

Fremont Presbyterian Church  
**The Ordination of Women**



The overall Word of God welcomes into Christ's ministry women who love Christ, women who acknowledge Him as Lord, and women who are gifted by His Spirit. Though the Biblical witness addresses particular problems at particular moments in history, the whole of Scripture affirms the role of women in the life and leadership of the church. Though its position on the subject is not deemed to be an essential of faith, **Fremont will continue to ordain women into roles of leadership and service.**

As Christians, we recognize that we are called to live in obedience to the Word of God, even if that obedience puts us in direct confrontation with cultural norms and expectations. We cannot accommodate the Word to the world and must resist the temptation to rationalize the Word to make it say what we want it to say. But we believe the Word of God provides ample evidence of and support for the leadership roles intended by God for women in the church.

The New Testament, interpreted in its first century context, does not close, but opens the door for women to assume ministry roles and functions in the life of any church. When considering the place of women in the life and ministry of Jesus, the place of women in the Book of Acts, and the place of women in the life and work of the Apostle Paul, texts such as those in I Corinthians 14 and I Timothy 2 must be interpreted in light of the whole text of Scripture.

As we observe the life of Jesus, it is important to note that he talked to women in public, which went against the rabbinic and cultural practices at the time. He also allowed women to be a part of his group of disciples. That group included Mary Magdalene, Mary (Jesus' mother), Martha and others. He also welcomed women to sit at his feet to receive his teaching and to represent him to others, to be his evangelists.

In the Book of Acts (2:17) Luke reports that Peter quoted from the prophet Joel: *"And it shall be in the last days, God says, that I will pour forth my Spirit upon all humanity, and your sons and daughters shall prophesy..."* Luke also writes in Acts 21:9 of Philip's daughters who were "prophets."

In Paul's writings, he often refers to Priscilla, who was active in the Ephesian church. In I Corinthians 11:4-5, Paul refers to women both praying and prophesying. In Romans 16 he commends Phoebe as a deacon to the Roman church and Junias as "outstanding among the apostles."

We recognize that the issue of the role of women in the life, ministry, teaching and leadership of a church has been controversial for the historic church. However, the biblical references noted above, along with numerous other biblical examples, affirm that women are called to provide significant teaching, leadership and service roles in the life of the church, including ordination into the offices of elder, deacon, or pastor.