

THE STATE OF WOMEN IN BAPTIST LIFE ▸ 2006

Commissioned by Baptist
Women in Ministry

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BAPTIST WOMEN IN MINISTRY
advocating • connecting • networking

ASSESSING ATTITUDES *About Women in Baptist Life*

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OUR VISION

Baptist Women in Ministry will be a catalyst in Baptist life, drawing together women and men, in partnership with God, to illuminate, advocate, and nurture the gifts and graces of women.

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INTRODUCTION

In 2005, Baptist Women in Ministry (BWIM) commissioned the first annual *State of Women in Baptist Life*, which provided statistical and historical information about Baptist women ministers and leaders. In anticipation of preparing the second annual report, BWIM in the spring of 2007 sponsored an on-line survey titled the *State of Women in Baptist Life Attitudes Survey (SWBL Survey)*, which was conducted in order to gain more insight into the attitudes of Baptists about the roles of women in society and in the church. In addition to the survey, BWIM set up an on-line registry. Titled *BWIM Registry for Ordained & Professional Women in Ministry (BWIM Registry)*, this website serves to collect information about Baptist women ministers, ordained and unordained.

The most notable insight gained from the survey is that when it comes to women in ministry, the attitudes of moderate and progressive Baptists continue to outpace the reality of women's ordination, leadership, and service among Baptists. Although the novelty of women entering professions of law, medicine, and teaching has long since waned, ministry remains one of the last professions to be entered in any significant numbers by women.¹ And while thousands of Baptist women in the North and South have received theological training and ordination for ministry, only

about 600 women currently serve as pastors or co-pastors in Baptist churches in the U.S.² Women continue to be underrepresented in the elected and paid leadership of Baptist agencies, but they fare better in ministry roles such as chaplaincy, counseling, church staff ministry, and missionary service.

The *SWBL Survey* clearly revealed a disjuncture between the overwhelming personal support for clergywomen offered by respondents and the actual number of ordained women who are serving in ministry roles such as pastor, chaplain, or denominational executive. A vast majority (93%) of respondents reported that they support ordination for women, and nearly two-thirds of them noted that their churches have ordained women; yet, the role of pastor continues to remain nearly out of reach for Baptist women. At best, 6.2 % of Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF) churches and 9.1% of American Baptist Churches, USA (ABC-USA) churches are pastored by women.

Forty years ago Wilbur Bock analyzed U.S. Census data for the number of reported female clergy from 1900 to 1960.³ The number of professional clergywomen increased from 3,405 in 1900 to 4,695 in 1960, peaking in 1950 when 6,777 women (89.6 % white and 10.4% African American) were reported. Although the number of clergywomen increased 38% from 1900 to 1960, the number of clergymen increased by 81%.⁴ Bock concluded that women in the profession of ministry

made up a small percentage, were not increasing substantially, and constituted a place of “professional marginality.”⁵

Since 1960, U.S. churches have experienced a revolution in both attitudes and practices related to women in the profession of ministry. Following a significant increase in women’s enrollment in seminaries and divinity schools in the early 1970s, the total percentage of women among the ordained clergy in Christian denominations began to rise noticeably. Between 1977 and 1994, women’s ordination to professional ministry increased substantially in many major denominations, including many Baptist denominations.⁶ Among Baptists of the South, as many as 1,825 ordinations of women have taken place since 1964.⁷

As with the 2005 report, the perspective of this 2006 report originates and is most concerned with the moderate-to-progressive constellation of Baptist organizations in the southern United States. The outcomes reported focus on

Baptist institutions that grew out of the Baptist controversies of the 1980s and 1990s, including the Alliance of Baptists (AB) and the CBF, as well as two major historical Baptist conventions in the U.S., the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and ABC-USA. Information about women serving in the Baptist General Association of Virginia (BGAV), and the Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT) are also included. The findings of the *SWBL Survey* and the *BWIM Registry* focus primarily on these groups, but additional information about other groups is included if clarifying data was available.

The *State of Women in Baptist Life, 2006*, includes three parts. Part One summarizes the findings of the *SWBL Survey*. Part Two updates information about women in leadership, ministry, and service among Baptists. Part Three reports on important events of 2006 related to women in Baptist life in the form of news highlights, and the activities of women’s ministry groups and organizations.

PART ONE: ASSESSING ATTITUDES

The ordination and ministry of Baptist women were points of contention even before Addie Davis became the first Southern Baptist ordained woman minister in 1964. The role of women in church life caused discontent, dissension, and loss of fellowship among Baptists and their institutions throughout the twentieth century. However, attitudes about women have changed in the last thirty years, and the views of Baptists who completed the *SWBL Survey* continue to be several steps ahead of the practical reality of women’s places of ministry in Baptist life. What keeps this gap in place? According to those surveyed, the leading cause is Baptist tradition itself.

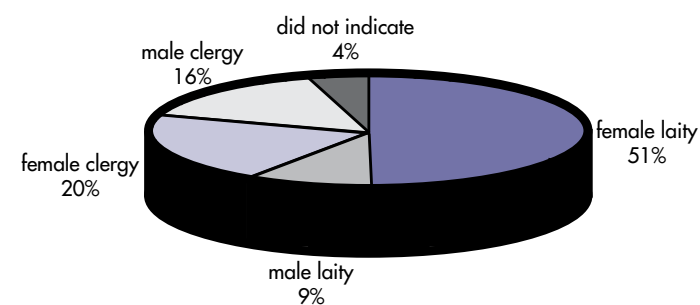
The *SWBL Survey* took as its launching point the constituency of BWIM, which weighted the results toward those who support women in ministry. However, invitations to complete the survey extended beyond those who are unmitigated supporters of clergywomen to reach a wide range of Baptists. When the results are compared with attitudes of Baptists—even the most progressive Baptists—of twenty and thirty years ago, an ongoing evolution in the mind-set of Baptists regarding women becomes apparent.

SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

The *SWBL Survey* was not designed as a randomized, social scientific poll. It was offered as an informal survey that began with the BWIM constituency and was circulated through various Baptist networks until 1,464 individuals had completed the questions between March 4 and May 8, 2007. The survey was completed by men and women, clergy and laity. The largest group was female laity, making up half of the respondents. Females identifying themselves as clergy made up 20% of survey

respondents; male clergy made up 16%, and male laity was the smallest group at 9%. A few women who took the *SWBL Survey* expressed concern that the categories of “laity” and “clergy” were problematic because they did not think that they fit clearly in one category or the other.⁸ Approximately 4% of respondents did not indicate either their clergy/laity status or their gender.

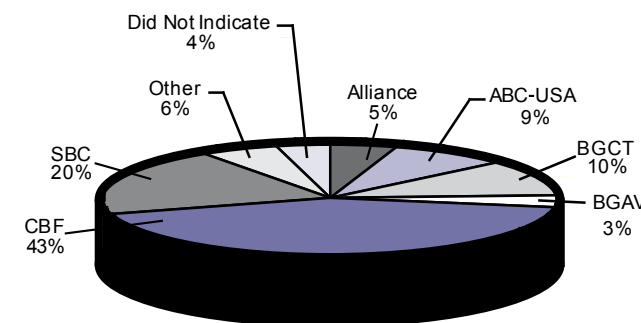
RESPONDENTS BY GENDER AND MINISTRY ROLE



Respondents were asked to identify their *primary* Baptist affiliation, the largest of which was CBF (43%), followed by the SBC (20%), the BGCT (10%), ABC-USA (9%), AB (5%), and the BGAV (3%). Other denominational groups indicated by respondents included the Baptist World Alliance, Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America, the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists, Freewill Baptists, National Baptists, and Progressive National Baptists, as well as a number of state SBC organizations, state CBF organizations, and several non-Baptist denominations. Respondents were also asked to list *all* their Baptist affiliations, and when both questions about denominational affiliations are taken into account,

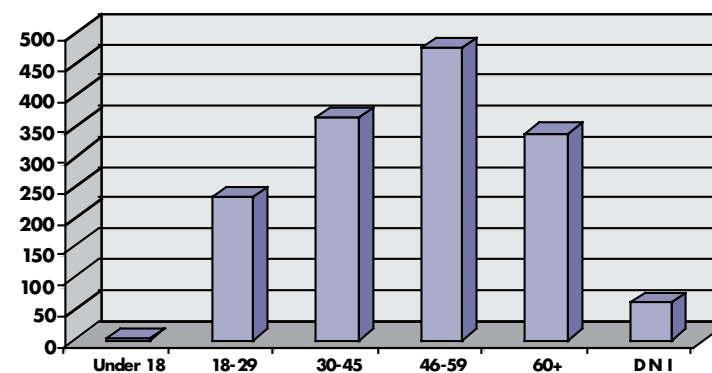
998 individuals, more than two thirds of those surveyed (68%), chose CBF as either their primary affiliation or one of several affiliations. More than a third of respondents to the study (507 or 34%) identified themselves as Southern Baptist, either as their primary affiliation or one of several affiliations.⁹

RESPONDENTS BY PRIMARY DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATION



The largest group of respondents reported they were between the ages of 46 and 59 (32%). Almost equal numbers of respondents were over 59 (23%) or between the ages of 30 and 45 (25%). A large majority of respondents to the survey indicated that they identify themselves as Caucasian/White (92%), while the remaining respondents identify themselves as African-American/Black (4.8%), Hispanic (3.1%), Asian (0.5%) or other (0.9%).¹⁰

RESPONDENTS BY AGE



Nearly a third of those who took the survey (31%) indicated that they have at some time been in a church with a woman pastor. The survey did not ask, however, if the respondents meant churches in which a woman served in any pastoral position or churches in which a woman served in the role of senior or preaching pastor. Nearly a quarter of respondents (24%) said that they were related to an ordained woman by marriage or kinship. In Baptist circles, where personal relationships are key to social attitudes and professional advancement, such familiarity with clergywomen contributes to changing perceptions about women in ministry.

