

The Foyer

Vol XXII, No. 4

Spring 2002

First clergywomen of color to lead agency

Raponzil Drake, Soomee Kim, new GCSRW general secretariat

After a search process spanning several months, the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW) has nominated and the General Council on Ministries (GCOM) has elected two new members of the general secretariat to lead the Commission's work.

Raponzil "Ra" Drake and Soomee Kim will take office Sept. 1, becoming the first two clergywomen of color—Drake is African American, Kim is Korean American—to lead the agency. They will succeed Stephanie Anna Hixon, still on staff, and Cecelia Long, who now serves as GCOM's con-



Soomee Kim

ciliar officer. The change in leadership was dictated by the 12-year term limit for general secretaries.

Hixon will stay at the Commission until Dec. 31 to help with transition. Long left at the end of 2001 to join the GCOM staff in Dayton, OH.



Raponzil Drake

Drake, 43, pastor of Newman United Methodist Church, Lincoln, NB, previously worked with the Memphis and Nebraska conference commissions on the status and role of women. Kim, 45, pastor of First United Methodist Church of San Fernando, CA, has been a member of GCSRW since 2000.

Questions? Services? GCSRW staffer Kim Coffing can help

In response to a large volume of inquiries for assistance from annual conferences and local churches, the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW) created a new staff position in January 2001. A year later the calls continue, while the level of service grows stronger. Kim Coffing, assistant to the general secretariat for program and constituency services, welcomes the daily phone calls and e-mail messages from across the church.

"I talk to annual conference status and role of women leaders, primarily, but we also receive calls from local church leaders, staff from other agencies, and others interested in learning about our work," explains Coffing.

One typical question is a request for resources to fulfill annual conference leadership roles. Closely related are questions that clarify the role and ministries of the Commission, particu-

larly in contrast to the Women's Division, General Board of Global Ministries. Another frequent question is sexual misconduct: what it is and how to formulate policies and procedures for addressing it.

Perhaps the most challenging line of questioning focuses on Biblical authority and theology about the roles of women in the church. In response to such questions, Coffing emphasizes, "I begin by putting the question into the context of our United Methodist history. The General Commission on Archives and History offers an interpretive history of our denomination. The Social Principles, Our Theological Task, and Doctrinal History—all found in *The Book of Discipline*—provide further insight into who we are."

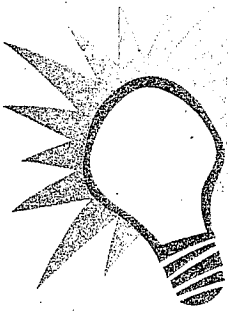
Coffing continues, "Then we consider the portions of the New Testament attributed to Paul, especially Corinthians and Timothy. These

books contain the passages often quoted about women keeping quiet, teaching in their homes, being under the guidance of their husbands. In contrast, Paul's theology of liberation in Galatians and Romans offers a view of women more in keeping with Jesus' respect of and inclusion of women."

Coffing finds that much of her work emerges from a ministry of encouragement. When local church leaders seek ideas on how to work on issues of the status and role of women, they are often frustrated by a lack of models from which to work. They are concerned about how to address stereotypes of negativism and blaming, rather than simply assessing the picture of who is present—in church, at a meeting, in decision-making places—and who is not.

"I see my role as one who helps

continued on page 3



Ideas for action

We have revitalized this forum for sharing ideas among Annual Conference Commissions on the Status and Role of Women (ACCSRWs) and related inclusiveness groups. We encourage annual conference and local church advocates for inclusiveness to contact Kim Coffing, assistant to the general secretariat for program and constituency services, at (800) 523-8390, or gcsrw@gcfa.org.

Domestic violence workshop

This winter Northern Illinois Conference offered a day-long workshop on "Domestic Violence and the Religious Community" for clergy. The event was sponsored by the NIC Commission on the Status and Role of Women and the Order of Elders. Workshop trainer was Thelma Burgonio-Watson from the Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence. For more information, contact Erica Robinson-Johnson, (773) 465-3113. E-mail: Rjcentral@juno.com.

History of women leaders in the conference

Dozens of biographical sketches, most including a photo, offer a history of women leaders in the Nebraska Conference. The book, published by Nebraska CSRW, is entitled *Prairie Legacy: Stories of Women in Nebraska United Methodist Churches*. The publication is dedicated to Angie Newman (1833-1910), the first woman elected as a delegate to General Conference 1888. She was elected from Nebraska, along with several other women, all of whom were denied seats on the floor, but made their presence known. Contact Barbara Burns, (877) 509-7865.

