

Germany elects first united methodist woman bishop outside United States

The Rev. Rosemarie Wenner of Germany has become the first woman elected to the United Methodist episcopacy outside of the United States.

Wenner was elected in Wuppertal at the denomination's Germany Central Conference Feb. 16, 2005. She received two-thirds of the 100 votes cast on the fourth ballot. Currently the superintendent of the Frankfurt District, she succeeds Bishop Walter Klaiber beginning April 1.

In Europe, Africa and the Philippines, The United Methodist Church is organized into "central conferences," comparable to USA jurisdictional (regional) units, that elect bishops.

"We rejoice with the church in Germany in the election of the Rev. Rosemarie Wenner to the episcopacy," said the Rev. R. Randy Day, chief executive of the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries. "Her commitment to global mission and ministry are well known through her work with European Pan-Methodism and her participation in the 2004 General Conference. We look forward to

a productive partnership with her in the future."

United Methodist bishops outside the United States are elected for four-year terms—and may be re-elected—

while bishops serving in the United States are elected for life. Bishop Klaiber, who retired on March 31, held office for 16 years. He is a highly respected Christian leader in predominantly Lutheran and Roman Catholic Germany.

The United Methodist Church in Germany has a membership of 65,000 and a constituency of twice that number organized into three annual conferences with some 500 congregations. Its central conference meets every four years.



Photo courtesy of Bishop Wenner

Bishop Rosemarie Wenner

Read more about Bishop Wenner's gifts and challenges on page 3

INSIDE

Women and stress
p. 4

Women by the
numbers
p. 6

Women Worth
Watching
p. 7



Change — a good thing!

By the end of 2005, you'll notice some welcome changes in this publication and in the way our agency does its work. We're aiming for fresher content, focused on ideas from, resources for and celebration of women who speak out, teach, proclaim, stand, monitor, pray, and—when needed—act up for the sake of a more Christ-like, open and inclusive church.

We've also retooled our website. And we're re-ordering our travel schedule to allocate more time for working with districts and annual conferences. (So bring on those invitations!) By the end of 2005 we hope to:

- Launch (May 1) a monthly electronic version of this newsletter—the eFlyer—to deliver time-sensitive news and information;
- Create a webpage and a second e-newsletter for Response Teams and others who deal with sexual ethics in the church.
- Report the results of a churchwide survey on sexual harassment policies and practices in the denomination.
- Plan a series of dialogues to bridge the communication gap between laywomen and clergywomen.

Why the changes? To better challenge and serve the church and to widen the table to include more women's voices. So, keep us in your prayers and send us your ideas. Change is a good thing!

M. Garlinda Burton
General Secretary

Support Women in the church



\$10 for one year



\$18 for two years



\$25 for three years



New



Renewing

The Flyer invites you to subscribe and show your support for women in The United Methodist Church. As one of the communication tools of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, The Flyer offers its readers updates on women's issues and resources for annual conference and local church women's groups. Your subscription will guarantee four issues of The Flyer for one year. Make checks payable to GCSRW, 1200 Davis, Evanston, IL 60201.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Annual Conference: _____

The Flyer

April – June 2005

The Flyer is published four times yearly by the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW) in The United Methodist Church. Primary distribution of The Flyer is through the Annual Conference Commissions on the Status and Role of Women and Response Teams. Women outside the United States, please ask your bishops' office to make sure you get The Flyer.

The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, an agency of the worldwide United Methodist Church, acts as advocate, catalyst and monitor to ensure the full participation and equality of women in the church.

GCSRW OFFICERS:

Bishop Mary Virginia "Dindy" Taylor, President
Eva Thai, Vice President
Dianne Spencer, Secretary

GENERAL SECRETARY

M. Garlinda Burton

STAFF:

Ariel Alonso
S. Kim Coffing
Elaine Moy Johnson

WEB SITE COORDINATOR:

Laura J. Latham

COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR:

Kristin Knudson Harris
kthree@mchsi.com

General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, 1200 Davis St., Evanston, IL 60201, 847.869.7330
GCSRW@gcfa.org.

For confidential inquiries and support re: clergy/lay professional misconduct, harassment or abuse, call us toll free at 800.523.8390.

Subscription/change of address:

Individual subscriptions of The Flyer are \$10 (US) annually. Send a check with your mailing address, email address and phone number to: The Flyer, GCSRW, 1200 Davis St., Evanston, IL 60201. Direct change of address information to the above address.