WOMEN IN SOCIETY

Many questions in the survey were adapted from a previous study published by Clay Louis Price III in 1978, in which he surveyed Southern Baptists about the roles of women in society and in the church.¹¹ In his study, Price adapted some of his questions from the Harris Poll taken in the 1970s, which surveyed American men and women about attitudes toward women.¹²

The first four questions in the *SWBL Survey* related to women in society were taken directly from the Price Poll. These questions about women’s roles in society clearly reflected the mind-set of the mid 1970s and thus sound slightly out-of-date in 2007. However, in order to make a fair comparison, the questions used Price’s exact phrasing.¹³ Other questions were created solely for use in this informal survey of attitudes about women in Baptist life in the twenty-first century.

Price noted in his analysis, “Southern Baptists may be five years behind the general American population in attitudes about women.”¹⁴ Thirty years after the Price Poll, Baptists responding to the *SWBL Survey* offered views quite different and nearly inverted from Price’s earlier findings. The following percentages reveal how many men and women agreed with the statements about women in society.

1. *Taking care of a home and raising children is more rewarding for a woman than having a job.*

HARRIS POLL 1970	HARRIS POLL 1975	PRICE POLL 1977	SWBL SURVEY 2007
Women 71%	Women 51%	Women 72%	Women 21.6%
Men 68%	Men 52%	Men 69%	Men 24%

Although these figures indicate a dramatic change in attitude about the role of women in caring for a family, it is notable that in the *SWBL Survey* almost no one suggested that women’s family responsibilities were a contributing factor to the lack of advancement by women in ministry in Baptist circles. Approximately 15% of people surveyed gave “other reasons” beyond the ones offered in the survey related to why clergywomen had not advanced any further than they have. Yet only five people actually mentioned “family issues” among the concerns.

2. *The country would be better off if women had more to say about politics.*

HARRIS POLL 1970	HARRIS POLL 1975	PRICE POLL 1977	SWBL SURVEY 2007
Women 39%	Women 57%	Women 36%	Women 90%
Men 35%	Men 39%	Men 36%	Men 84%

Since 1970 women have made numerous inroads into politics. In 2006, women were elected in record numbers to the United States Congress. When results were tallied for the

110th Congress, 74 women had been elected to the House of Representatives and 16 to the Senate. Women currently constitute 16.3% of all members of Congress.¹⁵

3. *There won't be a woman President of the United States for a long time, and that's probably just as well.*

HARRIS POLL 1970	HARRIS POLL 1975	PRICE POLL 1977	SWBL SURVEY 2007
Women 67%	Women 41%	Women 71%	Women 10%
Men 65%	Men 51%	Men 71%	Men 8%

Although several women by the mid-1970s had run for president, including Shirley Chisholm, who received a substantial number of delegates in 1972, not until 1984 did a woman make it onto a national party ticket. That year, Geraldine Ferraro ran as the Democrat's vice-presidential candidate. In the spring of 2007, when the *SWBL Survey* was conducted, Hillary Clinton was considered as a serious presidential contender, and this fact may have influenced survey responses.

4. *Women will always be more emotional and less logical than men.*

HARRIS POLL 1970	HARRIS POLL 1975	PRICE POLL 1977	SWBL SURVEY 2007
Women 58%	Women 39%	Women 43%	Women 13%
Men 68%	Men 54%	Men 50%	Men 21%

The differences between women and men have often been cited among the reasons that women cannot or should not be ordained or serve as pastors. Respondents to the *SWBL Survey* were less sure about the differences between genders when it comes to logic and emotion.

In addition to duplicating Price's questions, the survey also tested some attitudes which are circulating in the twenty-first century. To that end, four general questions were asked. (See the following chart.)

AGREED WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS:	WOMEN 1,033	MEN 368	ABC 224	BGCT 259	CBF 998	SBC 507
5. Women can excel in a career or in taking care of their families, but not both.	6.6%	15%	6.3%	10.9%	8.2%	12.4%
6. Society would be better off if more women were in leadership positions.	86.6%	84.4%	91.1%	82.9%	89.7%	76.2%
7. Women have trouble getting along with each other in the work place.	21.3%	23.6%	19.8%	22.0%	19.1%	27.4%
8. The "good old boy" network is still alive and well in the twenty-first century.	94%	90.4%	94.6%	90.3%	93.2%	90.6%

Overall, respondents disagreed with the suggestion that women cannot balance responsibilities for both a family and a career. This response duplicates the findings of a study done by Barbara Brown Zikmund, Adair T. Lummis, and Patricia Mei Yin Chang, which discovered that women's career paths have not been influenced as much by the fact that they have children as by the sheer fact that they are women. Zikmund et. al. noted, "Even though the career patterns of clergy with children and clergy without children show moderate differences, gender is the pivotal factor in accounting for career path differences between male clergy and female clergy."¹⁶ Question 5, about the ability of women to excel with both a family and a career, however, resulted in the widest disparity of answers between men and women who responded to the four statements.

Generally, those who responded to these questions agreed that society would be better if women were more involved in leadership, and that the "good old boy" network still exists. The idea that women have trouble getting along at work is a truism that circulates, but found little agreement among Baptists who took the survey.

WOMEN IN THE PROFESSIONS

The early decades of the twentieth century saw a rise of female professionals in several sectors of the labor force in America. In those years, women excelled in traditionally "female professions," including nursing, teaching, and working as a librarian. Yet women were virtually excluded from the professions of law, medicine, ministry, and teaching at the university level. Gradually, over the course of the twentieth century, women entered all the professions traditionally filled by men with greater numbers.¹⁷ According to the U.S. Department of Labor, in 2005, women made up 30% of U.S. lawyers, as well as 32% of all physicians and surgeons, and 67% of all psychologists.¹⁸

Baptists who took the *SWBL Survey* indicated strong support for women in professions from medicine and politics to law and ministry. Respondents apparently put that support into practice by utilizing the services of professional women, especially women serving as medical professionals, teachers, financial advisors, and ministers.¹⁹

FEMALE PROFESSIONAL PROVIDERS	PERCENTAGE RESPONDENTS WHO UTILIZE SERVICES
Doctor/Medical Professionals	67%
Teacher	38%
Banker/Financial Advisor/CPA	36%
Pastor/Minister/Spiritual Director	35%
Counselor/Therapist/Social Worker	25%
Lawyer	11%
Architect/Designer	4%
Other	3%
Business Professionals	1.5%

In terms of voting for women running for public office, respondents indicated overwhelmingly their willingness to vote for women running for the U.S. Congress (99%), state legislature (99%) and even president (92%). Respondents were also highly confident about the abilities of women to enter professions traditionally filled by men (98%), run a business (99%), engage in politics (97%), and even fulfill pastoral roles as well as men (91%). Only two individuals who took the survey were unwilling to grant that women should be paid equally for the same work done by men.²⁰ Although respondents to the *SWBL Survey* indicated strong support for professional women, including clergywomen, the fact remains that in the first decade of the twenty-first century women are both trained and employed in lesser numbers for vocations of ministry than they are for most other professions.²¹

WOMEN IN MINISTRY

Support for women's ordination and ministry was strong among respondents. In the second section of the *SWBL Survey*, two types of questions were asked. One type attempted to gauge individual attitudes toward women in church leadership. The other type was concerned with ways women might actually be serving in churches where respon-

dents are members. While personal rates of support for women's ordination are stronger than actual practice, Baptists who took the survey are clearly open to further change. The U.S. Department of Labor, which identifies the ministry as an occupation that is non-traditional for women, predicts rapid growth among clergy professionals and a rise in the number of women joining their ranks in the next decade.²²

Approval Rating

The overall personal approval rate for women in roles of deacon and minister was undeniably strong.²³ Over 90% of the respondents supported the ordination of women to *every* ministerial role suggested in the survey.²⁴ Even among those who identified themselves as affiliating with the SBC, which has in recent years more forthrightly disavowed women's service as pastors, indicated support for women's ordination at relatively high rates (78-86%).²⁵ In Price's 1977 poll, 80% of respondents *disapproved* of women ministers, and if given a choice between an equally qualified male pastor and female pastor, no one who took Price's survey was willing to choose a woman as their pastor. It seems an understatement to say that some Baptist attitudes about women in ministry have shifted dramatically in thirty years. (See the following chart.)