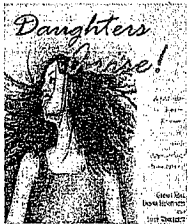
Jurisdictional networking

In April, a networking group of Annual Conference Commissions on the Status and Role of Women of the Southeastern Jurisdiction met to develop strategies to prepare for 2004 jurisdictional conference. The group worked on advocacy, building relationships, and monitoring. For more information, contact Cheryl Walker, (888) 525-3586, ext. 8. E-mail: walker@sejac-umc.org.

Resource for mother-daughter retreats

"Daughters Arise: A Christian Retreat Resource for Girls Approaching Womanhood" is the title of a new publication that will be available from Pilgrim Press in June 2002. This resource on mother-daughter retreats was initially developed by the Pacific Northwest CSRW.

A REVIEW: Drink deeply of the wisdom and journeys of the women and girls in "Daughters Arise: A Christian Retreat Resource for Girls Approaching Womanhood." Set in the context of biblical and faith traditions, this retreat resource stretches the imagination. It invites readers to create hospitable space—a vessel for girls and women to draw from the wellsprings of their beings and to relate candidly and courageously from their own lives. With its sage and gentle guidance, the text helps us to honor the seasons from girlhood through womanhood. This resource offers a gracious invitation—to embark on such a journey with our daughters and friends in our own life and faith context. I encourage you to do so."—Stephanie Anna Hixon, General Secretariat, General Commission on the Status and Role of Women



General Commission on the Status and Role of Women

Strategic initiatives shape AC/CSRW program year

To help plan the 2001-2002 program year, the Little Rock CSRW formulated strategic initiatives in the following areas: bearing witness to inclusiveness; advocating for women's issues; nurturing wholeness and equity; and evaluating progress. These areas are the central tenets of the group's mission statement. Among the details for bearing witness to inclusiveness are several ideas for communicating with the conference through the web page, conference newspaper, and an e-mail network. For more information, contact JoAnn Miles, (501) 525-2496. E-mail: jojomiles@aol.com.

Inclusive language survey

Minnesota is in the process of developing an e-mail survey on inclusive language to send to all Minnesota United Methodist Churches. The commission is willing to collaborate with other people who would assume a similar role in other states and denominations. The survey will also appear on Re-Imagining web site, www.reimagining.org. The commission invites ideas about factors to be considered. Contact Faye Christensen, e-mail faychris@brainerd.net ●

The 50th anniversary of full clergy rights for women in the UMC

Visit the GCSRW website for details on how your annual conference can help prepare for this historic event

www.gcsrw.org

Spring 2002
Vol. XXII, No. 4

The Flyer

The Flyer is published four times yearly by the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW) in the United Methodist Church (UMC) as a communication link with the 65 Annual Conference Commissions on the Status and Role of Women (ACCSRWs). Primary distribution of The Flyer is through the ACCSRWs; individual subscriptions, available through the GCSRW, are \$10.

Editor: Bonny Stalnaker Roth

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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First woman in UMC history takes office as Council of Bishops president

For the first time in the history of the United Methodist Church, the top two officers of the Council of Bishops will be women. Bishop Sharon A. Brown Christopher of the Illinois Area became the first woman to assume the office of president on May 3, and Bishop Sharon Rader of the Wisconsin Area continues as secretary, an office she has held since 1996.

The president normally serves for one year and presides at all meetings of the council and the executive committee. She also represents the council at official functions and serves as the spokeswoman after the body has acted. The council comprises nearly 150 active and retired bishops from the United States, Africa, Europe and the Philippines.

The secretary serves for four years. She coordinates the agenda, maintains current records and assists the council in connecting with others across the church.

Asked about the significance of serving as the first woman to preside over the council, Christopher said, "This moment is not about me. It is about the Council of Bishops that has been appointing women as leaders in congregations and conferences for many years. It is about laity who have been forming girls and women in faith and welcoming them as pastors of their congregations. It is an expression of the heart of the United

Methodist Church, a church of open hearts, open minds and open doors."

