are delegated out to a much wider group of people. These people (including women – our concern in this paper) then have a voice in decision-making and can use their skills, experience and initiative.

Lack of consultation and consideration of women's views in the decision-making process has left women feeling hurt, dissatisfied, undervalued and unappreciated. In the longer term this has resulted in loss of enthusiasm and increased apathy within the women of the church. While women want to contribute with an effective voice within the decision-making process of the church, they do not necessarily want to make the decisions.

Voice three: Women are hurting

Many women voiced the hurt they felt. They also expressed concern for the future of their children, particularly daughters, and their future roles in the church. Some reasons for this hurt were related to lack of recognition of gifts by the church leaders, limited opportunities to be part of a team mainly due to their gender, or lack of opportunities to use their gifts, training and experience in the church.

When women are not considered for certain roles within the church because of their gender, they feel overlooked. Women lack confidence because they have been previously discouraged, disappointed or hurt and have come to believe they have little to contribute. As a consequence, women become withdrawn, appear disinterested and don't volunteer to use their gifts in God's service. Many women stated that they wished this would not be so.

A number of women voiced disappointment with the negative attitudes of some church leaders towards women. This area was not fully explored in the focus groups but suggests that there may be a breakdown in communication in some churches between the leadership and the congregation. Improving communication pathways within the church structure may help overcome some of the hurts and disappointments. Leaders and congregations need to pray about and continually work on maintaining good communication.

Voice four: Women want to be equipped

Women and men who attested that their church (usually the Minister) taught and emphasised Bible teaching concerning spiritual gifts, were generally satisfied that they were being given valuable opportunities to exercise ministry in their congregation. On the other hand, those who believed that such teaching was not being given emphasis felt personally inadequate. Roles for them were limited or they were unable to be active in service. In effect they felt they had nothing to do, or could do nothing.

This voice indicates that Bible teaching from the pulpit about the recognition and use of gifts for service leads to valuable opportunities to exercise one's gifts. The injunction specifically given to the pastors and teachers in Eph. 4:12 "*to prepare God's people for works of service*" cannot be taken lightly. A congregation being prepared for works of service brings fruitfulness and contentment within the people. Through the Holy Spirit and preaching people begin to be equipped to use their gifts for God's glory.

Women also need to be equipped with suitable skills and resources. When this occurs, encouragement is translated into action. Equipping is defined as "to furnish for service or action by appropriate preparation". Equipping occurs personally and formally by the church providing appropriate resources to prepare women for service. Respondents identified that most equipping in the PCA occurs in regular teaching within their churches and small Bible study groups. Occasionally equipping occurs at larger events such as conferences and sometimes through mentoring.

Equipping women through formal theological training is rare within the PCA. Although some formal courses exist they need to be more widely published or promoted. Formal church processes and structures that encourage and equip women for service need to be accessible for women in the church.

Women are personally responsible to equip themselves and take up opportunities as God leads them. Often women fail to volunteer for opportunities available to them even when they possess the gifts to do so. 2 Corinthians 13:5 says “Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test?” Women need to examine their hearts in this respect.

Voice five: Women want to use their gifts

An underlying principle of this paper is the complementarian view of God-given roles, as in creation where God made woman to complement the man. Women believe they have God-given gifts to use for His service and to complement men in ministries of the church. They want to be given an opportunity to use these gifts in the way God intended. Where church leaders take account of and value all the gifts within the congregation, women reported more opportunity and involvement within church activities. Many women however, stated that they were not given opportunity or encouraged to use their gifts in the church. Many women find it difficult to escape the sense that their contribution is not seen as valuable within the organization – thus they fail to volunteer.

The church is a body made up of many parts, each having their own gifts for the common good (1 Cor 12:7, 12-31). God places His people in his church, and He provides them with gifts according to His purposes. Ideally, when planning a ministry agenda, church leaders should primarily look at the gifts provided by God and not just the positions to be filled. Often a church’s ministry agenda has not taken into account the gifts of people within their congregations.

Where a church has needs, and no-one seems to possess the gifts for that ministry, training and equipping may be required. In this case, individuals are to be responsible and rise to the challenge of developing their gifts and learn new skills in order to be of service. Therefore the church’s role is to encourage, recognise and affirm individuals and this will enable women confidently to step out with confidence and use their gifts. Elders should be alert to the areas of growth required by the congregation.

The PCA has very few formal roles or positions for women within the church (paid or unpaid) and many women see little purpose investing time in developing skills they cannot use in the church. Overcoming these issues requires organisational change driven by the leadership of the church. Recognition of women's unutilised gifts and hidden potential is part of good leadership. Encouragement, recognition and affirmation are the keys to unlock women's gifts. A church that teaches women how to equip themselves and encourages them will find them taking up more positions of service within the church.