In the mid-1980s, Nancy Ammerman and her colleagues surveyed Southern Baptists about their views on a wide variety of topics, including their views about women's ordination and ministry. Overall, respondents approved women's ordination at a rate of 26%, but those who identified themselves as moderate or moderate-conservatives approved women's ordination at 87% and 64% respectively. Only 6% of moderates and 3% of conservative-moderates reported that their churches had ever ordained a clergywoman. A much higher percentage of respondents stated their approval of the ordination of women as deacons and noted that women actually served in their churches in that role.²⁶

In Ammerman's poll, 90% of moderates and 81% of moderate-conservatives said that they would "support hiring an ordained woman." These percentages are comparable to the responses to a similar question asked in the *SWBL Survey*.

AGREED WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS:	PRICE POLL	SWBL SURVEY	SBC	CBF	FEMALE CLERGY	MALE CLERGY	FEMALE LAITY	MALE LAITY
According to your understanding of the Bible, does the possibility exist for women to serve in pastoral roles?	18%	93%	85.8%	97.3%	98.3%	96.5%	91.3%	91%
Do you approve of the ordination of women to the pastoral ministry?	15%	93%	85.8%	97.3%	98.3%	96.1%	91.2%	94.8%
If a qualified woman were available for the pastorate of your Baptist church, would you be open to calling her?	15%	90%	78.4%	95.3%	96.5%	92.4%	87.4%	89.5%

However, the *SWBL Survey* specifically asked about the hiring of an ordained woman as pastor. In Ammerman's study, many respondents wrote in the margins that they would support hiring a qualified woman but not as pastor.²⁷

When respondents to the *SWBL Survey* were asked about choosing a male or female pastor, between 53% and 66% in all groups said that they were unsure. However, between clergy, laity, male and female, the differences among the remaining 40% were more varied.

Not surprisingly, clergywomen as a group were most adamant in their preference for calling a qualified woman as pastor, while self-identified SBC members were least likely as a group to prefer a woman and most unsure about whom they would choose.

More surprising is the response of laity in CBF churches. The opinions offered by 404 lay members of CBF churches revealed that one in five of them would prefer a woman, while less than 17% would prefer a man, and over 95% would be open to calling a woman to their church as pastor. These same lay members of CBF churches indicated that more than a third of them have been in a church with a female pastor, and 88% have been in a church with an ordained woman on staff. Less than 16% reported that they are related to a clergywoman by marriage or kinship.²⁸ Together these findings suggest that the extended contact with women in ministry may have an impact on attitudes. They also suggest that the conventional wisdom that CBF churches "aren't ready" for a woman pastor might be eroding.

Church Practice

Some discrepancies arose when comparing individual support with church practice as reported by respondents. For instance, while respondents support women's ordination to ministry (93%) and the diaconate (96%), only about two-thirds (65%) reported that their churches have actually ordained a woman to ministry, and only 73% reported that women serve as deacons in their churches.²⁹ Only 31% of the respondents have been members of churches that had a female pastor, and 55% reported having a woman serving as chair of deacons in their congregation. These differences demonstrate that attitudes are outpacing practice among Baptists who support women in ministry.

Although the findings of the *SWBL Survey* seem to confirm the widely-shared perception that progressive and moderate Baptists support women in ministry, the fact remains that women have only advanced marginally in the profession of ministry in Baptist life. When asked why this is so, respondents

selected as the leading cause the idea that Baptist tradition holds women back (78%). This response was followed by the response that men in power prevent women's advancement (69%). Twenty-one percent of respondents believe that the church is not ready for women's leadership, although responses to other questions in the survey challenge this assumption. Very few of the respondents agreed with the ideas that women are not adequately prepared or that the lack of advancement might be God's will. (See chart on next page.)

In the *SWBL Survey*, Southern Baptist respondents were more likely to say the church is not ready for women's leadership, and 82% of them stated that Baptist tradition is responsible for clergywomen's limited progress. Southern Baptists were also more likely than any other group to agree with the idea that the Bible prohibits women's leadership in the church.

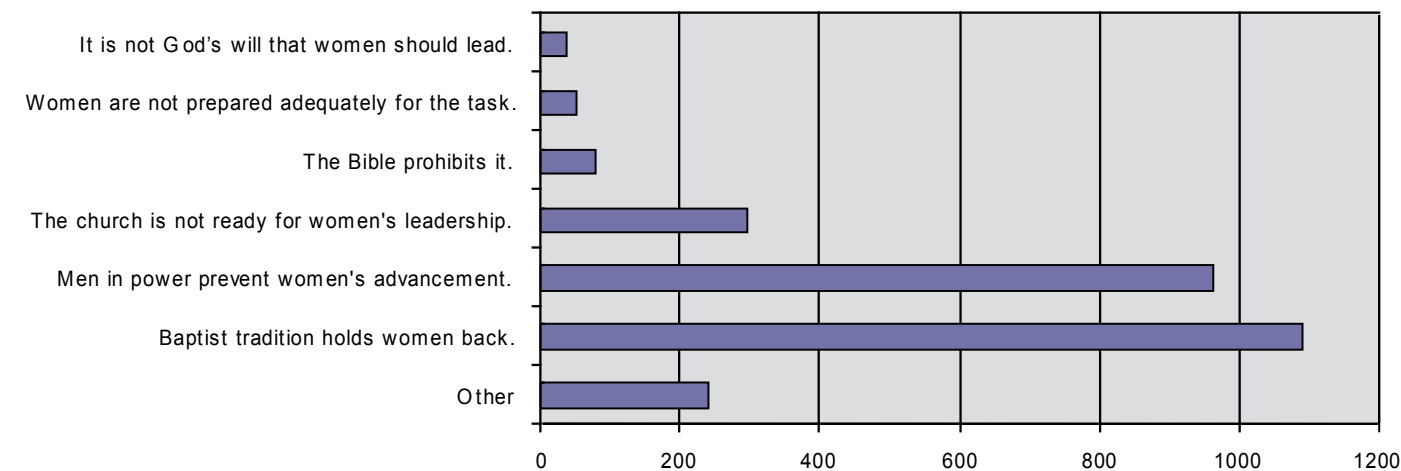
Clergywomen themselves attributed the lack of advancement beyond the current situation equally to men in power (75%) and Baptist tradition (75%). Male and female clergy tended to believe that Baptist tradition and men in power are responsible at almost equal rates for the inability of women to advance, while lay persons stated that tradition is more responsible and men in power are less responsible. Clergywomen were the most ready to agree that the church is not ready for their leadership (23%), while laypersons agreed at a slightly lower rate, and male clergy were the least likely to see the church as unready for women's leadership (19%).

The idea that the Bible prohibits women's pastoral ministry was supported by less than 6% of respondents. Yet those who opined additional reasons for the lack of advancement by women in ministry most often cited *inadequate interpretations* of scripture.³⁰ Other leading causes of women's failure to advance in ministry, according to 79 female clergy who responded to this portion of the survey included problems stemming from the wider culture; fear, inexperience and lack of education in the church; failures on the part of clergywomen themselves; and a lack of support by other women both in terms of mentoring and more negatively in terms of outright opposition by other women to clergywomen.³¹ The 94 lay women who responded to this part of the survey named these same "other" causes for the lack of advancement by women in ministry. In addition to problematic biblical interpretation, the top suggestions made by men included forces in the wider culture, failures of the clergywomen themselves, and lack of support by other women.

If an equally qualified man and woman were available for the pastorate of a given Baptist church, which would you honestly choose?	PRICE POLL	SWBL Survey	SBC	CBF	Female Clergy	Male Clergy	Female Laity	Male Laity
Choose a Man	95%	16.9%	31.7%	11.6%	4.9%	16.4%	19.6%	24.2%
Choose a Woman	None	22.1%	11.4%	24%	41.8%	16.9%	18.3%	13.6%
Unsure	**	61%	85.8%	64.4%	53.3%	66.7%	62.1%	91%

** "unsure" was not offered as a choice by Price in 1977.

REASONS CLERGYWOMEN HAVE NOT ADVANCED SIGNIFICANTLY



PART TWO: ASSESSING LEADERSHIP

Clergywomen continue to make up a small, yet vocal and visible minority of Baptist clergy. Baptists surveyed in the *SWBL Survey* agreed at a rate of 93% that women should be ordained for ministry, yet only 65% of respondents indicated that their church had ordained at least one woman for ministry.³²

In ordaining people for the ministry, Baptist churches, most of which are firmly in the free-church tradition and emphasize local church autonomy, are generally most concerned with the individual's personal sense of calling by God to do the work of ministry. Effective and persuasive leadership is key to pastoral authority among most Baptists.