Christopher, 57, is a graduate of Perkins School of Theology in Dallas and served churches following her 1972 ordination as an elder in the



Bishop Christopher

Wisconsin Conference. She also served as a district superintendent and an assistant to the bishop before her election to the episcopacy in 1988.

She is married to Charles E. Logsdon Christopher, a retired clergy member of the Wisconsin Conference. The couple adopted the name Christopher (meaning "Christ bearer") following their marriage in 1973. They have two adult children and two grandchildren.

Rader, 62, is a 1976 graduate of Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, IL, and she was ordained an elder in the Northern Illinois Conference in 1978. She served churches in Illinois and Michigan before being named a member of the West Michigan Conference program staff and subsequently a district superintendent. She was elected to the episcopacy in 1992 and assigned to the Wisconsin Area. She is married to the Rev. Blaine Rader, an ordained elder in the Michigan Conference now serving a church in Wisconsin. The couple has two adult children and two grandchildren.

Of her role as secretary, Rader said, "I find it challenging and fulfilling to help this world body give attention to the many languages and cultures gathered around the table. Sensitivity to the global nature of the council assists the whole church in its effort to live as the body of Christ."

Bishop Ruediger R. Minor of the Eurasia Area was elected president-elect. He will become president at the council's 2003 spring meeting and will serve until the bishops meet at the 2004 General Conference in Pittsburgh.

—From UMC News press release
May 6, 2002



Kim Coffing

Questions? from page 1

others reset the focus on their camera lens. I help them shape some components so they can gain the vision themselves of God's desire of having creation and co-creators of mutual respect and dignity. Thus, they not only grasp the vision, but they can also communicate it," says Coffing.

When Coffing speaks of the joys of her work, she expresses delight in working in partnership with people who are concerned about the ministry God has given them. "I am inspired by those who are willing to face hostility for the purpose of doing prophetic ministry," she explains. "They are open to inviting God into their work of revealing what behaviors happen in the church, who is present, speaking, being recognized. They expose the reality and ask how we invite God into the continuing fullness of the church."

On the other hand, the biggest challenges for Coffing are two faces of fear. "The first is conversing with those who are angry and hostile toward the Commission because the Commission's work addresses discrimination toward women. I hear their struggles. Through listening attentively to their fears, I hope that expressing their hostility can help lead them to become open to the possibility of God calling women. The second challenge comes from those who feel afraid of the power of God living in them and calling them."

But with these joys and challenges, Coffing relishes the opportunity to serve whomever may be the next caller or e-mailer, for through these connections she believes the work of the Commission is shared among persons in the pews. ●



Bishop Rader

Cooking ahead...

Monitoring—who, how, when, where

As many of our Annual Conference Commissions on the Status and Role of Women are participating in their Annual Conference sessions, questions often arise about monitoring: Whom shall we monitor? When and where do we monitor? How can we do it more effectively?

Have questions? Call the GCSRW office (800)523-8390. ●

Status Report

New Sojourner Truth center preserves history

Adrian College is introducing a state-of-the-art facility that uses modern technology to preserve the history of Michigan's Underground Railroad. The Sojourner Truth Technical Training Center is the first of its kind in the country.

Both Michigan and the United Methodist Church have strong connections with the Underground Railroad — the channel by which slaves escaped from the South and were secretly transported to Canada during the 19th century. Many Methodists were involved in the Underground Railroad.

One slave who escaped from Tennessee, Jermain Loguen, later became a bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church. Probably the most famous "engineer" of the Underground Railroad was Harriet Tubman, a Zion Methodist. She helped about 300 slaves escape by making some 19 trips into the South.

In Lenawee County, Michigan, Laura Haviland is remembered for running the Underground Railroad station at Adrian. She housed runaway slaves in her home, at one point taking six slaves to safety in Canada. She briefly belonged to the Methodist Episcopal Church. The slavery issue split the Michigan Methodist Episcopal Church, so she joined the Wesleyan Methodists. A statue of Haviland stands before city hall in Adrian.

Visitors to the Sojourner Truth Center are learning how to use the most advanced technology available to document the Underground Railroad network of people, places, and artifacts. The center's training program will allow researchers, scholars and historians to digitize their historical information and post it on the Web.

The center is located in Dean Hall on the campus of the United-Methodist-related college. The school itself was founded by an outspoken abolitionist, Asa Mahan.