Ministry may be gift-driven. However, this doesn't allow for people to be a law unto themselves. The Bible teaches that gifts are given to the whole body so that all believers may exercise them in service under the authority of the church (Rom 12, 1Cor 12). However, this concept is often misunderstood.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The voices of women and men have been heard and discussed. This section suggests ways in which leaders of the church can activate women's ministry in the church. Churches should be encouraged to discuss, review and plan the roles of women and their involvement in the church, now and in the future. How can they do this? Through the ***PEOPLE Model (2007)***.

The PEOPLE Model (2007): Prepare, Encourage, Opportunity, Policy, Listen, Edify.

PREPARE women by equipping them for service. Make general training readily available to both men and women in congregations.

Some ways to equip women for service

Bible studies

Bible College

Growth groups

Training courses
Camps/retreats/workshops
Distance education
Women's fellowship nights
Advertise what's available (not just PCA but any good course)
Encourage women to take up study.

At the level of theological/bible college, women need to be strongly encouraged to get involved. Marketing could be more overtly directed to women as well as men. It takes a brave woman to be the only one in a class of males with a male teacher!

ENCOURAGE and affirm women to take up their responsibility to serve the Lord. The Holy Spirit was given by Christ as our great encourager, members of the church who hold offices must encourage the members – the Minister as he preaches the Word and the Elders as they shepherd the flock.

Leaders can actively build encourage women to recognise their potential by

- Running workshops on
 - Becoming contagious Christians
 - Gift identification and acknowledgement
- Affirming women's skills and abilities verbally and by recognition
- Mentoring women through special events for women
- Challenging leadership attitudes
- Showing respect for abilities and knowledge
- Providing an opportunity to contribute to discussions within the church

OPPORTUNITY for the involvement of women in new roles, revised roles and positions within the church.

Some suggestions of roles at local, state or national are (although are not limited to)

- administration,
- committee membership,
- education,

- management,
- financial planning,
- chaplaincy and pastoral care,
- counselling,
- health and well-being,
- children and youth workers,
- Religious Education in schools,
- special projects,
- social welfare work,
- consultants or representatives that report to Sessions, Presbyteries and Assemblies,
- Website consultant.

POLICY: Have a positive statement Have a positive statement about ministries available to women, giving direction from the church at a national level.

LISTEN to women.

Provide opportunities for women to have a voice in local churches, Presbyteries, States and National levels.

How can women have a voice? Consultancy at Session level, at Presbytery level, in church offices, at State Assembly level, at GAA level.

What is the practical way to give women a voice? Ask their opinions, advice, perspective, input and ideas either informally or formally, verbally or written.

Who should have a voice? All women should have an opportunity. Have a structure where relevant issues are made known to the congregations. Feedback can then be provided through nominated women to relevant decision-makers.

Open up communication channels. Have ways in which people can find out what's going on (eg websites). Have regular means of communication eg weekly bulletin or word of mouth, as well as an e-bulletin, a billboard, have a word of mouth structure where a few are informed and they have a specific list of others to advise. Communication should go both ways up and down the channel. Hold an open forum for people to voice their suggestions a few weeks before the AGM / congregational meeting, so that the Session has opportunity to consider such and address at the meeting.

At the local level women could be members of committees advising or consulting with sessions and committees of management, or female representatives/leaders of groups could meet with elders at leaders meetings.

At the national level there is a need for the women of PCA to be represented by one or more spokespersons, who might also be a consultant to the GAA, and a consultant for women's ministry groups around the nation, so that matters of importance to women are passed on and eventually heard at higher levels.

EDIFY the body through preaching about gifts and encouraging all believers to be active in ministry.

Lesley Ramsay (2002) suggests that women's ministries should promote spiritual growth, involve Bible study and prayer and outreach, develop deep relationships, provide support, suit the needs and characteristics of individual church cultures, include mentor relationships, help discover and encourage the use of gifts, and provide training in skills of Christian ministry. However the purpose of all of this is to allow women to take their place within the Ministry-Plan / policy of the church, not be isolated from it.

Structures (e.g. website) that enable sharing of ideas or combined events (e.g. seminars/speakers/conferences) could be set in place. This could be maintained by an employed woman or women of the church.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee recommends that

1. Members of the PCA prayerfully consider, in the light of Biblical principles, the giftedness of women and their place in the church.
2. Consideration be given as to how the voice of women can be heard in the decision-making processes of the church, so that the opinions and expertise of women can be consulted by existing leadership structures of the church.
3. Copies of the report be sent to all Sessions with a view to implementing its recommendations. Leaders should be invited to review the position of their church in providing encouragement and hands on training to equip the women of their church. The PEOPLE Model (2007) may be of use to these men.
4. Consideration for a national-based Website for Women's Ministries PCA be developed and monitored to encourage the women of Australia in communication, support, networking and equipping.
5. The PCA consider holding a national women's conference every two years, each state taking a turn to host the conference, where practical.
6. The PCA consider formulating a policy on women's roles in the church. For example: *"The PCA values and seeks to mobilise women and encourage them to use their gifts in the activities of the church to glorify God, within the structures of church leadership"*.

