

The Flyer

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Members moved by personal stories heard.

Commission listens to women from Central Conferences

At its Sept. 19-22, 2002 meeting in Seattle, the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women realized a dream held by members for several years: to engage in conversation with sisters from the Central Conferences.

Commission members were moved by the personal stories told by participants: Marcela Sobrinho, Angola; Emma Cantor, Philippines; Meeli Tankler, Estonia; Liatu Kane, Nigeria; and Maria Sol Sioco Villalon, Philippines.

Grace Imathiuask, ordained as clergy in Kenya, who recently served a church in Green Bay, WI, offered Bible studies to prepare the hearts and minds of Commission members for the panel's stories.

First woman ordained in Nigeria

Liatu Kane of Nigeria told her story of being one of five women pastors in Nigeria, which became an annual conference in 1992. In 1995, she was the first woman to be ordained. It happened during an annual confer-



Liatu Kane (third from left), the first female UMC pastor in Nigeria, discusses her experiences at the GCSRW meeting in Seattle. Left to right are: Emma Cantor, Philippines; Meeli Tankler, Estonia; Kane; and Maria Sol Sioco Villalon, Philippines.

being ordained, Kane had a huge line of women with one man standing behind her.

When Kane almost withdrew just days before her ordination because of pressure from relatives, it was her husband who stepped outside the culture to be supportive and persuaded her to continue. But her struggles did not end with ordination. Once the novelty of having a woman pastor wore off, she reported, "Many are the times when I have felt I am not needed. I

husband. Now, in addition to facing Nigeria's cultural and legal biases against widows, she must support her five children, ages 12-22, and her elderly father. She also is continuing to pursue her studies at Methodist Theological Seminary in Ohio.

Kane continues to face challenges as a woman in ministry. "It is hard to serve as a woman among men on the cabinet," explains Kane. "I am expected to dress for worship in a men's room. A woman finds herself alone and has to struggle alone, although it helps to now have five women ordained. It is also challenging to help women because about 80 percent of our women are not educated. We need the church's help to develop programs to address cultural issues."

Progress in Estonia

Meeli Tankler, a laywoman who is married to the Rev. Ullas Tankler, pastor of the Agape Center in Parnu, Estonia, explained that this year for the first time in her annual conference

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Instead of a woman standing behind the man being ordained, (Liatu) Kane had a huge line of women with one man standing behind her.

ence session in a packed church. Some who attended were not even Christians, but they came because a woman was going to be ordained. Women burst out singing. Instead of a woman standing behind the man

am not wanted." In 1998, she even went without a salary for three months because her district superintendent did not think she deserved it.

On a personal level, Kane's problems deepened with the death of her

GCSRW hears Central Conference women continued from page 1

two women were consecrated as probationary members of conference. Although Estonia is the only annual conference in United Methodism's Northern Europe Central Conference that had no female pastors, Tankler believes the women would not have been accepted this year if they had not been presented along with five male candidates.

Tankler wonders whether the women will ultimately be ordained. She has heard comments such as, "I have nothing against this person; she is just the wrong sex." In fact, she reports that many women are against the ordination of women.

At the local level, however, the reception has been positive. Tankler noted that the two women have so far been well accepted in the congregations they have served.

Women's status in Philippines

In the Philippines, the establishment of a committee on the status and role of women on an annual conference level has provided a way in which women can have their grievances addressed. Before, according to Maria Sol Sioco Villalon, a pastor, "Our women, the deaconesses especially, did not know how to pursue complaints."

Besides setting up a commission in the late 1980s, the women of Villalon's annual conference in the southern Philippines conducted surveys and other informal research on the conditions of women inside and outside the church, the involvement of women in leadership and the various problems that women faced. "We had no copies of *The Book of Discipline* in rural areas, so women could not find out how to file complaints of sexual misconduct," she said. "Then when we saw one, we felt empowered to discover the mandated process." After these reports were completed, the bishop organized committees to review and process complaints. Eventually, two clergy were suspended and expelled because of complaints of abuse.

Emma Cantor, a deaconess from northern Philippines, explained that women in her country are marginalized, often not even given salaries. As a result, many live in overwhelming poverty. She recounted her own experiences of being overworked as a deaconess with little economic compensation. "I loved the work, but it drained me," she said.

