

## Laity lack positions in church leadership: Clergymen hold leadership positions in South Central and Southeastern Jurisdictions while clergywomen do the same in Western Jurisdiction

by Craig This\*



*EDITOR'S NOTE: This article is Part 2 of a two-part series. It is a continuation of the Women By the Numbers article in the October 2010 issue, which can be found [HERE](#).*

Clergy dominate the categories 1-3 positions (executives/directors, professionals, managers/administrators) in all three jurisdictions with 98% of the positions for South Central Jurisdiction, 86% of the Western Jurisdiction, and 64% for the Southeastern Jurisdiction. (Because of their education levels, clergy are usually not found in categories 4-6 positions.) Nevertheless, clergy can be found occupying the leadership positions of most annual conferences in the South Central, Southeastern, and Western Jurisdictions.

Clergymen in the South Central and Southeastern Jurisdictions and clergywomen in the Western Jurisdiction hold the most leadership positions in Categories 1-3, according to the 2009 Annual Conference desk audits conducted by the General Commission on Race and Religion and the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women. The Rio Grande (South Central), Holston (Southeastern) and Rocky Mountain (Western) annual conferences did not provide data for the audits. In the South Central Jurisdiction, 1,047 clergymen hold a leadership position in the 1-3 categories, while 133 clergymen in the Southeastern Jurisdiction and 121 clergywomen in the Western Jurisdiction do the same (see Table 1 [HERE](#)).

### Gender

Women constitute 62% of the total employed by the annual conferences of the Western Jurisdiction, 44% of the Southeastern, and 34% of the South Central Jurisdiction. However, in both the Western and South Central Jurisdictions, 73% of the women are employed in Categories 1-3 positions, while just 41% of women in the Southeastern Jurisdiction are employed in these same categories. The majority of men employed by the annual conferences are employed in the Categories 1-3 positions: 98% for South Central Jurisdiction; 88% for Southeastern Jurisdiction; and 87% for the Western Jurisdiction. Combined, these three jurisdictions have 1,421 men employed, of which only 67 or 5% are employed in the categories 4-6.

### Racial/Ethnic

The number of racial/ethnic persons employed range from 41% (138) in the Western Jurisdiction to 18% (295) in the South Central Jurisdiction to 22% (104) in the Southeastern Jurisdiction. The Southeastern Jurisdiction (54%) and the South Central Jurisdiction (84%) report more racial/ethnic persons serving in Categories 1-3 positions than 4-6 positions. The Western Jurisdiction has the majority of its racial/ethnic persons (64%) serving in Categories 4-6 positions.

### Conclusion

Over the course of the past few issues, Women by the Numbers has examined the employment make-up of the annual conferences of The United Methodist Church. These statistics show how difficult it is to overcome traditional views of leadership and participation in the church, namely clergy (mostly men) provide the leadership of the church while laywomen provide the labor to support those tasks. Laymen, for the most part, have been employed outside the church, but serve at the local church level, and clergywomen, a relatively new phenomenon, are still making gains in leadership positions. Regardless, these statistics should raise questions not only about who and what it is, but who and what the United Methodist Church is to be?

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