American Baptist and Southern Baptist clergywomen who took part in a late-1990s study indicated that they thought more women should be ordained. However, those same women agreed that in an ideal church no one would need to be ordained.³³ This seeming discrepancy indicates the powerful belief in the "priesthood of all believers," while also demonstrating a commitment to the practice of ordination as long as it is still needed. This need for ordination is particularly true for women who only make up a small percentage of ordained clergy among Baptists. The following data about the ordinations and leadership of Baptist clergywomen provide a snapshot of the state of women in 2006.

ORDINATIONS

In order to gather information about Baptist women serving in professional roles of ministry, BWIM opened its on-line registry on April 22, 2007. By May 10, 2007, 617 women had registered or had been registered by a friend, family member, or colleague.

Of the 617 Baptist women, 447 had been or were scheduled to be ordained.³⁴ The 447 women who have registered

are only a fraction of the total number of Baptist women who have been ordained by Baptist churches in the past 131 years. Since the first known ordination of a Freewill Baptist woman in 1876, thousands of women have been ordained, including hundreds of Baptist women in the South. The first known ordination of a Southern Baptist woman took place in 1964 when Watts Street Baptist Church in Durham, North Carolina, ordained Addie Davis.

Other "first" ordinations occurred in the 1970s, including Shirley Carter, the first woman ordained in South Carolina (1971); Marjorie Bailey, the first woman ordained in Virginia (1972); Jean Smith Pruett, the first woman ordained in Georgia (1973); Jeanette Zachry, the first woman ordained in Texas (1974); Becky Matheny, the first woman ordained in Alabama (1978); and Terry-Thomas Primer, the first woman ordained in the New England Baptist Convention (1979).³⁵ Pruett and her husband, who was ordained previously, became the first known Southern Baptist ordained clergy couple when she was ordained by Oakhurst Baptist Church in Decatur, Georgia.

The 447 ordained women who registered cited as their personal denominational affiliation or affiliations: CBF (348), ABC-USA (58); SBC (33); AB (93); BGAV (41); BGCT (37); National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. (3); National Baptist Convention of America, Inc. (2); and Progressive National Baptist Convention (1). The women who registered also indicated the state in which they were ordained. The most ordinations occurred in North Carolina, where Baptist churches ordained 96 women. The next four states with the most ordinations were Georgia, Texas, Virginia, and Kentucky. In these five states, 324 Baptist women were ordained, which is 72% of the total number of registered ordinations. Following is a breakdown by state of the 447 registered ordained women.

ORDINATIONS BY STATE

AL	9	KY	31	NY	1
CA	10	KS	1	OH	2
CT	1	LA	4	OK	9
DC	1	MA	3	PA	1
FL	11	MD	5	SC	25
GA	79	ME	1	SD	2
HI	1	MO	13	TN	14
IA	1	MS	3	TX	66
IL	1	NC	96	VA	52
IN	1	NJ	1	WA	2

The earliest ordination registered in the *BWIM Registry* was that of Imogene Stewart, who was ordained in 1959 by Greater Pearly Gate Baptist Church in Washington, D.C., which was affiliated with the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.³⁶ Most of what is known about ordinations that occurred in the 1960s and 1970s is found in Leon McBeth's 1979 book, *Women in Baptist Life*. There McBeth listed the names of fifty-eight women ordained between 1964 and 1978 by Southern Baptist churches.³⁷ Only seven of those fifty-eight registered or were registered by May 10, 2007. McBeth noted that following Davis's ordination in 1964, no other Southern Baptist woman was ordained until 1971.

Information gathered by the *BWIM Registry* indicated that the great majority (over 60%) of the 447 registered ordinations have occurred since 2000. Following is a breakdown of the registered ordinations by the year of their occurrence.

ORDINATIONS BY YEAR

1959	1	1984	3	1997	17
1964	1	1985	6	1998	10
1973	1	1986	8	1999	15
1974	1	1987	5	2000	22
1975	1	1988	7	2001	29
1976	1	1989	4	2002	22
1977	2	1990	4	2003	25
1978	4	1991	8	2004	18
1979	3	1992	8	2005	85
1980	5	1993	11	2006	49
1981	6	1994	4	2007	23
1982	9	1995	16	2008	1
1983	6	1996	6		

The significant increase in ordinations in recent years can be attributed partly to the establishment and growth of two new Baptist organizations. The AB was established in 1987, and CBF was established in 1991. Both organizations have, from their founding, supported the ordination of women, and surely their formation has contributed to the rising number of ordinations.

Another contributing factor was the establishment of new theological institutions by moderate Baptists in the South. The

first schools were established in the 1990s, with the first being the Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond (BTSR) in Richmond, Virginia. BTSR opened its doors in 1991 to thirty-two students. The next year Gardner-Webb University's Christopher White School of Divinity in Boiling Springs, North Carolina, opened and was followed by the establishment of Baylor University's Truett School of Theology in Waco, Texas, in 1994; Campbell University Divinity School in Buies Creek, North Carolina, in 1996; Mercer University's McAfee School of Theology in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1996; and Wake Forest University's Divinity School in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, in 1999.

In 2007, fourteen seminaries, theology schools, or Baptist studies programs are part of CBF's network of ministry partnerships.³⁸ A common feature of these new institutions is their affirmation of women in ministry, which has resulted in a higher enrollment rate of women at those schools. At eight of the fourteen institutions, women comprise over 40 percent of the student population. By 2000, when the ordination of Baptist women stepped up to a new level, enrollment at these schools was slowly increasing, and the graduation rates were rising. By 2006, these fourteen schools had a combined enrollment of 2,087 students with 806 (39%) women students.

Many of the female students at these moderate schools have been or are scheduled to be ordained. Of the 255 women who registered on the *BWIM Registry* and who were ordained by Baptist churches that affiliate with the AB, BGAV, BGCT, CBF, and the SBC since 1997, at least 106 (42%) were students or graduates of the theological schools affiliated with CBF. Thus, a strong case may be made that the existence of the new moderate theological institutions has contributed to the marked increase in the ordinations of women.

The *BWIM Registry* allowed space for women to comment on their ordinations. Nine of the women indicated that they had been ordained at the same time their husbands were ordained. Four of the women noted that they had served in churches for many years (from 16 to 25) before they were ordained. Several women indicated that their ordination was the first one in which all members of the congregation, not just ordained persons, were allowed to lay hands on the one being ordained.

PROFESSIONAL NON-ORDAINED WOMEN MINISTERS

Some respondents to the *SWBL Survey* questioned the difficulty of identifying themselves as "laity" or "clergy." This response prompted an additional category for the *BWIM Registry*. The registry not only collected information from ordained Baptist women but also from Baptist women in professional ministry who had not been ordained. As of May 10, 2007, 170 non-ordained Baptist women ministers had registered their information. These women were given the opportunity to provide an explanation of why they had not been ordained. Five responses were provided, and following are those responses and the percentages of women who selected those responses. Some women selected more than one response.

REASONS SOME WOMEN IN MINISTRY ARE NOT ORDAINED

My ministry has not required ordination	74%
The right opportunity and circumstances have not yet made ordination possible	41%
I support ordination for women, but I am uncomfortable with the idea of ordination for myself	14%
I have pursued ordination in the past, but so far it has not come to fruition	7%
I do not support ordination for <i>any</i> ministers	2%

Over twenty women offered further explanations. Three indicated that they had been licensed for ministry; three stated that they did not see a need for ordination in order to continue their ministry; two noted that they hold part-time positions that do not require ordination; two expressed openness to being ordained in the future, one indicated that her church had never ordained a woman as minister; and one woman indicated she was not seminary trained.

MINISTRY AND LEADERSHIP

Baptist women in 2006 continued to serve in a variety of ministry and leadership positions. In most areas of ministry, the number of women serving increased in the year between 2005 and 2006, including women serving as pastors and co-pastors, chaplains, and counselors.³⁹

Women Pastors and Co-Pastors

In 1997, Sarah Frances Anders identified 85 women serving as pastors.⁴⁰ Eight years later, the *State of Women in Baptist Life, 2005* reported 102 women pastors, co-pastors, or church planters in churches affiliating with the AB, BGAV, BGCT, or CBF.