For her academic work, Cantor wanted to use personal stories to bring attention to women. In her own pastoral work, Cantor reports, "I was moved every three months as a pastor. I served as a pastor but also as a kindergarten teacher. The church receives money from educating wealthy kindergarteners, but what happened to our Wesleyan heritage?"

After 100 years of struggle, the 1996 General Conference declared that the 75 deaconesses could become members of annual conference with both voice and vote. Says Cantor, "Yet a deaconess receives one quarter of the salary of a male pastor. Some do not receive Social Security benefits. They are not encouraged to attend seminary because their absence from their teaching upsets the school and the economy. They are often harassed."

Cantor wants to call men and women to a dialogue to share their experiences. Her hope is that through such a process women may no longer be marginalized, but can enter the mainstream of Philippine life.

Women resist war in Angola

In the West Angola Conference, women have organized their work well. A general board, 10 district boards and 249 local boards serve about 60,000 women, of whom 22,000 are registered members. Marcela Sobrinho, a married mother of nine and grandmother of three, is the conference's general director of women's ministries with diverse projects that include the vaccination of children, education about human rights, evangelism, and Christian outreach.

Literacy remains one of the greatest challenges in Angola: "We have women who are group leaders, and they don't even know how to read and write," Sobrinho said. Yet women have been a strong force in the peace process and the April cease-fire agreement that finally ended Angola's 25-year civil war.

According to Sobrinho, there are around 20,000 women in displaced persons camps. "We moved churches to refugee camps. Women always keep strong, even during war," she emphasized. At the end of the war, all are returning to their areas, which have been destroyed by war. "Now women are deputies to Parliament, so we can talk directly to government about our problems."

How women support one another

The five women suggested ways that the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women and other church entities could strengthen their ties with women in other parts of the denomination.

As Cantor points out, "The price of change for women is high. It is risky for a woman to be changed. It changes her family and relationships." The voice from America can help legitimize an issue or position in the Philippine church. Creating policies for women's agenda helps. She also points to a need for women in theological schools to defend women. She urges women and men to read the Bible in different ways.

Villalon makes a plea for "safe places to tell stories, especially for victims of violence. We see our problems as larger than United Methodist women's problems. These problems happen in church because of problems in society."

Tankler noted that there is no support system in the Estonian United Methodist Church for women. In addition, "we have two different cultures, Estonian and Russian, so tension between the two makes our work more challenging." According to Kane, in every small Nigerian church, women are organized. The groups are strong and mission oriented. Yet many people in Nigeria still have not heard about Jesus. When she was invited in 1991 to a consultation of West Ohio clergywomen, she said that following that meeting, "I remembered them when I felt alone. Women need exposure and support from other women."

Kane concluded, "I would like to ask for your prayers. Prayer goes where our hands and feet cannot go."

Portions of this article are from *UMNews Service* release, Sept. 23, 2002, available at www.umns.umc.org/02/setp/424.htm.

Read more about it...

To learn more about the lives of women in various contexts in the United Methodist Church, you may find these resources helpful.

The Bible in Africa: Transactions, Trajectories and Trends, ed. Gerald O. West and Musa W. Dube (Brill Academic Publishers, 2001). The essays in this book offer a glimpse of the rich resources that constitute Africa's engagement with the Bible. Among the topics are the historical development of biblical interpretation in Africa, the relationship between African biblical scholarship and scholarship in the West, African resources for reading the Bible, the history and role of vernacular translation in particular African contexts, the ambiguity of the Bible in Africa, the power of the Bible as text and symbol, and the intersections between class, race, gender, and culture in African biblical interpretation. \$59.95.

Black Sisters, Speak Out: Feminism and Oppression in Black Africa, Awa Thiam (Pluto Press, 1978). The author, a Black African feminist, lets some of the most oppressed women in the world speak for themselves. Polygamy, clitoridectomy and infibulation are the weapons used by men to control millions of women. The author makes plain that these practices are part of a pattern of universal violence from men toward women. \$10.95.