—United Methodist News, April 18, 2002

Visit us on the web!

www.gcsrw.org

Zimbabwean church women combine spiritual, practical work

The United Methodist women of Zimbabwe make an annual pilgrimage to Chin'gando, an informal gathering place under a tree about a half-mile up the hill from Old Mutare Mission.

The United Methodist Church's roots in Zimbabwe reach back to 1897, when Bishop Joseph Crane Hartzell began a mission in Old Mutare. The "Riukwudzano Rwe Vadzimai," or Fellowship of Women, was born under a chin'gando tree on the outskirts of Old Mutare Mission 30 years later.

During the 1927 annual pastors' meeting at Old Mutare Mission, the pastors' wives began rising early in the morning to gather secretly for prayer under the chin'gando tree. They would return before their husbands awakened. From 1927 on, early morning women's prayer meetings became a daily tradition during pastors' gatherings.

In the early days, the women prayed for the opportunity to attend school and be educated, an almost unimaginable dream, according to Grace Musuka, coordinator of women's, youth and children's ministries for the United Methodist Church in Zimbabwe.

Later, they would pray that women might someday be ordained, she said. "They prayed for all these things, and we found them happening."

While prayer was the primary agenda, the women also spent some time under the chin'gando tree "organizing for women's culture," Musuka said.

This dual emphasis upon the spiritual and the practical has characterized the life of the Riukwudzano Rwe Vadzimai ever since.

The Zimbabwe conferences' ministries for women include prayer conventions. Last year, one five-day gathering attracted 9,000 women to camp at Nyadiri to hear preaching and to sing and pray, and a gathering at Mutambara engaged another 5,000 women in spiritual renewal. During the meetings, the women live in prim-

itive campgrounds and devote all their time to worship and prayer. According to Musuka, the agenda of the prayer-convention is entirely spiritual.

An example of practical ministries is a skills training program to teach women cloth dyeing and tailoring. Musuka recruits the United Methodist women most skilled in the tie-dye, batik and screen-printing crafts to be teachers. For the past four years, two women from each of the districts in the church's two Zimbabwe annual conferences have been trained each February.

Tailoring clothes and dyeing cloth are income-generating skills that help women become more self-sufficient, Musuka said. "The major factor that affects women's ability to make choices is lack of their own income," she wrote in a report to the Women's Division, General Board of Global Ministries. "Many women are becoming heads of families through death of husbands, divorce and single parenthood. ... Most of these women are not employed and thus require skills to survive."

According to Bishop Christopher Jokomo, who leads both of Zimbabwe's annual conferences, the economic vulnerability of women is a factor responsible for the spread of AIDS in Zimbabwe, a country where as much as a third of the adult population is believed to be HIV-infected.

Musuka is initiating a new project to advance Zimbabwean women toward economic self-sufficiency. She hopes to buy two sunflower seed presses for making cooking oil and two grinders for preparing peanut butter for use by United Methodist women and youth in each of the 12 districts. These machines, which operate without electricity and cost about \$30 each, will greatly enhance women's income from crops of sunflower seeds and peanuts.

Rather than merely sell their crops for a few dollars, the women will be able to sell processed foods for a much greater profit, and accumulate funds to buy more equipment to employ yet more women.

—Excerpted, UMNews, March 13, 2002

Ovations

To **Manya Brachear**, a student at Columbia University in New York, and **Lilian K. Ringera**, a student at United Methodist-related Iliff School of Theology in Denver, who will receive Stooddy-West Fellowships from United Methodist Communications.

To **Cheryl Cavalari**, director of campus ministries of Northeast Pennsylvania, who has been named Campus Minister of the Year by the United Methodist Higher Education Foundation.

To **Johnnetta B. Cole**, a retired anthropology professor and former president of Spelman College in Atlanta, who was named 14th president of United Methodist-related Bennett College, a historically African-American women's school in Greensboro, NC.

To **Amy Christine Cottrill**, ordained elder in the West Virginia Conference; **Rebecca Duke-Barton**, probationary member of the South Georgia Conference; and **Natalya Alexeevna Shulgina**, probationary member of the Russia Conference; who are among doctoral candidates preparing for careers in theological education who have received Dempster Graduate Fellowships for the 2002-2003 year from the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

To **Kathy Galloway**, who is the first woman to have been elected Leader of the Iona Community in Glasgow, Scotland.