In 2006, the number of women identified as serving in these roles grew to 117 women pastors, co-pastors, or church planters, a net increase of 15 women or 15%. Of these women, 78 served as pastors, 36 as co-pastors, and 3 as church planters. The states in which these women served and the numbers of women serving follow:

WOMEN PASTORS BY STATE

VA	20	CA	3	WI	2
GA	14	IL	3	CT	1
TX	12	MS	3	DC	1
NC	12	PA	3	IN	1
TN	7	FL	3	IA	1
KY	5	ME	3	MI	1
SC	5	MA	2	MN	1
AL	4	NY	2	MO	1
MD	4	OH	2	NJ	1

For the second year, Virginia led in the number of women pastors or co-pastors with 20, an increase of 4. Georgia moved from fourth place to second, increasing from 11 to 14. Texas remained in third place, increasing from 11 to 12, and North Carolina moved from second to third place, remaining constant with 12.

From 2005 to 2006, the number of women serving as pastors, co-pastors, and church planters increased slightly, yet statistically the percentages of Baptist churches affiliated with the AB, BGAV, BGCT, and CBF continue to be minimal. In 2006, the AB had 115 affiliating congregations, with 33 women pastors and co-pastors, which is 28% and is up from 22% in 2005. In 2006, CBF had 1,899 affiliating churches, and not all 117 women pastor churches affiliated with the CBF. Thus, at best only 6.2% of CBF churches in 2006 were led by women, up from 5.5% in 2005. In 2006, the BGAV had 1,408 churches with 20 women pastors or co-pastors, which is 1.4%, up from 1.1% in 2005. The BGCT had 5,600 churches with 12 women pastors or co-pastors in 2006, which is .21% and is up from .19% in 2005.

The ABC-USA in 2006 had 5,369 individuals serving as pastors, co-pastors, and interim pastors. Of this number, 490 were women (9.1%). This percentage is up from 2005, when 403 (7.5%) of the 5,403 ABC-USA pastors, co-pastors, and interim pastors were women.⁴¹

Women Chaplains and Counselors

The number of endorsed chaplains and counselors showed a slight increase from 2005 to 2006. The following statistics suggest that women continue to find inroads to ministry in the fields of chaplaincy and counseling and that women make up a sizable percentage of those endorsed by Baptist institutions.

2006 STATISTICS	TOTAL ENDORSED CHAPLAINS & COUNSELORS	TOTAL WOMEN	PER-CENTAGE
AB ⁴²	135	75	55%
ABC-USA ⁴³	569	177	31%
BGCT ⁴⁴	369	70	19%
CBF ⁴⁵	543	160	29%
SBC ⁴⁶	2,715	215	8%

Women in Campus Ministry

Baptists have historically recognized the importance of both ministry with college students and ministry by college students. Currently in SBC life, 779 individuals serve as campus ministers, and of those, 170 are women (22%).⁴⁷ Among American Baptists, 70 individuals serve as campus ministers, and 19 of them are women (27%).⁴⁸ Five of the 511 Baptist women who listed their position title on the

BWIM Registry identified themselves as campus ministers, and in the *SWBL Survey*, a few respondents identified campus ministry as a position appropriate for ordination.

Women Missionaries and Agency Staff

Missionary service continues to be one of the most favored places of service for Baptist women desiring a vocation in ministry. Missionaries received one of the highest approval ratings in the *SWBL Survey* as a role appropriate for ordination, especially among Southern Baptist respondents. Baptist women have also found roles of ministry and service as employees of their denominations. The following updates the state of women among missions and denominational service.

In 2006, CBF supported 138 global missions field personnel. Of those, 74 (54%) were women.⁴⁹ CBF listed 64 employees on its website, of which 32 (50%) were women.⁵⁰ Women at CBF fill several executive level positions: Coordinator (1), Associate Coordinator (6), and Manager or Director (3).

At the end of 2006, ABC-USA had a total of 109 international personnel (missionaries, global consultants and development workers). Of their international missionaries and staff, 62 (57%) are women, and 21 of those women are ordained.⁵¹ The ABC-USA website lists 84 members of their National Ministries and Missionary Staff. Of those, 45 are women (54%). Women make up two-thirds of the Leadership Team for National Ministries, which, in addition to supporting national missionaries, is charged with “responsibility for the denomination’s ministries of discipleship, education and publishing.”⁵²

The AB does not employ missionaries. In 2006 the AB employed two full-time staff members: Jeanette Holt and Stan Hastey. As of April 2007, the BGCT employed 259 people. Of that total, 139 were women (54%), and 10 of those women filled executive positions.⁵³

Women’s Elected Leadership in Baptist Agencies

In most Baptist denominations, the elected boards govern policy and major decisions of the agencies and conventions. The following statistics include the percentage of women who are elected to each governing body. (See following chart.)

2006 STATISTICS	GOVERNING BODY	TOTAL ELECTED BOARD MEMBERS	TOTAL ELECTED WOMEN	PERCENTAGE
AB ⁵⁴	Board of Directors	28	14	50%
ABC-USA ⁵⁵	General Board	102	36	35%
BGCT ⁵⁶	Executive Board of Directors	107	23	21.5%
CBF ⁵⁷	Coordinating Council	68	27	40%
SBC ⁵⁸	Executive Committee	80	7	9%

WOMEN AND THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Like the disjuncture between attitudes and actual service of women in ministry, Baptists also have a disparity between the rates at which women are educated for ministry and the significantly lower rate at which they are employed in ministry positions. Attempts to understand the role and leadership of women in Baptist life have also become a subject of academic interest in recent years. Following are statistics about theological education and a list of current and past doctoral dissertations.

Women Enrolled in Theological Schools

In a 2001 Auburn Study of theological students, Barbara Wheeler reported that from 1970 to 2000, the enrollment of women in theological schools had grown dramatically, and by 2000, women comprised approximately 35% of the total enrollment.⁵⁹ Statistics published by the Association of Theological Schools in the U.S. and Canada (ATS) for the 2005-06 academic year indicate that women make up 31% of the students enrolled in the Master of Divinity programs, and 34% of the total enrollment in all programs.⁶⁰ Eleven of fourteen CBF-affiliated schools and all of the American Baptist-related institutions enroll women at rates higher than the national average. Four Southern Baptist seminaries enroll women at rates well below the national average.

When comparing seminaries and divinity schools to other professional degree programs, women’s enrollment rates look less positive. Wheeler noted, “Overall, theological schools have lagged behind medical and law schools in women’s enrollment. Women were 43.5 percent of entering law students in 1991 and 43 percent of entering medical students in 1996.”⁶¹

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship

In 2006, CBF’s fourteen seminaries, theology schools, and Baptist studies programs had a combined enrollment of nearly 2,100.⁶² The enrollment numbers for each of these schools, with the exceptions of the Baptist Houses of Study at Duke University, Emory University, and Texas Christian University, include all students, Baptist and non-Baptist, and include the numbers enrolled in all professional degrees. The enrollment numbers for Duke, Emory, and Texas Christian include only

Baptist students. (See chart on this page.)

Thus, in 2006, CBF schools had a total of 2,087 students, of which 806 were women (39%). These numbers reflect a slight increase from 2005, when the schools had 1,999 total students with 752 women students (38%). The schools with the greatest increase in women students were Baptist Seminary in Kentucky (29% in 2005, 40% in 2006); Wake Forest University Divinity School (33% in 2005, 48% in 2006); and Texas Christian University’s Brite Divinity School (23% in 2005, 32% in 2006).

American Baptist Churches, USA

In 2006, the ABC-USA had six theological institutions.⁶³ The enrollment numbers for each of these schools include all students, Baptist and non-Baptist, and include the numbers enrolled in all professional degrees. (See chart on this page.)

Thus, in 2006, the six ABC-USA schools had a total of 1,536 students, of which 854 were women (56%). In 2005, only five ABC-USA schools provided enrollment information.

That year, those schools enrolled 1,081 students, of which 615 were women (57%). Four of the five ABC-USA schools that reported enrollment in 2005 actually decreased one to three percentage points in female enrollment in 2006. Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School experienced the greatest decline, decreasing from 60% in 2005 to 52% in 2006.

Southern Baptist Convention

In 2006, the SBC had six seminaries. Enrollment information for 2006 was obtained from only four of the seminaries.⁶⁴ The enrollment numbers for each of these schools include all students, Baptist and non-Baptist, and include the numbers enrolled in all professional degrees. (See chart on this page.)