Daughters of Anowa: African Women and Patriarchy, Mercy Amba Oduyoye (Orbis Books, 1995). This book provides an analysis of the lives of African women today from an African woman's own perspective. It is the study of the influence of culture and religion—particularly of traditional African cultures and Christianity—of African women's lives. The author illustrates how myths, proverbs, and folk tales operate in the socialization of young women, working to preserve the norms of the community. \$19.00.

Introducing Asian Feminist Theology, Kwok Pui-lan (Pilgrim Press, 2000). This text surveys the social, political, and cultural contexts of the experiences of Asian women in theology, the interpretation of the Bible, and the appropriation of Asian religious traditions. The author offers Asian women's critiques of the patriarchal church and outlines the search for a new spirituality that expresses women's embodiedness and sexuality. \$16.95.

Other Ways of Reading: African Women and the Bible, ed. Musa W. Dube (Society of Biblical Literature, WCC, 2001). This volume of essays highlights some of the unique ways in which African women read and interpret the Bible in their diverse historical and cultural contexts. This book provides tools and resources for the study of the Bible in Africa, complements the work of Western feminist and womanist theologians and biblical scholars, and embodies postcolonial scholarly concern to take seriously other ways of reading. \$24.95.

Postcolonial Feminist Interpretation of the Bible, Musa W. Dube (Chalice Press, 2000). Using a literary-rhetorical method, the author successfully demonstrates the intricate relationship between patriarchy and imperialism through her intertextual reading of the Bible with ancient and modern imperializing texts. \$32.99.

A Time for Honor: A Portrait of African American Clergywomen, Delores C. Carpenter (Chalice Press, 2001). The author uses historical, theological, and sociological scholarship to frame denominational statistics and her own survey and interview findings on black women seminarians and pastors. \$19.99.

For additional listings, visit our website: www.gcsrw.org.

Stephanie Anna Hixon...

Celebrate ministry of GCSRW leader

In an evening of laughter and tears, Stephanie Anna Hixon was honored at a celebration of her ministry with the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women since 1991. Hixon is leaving the post in December. Cecelia M. Long, formerly general secretariat with Hixon and now conciliar officer with General Council on Ministries, served as host of the ceremony, held Sept. 21.

Leading off the celebration, Marcia McFee and Mark Miller offered a musical roast. Then the celebra-



Charlotte Fitzsimons, left, Personnel Committee chairperson, presents a lei to Stephanie Anna Hixon.

tory tone shifted as Miller offered his gift to Hixon, a new hymn tune "Hixon" in her honor. Those gathered sang the hymn "All My Days," with lyrics by Laurie Zelman and music by Miller. The hymn is slated to appear in a collection of hymns by Miller to be published by Abingdon Press.

Hixon received numerous tributes from those present at the celebration, as well as those who had sent written greetings.

Among them, Bruce Ough, bishop of West Ohio and member of the Commission, commented, "Stephanie is a treasure. We celebrate tonight not only because we love her, but because she points to you, Lord."

In a written tribute Marie M. Fortune, founder of the Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence, emphasized, "Like the Persistent Widow, you have been tenacious in your pursuit of justice on behalf of those who have been harmed inside and outside the church. And like Vashti, you have refused to tolerate the subordination and harassment of women." ☉

The Flyer

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The GCSRW, a national agency of the UMC, acts as an advocate, catalyst, and monitor to ensure the full participation and equality of women in the church.

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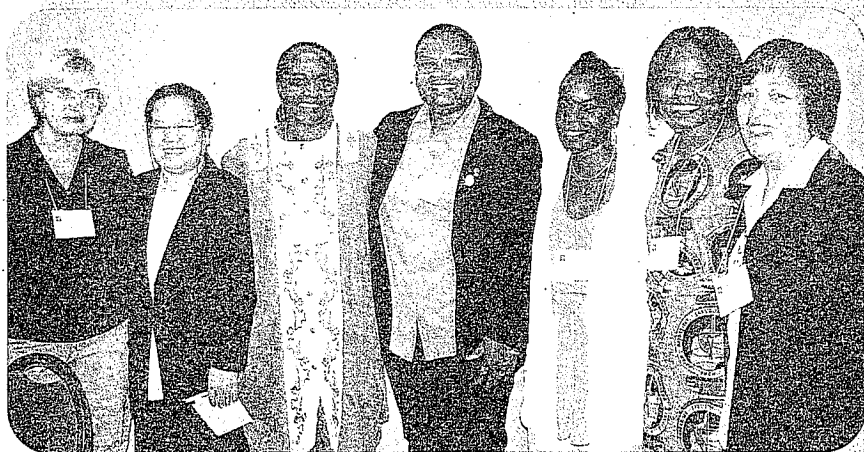
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Highlights of GSRW Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women featured several highlights: conversations with Central Conference sisters, welcoming of new general secretariat, and thanksgiving for departing general secretariat.

