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News Item

## Obstacles remain as women seek more leadership roles in America's Black Church | Associated Press

By Darren Sands

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*Image by motionlantern via Vecteezy.*

In January 2024, Rev. Gina Stewart electrified the Joint National Baptist Convention with a convention speech that championed the cause of women in ministry. However, when the recording of her speech was mysteriously removed from the JNBC's official Facebook page, it highlighted the enduring obstacles faced by women in ministry—particularly in the African American Church.

***It is symptomatic of a larger problem, according to several Black women pastors interviewed by the AP. They emphasized how they were worn down by the physical and psychological toll of working in a male-dominated culture. In some denominations, women have made progress... In the Black Church as a whole, male pastors predominate, though there's no comprehensive gender breakdown. [Martha] Simmons [founder of Women of***

***Color in Ministry]* estimates that less than one in 10 Black Protestant congregations are led by a woman, even as more Black women are attending seminary.**

—Darren Sands

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