Permission to reprint is not required; a credit line is requested. This publication is on file with the Women's Collection, Special Collections Department, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL 60201.

Printed on processed chlorine-free recycled paper using soy inks.

Newest woman bishop shares her experiences

Rosemarie Wenner, 49, grew up in Ruppoldingen in southern Germany and studied at the United Methodist Theological Seminary in Reutlingen. She was ordained in 1981 as the third Methodist clergywoman in Germany. She held pastorates in Karlsruhe-Durlach, Hockenheim, Darmstadt-Sprendlingen before her appointment as the Frankfurt district superintendent in 1996.

As with the other newly elected women bishops, The Flyer asked Bishop Wenner:

- **Who are your role models?**
- **What are the gifts you bring to the episcopacy?**
- **What particular challenges do clergywomen face in the EMK (German Methodist Church) today?**
- **If you hadn't become a pastor, what might you have been?**
- **In 50 years, how do you wish to be remembered?**

Role models:

"There were only a few female clergy sisters as role models in ministry. In my first years as a pastor I really thought that it should be my challenge to be as good a pastor as my male colleagues. Then I realized — mostly while sharing experiences with (mostly younger) sisters in ministry — that I am called to live my faith as a woman.

"Coming into the ministry in the episcopacy I am very glad to know at least two of the American female bishops and to have three sisters in the episcopacy in the Lutheran Church in Germany with

whom I am connected in the ecumenical movement."

Gifts:

"I have a strong background in counseling, which may help me to listen carefully to my sisters and brothers and to take good care of myself. I have experiences in leadership — especially in leading congregations in times of

change.

"I try to listen for God's voice in the Holy Scriptures and in the experiences of people who are God's loved children. I am very interested and gifted in bringing different people together. I am glad that as different as we are, we are one in Christ."

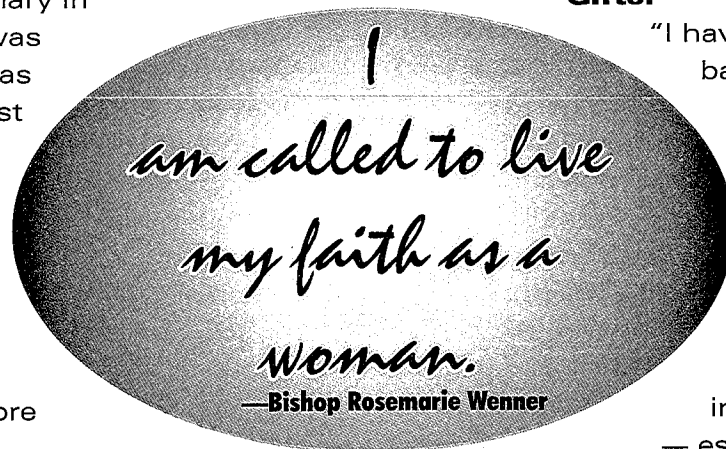
Challenges:

"Clergywomen are still a minority in Germany. Women in congregations and in the society need to experience men and women living God's calling. We need models to bring family work and church work together and we are challenged to struggle for more justice — gender justice, justice for poor people, for migrants and others."

Alternate path:

"I am quite sure that I would have been a teacher of mathematics and theology. I like children and working with children very much."

"**Remember me as** a bishop in the midst of the congregations, sharing faith and love with people inside and outside the church; as a pastor who invited different people to celebrate God's love and as a pastor who worked for peace."



How Women Cope with Stress

During the 1980s new studies specifically targeting women and their response to stress were done at UCLA. What was discovered is that females biologically respond to stress differently than males. In males, the hormone testosterone causes them to engage in "fight or flight" behaviors. The result is that men generally confront or avoid the issues that cause stress.

In women, however, the hormone oxytocin, generally induces a "tend and befriend" response to stress. Oxytocin is a hormone released by women during stressful situations — particularly childbirth. It causes calming, positive

social behaviors and emotional bonding.).

As a general rule, females of all species are smaller and less physically strong than males. Therefore, when confronted with stress, they gather together to collectively strategize and lend support to each other to handle whatever threatens or disturbs their environment, family or community.

To put it bluntly, when it come to stress, what we women lack in brawn, we compensate with collective brain power.