Photos by Bonny Stalnaker Roth



A gathering of gifted women from Central Conferences: from left, Meeli Tankler, Estonia; Maria Sol Sioco Villalon, Philippines; Grace Imathiu, formerly from Kenya; Marcela Sobrinho, Angola; Tomani Nyajeka, Gammon Theological Seminary, Atlanta, formerly from Zimbabwe; Liatu Kane, Nigeria; and Emma Cantor, Philippines.



Marcia McFee, worship consultant, and Mark Miller, director of music and instructor of Church Music at Drew Theological Seminary and former Commission member, lead joyful singing during Commission worship.



Liatu Kane, left, answers questions about her experience as a pastor in Nigeria, as Commission members listen: from left, Norma Wall Jones, Annie Moseley, Terry Muse, Mattie Mae Rice, and (from back) Charlotte Fitzsimons.



Commission members consider ways to extend ministry to Central Conferences: from left, Haeran Kim, Margaret Crawford, a guest from Desert Southwest Conference, Molly Turner, Sherman Harris, and, from back, Emma Cantor, a guest from Philippines.



Gail Murphy-Geiss, president of the Commission, receives a gift from Marcela Sobrinho, Angola.

On Sept. 1, 2002, Raponzil "Ra" Drake and Soomee Kim began their tenures as general secretariat of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women. They hold the distinction of being the first two clergywomen of color—Drake is African American, Kim is Korean American—to lead the agency. They join Stephanie Anna Hixon, who remains on staff until Dec. 31. The change was dictated by the 12-year term limit for general secretaries.

To help readers of *The Flyer* become better acquainted with the new leadership, we offer here the highlights from interviews with each new member of the general secretariat.

Drake, 44, pastor of Newman United Methodist Church in Lincoln, NE, previously worked with the Memphis and Nebraska Conference Commissions on the Status and Role of Women. Drake holds a D.Min. degree. Kim, 46, pastor of First United Methodist Church, San Fernando, CA, had been a member of GCSRW since 2000.

What led you to this place?

Ra Drake: God's love and grace brought me here. We often pray for discernment, but when God sends us a message, we reject that message. It took a while when others encouraged me to apply for this job before I finally listened.

As a pastor, campus minister, and former commission chairperson in the Memphis Conference, I had faced tremendous challenges as a woman and a person of color. I was not facing a glass ceiling; I was facing a cellar ceiling. About ten years ago I wanted to start a ministry serving women, both clergy and lay, by offering a retreat setting, a safe place, in which to name their issues, realities, and solutions. As an associate director in the Nebraska Conference, COSROW was part of my portfolio. I also taught courses on women in religion at Nebraska Wesleyan. These and other experiences prepared me for this calling.

What gifts do you bring to your work with the Commission?

Drake: I bring a ministry of presence and creativity, along with a tremendous amount of dynamic energy and passion for this work. I also bring a hunger to become more aware of global issues impacting women. I offer openness, knowing that I will be changed over the years. Others say that I offer a gift for speaking, especially for teaching and preaching.

What challenges are facing women in the United Methodist Church?

Drake: Solidarity as women is a key challenge. Too often we tend to be polarized when we are being sucked into an atmosphere of competition and survival, as if co-existence,

difference, and full participation are mutually exclusive values. We are one in Christ. We find labels to codify who we are—rural vs. urban, lay vs. clergy. Identification has its significance as each has a role in the life of church: to make the face and image and spirit of God more present in world. Without each of us that image is incomplete, less whole. God didn't give us a spirit of competition. We must try to find a way to embrace wholeness. We don't want to exclude males, but we do want to give women avenues for fullness within the context of a greater wholeness.

New general secretariat share their visions for women in the church



Soomee Kim, left, and Ra Drake share their visions for the Commission as they begin their tenures as general secretariat.