To **Ellen S. Goidey**, associate professor of biology at Wofford College, who has been named, by the United Methodist Higher Education Foundation, Outstanding Educator of the Year, an award given to teachers in United Methodist-related schools and seminaries who have made an extraordinary impact on their students, peers, the institution, church and community.

To **Dorothy Height**, civil rights activist and recipient of the Medal of Freedom from President Clinton in 1994, who turned 90 on March 24. Guests at a birthday party March 20 pledged more than \$5 million to pay off the mortgage on the headquarters building of the National Council of Negro Women, which she headed from 1957 to 1998.

To **Irene Howard**, chancellor of the Mississippi Conference, who will become general counsel of the General Council on Finance and Administration on July 1.

To **Anna Kpaan**, Monrovia District, and **Nellie Wright**, St. John River District, who were appointed district superintendents at the annual conference of the United Methodist Church in Liberia.

To **Joan Gray LaBarr**, pastor of Christ United Methodist Church in Farmers Branch, TX, who will become director of communications for the Dallas Area in June.

To **Barbara Day Miller**, assistant dean of worship at Candler School of Theology at Emory University in Atlanta, who has been named music director for the 2004 General Conference.

To **Shante' Morgan**, a student at the University of Southern California, and **Sarah Schroeder**, who will be attending George Washington University in Washington, who have been named runners up for the Stooddy-West Award by United Methodist Communications.

To **Lorena Stone**, vice president of academic affairs at United Methodist-related Wesley College in Dover, DE, who has been selected to receive the Francis Asbury Award, sponsored by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. The award recognizes individuals for significant contributions to fostering the church's ministries in higher education at the local, district or annual conference level.

To **Jennifer Su**, a student at Northwestern University in Evanston, IL, who was named winner of the Leonard M. Perryman Communications Scholarship for Ethnic Minority Students by United Methodist Communications. ☉

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:

Sept. 15, 2002.....Fall 2002
Dec. 15, 2002.....Winter 2002

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

(800) 523-8390
e-mail: gcsrww@gcfa.org

Flyer

SMU offers new women's studies program

Southern Methodist University's Perkins School of Theology in Dallas is offering two new graduate certificate programs in women's studies and urban ministries for students in the master of divinity degree program. The graduate certificate in women's studies is offered jointly with SMU's Dedman School of Humanities and Sciences. Details are available by calling (214) 768-2293 or writing to ology@mail.smu.edu. For more information about the graduate certificate in urban ministry, contact R. Van Kemper, urban ministry adviser, at (214) 768-2928 or send e-mail to rkemper@mail.smu.edu.

Applications invited for Theresa Hoover Award

The Women's Division, General Board of Global Ministry, is accepting applications for the Theresa Hoover Community Service and Global Citizen Award. The \$5,000-\$6,000 grant will be awarded to a woman 21-35 for research or observation in a subject of her choosing in harmony with the division's current interests.

Applicants should propose new projects, demonstrate concern for community service, and exhibit awareness of responsibilities in today's world. Apply by Aug. 1, 2002. For further information, call (212) 870-3696. Website: gbgm-umc.org/UMW/theressa.html. ☉

Resources

Voices Project is an initiative of Saint Mary's Press to nurture and support the gender-specific spiritual needs of young people, beginning with adolescent girls. The Voices series consists of six manuals of strategies to use with adolescent girls in schools, parishes, and single-gender settings. The manuals in the series share the same purpose: to help girls embrace the true meaning of the phrase "created in the image of God," a profound statement about who they are and who they are becoming. \$24.95.

Awakening: Challenging the Culture with Girls. Offers a variety of activities to help girls critique the culture for both its negative and its positive influences.

Retreats: Deepening the Spirituality of Girls. Presents seven retreats on themes such as friendship, media, and childhood myths. Also included is a retreat for mothers and daughters.

Prayer: Celebrating and Reflecting with Girls. Provides ideas for community prayer services and suggestions for enriching girls' personal prayer life.

Church Women: Probing History with Girls. Outlines strategies for discovering the richness of women's contributions to the life of the church.

Biblical Women: Exploring Their Stories with Girls. Suggests ways to help girls get to know the women in the scriptures and examine the roles they played in communities of faith and the beginnings of the church.

Seeking: Doing Theology with Girls. Offers methods for exploring and discussing theological and moral issues from the perspective of women.

