

DIOCESE OF ADELAIDE

DIOCESAN COUNCIL

POLICY

SUBJECT	INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE POLICY
LAST REVISED BY COUNCIL	New Policy – Initiated by the Women Clergy Task Group
BACKGROUND	The Women Clergy Task Group has observed that, despite any intentions to the contrary, there is no consistent practice of using gender inclusive language within the life of the Diocese.
PURPOSE	To assist the councils, committees and liturgical gatherings of the Anglican Church in the diocese of Adelaide to witness in word and in action that the Church is a welcoming community, called to inclusion of all people irrespective of gender.
PRINCIPLES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The language used in the councils and committees of the Church, and in the corporate and public worship of the Church should reflect the theological principle that women as well as men share in the fullness of humanity, and in the fullness of the redemption realised for all people in Christ.• Language does more than reflect attitudes within a society or organisation. It also constitutes them. It is therefore important that the language employed in the life of the diocese of Adelaide reflects the Church's concern to acknowledge the equal status in the body of Christ. Equally, diocesan language should bear the mark of full gender inclusivity in acknowledgement that such usage engenders a positive and affirming environment for the nurture of both men and women.• Failure to use inclusive language can result in the proliferation of a culture which may create an undervaluing of the nature and participation of women, and could cultivate disesteem in female members.• There has been a tendency in recent times to belittle attempts to cultivate good habits of inclusive language within organisations, on the grounds that such attempts smart of a neurotic "political correctness." Such claims assume the position that language which reflects men's experience is normative and that women's experience is subsumed. These claims imply that it is never valid to critique language usage in terms of its inherent value systems: they imply that language is value-neutral. Indeed, the pejorative impact of the term "political correctness" itself demonstrates the value-laden character of language. Its employment in this debate as "belittlement" substantiates the claim that language does have the power to diminish or exclude.• The Clergy Women's Task Group of the Diocese of Adelaide believes that there needs to be a concerted effort within the diocese to ensure the use of inclusive language when speaking of the people of God and to encourage the use of a wide range of metaphors when speaking of God, as an issue of justice for women

<p>POLICY</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Diocesan Council and all Committees of Diocesan Council are to exercise care and sensitivity in their employment of language in order that the language is inclusive of men and women. 2. Diocesan Council is to request the Chairs of all Diocesan Council Committees to encourage members to use inclusive language. 3. Diocesan Council through the offices of the Ministry Development Council is to encourage parishes to be careful about gender inclusivity in all aspects of parish life. 4. Those requested to develop liturgies for Diocesan occasions are to be informed of the Diocesan Council's expectation that inclusive language be used – in both liturgical text, and words of songs and hymns. 5. Gender inclusivity should be exercised in this diocese when: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) We (the Church) address and refer to one another in our meetings; b) We compile orders of business and minutes; c) We create policy documents; d) We generate material used in Diocesan business such as, Reports, Synod papers, Orders of Business, Resolutions, Bills for Ordinances and Policy documents; and e) We make public statements and press releases.
<p>GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION</p>	<p>Guidelines for implementation would include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Diocesan Council promulgate this 'Inclusive Language Policy' throughout the Diocese via <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Clergy mailings b) Articles in the Adelaide Church Guardian c) Distribution to the Diocesan Liturgical Commission d) Distribution to the chair of each diocesan committee, and e) Information given to the newly ordained clergy and clergy moving into the diocese. • That the Ministry Development Council prepare and/or promote programs and material which will assist the Church in the Diocese of Adelaide to adopt this policy, that is, to witness in word and in action that the Church is a welcoming community, called to include all people irrespective of gender. • That the Women Clergy Task Group <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Assist the Diocesan Council and the Ministry Development Council in this work, and b) Prepare an educational leaflet suitable for use in parishes.