What are your dreams/visions for the Commission?

Drake: Out of grounding, down-to-earth yet spiritual visions are born. My initial months with the Commission are a time of getting grounded.

I dream of helping women in more developed nations so we have sense of solidarity.

In my ministry over 25 years, I have become fed up with a white liberalism concerned for the two-thirds world when that liberalism substitutes this global concern for caring for American racism. So I wondered, "How can we embrace our sisters in Africa, yet pass up single parent African Americans?"

I am glad the Commission has been intentional in caring for issues of sexual misconduct. I know the church is not without concerns. Might we ask, as we continue our work on issues of gender, "What are the antecedents of sexual misconduct?"

This and other questions double in capacity as we consider economics—the economics of power and how we share it; how we covenant together.

We are in transition until we see in one another what it means to be created in the image of God. I hope for increasing awareness among congregations in understanding sacred texts from the perspective of women. I hope that our church learns to embrace the Holy Spirit, incarnate uniquely in each one of us. As our capacity for understanding God and one another stretches, may we prove flexible enough to be reshaped by God.

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What led you to this place?

Soomee Kim: The Holy Spirit led me. I knew God was prompting me to be ready for a new challenge and ready to take on a new responsibility when, about one and a half years ago, several different sources directed me to read Joshua 1. As Joshua took up the leadership of Israelites, God reminded me to "be strong and courageous." I was very comfortable where I was as a pastor of a local church. Why was God reminding me to be strong and courageous? Well, the answer came shortly. When my husband heard about the search for new general secretariat of the General

Commission on the Status and Role of Women, he became so excited and encouraged me to apply.

After talking to my bishop, Mary Ann Swenson, and mentor Nan Self, a former general secretariat of GCSRW, and my spiritual director, Shirley Shinn, I went on a retreat. In the two-day retreat it became clear to me that I was to apply, if not for anything else than to learn whatever I needed to learn from the process. It was certainly a learning process, especially in continuously discerning God's will.

What gifts do you bring to your work with the Commission?

Kim: I bring my multicultural background and cross-cultural skills, among my gifts. I was born and raised in Korea, and learned to adapt to American culture. I served predominantly Anglo-white churches, and the last church I pastored is in a predominantly Hispanic neighborhood. There are many commonalities in diverse cultures. I like to point out our common ground in our differences so that we can embrace one another in our common struggles, whether it is sexism, racism, classism, or homophobia.

I am very flexible and a good listener. There are prophetic messages that I am not afraid to express. I am learning to become more grounded spiritually. I am not alone in this call. Before I left California, I secured a support group. I call them Soomee's PBs, or prayer buddies. They are seven women, five lay and two clergy, some but not all, are United Methodists, who have agreed to pray for me and my ministry around the clock. I feel their presence and God's uplifting through their prayers.

What challenges are facing women in the United Methodist Church?

Kim: We are a little ahead of other denominations in some areas of issues related to women. We have women bishops and other women leaders in the UMC, yet we still have a long way to go to reach full and equal participation of women in all areas of the church. Institutional sexism hits us in subtle and unexpected ways. The di-

versity in our theologies and our backgrounds can become competing forces rather than uniting forces that help us celebrate with each other.

What are your dreams/visions for the Commission?

Kim: The image of building a tower came clearly to my mind in the process of discerning God's call. When I first struggled with the call to ministry, God gave me two images to work on. In Luke 9, Jesus reminds us, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God." The second image was from Luke 14, "For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it?" All through my ministry in the local church, I had the image of a gardener, plowing and tilling the soil, planting new seeds, tending the crops, encouraging other farmers as they labor in the name of Christ. During my discerning period, I heard God calling me out of the garden, "It's time to build a tower,

now." So I prayed with the image.

I see the Commission as a tower, the work of the Commission as tower building. God has the resources already secured for us. In God's time it will be completed. In the last thirty years, our sisters have built a foundation. I will help strengthen the foundation, secure any loose bricks, strengthen the molding. When my tenure as a general secretariat is over, I hope to have added a few layers to the foundation of the Commission.

One doesn't go and hide in this tower. It is like an observatory. One goes up and sees the sky and stars out there and communicates about God's truth of human equality and tries to teach others of God's constellation. This is a tower that can serve as a lighthouse; others will be guided by the light it sheds.