CONCLUSION

This paper has provided an overview of the consultation conducted with people from the PCA 2005-2007 about the roles available to women in the PCA for 2007 and beyond. Voices have been heard about this issue.

Reviewing the roles of women in the church has indicated a need for women's involvement in consultation and communication to be reviewed. Local churches are encouraged to review their outlook about women's roles and how they can encourage and equip the women of their church with the following points in mind:

- Acknowledge women's gifts. Gifts are personally bestowed by God regardless of gender, and people should be placed in roles based on their gifts rather than on gender stereotypes.
- Give women opportunity to serve in roles in Christ's church as they are able.
- Women are to use their gifts responsibly under the authority of the church.
- Identify, encourage and develop the spiritual gifts of the whole body.
- Leaders of the church support and encourage all believers to serve and thereby bring glory to God.
- Equip and encourage people. Church members find fulfilment in service for which the Holy Spirit has gifted them, and for which the church has equipped and encouraged them through teaching.

Leaders of the church can use the **PEOPLE Model** (2007) to implement strategies to activate women into service to use their gifts for ministries of the church. A number of suggested readings have been included in the appendices to provide church leaders with resources.

DELIVERANCES

That the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia (2007)

1. Receive this report;
2. Affirm women as valued partners in the PCA by establishing an ad hoc committee within the GAA to oversee and further investigate implications and implementations of this report;
3. Send a copy of this report to State Assemblies, Presbyteries and Session and encourage its implementation in facilitating opportunities for women to use their gifts in service; and
4. Thank and discharge this committee.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writers of this paper would like to take this opportunity to commend and encourage the General Assembly of Australia for taking up the challenge of exploring the issue of “Biblical ministries available to women” and for the following:

- appointing this committee,
- persevering for more than 10 years in this activity;
- providing an opportunity for women to have a voice in the future direction of the church;
- listening to the voice of women in the PCA;
- providing support and encouragement to the women of Australia by these actions;
- providing financial support to facilitate and process this report; and
- prayerfully considering and acting upon the findings of the appointed committee.

Please be assured that many women in Australia are praying for the General Assembly for wisdom in decision-making and future action.

In the course of preparing this paper, the services and ideas of many people were called upon. Much gratitude is extended for their assistance. The committee particularly thank the area coordinators of the Focus Groups, the participants of Focus Groups and the responses from the many individuals and groups. You took time to read and respond in Godly ways. The committee members’ home churches also assisted greatly by making their facilities available for meetings, photocopying etc, thank you. Particular thanks go to Ithaca Presbyterian Church.

The committee members’ families also supported this project. As members attended meetings, travelled away to Focus Groups, spent many hours reading books, worked on our computers, read and analysed responses, sent emails and wrote papers, it was the spouses, parents, children and friends who helped maintain sane households. Much is indebted to them for their love, patience and graciousness.

Finally, we thank the Lord for the opportunity to prepare this paper, exercise gifts and stretch abilities during the past three years. This project has been a journey for each committee member. Praise Him for the ways in which each one has grown, learned more of His Word, leaned on Him in prayer, and appreciated His strength, grace and mercy. It is our prayer that this paper and its outcomes will glorify Him.

APPENDIX 1: THE COMMITTEE

This committee was comprised of the convenor appointed by the GAA and women from Women's Ministries Presbyterian Church of Queensland (WMPCQ). The committee agreed to take on the task enthusiastically as it was aware that a need already existed within the PCQ and felt extremely privileged to be asked to take on this wider task. It has been the committee's prayer from the first instance that women might be encouraged and equipped to be serving Christ and each other. However no one on the committee was aware of just how much there was to learn regarding the issues of ministries for women, the Biblical position and where the PCA stood as a whole on this issue.

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APPENDIX 2: RESOURCES

Further information about the possible or potential roles of women in the church may be found in the following resources.

Belleville, L; Blomberg, C; Keener, C; Schreiner, T. (2005). Two Views on Women in Ministry. Zondervan, USA.

Briscoe, J; McIntyre Katz, L; Severson, B. (1995). Designing Effective Women's Ministries. Zondervan: USA

Grudem, W. (2002). Biblical Foundations for Manhood and Womanhood. Crossway Books: Illinois, USA.

Grudem, W. (1995). But what should women do in the church? CBMW News (The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood). Vol1:2 pp 3-7.

Ramsay, L. (2002). Women at Work. Evangelism Ministries: Sydney