Calendar

July 1-26

Growing in Wisdom, Age and Grace: Eldering Sabbath, St. Paul, MN. This month-long retreat offers an opportunity for women, within the context of an ecumenical community, to harvest the richness of their lives by remembering significant people and events that have shaped their lives and life stories. Contact Women Well, 1784 La Crosse Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55119. (651) 739-7953. Web site: www.WomanWell.org. E-mail: seeking@WomanWell.org.

July 11-14

Wonderfully Made: Celebrating Our Creation in the Image of God, Indianapolis, IN. Biennial international conference of Evangelical and Ecumenical Women's Caucus. Plenary leaders are Wilma Ann Bailey, Reta Halteman Finger, Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, and DeeDee Risher. Contact Barbara Crews, 7556 Farm View Cir, West Indianapolis, IN 46256. Phone: (317) 570-0553. E-mail: conference2002@eewc.com. Web site: www.eewc.com/index.htm.

July 12-14

A New Vision, A New Hope, Berkeley, CA. A national gathering for youth, young adults, college students, grad students and seminarians. This is an informal meeting to discuss plans of participants of the Reconciling Ministries Network to better the participation of the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, transsexual community and their allies within the United Methodist Church. Contact Tina Cansler, (510) 547-7481. E-mail: Mosaic_RMN@yahoo.com.

Aug. 12-15

Spiritual Renewal of Clergywomen, Fort Lee, NJ. UM Korean clergywomen gathering. Guest speaker is Heather Murray Elkins. Contact Jennifer Yu, (609) 919-9693. E-mail: jennifer.yu@ptsem.edu.

Sept. 3-27

Growing in Wisdom, Age and Grace: Eldering Sabbath, St. Paul, MN. This month-long retreat offers an opportunity for women, within the context of an ecumenical community, to harvest the richness of their lives by remembering significant people and events that have shaped their lives and life stories. Contact Women Well, 1784 La Crosse Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55119. Phone: (651) 739-7953. Web site: www.WomanWell.org. E-mail: seeking@WomanWell.org.

Oct. 3-8

By Rivers of Living Water, Norfolk, VA. The Christian Educators Fellowship of The United Methodist Church holds its 16th national conference. Contact the conference website: www.cefumc.org.

You can help support women in the Church—Subscribe to The Flyer

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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Portraits of two women...

The following biographical sketches are reprinted by permission from *el Intérprete* March/April 2002. The articles were written in collaboration with Minerva N. Garza.

¿Quién fue Jovita Idar de Juárez?

Durante la revolución mexicana, muchos ciudadanos emigraron a los Estados Unidos escapando de la inquietud política que existía en el país, entre ellos la familia Idar.

Jovita Idar nació en Laredo, TX el 7 de septiembre de 1885 y hasta el fin de sus días, en 1950, fue una fiel y tenaz defensora de la educación y de los derechos de la mujer de esa época, en donde a la mujer no se le permitía expresarse. Fue una estudiante destacada y se recibió de maestra. Su padre, Nicario Idar, estaba muy involucrado en los asuntos sociales; veía la injusticia que se ejercía con los mexicanos y texanos, especialmente en la frontera. Organizó la Primera Conferencia Política para unir a los mexicanos y a los texanos y el periódico *La Crónica*, que él dirigía, fue el medio y la voz de difusión.

En 1911, el primer Congreso Mexicano para ciudadanos de esa nacionalidad se reunió en Laredo, TX para abogar por los temas de la educación, la justicia social y penal y los problemas en cuanto al tema de los empleos. A instancias de su padre y con su apoyo, Jovita llevó a las mujeres a la reunión y como resultado nació la primera Liga Femenina Mexicana, con Jovita como presidenta. El primer proyecto que abrazó fue el de la educación gratis para los niños pobres.

Se enfrentó con varios desafíos políticos: en 1913, como integrante del periódico *El Progreso*, escribió un artículo sobre los disturbios en la frontera cuando el Presidente Woodrow Wilson envió tropas a México. Los Texas Rangers intentaron invadir el local, pero Jovita les prohibió la entrada y, como resultado, regresaron y destruyeron el periódico y arrestaron a todos los empleados. También, en 1913, en oportunidad en que las tropas revolucionarias atacaron a Nuevo Laredo, México, Jovita brindó asistencia médica y llegó a ser enfermera de la Cruz Blanca.