I feel very good about the strong team of staff in place. I have felt invited to join the community. We are already living out a vision at the Commission through its shared leadership. ●

New fund supports advocacy for women

At its annual meeting Sept. 19-22, the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women began breaking new ground among United Methodist general agencies as it embarks on establishing an endowment fund, according to Byrd Bonner, executive director of the United Methodist Church Foundation. The new endowment fund is designed to fund emerging ministries related to advocacy for women in the UMC.

The Commission heard a litany, "By faith..." that lifted up the names of pioneering women within the denomination. Women such as Theresa Hoover, Barbara Ricks Thompson, Nancy Grissom Self, Trudi Kiddie Reed, and Leontine T.C. Kelly have blazed trails and offered their voices on behalf of women. "We are grateful for the pace that the Commission is setting for the denomination," remarked Bonner in regard to the historic action.

Louise Branscomb gave a generous gift to the Commission in its early years. That gift helped establish the Empowering Women for the Second Decade Fund.

The first gift for the new endowment fund comes from Stephanie Anna Hixon, member of the general secretariat of GCSRW. "This fund offers an opportunity for those with a passion about the legacy of the Commission to contribute to ministries of advocacy and justice for women within the United Methodist Church," emphasized Hixon. "Establishment of the fund will also serve as a reminder of the legacy of voices on behalf of women when possible initiatives are considered annually related to the fund. Those entrusted with the fund will be invited to ask 'What does advocacy for women mean in this moment within the UMC?'"

The Commission has formed an endowment committee to work with staff to complete the details of the endowment fund document, which will be presented for a final vote by Commission members in the near future. ●

Ovations

To **Amanda Bachus**, who has joined UMCcommunications in Nashville, as associate editor of *el Interprete* magazine.

To **Heien Bell**, who was installed as superintendent of Little Kanawha District and is the first African American woman to be appointed to the West Virginia Conference cabinet.

To **Michelle R. Johnston**, assistant to the president of Wood College in Mathiston, MS, who is the 2002 Esther Edwards Graduate Scholarship Award recipient. The \$5,000 is given by the UM Office of Loans and Scholarships to encourage women to pursue leadership roles at UM colleges and universities. Johnston is a doctoral candidate in educational leadership at Mississippi State University.

To **Kathryn Mastin**, senior human resources director at American Retirement Corp. in Nashville, TN, who has joined the staff of the General Board of Discipleship as executive director of the office of Human Resources.

To **Susan Joy Meister**, former director of mission/outreach for the Illinois Great Rivers Conference, who has been named director of communications for the conference.

To **Amelia Tucker Shaw**, owner of a consulting firm in Atlanta and member of Ben Hill United Methodist Church, who has joined the Communications Resourcing Team at UMCcommunications.

To **Allison Leigh Smith**, a junior at United Methodist-related DePauw University, who is a recipient of a \$7,500 Verde Dickey Memorial Scholarship from the United Methodist Higher Education Foundation, awarded to a student majoring in education or physical education who plans to become a teacher with an emphasis in coaching.

Resources

Peace Liturgies, Diann Neu. This is a collection of liturgies nurturing a spirit of peacemaking. Copies are available for \$15 from WATER, 8035 13th St., Silver Springs, MD 20910-4803. (301) 589-2509. Web: www.hers.com/water.

Violence Against Women: Law, Prevention, Protection, Enforcement, Treatment, Health, Joan Zorza (Civic Research Institute, 4478 US Route 27, P.O. Box 585, Kingston, NJ 08528). A reference for victim advocates, attorneys, law enforcement, counseling and health professionals, educators and students. The text contains ideas on effective programs, policies, and legal developments in the fight against interpersonal violence. Fax: (609) 683-7291. Available for 21-day examination, \$125, plus \$8.95 shipping.

A Voice from the Wilderness: The Story of Anna Howard Shaw, Don Brown (Houghton Mifflin, Co., 2001). This book for young readers focuses on Shaw's early life with her family and her efforts with the suffrage movement. \$16.00.