What does this mean for women in today's society? We need to recognize and harness our innate coping skills. When a woman is under stress or feels that her family is under stress, she will calm herself and her family by initiating caring and beneficial activities with and for family members. These may include quality time with family; cleaning, organizing or redecorating one's work or living space; or getting involved in social action, service, civic, or church projects to make a positive difference in one's community; or feeding the soul via music or other artistic or spiritual pursuits.

The other *essential* coping skill is to gather with other women to process and strategize during the stressful situation. Any small group made up mostly of women may become part of this support system, including Bible study and prayer groups, social groups, e-mail networks friends and chat-rooms, music and exercise groups, and even the car pool. If women try to cope with their stress in isolation without input from other women, their mental and emotional health is at risk.

**Be patient with each person,
attentive to individual needs...
Look for the best in each other,
and always do your best to bring
it out.**

(1 Thessalonians. 5:14, 15b The Message)

When under stress, you can either change how you are coping or change the situation. Consulting your support group and nurturing yourself with healthy activities will go a long way in decreasing your stress levels.

Kae Tritle is a diaconal minister and Wellness Coordinator for the Iowa Annual Conference

If women try to cope with their stress in isolation without input from other women, their mental and emotional health is at risk.

Stroud appeal hearing set for April 28

A UMNS Report

By Linda Bloom

An April 28 hearing date has been set for the appeal of Beth Stroud, a former United Methodist clergywoman who lost her credentials after a church trial (see **The Flyer**, January-March 2005, page 7).

Stroud, formerly associate pastor of First United Methodist Church of Germantown in Philadelphia, was found guilty in December of violating the denomination's prohibition of "self-avowed practicing homosexuals" in the ordained ministry. Since losing her clergy credentials, she has remained on staff at that church as a lay member.



UMNS Photo

The Rev. Beth Stroud

The jurisdiction's committee on appeals, which will hear the appeal, will meet April 27 to consider questions for the hearing, said the Rev. William "Scott" Campbell, committee chairman and pastor of Harvard-Epworth United Methodist Church in Cambridge, Mass. Stroud has requested the hearing be open to the public, Campbell said. After the hearing, the committee on

appeals will begin its deliberations, which could continue into the next

day if needed. The committee's decision will be announced at the hearing site, but no time has been set.

According to the United Methodist **Book of Discipline**, Paragraph 2715.7, "the appellate body shall determine two questions only: (a) Does the weight of the evidence sustain the charge or charges? (b) Were there such errors of church law as to vitiate the verdict and/or the penalty?"

"There will be an opportunity for each party to present its case orally," Campbell said.

(Updates on the hearing process for Stroud are available at www.umc.org)

worth repeating worth repeating worth repeating

"Racism has no business in the church of Jesus Christ."

Retired bishop Leontine T.C. Kelly in "Remembering Central Jurisdiction. A UMNS feature.



UMNS Photo



Women by the numbers

147.8 million

The number of females in the United States as of July 1, 2003. That exceeds the number of males (143.0 million). Males outnumber females in every five-year-age group through the 35 to 39 age group. Starting with the 40 to 44 age group, women outnumber men. At 85 and over, there are more than twice as many women as men.

US Census Bureau

THE AMOUNT US WOMEN, WHO WORKED FULL TIME, YEAR-ROUND, EARNED FOR EVERY \$1 THEIR MALE COUNTERPARTS EARNED. THIS AMOUNT IS DOWN FROM 77¢ FOR EVERY DOLLAR IN 2002.

US Census Bureau

Women

now account for almost half of all cases of HIV/AIDS, and in countries with high HIV prevalence, young women are at higher risk than young men of contracting HIV.

UN Division of Statistics

1.7 MILLION

The number of U.S. military veterans who are women.

US Census Bureau

215,243

Total number of active duty women in the U.S. military, compared to 1,219,134 men, in 2003. Of that total, 34,796 women are officers, 178,428 are enlisted and 2,019 are enrolled in military academies.

16%

Percent of U.S. Persian Gulf War (1990-91) veterans who are women. In contrast, women account for 5% of World War II vets, 3 % of Vietnam vets and 2 % of Korean War vets.

2/3

of the world's 876 million illiterate people are women.

This number is not expected to decrease significantly in the next 20 years.