Thus, in 2006, these four SBC schools had total of 6,407 students, of which 1,358 were women (21%). These numbers reflect an 8% increase in total enrollment of students but only a .3% increase in female enrollment from 2005, when these four schools had 5,925 students, of which 1,354 were women (23%). The percentage of female students at three of the SBC

	TOTAL STUDENTS	FEMALE STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE
CBF SCHOOLS			
Baptist Seminary of Kentucky	50	20	40%
Baptist Theological Seminary in Richmond	169	87	51%
Baptist University of the Americas	235	92	39%
Baylor University’s Truett School of Theology	376	111	30%
Campbell University Divinity School	212	96	45%
Central Baptist Theological Seminary	109	56	51%
Duke University’s Divinity School	91	36	40%
Emory University’s Candler School of Theology	71	37	52%
Gardner-Webb University’s School of Divinity	164	41	25%
Hardin-Simmons University’s Logsdon School of Theology	117	23	20%
International Baptist Theological Seminary	136	36	26%
Mercer University’s McAfee School of Theology	226	114	50%
Texas Christian University’s Brite Divinity School	37	12	32%
Wake Forest University’s Divinity School	94	45	48%
ABC-USA SCHOOLS			
American Baptist Seminary of the West	61	32	52%
Andover Newton Theological School	383	261	68%
Central Baptist Theological Seminary	109	56	51%
Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School	248	128	52%
Palmer Theological Seminary	398	210	53%
Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology Virginia Union University	337	167	50%
SBC SEMINARIES			
Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary	742	166	22%
Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary	421	57	14%
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary	2,229	319	14%
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary	3,015	816	27%

schools decreased in 2006. Golden Gate dropped from 27% in 2005 to 22% in 2006. Midwestern dropped from 21% in 2005 to 14% in 2006. Southern dropped from 18% in 2005 to 14% in 2006. Only Southwestern increased in female enrollment, moving from 26% in 2005 to 27% in 2006.

Academic Writing about Baptist Women

In the past twenty-five years, interest in researching and studying the lives and contributions of Baptist women has grown. As a result, doctoral students have produced numerous dissertations on the topic. Following is a list of some of those dissertations.

Past Dissertations

- Brooks, Evelyn. "The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920." University of Rochester, 1984.
- Bennett, Laura. "Equal Privilege of Service': Women, Missions, and Suffrage in America, 1870-1930." Princeton University, forthcoming.
- Butler, Deidre Hazel Pauline Hill. "Reconstructing African American Suburban Womanhood: Agency Across Boundaries." Clark University, 2002.
- Hall, Prathia LauraAnn. "The Religious and Social Consciousness of African American Baptist Women." Princeton Theological Seminary, 1997.
- Holcomb, Carol Crawford. "Mothering the South: The Influence of Gender and the Social Gospel on the Social Views of the Leadership of the WMU, Auxiliary to SBC, 1888-1920." Baylor University, 1999.
- Holt, Sally Dean Smith. "The SBC and the WMU: Issues of Power and Authority Relating to Organization and Structure." Vanderbilt University, 2001.

- Jenkins, Richard Anthony. "Rhetorics of Discontent: A Comparison of Woman's Christian Temperance Union and Farmers' Movement Speeches with European American and African American Baptist and Methodist Sermons in North Carolina, 1880-1900." Duke University, 1995.
- Russell, Thomas Arthur. "Women's Leadership Roles in the Student Christian Movement and the Rise of the New Woman, 1880-1920." Vanderbilt University, 1999.
- Scales, T. Laine. "All That Fits a Woman': The Education of Southern Baptist Women for Missions and Social Work at the Woman's Missionary Union Training School, 1907-1926." University of Kentucky, 1994.
- Tew, C. Delane. "From Local Society to Para-Denomination: Woman's Missionary Union, 1890-1930." Auburn University, 2003.
- Vaughn, Carol Ann. "Living the Lives of Men: A Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Journey from Alabama to Shandong, 1830-1909." Auburn University, 1998.

Current Dissertations

- Campbell-Reed, Eileen. "Anatomy of Schism: How Clergywomen's Narratives Interpret the Fracturing of the Southern Baptist Convention." Vanderbilt University, forthcoming.
- Flowers, Elizabeth. "Varieties of Evangelical Womanhood: Southern Baptists, Gender, and American Culture." Duke University, forthcoming 2007.
- Maxwell, Melody. "Reflections of Womanhood and Service: Southern Baptist Women's Roles in Mission as Indicated by the Publications of Woman's Missionary Union, 1906-2006." International Baptist Theology Seminary, forthcoming.

"BWIM issues *State of Women in Baptist Life Report*"
Baptist Women in Ministry commissioned a report about the status of women's leadership in Baptist life. The *State of Women in Baptist Life Report*, 2005 included statistics about women serving as pastors and co-pastors, women's leadership among denominational schools, boards, and organizations, top news stories for 2005, and the number of women ordained in 2005.

"Suzii Paynter named director of Texas CLC"
The BGCT named Suzii Paynter as director of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission (CLC), effective August 15, 2006. Paynter is the first woman to serve as director of the CLC, historically one of the most high-profile positions in Texas Baptist life. She had served as CLC interim director since March 2, 2006.

"Al Mohler responds to *State of Women in Baptist Life report*"
In his August 21, 2006, blog, Al Mohler, president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary responded to BWIM's *State of Women in Baptist Life*, 2005, by asking the question: "Do SBC moderates really believe women should serve as pastors?" Mohler then answered, "moderate Baptist congregations—even self-consciously liberal congregations—are just not calling women to serve as pastors to any significant degree." He concluded, "This report deserves a wide reading and should be of interest to both moderate and conservative Baptists. The researchers cover a wide range of questions and their quantitative analysis should prompt much discussion among Baptists on both sides of this controversy. . . . If nothing else, regardless of one's convictions on this question, the report must raise the question of credibility on the part of moderate Baptists who claim to support women pastors."

"Cindy H. Dawson named coordinator of Global Women"
Cindy H. Dawson, formerly CBF strategy coordinator for Romany ministries in Russia, was named as the new coordinator for Global Women in September 2006. Dawson and her husband, Frank, have two daughters and live in Pelham, Alabama, where she is minister of music at Crosscreek Baptist Church.

"Alabama church ejected from association for hiring female associate pastor"
The Mobile Baptist Association voted October 19, 2006, to withdraw fellowship from Hillcrest Baptist Church in Mobile. Associational leaders cited the church's July decision to call Ellen Guice Sims to the associate position, saying the congregation had violated the association's policy of adherence to the 2000 version of the SBC's Baptist Faith and Message confessional statement.

"Rosalynn Carter ordained deacon by Baptist church in Plains, Georgia"
Former First Lady Rosalynn Carter was ordained as a deacon on December 10, 2006, by Maranatha Baptist Church in

Plains, Georgia. Though raised a Methodist, Carter, 79, has been active in Baptist congregations since her marriage more than sixty years ago to former President Jimmy Carter, a long-time Baptist deacon.

STATE WOMEN'S GROUPS

Florida Baptist Women

In Florida, work is being done to organize a network for women in ministry. For information, contact Nancy Burke at burkenancyb@yahoo.com.

Georgia Baptist Women in Ministry

Georgia BWIM holds annual meetings, and at its 2007 Spring meeting presented the Church Woman of the Year award to Brenda Dedmon of First Baptist Church, Roswell, and the Sara Owens Etheridge Scholarship to Amanda Duckworth, Doctor of Ministry student at McAfee School of Theology. Nikki Hardeman is the new president. For more information, contact Nikki Hardeman at nikhardeman@gmail.com.

Kentucky Baptist Women in Ministry

Baptist women ministers in Kentucky participate in a Peer Learning Group. Lynn Smith is the convener. For more information, contact Lynn Smith at lynnsmith@hotmail.com.

Missouri Baptist Women in Ministry

Baptist women ministers in Missouri have established a Peer Learning Group sponsored by the CBF with a Lilly Endowment grant. Eleven women meet monthly, and although the participants are mostly Baptists, it is an ecumenical group. Their coordinator is Cynthia Jarrold. For more information, contact her at cjarrold@sbcglobal.net.

North Carolina Baptist Women in Ministry

BWIM, NC meets annually and at its 2007 Spring meeting presented its church award to Memorial Baptist Church, Buies Creek, and the Anne Thomas Neil Award was presented posthumously to Kay Simpson. As a tribute to Kay, BWIM, NC has established the Rev. Kay Simpson Memorial Scholarship. To contribute, send a check payable to BWIM, NC, J. J. Johnson, Treasurer, 2719 Gordon Street, Raleigh, NC 27608. New officers are Alicia D. Porterfield, convener, and Jeanell Cox, convener-elect. For information about Baptist Women in Ministry in North Carolina, contact Alicia Porterfield at aporterfield@ec.rr.com or visit <<http://www.bwimnc.com>>.

Oklahoma Women in Baptist Life

Oklahoma Women in Baptist Life holds an annual meeting and presents a scholarship. At the 2007 meeting, April Coates, who will be enrolling at Duke Divinity School, was presented with the scholarship. For more information, contact Beth Davidson at BDavid1957@aol.com or 918-299-7444 or Dorothy DeBorde at d.deborde@cox.net.