New from the Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence: Domestic Violence: What Churches Can Do. A one-hour program for use in Christian education. Includes a 20-minute video (an edited version of *Broken Vows*),

To **Libba Stinson**, who is the first woman to serve as director of Connectional Ministries of the Alabama-West Florida Conference.

To **Corinne Van Buren**, more recently a meeting planner for the General Board of Discipleship, who has been named director of member services for the Christian Educators Foundation. ☉

plus worship materials and a comprehensive guide for the facilitator. \$45 (\$30 for past purchasers of *Broken Vows*).

Family Violence and Religion: An Interfaith Resource Guide (Volcano, CA: Volcano Press, 1995). A resource for clergy and community professionals to understand family violence and respond appropriately. Includes background information on domestic violence; guidelines for pastoral counseling to battered women; theological perspectives; discussion of elder abuse; and specific articles on domestic violence in African-American, Asian-American and Hispanic-American communities. \$29.95.

The Healing Years: A Documentary About Surviving Incest and Child Sexual Abuse. This 52-minute video profiles three women through their journey of pain and despair from incest and their process of recovery. Religious issues addressed in the study guide. \$99.

New translations available... Keeping the Faith: Guidance for Christian Women Facing Abuse, Marie M. Fortune. This booklet is a concise response to common religious questions raised by victims/survivors of domestic violence and is a valuable resource for shelters, counselors and pastors. Now available in culturally-appropriate translations in Spanish and Korean. \$6.99 (quantity discounts available).

What Every Congregation Needs to Know About Domestic Violence. An introductory pamphlet ideal for distribution to both laity and clergy. Includes information for victims and for batterers. Now available in Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, Laotian, and traditional Chinese. \$12.50 per package of 25. \$10.00 per package for orders of five or more packages. ☉

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The Flyer invites you to subscribe and thus demonstrate your support for women in the United Methodist Church. As the primary communication tool 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.

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in the United Methodist Church
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Status Report

Canadian Lutherans elect woman bishop

Canadian Lutherans have elected their first woman to serve as bishop. Cynthia G. Halmarson, 47, will head the Saskatchewan Synod for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. Halmarson was born and raised in Connecticut and moved to Canada after her marriage in 1978.

In the U.S., seven women currently serve as bishops in the ELCA, which first ordained women as clergy in 1970. The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod does not ordain women to serve as congregational pastors. Around the world, 22 women have been elected bishops or presidents in churches that belong to the Luther World Federation.

—*Christian Century*,
July 31-Aug. 13, 2002

Ed. note: The Methodist Church first ordained women in 1956. The first woman to be elected bishop in the United Methodist Church was Marjorie Matthews in 1980. By 2000, 14 women had been elected bishop; 11 continue to serve as active bishops; 2 serve as retired bishops; 1 is deceased.

Fly

UMCOM invites scholarship applicants

United Methodist Communications invites applicants for its scholarships and fellowship. Here are the criteria:

For recent or this year's racial ethnic minority graduate students: *Judith Weidman Racial Ethnic Minority Fellowship* is awarded to one recent college/seminary graduate each year. The recipient will spend a year as part of a communications staff in an annual conference office somewhere in the United States and will receive a \$30,000 salary and benefits. Applicant must be a United Methodist to qualify. Apply by March 17, 2003.

For undergraduates (two awards @ \$6,000 each): *Stoody-West Scholarship* is a \$6,000 award for students in their post-graduate study at an accredited U.S. college or university who intend on pursuing a career in religious journalism. Christian students of all denominations are encouraged to apply. Apply by March 7, 2003.

For racial ethnic minority graduate students (two awards, \$2,500 ea.): *Perryman Communications Scholarship* is a \$2,500 scholarship for undergraduate study in religion journalism/mass communications. Christian students of all denominations are encouraged to apply. Apply by March 7, 2003.

For applications, contact the Communications Resourcing Team of United Methodist Communications, (800) 278-4862. E-mail: crt@umcom.org. Web: <http://umcom.org>.

COPY DEADLINES

To ensure inclusion of job listings, calendar items, and other items to be published in *The Flyer*, please submit written details by the following dates:

Jan. 15, 2003.....Winter 2003
March 1, 2003.....Spring 2003

Send to: Bonny Stalnaker Roth,
GCSRW, 1200 Davis St. Evanston, IL
60201

(800) 523-8390
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