



Did you know Antoinette Brown...

Antoinette Brown felt a calling from God as a young girl. Her parents were Congregationalists who supported her religious interests and pursuits. She had a conversion experience at age eight, was an active church member at nine and was preaching in her home church at age ten. After she acquired her bachelor's degree she applied to Oberlin's school of theology to study for the ministry.

A request from a woman to study for the ministry had never been made before. It was assumed that women were not suited for the ministry, and that scripture forbid it: "Let your women keep silence in the churches." Antoinette was admitted into the program. She could attend the lectures and do the work, but not for credit. Antoinette became a top student in her all-male class. She wrote an essay on 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 that was published in the school's journal arguing that Paul meant only to warn against excesses in public worship, and that biblical pronouncements against women were culturally conditioned and not applicable to the 19th century.

Brown was invited to pastor a Congregational church in New York in 1852. The next year she became the first woman to be ordained by a mainstream Christian denomination. Due to lack of financial support she left the ministry and spent the rest of her life promoting the causes of abolition, temperance, and women's rights. She lived long enough to cast her vote in the 1920 election.

...was a Congregationalist?

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Call To Worship

L: Laus Deo.

C: Praise be to God.

L: This is the first inclination when we gather for worship.

C: Laus Deo. We gather to praise and thank God for this hour.

L: May our prayers and songs honor the saints of old and the presence of the Spirit among us.

Invocation (in unison)

Almighty and merciful God, we come to this hour seeking a vision, for a world which needs Your love and care. Imbue us with a pilgrim spirit, always willing to venture where You would have us go, always prepared to do our part to redeem the past for the sake of a more hopeful future. Gather us now, for we come with great expectations to be blessed. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Norm Erlendson

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard