

# Ordination of Women and its Development since MOE

*CPCE-consultation april 2026*

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# The MOE recommendations

## Recommendation 8:

«We recommend to those churches at CPCE which do not yet ordain women that they take seriously the broad consensus among the CPCE churches that the ministry of both women and men is a gift of God.»

## Recommendation 10:

Reconciled diversity – who pays the price?

# From where do I respond?

- The project «Seen and Unseen. Female pastors in Norwegian free churches»
- Denominational scope:
  - The Baptist Church
  - The United Methodist Church
  - The Evangelical Covenant Church
  - The Seventh-day Adventist Church
  - The Salvation Army
  - The Pentecostal Movement
  - The Evangelical Lutheran Free Church



# The research project



- Historical, empirical and theological perspectives
- Interviewed 38 pastors
- The research group:
  - 8 scholars
  - 5 institutions
  - 5 denominations
  - All with pastoral experience
  - Including 2 men

# Two responses:

## 1. Women's ordination/ministry approved

«You should be in that pulpit, Sarah!»

## 2. Women's ordination/ministry challenged

«We are not against female pastors, we just don't want one.»



Den prestedrakten Jorunn Wendel skal bruke - som muligens er den første i Norge laget spesielt for kvinnelige prester - er tegnet av skreddermester Ansgar Granaas og sydd av Sigrud Elvestad i firmaet «Sigéll» i Oslo.

Foto: T. Wold Anthonsen

# A Brief History

- Women ordained/appointed as pastors:
  - The Salvation Army - 1888
  - The Evangelical Covenant Church - Gerda Karijord, 1915
  - The Methodist Church - Agnes Nilsen, 1932/1954
  - The Church of Norway – Ingrid Bjerås, 1961
  - The Baptist Church – 1977
  - The Seventh-day Adventist Church – 1984
  - The Pentecostal Movement – 1994
  - The Evangelical Lutheran Free Church - 2005/2011
- The Seventh-day Adventist Church – in opposition to the international church 2022





# Women's ordination approved

- Strong sense of being called
  - Self-confidence
  - God is a safe space
  - The pastoral call is part of their identity
- Opportunities, leadership

# Women's ordination challenged

Women do experience resistance against their ministry

Four kinds of resistance

Theological

Institutional

Collegial

Little or no resistance



# How do women deal with resistance – a typology

## Zero tolerance

«You've had 50 years.  
We're done now.»

## Respectful tolerance

«If I want respect for my point  
of view, I have to respect  
others for their point of view.»

## Involuntary tolerance

«You get used to it in a  
way.»

## Tactic tolerance

«I have picked my fights.»

# Women's ordination/ministry challenged

## Those who quit

Not because the call disappeared,  
but family-related or due to a conflict

## Renewed debate on female pastors during the project period

Conservative shift

Renewed focus on subordination

Students

Church of Norway – complex diversification

Freedom of religion vs safe working-  
environment