En 1917, se mudó a San Antonio, TX e inició un jardín de infantes (kindergarten) para niños mexicanos donde se impartía la enseñanza de inglés y español en forma gratuita.

Jovita será recordada por su rica herencia cristiana en las luchas sociales con los mexicanoamericanos, por su papel como educadora, intérprete, periodista, feminista y humanitaria. Fue miembro activo de la Iglesia Metodista Unida La Trinidad, en San Antonio, TX y colaboró, incesantemente, con todas las actividades femeninas de la Conferencia de Río Grande y como editora en la Página Femenina del *Heraldo Cristiano*. Integra el "Hall of Fame" (la Galería de la Fama), en el "Institute of Texas Culture" (el Instituto de Cultura Texana), en San Antonio, TX.

Who was Jovita Idar of Juárez?

During the Mexican Revolution, many Mexican citizens emigrated from their country to the United States to escape political unrest; among these citizens was the Idar family.

Jovita Idar was born in Laredo, TX Sept. 7, 1885. Until her death in 1950, she was a faithful and tenacious defender of education for and the rights of women of that period, a time during which women were not permitted to express themselves. She distinguished herself as a student and was welcomed as a teacher. Her father, Nicario Idar, was very involved in social issues; he witnessed the injustices inflicted on Mexicans and Texans, particularly

on the border. He organized the First Political Conference to bring together Mexicans and Texans. He also founded and published the newspaper *La Crónica*, which became a voice of information on this issue.

In 1911, the first Congress for Mexican Citizens was held in Laredo, TX to spearhead the causes of social and penal justice and workers' rights. With the encouragement and support of her father, Jovita brought women to the meeting, which resulted in the creation of the first League of Mexican Women. Jovita was named president of the league. The league's first project was free schooling for poor children.

She faced various political challenges; in 1913, while on the staff of the newspaper *El Progreso*, she wrote an article about the border unrest caused when President Woodrow Wilson deployed troops to Mexico. Texas Rangers tried to overtake the newspaper offices, but Jovita refused to let them in. As a result, the Rangers returned and destroyed the paper's headquarters and arrested the staff. Also in 1913, during an attack on New Laredo, Mexico by revolutionary soldiers, Jovita provided medical assistance, eventually becoming a nurse in the White Cross.

In 1917 she moved to San Antonio, TX and started a free kindergarten for Mexican children. She taught in English and in Spanish.

Jovita will be remembered for her rich Christian legacy as a fighter for Mexican-American social issues, and for her work as educator, interpreter, journalist, feminist and humanitarian. She was an active member of the La Trinidad United Methodist Church in San Antonio and worked tirelessly on all women's projects of the Rio Grande Conference and as editor of the Women's Page of the *Christian Herald*. She has been inducted into the Hall of Fame at the Institute of Texas Culture in San Antonio. ●

Rosa Sandoval y su Liderazo

Rosa Sandoval es miembro fiel y activo de la Iglesia Metodista Unida El Mesías, en Mission, TX. En la iglesia local ha servido como coordinadora en los Ministerios de Familia y como maestra en la Escuela dominical en la clase de damas. En la División de Mujeres Metodistas Unidas, sirvió como tesorera y coordinadora de intereses cristianos globales en su iglesia local. El amor por la obra misionera llevó a Rosa y a su esposo a trabajar en las colonias a ambos lados del Río Grande con el Comité de "Ministerios Fronterizos" y con el equipo "Siervos del Mundo". Precisamente, es con Jorge y Jan Waterman que juntos han construido casas y llevado alimentos para la gente humilde de las colonias. El Pastor de la Iglesia Metodista de México le otorga en el 1995 un reconocimiento público por su labor con la comunidad a través de "Siervos del Mundo".

En 1992, Rosa se une a un grupo de Mission, TX y juntos construyen una Jardínera (Kindergarten) en la Colonia 15 de enero. Más tarde aunaron sus esfuerzos con otros hermanos del norte de Estados Unidos y con Minerva Garza, compraron un terreno y construyeron la Iglesia Metodista el Camino. Así se fue completando el salón social y el comedor de la iglesia que recibió el nombre de Rosa y Sabas Sandoval Jr. en reconocimiento a sus esfuerzos.