31%

of women ages 25 to 29 years who had attained a bachelor's degree or higher world wide in 2003, which exceeded that of men in this age range (26%). 88% percent of young women and 85% of young men had completed high school. The last year young women and men had equal rates of high school and college attainment was 1995.

UN Division of Statistics

In some African countries, more than half of all women and girls have undergone female genital mutilation and its prevalence is not declining.

UN Division of Statistics

Women Worth Watching

Ruby-Nell Estrella, Manila

Achievement: She's is one of only three women out of a total of 20 district superintendents serving in The United Methodist annual conferences in the Philippines. She oversees 30 congregations that comprise the Northwest Metro Manila District.

In a previous life: She spent three years as chaplain of a social service and advocacy agency serving children and families living in poverty in Manila. She has an undergraduate degree in accounting, and began her professional church life as a missionary. ("I realized that the Lord was calling me to be a pastor," she says.)



Role models: "Many dedicated laywomen" and missionaries, especially those dedicated to serving the poorest people around the world.

Words of wisdom: "Women clergy in the Philippines have been given some chances for leadership, but some of our members resist our leadership. I hope the church will give us [more] chances to serve as pastors, superintendents and even bishops."

—reported by J. Richard Peck

April 19 is Equal Pay Day

Each year, Business and Professional Women/USA advocates across the country sponsor Equal Pay Day events to bring attention to their number one issue — Pay Equity. Due to the gender wage gap, nationally women earn 76 cents to each dollar paid to male counterparts. Over a working lifetime, this wage disparity costs the average American woman an estimated \$500,000. April 19 is a symbolic date that designates the time in the year when a woman's pay for the previous year through April 19 of the next year, would equal the one-year earnings of her male counterpart.

Clergywomen's Corner

"While U.S. churches are ordaining more women than ever, clergywomen still find it harder than men to move up the ranks to higher paying positions beyond their first appointment or call to a local parish."

From the Summary of Major Findings on a 2003 Survey of the NCC Justice for Women Network
http://hrr.hartsem.edu/research/research_women_religion_articles_hessel.html



passing legends

Rape crisis center co-founder Oleta Kirk Abrams, dies in California

BERKELEY, Calif. - Oleta Kirk Abrams, who co-founded the nation's first rape crisis center nearly 35 years ago, died January 8, 2005, in Berkeley, Calif. She was 77.

In 1971, Abrams helped found Bay Area Women Against Rape, which still serves hundreds of women each year from its Oakland offices. The agency offers a 24-hour crisis hotline, counseling, education and survivor advocacy service to women and girls.

Abrams, and two other women founded the nonprofit organization after her 15-year-old foster daughter was raped in a stairwell at her high school, then treated rudely by authorities.

The girl was not allowed to phone home and was kept from her family at the police station. At the hospital, the girl was kept waiting an hour before a doctor arrived. In the room, he made jokes, but never checked the girl for pregnancy or venereal disease, according to news reports.

The Commission website has a new look! Visit www.gcsrw.org to get the latest news about women's issues in The United Methodist Church and find new resources for ministry. While you're there, sign up for the new e-Flyer.
www.gcsrw.org

worth repeating worth repeating worth repeating

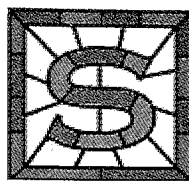
"As leaders in science, engineering, and education, we are concerned with the suggestion that the status quo for women in science and engineering may be natural, inevitable, and unrelated to social factors... Society benefits most when we take full advantage of the scientific and technical talent among us. It is time to create a broader awareness of those proven and effective means, including institutional policies and practices, which enable women and other underrepresented groups to step beyond the historical barriers in science and engineering."



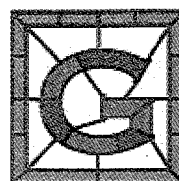
Association for Women in Science responding to Harvard President Larry Summer's comments that "innate differences" account for some of the reason women don't succeed as often as men in technological and scientific fields. Signatories include Astronaut/Professor Sally M. Ride (pictured left)

Annual Conferences at work

Breaking the



tained



lass

Ceiling

Baltimore-Washington Studies Clergy Salaries

When the Commission on the Status and Role of Women of the Baltimore-Washington Conference started a survey of clergy salaries in the conference, the goal was to get some solid data. The task force, chaired by the Rev. Terri Rae "T.R." Chattin, surveyed clergy members of the conference. Responses came from 63 percent of all clergy and was representative of demographic and gender divisions within the area.