PART THREE: RECAPPING EVENTS OF 2006

Statistics never tell the full story. The following news highlights and information about other women in ministry groups help to round out the description of the state of women in 2006.

TOP NEWS STORIES ABOUT BAPTIST WOMEN IN 2006⁶⁵

"Woman wins Baptist Heritage Preaching Award"

On June 2, 2006, the Baptist History and Heritage Society presented its 2006 Baptist Heritage Preaching first-place award to Martha Kears, a student at Gardner-Webb's Divinity School and minister to children and family life at St. John's Baptist Church in Charlotte, North Carolina. Martha is the first woman to have won this award in the five-year history of the contest.

"WMU retains auxiliary status"

Messengers at the SBC meeting on June 13, 2006, voted

down a proposal asking the Woman's Missionary Union to become an official entity of the SBC and called for the women's organization to reaffirm its "exclusive" commitment to the SBC. The proposal's defeat allows WMU to retain its status as an auxiliary to the convention. Wanda Lee, WMU executive director, spoke against the motion, saying that WMU's "'singular purpose' is missions." The vote countered the desires of the SBC Executive Committee, which had approved the proposal in its meeting on June 12.

"BWIM presents annual awards"

BWIM presented the 2006 "Addie Davis Awards" to Stacy Cochran and Debra Ann Carter. Cochran, a 2006 graduate of the McAfee School of Theology, received the award for outstanding preaching, and Carter, a student at Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond, received the award for outstanding pastoral leadership.

South Carolina Baptist Women

The CBF of South Carolina each year sponsors a retreat for Baptist women ministers and Baptist lay women. For information, contact Amanda Atkin (919) 467-0481, Beth McConnell (704) 366-4030, or Christy McMillin-Goodwin (803) 328-3864 or cgoodwin@oaklandchurch.com.

Tennessee Baptist Women in Ministry

At the 2006 Tennessee CBF gathering, Molly Marshall, president of Central Baptist Theological Seminary, was presented the Betty Galloway Award. Ircel Harrison, coordinator of the Tennessee CBF announced in April 2007 that Tammy Abec Blom, who has been convening monthly gatherings of women in ministry in Nashville and Knoxville, resigned effective May 18. She and her family will be moving to South Carolina. Plans are being made for Baptist women ministers in Tennessee to continue meeting monthly. For more information, contact Ircel Harrison at coordinator@tncbf.org.

Texas Baptist Women

Each fall at the BGCT, a breakout session for women ministers is held. For more information about Texas Baptist Women in Leadership and Ministry, contact Julie O'Teter at Julie.OTeter@bgct.org. Visit their website at <<http://www.bgct.org>>. Click on Leadership. Then click on Minister Development, and finally click on Women in Leadership/Ministry.

Virginia Baptist Women in Ministry

Virginia Baptist Women in Ministry holds an annual meeting, and at the 2007 Spring meeting, VBWIM presented a scholarship to Meekie Glaywoen, a student at the Liberia Baptist Theological Seminary. Elizabeth Rickert Dowdy was elected as the new moderator. For more information, e-mail Elizabeth Rickert Dowdy at liz804@earthlink.net or visit <www.vbwim.org>.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Clay Price's 1977 survey of Southern Baptists asked respondents whether attitudes toward women would change in the next twenty-five years. Two-thirds stated that attitudes would indeed change. Intuitively most anyone who has lived and observed U.S. culture and Baptist life in the last three decades can see the accuracy of this prediction.

Baptist attitudes about women in ministry have made revolutionary changes during this time. At the same time, more conservative Baptists have worked to keep traditional roles for women in place. Among moderate and progressive groups, attitudes continue to favor the expansion of women's roles in society and in the church, but those attitudes continue to outpace reality. Changes to the Baptist reality, however, seem to be on the horizon. Responses to the *SWBL Survey* challenged the conventional wisdom that Baptist churches are not ready for women's pastoral leadership.

As with the 2005 report, the compilation data, stories, and analysis about the state of women in Baptist life presents a

picture vivid in its diversity and vitality. It also paints a sobering tableau with its evidence of ongoing "professional marginality," which continues nearly fifty years after Bock's initial observation that women made up only a small percentage of total ministers and were not increasing substantially.

In order to expand the understanding of this twenty-first century situation, future reports need to examine more closely the experiences of clergywomen themselves and the settings where they serve. As a more comprehensive database of clergywomen is built, women serving in churches, mission settings, campuses, and other institutions need to be polled for their experiences of ministry. Moving beyond the questions of ordination and calling to employment, compensation, advancement, and the related challenges could enrich understanding of the state of women in Baptist life.

Endnotes

1. A few notable exceptions exist, including the Presbyterians Churches, USA. In 2005, Presbyterian women made up 29% of all clergy as well as 29% of the pastors and co-pastors. See http://www.pcusa.org/research/compstats/cs2005/2005_table9.pdf, accessed May 31, 2007.

2. The 600 or so women serving as pastors or co-pastors in Baptist churches in the U.S. in 2006 include 117 women affiliated with AB, BGAV, BGCT, CBF, and SBC, and 490 women affiliated with ABC-USA. A handful of women serve as pastors or co-pastors in churches affiliated with the Freewill Baptists, Progressive National Baptists, Seventh Day Baptists, and other smaller Baptist denominations.

3. E. Wilbur Bock, "The Female Clergy: A Case of Professional Marginality," *The American Journal of Sociology* 72 (March 1967): 531-39.

4. *Ibid.*, 534.

5. *Ibid.*, 531. Bock was not able to account clearly for several fluctuations in the data over the six decades that he examined.

6. See Barbara Brown Zikmund, Adair T. Lummis, and Patricia Mei Yin Chang, *Clergywomen: An Uphill Calling* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 4-7, 138-39.

7. In 1997, Sarah Frances Anders identified 1,225 ordinations of Southern Baptist women. If only 60 ordinations per year are estimated since that time, a conservative estimate would be 1,825 ordinations by 2007. See Anders, "Historical Record-Keeping Essential for WIM," *Folio: A Newsletter for Baptist Women in Ministry*, 15, no. 2 (Fall 1997): 6.

8. These observations prompted a change in the design of the second major data collection begun in 2007. As of May 10, 2007, 170 women have registered in this category.

9. A total of 507 unique individuals chose SBC as one of their affiliations. However, because the *SWBL Survey* was not a randomized representative poll, it would be unfair to assume that these individuals represent a wide cross-section of SBC church members.

10. Several invitations were extended in an effort to expand the number of non-white survey participants, but the effort was only minimally successful. The 116 individuals who identified themselves as African-American, Hispanic, Asian or other were fairly evenly distributed across denominational groups, the largest numbers affiliated with ABC and CBF; they were evenly divided between clergy and laity, and about 70% live in Texas or Virginia.

11. Clay Louis Price III, *A Survey of Southern Baptist Attitudes toward the Role of Women in Church and Society* (M.A. Thesis, West Georgia College, 1978). Before constructing the *SWBL Survey*, the authors consulted with Price and received his permission to use questions from his poll.

12. "Changing Views on the Role of Women," *Current Opinion*, IV (February 1976), 16, as cited in Price, *A Survey of Southern Baptist Attitudes*, 36.

13. In particular statement number 3 was problematic and prompted at least one complaint. The statement actually poses two questions with different possible responses for each: a) will there be a woman elected president? and b) is that favorable or unfavorable to you? However, only 16 people (1%) skipped this question

14. Price, *A Survey of Southern Baptist Attitudes*, summary page 6.

15. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_the_United_States_Congress#_note-3, accessed May 31, 2007.

16. Zikmund, *Clergywomen*, 91.

17. Barbara Harris traced this story through the mid-1970s in *Beyond Her Sphere: Women and the Professions in American History* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1978).

18. These facts are reported at <http://www.pay-equity.org/PDFs/ProfWomen.pdf>, accessed May 26, 2007. The document cites the following: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings*, Annual Averages, Table 11, "Employed persons by detailed occupation, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity," 2006, <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat11.pdf>.

19. These figures include the responses given under the category "other" which duplicated the categories offered. The category that was not included, but should have been added, was business professional.

20. The number of respondents (1,432) who agreed that women should be paid equally with men constituted 99.9%, with 2 disagreeing and 32 skipping the question.

21. Barbara Wheeler, *Is There a Problem? Theological Students and Religious Leadership for the Future* (New York: Auburn Theological Seminary, 2001), 5. The U.S. Department of Labor lists clergy as one of the nontraditional occupations for women because women make up less than 25% of the labor force in that sector. See <http://www.dol.gov/wb/factsheets/Qf-nontrad-2.htm>, accessed May 31, 2007.