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**The General Commission on the
Status and Role of Women**
in the United Methodist Church
1200 Davis Street, Evanston, Illinois 60201

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



Portraits of two women... *continued from page 7*

Construyeron también la Iglesia Metodista el Sendero y un dispensario médico en la colonia Pedro Méndez. Sandoval está permanentemente en busca de servir a los hermanos más pequeños, inspirada por las palabras de Jesús: De cierto os digo que en cuanto lo hicisteis a uno de estos mis hermanos más pequeños, a mí lo hicisteis. Mateo 25:40

Sandoval se ha hecho acreedora a otros reconocimientos, entre ellos: En 1997, el alcalde de la ciudad de Mission, TX le presentó la llave de la ciudad por el trabajo realizado en la comunidad. Recibió el premio "Vida de Oro" por la colaboración para el pueblo del valle de Río Grande. Se involucró de lleno con el progreso y orientación de la juventud recibiendo un reconocimiento de la Escuela Secundaria (High School) de Kenneth White Jr.

Inspirémosnos en el liderazo de Sandoval y roguemos para que el dueño de la mies levante más obreros como Rosa y su esposo.

Rosa Sandoval and her leadership

Rosa Sandoval is a faithful and active member of El Mesías United Methodist Church in Mission, TX. At the local church level she has served as coordinator of family ministries and as teacher of the women's Sunday school class. For the United Methodist Women she has served as treasurer and coordinator of worldwide Christian interests in her local church.

A love of missionary work led Rosa and her husband to work with the Committee on Border Missions and with the Servants of the World team on both sides of the Rio Grande. She

has worked with George and Jan Waterman to build houses for and distribute food to the poor people of the border colonies. In 1995, the pastor of the Methodist Church of Mexico publicly recognized and honored her for her work with the community through the Servants of the World team.

In 1992, Rosa assisted a group in Mission to build a kindergarten in the January 15th colony. Later she contributed her efforts to those of other sisters and brothers from the northern United States and, with Minerva Garza, they bought the land for and built El Camino Methodist Church. The fellowship hall and the dining room of the church are named for Rosa and Sabas Sandoval Jr. in honor of their work.

Rosa and this group also built El Sendero Methodist Church and a medical clinic in the Pedro Méndez colony. Sandoval is constantly looking for ways to serve her small sisters and brothers, inspired by Jesus' words: "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me" (Matthew 25:40, NRSV).

Sandoval has other honors to her credit. In 1997, the mayor of Mission presented her with the key to the city in honor of her work on behalf of the community. She received the "Life of Gold" award for her work with the people of the Rio Grande Valley. For her work on behalf of progress and education for youth, she was recognized by Kenneth White Jr., High School.

Sandoval's leadership is an inspiration to us all. Let us pray to the owner of the harvest to raise up more workers like Rose and her husband. ☪

The Flyer

THE FLYER READERS' SURVEY

As a reader of *The Flyer*, you and your opinions are very important to the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GSCRW). We invite you to tell us how our newsletter is helpful and how we might improve its usefulness for you.

Please answer the following questions and return this form to GSCRW at the address on reverse side.

1. Do you currently subscribe to *The Flyer*? Yes No
If yes, for how long? _____ Number of years
2. If you are not a current subscriber, have you subscribed to *The Flyer* in the past? Yes No
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3. If you are not a subscriber, how do you receive it?
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4. How often do you read *The Flyer*?
 Every issue
 Occasionally
 Almost never
5. Please rate these components of *The Flyer* according to how well they serve your needs.
Circle the number that best represents your answer:
1=not useful 2=seldom useful 3=occasionally useful 4=sometimes useful
5=often useful 6=frequently useful 7=always useful

	Not	Useful					Always
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Front page news	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
FYI	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Ideas for Action (annual conference programs)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Ovations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Resources	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Status Report	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Special supplements	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

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6. How frequently do you refer to past issues of *The Flyer*?
- Never, I throw them away after reading them.
 - Occasionally, I refer back to information and resources in an issue.
 - Often, I use the information contained as a resource.

7. What other information would you like to see included in *The Flyer*? _____

8. How frequently would you like to receive *The Flyer*?
- four times a year (as now)
 - more frequently _____ times a year
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9. Have you visited the GCSRW web site: www.gcsr.org? Yes No
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11. If *The Flyer* were available in its entirety free of charge on our web site, would you prefer to receive it by that means?
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