While much of the information gleaned was predictable, there were some surprises.

"We had assumed that clergywomen left the ministry at a higher rate than men," said Chattin, "But the good news is that this is not so."

The survey reported that attrition rates are about 2 percent for both men and women in ministry in the conference.

"The fact is, most respondents didn't think that often about leaving the ministry," said Chattin, noting that only 11 percent of the respondents thought of leaving "very often" or even "fairly often."

One of the concerns the survey shows is that nearly seven out of 10 clergywomen who responded earned less than \$50,000 per year while less than half of the clergy men earned below that amount.

"There are some salary differentials between men and women," said Chattin, adding that the Baltimore-Washington COSROW expects to address this concern at many levels in the coming months.

The survey was planned four years ago and was sponsored by the conference's COSROW and Board of Ordained Ministry.

"The survey's results help us see that sexism hinders the ability of women to be effective discipling pastors," said Bishop John R. Schol, resident bishop. "We need to insure that barriers women face are eliminated and that they have the necessary support to excel in leading congregations."

The Rev. Erik J. Alsgaard, Co-Director of Communications in the Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference contributed to this story. Portions were reprinted from the Baltimore-Washington UMConnection.

worth repeating worth repeating worth repeating

"It's difficult to be president of Harvard and be that dumb!"

Writer and journalist Debra Dickerson on NPR's News and Notes with Ed Gordon, commenting on recent remarks by Harvard president Larry Summers that women may not have the "intrinsic aptitude" for high level science.



One step forward...two steps back

We're not happy campers

It may be 2005, but this United Methodist camp description caused us to check our calendars. Have we gone back to an era when women and girls are judged solely by their looks and not their skills, talents and abilities?

Makeover Madness: (grades 4-6)

Girls, bring your makeup, hair, and nail supplies, because it is time to get dressed up. Get a makeover on the outside and find out what it means to be madeover on the inside. Split into two groups and surprise the other group with your new looks and new attitude

The good news? The registration fee includes a t-shirt.

"Tool Belt Divas" need not apply

Swedish home furnishings giant IKEA is guilty of sex discrimination by showing only men putting together furniture in its instruction manuals, Norway's prime minister says.

IKEA, which has more than 200 stores in 32 nations, fears it might offend Muslims by depicting women assembling everything from cupboards to beds. Its manuals show only men or cartoon figures whose sex is unclear.

"This isn't good enough," Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik said. "It's important to promote attitudes for sexual equality, not least in Muslim nations."

Advocacy for Women Fund thanks donors

The specialized work of the General Commission on Women is ever-changing and ever-challenging. In order to respond to emerging issues related to the advocacy of women, the Advocacy for Women Endowment Fund supplements the bare-bones budget of the Commission. The members and staff of the Commission thank all those who gave to the Advocacy for Women Endowment Fund in 2004.

- Samuel and Erlina Aguirre
- Evelyn F. Attwood
- Byrd & Patty Riggle Bonner
- Margie M. Briggs
- Bishop Sally Dyck
- Charlotte Fitzsimons
- Barbara E. Goodman
- Donald Hayashi
- Elaine & Matthew Moy Johnson
- The Korean Church of Atlanta
- Allen and Mary Elizabeth Moore
- Janet Morgan
- New York West Area
- Bishop Bruce & Charlene Ough
- Brolin Parker
- Deborah Pitney
- Mattie Mae Rice
- Almeda Riley
- Bishop Ann B. Sherer
- Jeannie Trevino-Teddle
- Mary White
- Bill Wilson
- Ronald Zimmerman

In Honor Of:

- Evelyn, Emerald & Emmeline Aguirre
- GCSRW Staff
- Stephanie A. Hixon
- Cecelia Long
- JoAnn Miles
- Bishop Ann B. Sherer
- Ann Marie Trammell

In Memory of

- Masue Escalona
- Florence Ough

Money Matters

84.3 ¢: the amount of each dollar contributed to the UMC that stays in the local church

12.4 ¢: the amount of each dollar contributed to the UMC that is sent to Jurisdictional Areas, Annual Conferences and Districts

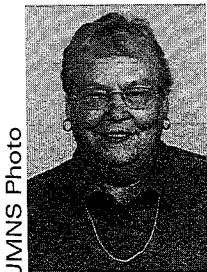
3.3 ¢: the amount of each dollar contributed to the UMC that is sent on to national and international ministries and programs through the work of the general church agencies

.0001 ¢: the amount of each dollar contributed to the UMC that goes to the ministry of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women. For every \$1,000 donated to a local church, The General Commission on Women receives 1¢.