22. The U.S. Department of Labor projects clergy as among the fastest growing professions in the next decade. See <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocotjt1.htm>, accessed May 31, 2007. Nontraditional occupations for women are those in which they make up 25% or less of the labor force, including clergy. This makes the profession one in which women are likely to continue to excel.

23. Between 51 and 63 people skipped each of the questions in this section which were about women in ministry. This is 4% or less of the total respondents.

24. The options given in the survey were the following: Chaplaincy, Christian Education, Church Musician, Missionary, Social Worker, Pastor/Associate Pastor, Pastoral Counselor, Youth and Children's Work. Only 27 respondents (1.9%) chose "none of the above."

25. These approval ratings range from Pastor at 78.8% to Missionary at 96.4%, and include chaplaincy, Christian education, music, social work, counselor and youth and children's work. Only 10 Southern Baptists said "none of the above."

26. Nancy Tatom Ammerman, *Baptist Battles: Social Change and Religious Conflict in the Southern Baptist Convention* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1990), 97.

27. *Ibid.*, 96-97.

28. These CBF lay people come from 21 different states, and are mostly white, married, and college educated. They are almost evenly divided by age, with a 18% of them in the 18-29 group, and the three older groupings evenly represented

29. Several objections to the assumption about ordination and deacon service were offered by respondents. Of particular concern was that some churches have women serving as deacons, however, no one in the church, male or female is ordained for deacon ministry.

30. Overall 42 people (3% of the total number of respondents) suggested that inadequate interpretations of the Bible were the main barrier to women's advancement in ministry.

31. These responses were the six most common answers given by the clergywomen.

32. On the question of personal agreement, 1,318 agreed; 94 disagreed; and 53 people skipped the question. On the question of church participation in ordination, 913 indicated "yes;" 493 indicated "no;" and 59 skipped the question.

33. See Zikmund, *Clergywomen*, 108-11, 161. ABC-USA women were grouped with Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and United Churches of Christ, who averaged agreeing with the following statement "more women should be ordained to full ministerial status in my denomination" at a rate of 72%. SBC clergywomen together with Church of the Brethren agreed at a rate of 85%. Clergymen agreed at rates of 52% and 40% respectively.

34. Information about the 447 ordained women was gleaned from the on-line *BWIM Registry for Ordained & Professional Women in Ministry* set up on April 22, 2007, and from an informal e-mail survey conducted in the spring of 2006.

35. Leon McBeth, *Women in Baptist Life* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1979), 157, and the *BWIM Registry*. All these ordinations are the earliest documented ones. Earlier ones may have taken place.

36. Imogene Stewart, telephone interview by Pamela R. Durso, May 16, 2007. Stewart is now affiliated with the Progressive National Baptist Convention. For the past forty years, she has run the House of Imogene, a shelter for battered women located in Washington, D.C.

37. McBeth, *Women in Baptist Life*, 154-55.

38. The fourteen theological institutions that in 2007 affiliate with CBF are Baptist Seminary of Kentucky, Baptist Theological Seminary in Richmond, Baptist

University of Americas, Baylor University's Truett School of Theology, Campbell University Divinity School, Central Baptist Theological Seminary, Duke University Divinity School, Emory University's Candler School of Theology, Gardner-Webb University's Christopher White School of Divinity, Hardin-Simmons University's Logsdon School of Theology, International Baptist Theological Seminary, Mercer University's McAfee School of Theology, Texas Christian University's Brite Divinity School, and Wake Forest University's Divinity School.

39. Finding records of women (or anyone) in Baptist life is severely challenged by the lack of centralized record-keeping and the autonomy of individual Baptist churches and agencies. The statistics obtained for this report resulted from many personal contacts and combing record books and websites.

40. Anders, "Historical Record-Keeping Essential for WIM," 6.

41. Wendy Rothenberger, telephone interview by Pamela R. Durso, June 19, 2006 and May 31, 2007.

42. Chris Copeland, e-mail to Eileen Campbell-Reed, May 24, 2007.

43. George Langhorne, telephone interview by Eileen Campbell-Reed, May 24, 2007. A total of 889 chaplains and counselors are endorsed by ABC, including 320 individuals who are retired.

44. Julie O'Teter, BGCT, e-mail to Eileen Campbell-Reed, May 18, 2007.

45. Brian Green, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, e-mail to Eileen Campbell-Reed, April 18, 2007.

46. Noolie Yoon, North American Mission Board, e-mail to Eileen Campbell-Reed, May 17, 2007.

47. Linda Osborne, LifeWay, e-mail to Eileen Campbell-Reed, May 31, 2007.

48. Website Accessed 5/31/2007: http://www.nationalministries.org/education/campus_ministers.cfm

49. Becky Buice Green, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, e-mail to Eileen Campbell-Reed, April 26, 2007.

50. See <http://www.thefellowship.info/cbfresource.aspx>, accessed April 16, 2007.

51. Sharon Smart, International Ministries, American Baptist Churches (USA), e-mail to Eileen Campbell-Reed, May 1, 2007.

52. See ABC-USA, National Ministries Website, http://www.nationalministries.org/come_from.cfm, accessed May 31, 2007. A listing of staff is found at: http://www.nationalministries.org/home_missionaries_list.cfm, accessed May 31, 2007.

53. Campus ministers in Texas are included in the SBC campus ministry numbers. The total of BGCT employees reported does *not* include Baptist Student Ministries, Texas Baptist Men, WorldConnex, Baptist Church Loan Corporation, or the Baptist Foundation of Texas. Julie O'Teter e-mail to Eileen Campbell-Reed, June 4, 2007.

54. See <http://www.allianceofbaptists.org/Officers.htm>, accessed May 14, 2007.

55. Beverlee Everett, American Baptist Churches, USA, e-mail to Eileen Campbell-Reed, April 19, 2007.

56. Julie O'Teter, BGCT, e-mail to Eileen Campbell-Reed, May 18, 2007.

57. See http://www.thefellowship.info/documents/CC_MEMBERLIST.pdf, April 16, 2007.

58. The list of executive committee members included a total of 80 positions, 2 of which were vacant. *Annual*, Southern Baptist Convention, 2006, 433-44.

59. Wheeler, *Is There a Problem?*, 5.

60. Association of Theological Schools in the U.S. and Canada: *ATS Data Tables 2005-2006: Enrollment*, 3, 48. See <http://www.ats.edu/Resources/FactBook/2006/2005-06%20Annual%20Data%20Tables.pdf>, accessed May 25, 2007. The total enrollment figures include masters, doctoral, and other programs offered in 226 member schools.

61. Wheeler, *Is There a Problem?*, 5.

62. Information gathered from telephone interviews and e-mails by Pamela R. Durso with representatives from each school, Spring 2007.

63. *Ibid.*

64. *Ibid.* Some information was provided by Bill Summers, director of the Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee.

65. Many of these headlines are from the monthly e-newsletter distributed by Baptist Women in Ministry. Other headlines are from the Associated Baptist Press (www.abpnews.com), and the summaries are taken from information reported in ABP stories.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE BWIM LEADERSHIP TEAM

In 2005, the Baptist Women in Ministry (BWIM) organization commissioned the first annual *State of Women in Baptist Life (SWBL)* report in order to track the status of women's leadership in Baptist life. One of the organization's objectives was to use the documented information to bring about change in areas where deficiencies occurred. An important finding of the 2005 report was that the pastorate continues to be only marginally open to women. In response to this finding, BWIM created the *Martha Stearns Marshall Day of Preaching*, an annual event in which churches invite women into their pulpits to preach. Fifty-one churches participated in the event on February 4, 2007. The on-going process of positive change for women in ministry got a boost last year thanks, in part, to the findings of the 2005 *SWBL* report.

The Leadership Team of BWIM is delighted to introduce the second annual *State of Women in Baptist Life* report. The 2006 report focuses on Baptist attitudes toward women in society, the professions, and church leadership. Documenting information about women's current status in Baptist life is of the utmost importance. BWIM cannot continue to work for equality for Baptist clergywomen if we do not know where we stand year by year. The *SWBL* report gives us the information needed to foster change so that women can fulfill their God-given callings as ministers of the Gospel.



Rachel Gunter Shapard
BWIM Coordinator

SUPPORT BAPTIST WOMEN IN MINISTRY

BWIM offers this report with the hope that it will provide insight and clarification about women's leadership in Baptist life. If you are a Baptist woman minister, ordained or not ordained, and have not registered on the *BWIM Registry*, please visit www.bwim.info, which will direct you to the registry. Please pass this invitation along to your friends and colleagues.

Please consider assisting BWIM in its efforts to continue offering pertinent and helpful information by making a donation to the BWIM organization, which is committed to networking, connecting, and advocating with and for women in Baptist life and those who support them. Send your donation to:

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