

"She Has Shown Great Love"
Gender Equality

Proper 6, Year C

OVERVIEW



Focus Text: Luke 7:36-8:3

And a woman in the city, who was a sinner, having learned that he was eating in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster jar of ointment. She stood behind him at his feet, weeping, and began to bathe his feet with her tears and to dry them with her hair.

Pastoral Reflection by Rev. Jean Rodenbough, Presbytery of Salem and President, NC Council of Churches, Greensboro

When I applied to divinity school thirty years ago, I was asked by my interviewer, "Why don't you just be a good church member and serve the church that way?" That is, I was being advised to continue the traditional role of being a supportive woman to the men doing the "real work" of ministry. Ignoring that advice, I enrolled, and when I graduated and sought a call to ministry, the response was, "We don't think our congregation is ready for a woman minister."

Personal Vignette from *The Woman's Coffeehouse of Spirit*

One year, after I participated in the installation of a pastor in our town, one woman came up to me and said, "It was really neat to see a woman up there. You know, when you were up there, I thought: one day maybe our church should try to have a woman associate." And I said, "Oh, I look forward to the day when you have a woman head of staff." You would have thought I had hit her in the face. Her smile dropped, she took a step back, and the conversation finished. She walked away as if I had insulted her. It was as if there was only one box for a woman to be in.

Key Fact

North Carolina is one of only 15 states that has refused to adopt the Equal Rights Amendment, which holds that “Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.”

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