Ovations

- To Ana-Haydee Urda of Los Angeles on being elected president of Methodists Associated to Represent the Cause of Hispanic Americans (MARCHA). The caucus was founded in 1971.
- To Billie K. Fidlin on being selected as the 2004 Distinguished Evangelist of The UMC by the Foundation for Evangelism. The award is given annually by the foundation to an outstanding person in the field of evangelism. Fidlin is associate council director for the care of children, youth and young adults at risk for the Desert Southwest annual conference. Fidlin is best known for her work in "street evangelism" especially Sidewalk Sunday School.
- To Anne Marshall of Holdenville, Okla., and Raquel Mull of Albuquerque, N.M., who were elected chairperson and vice-chairperson, respectively, of the Native American International Caucus. The caucus advocates for the concerns and interests of Native Americans in the denomination and the larger society.
- To Linda N. Hanson on her selection as president-elect of UM-related Hamline University in St. Paul, Minn., Hanson, current president of the College of Santa Fe, will replace retiring Hamline University President Larry G. Osnes, effective July 1.
- To Irene Howard on being named deputy general secretary of strategic initiatives for the denomination's General Council on Finance and Administration. Howard was formerly general council for the denomination.
- To the Rev. Leah Gaskin Fitchue who was inaugurated as the head of Payne Theological Seminary in Wilberforce, Ohio. Fichue is the first African-American woman president of a seminary affiliated with the U.S. Association of Theological Schools, joining 16 other women who serve as seminary presidents among the 251-school association.
- To Soomee Kim, formerly part of the general secretariat of the General Commission on Status and Role of Women. Kim will be appointed interim dean of students and campus pastor at Claremont School of Theology, effective July 1. Kim is currently a doctoral student and adjunct faculty member at Claremont.
- To Edith J. Patterson a member of Metropolitan UMC in the Baltimore-Washington annual conference, who is the first African-American woman to become a commissioner in the Charles County Maryland.
- To Wendy J. Deichmann Edwards on her appointment as academic dean and vice president of academic affairs at United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio. Her tenure begins July 1.

Ovations



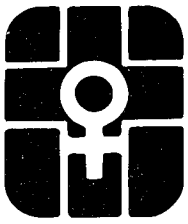
JMNS Photo

worth repeating worth repeating worth repeating

"God is in this event - in the tears of those who mourn, in the joy of those who survived, in the numbness of those who wonder about the future, in the anguish of those who try to get through each day. God surely is in this event in the hands and feet of those who carry the stuff of relief — medicine, food, shelter."

Retired bishop Judith Craig is a bishop in residence and visiting professor of church leadership at Methodist Theological School in Ohio in Delaware, Ohio. This commentary on the December tsunami is part of the "God, Why?" project. Details are available at www.umc.org.





GENERAL COMMISSION
ON THE STATUS AND ROLE OF WOMEN
in The United Methodist Church
1200 Davis Street, Evanston, IL 60201

For better health for women and a healthier environment for our children, our newsletter is printed on chlorine-free, acid free recycled paper using soy inks.

emPOWERment

Advocacy for Women Endowment Fund

Advocate for Women in The United Methodist Church

Your gift to the Advocacy For Women Endowment Fund, established by the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, provides monies for emerging ministries related to advocacy for women. Add your voice and your financial support to our ministry. Your gift will help to endow future ministry on behalf of ALL women in The United Methodist Church.

Make checks payable to "Advocacy for Women Endowment Fund" and mail to:
Advocacy for Women Endowment Fund
c/o General Commission on the Status and
Role of Women
1200 Davis Street
Evanston, IL 60201

YES! I'm an Advocate!

Enclosed is my gift
in the amount of \$ _____
to ensure the full inclusion of women in all
levels of The United Methodist Church

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip _____

Annual Conference: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

If you wish to give this gift in honor of someone, please include their address so that we might notify them.

- I prefer this gift remain anonymous.
- I consent to being thanked publicly.