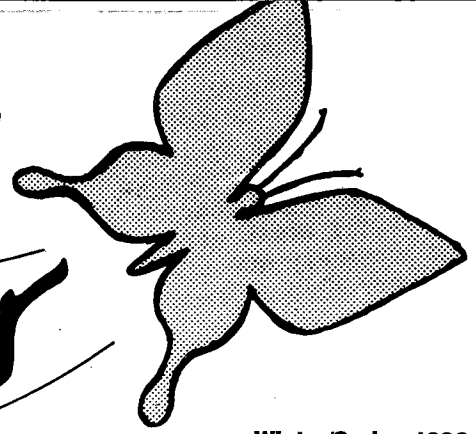


WELCOME
1992 GENERAL
CONFERENCE READERS!

The General Commission on the Status and Role
of Women in the United Methodist Church

The Flyer



Vol XII, No. 4

Winter/Spring 1992

GCSRW report to General Conference 1992

Equity, opportunity, a continuing challenge

Equity and opportunity in the church and in society—these are the issues that continue to challenge women in the church and thus provide innumerable opportunities for the ministry of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW).

In its report to General Conference 1992, the Commission celebrates its accomplishments and looks ahead to the challenges that remain.

Consider these statistics:

- ◆ 60 percent of the 8,908,741 members of The United Methodist Church are women.
- ◆ 10.6 percent of the 42,423 clergy are women, an increase from 1.0 percent in 1970, including 4 women bishops.
- ◆ 34.4 percent of delegates to General Conference are women compared with 13.4 percent in 1972.

Concerns that continue

The church has made progress in recognizing, respecting and appreciating the gifts of women, but current trends and data indicate that we have more to do to realize the disciplinary mandate of the Commission. GCSRW is charged "to challenge The United Methodist Church, including its general agencies, institutions, and connectional structures, to a continuing commitment to the full and equal participation of women in the total life

and mission of the Church, sharing fully in the power and policy-making and mission of the Church's life." (Para. 2202, *Book of Discipline*, 1988.)

As the church struggles to strengthen the participation of women at all levels, the Commission continues its key role in voicing the needs of women and responding to concerns identified during this quadrennium:

- ◆ Pay inequity for persons with the same job descriptions
- ◆ Sexual harassment in local churches, general agencies, theological schools
- ◆ Uneven pension benefits for lay church employees

- ◆ Unfair performance reviews of female general agency staff members
- ◆ Reorganization of annual conferences and general agencies, which may result in job losses for women
- ◆ Discriminatory procedures in clergy appointments
- ◆ Underutilization of women's gifts and leadership in the Church

According to the GCSRW report of its fifth quadrennial survey to gauge the participation of women in local churches, the broad patterns of the local church participation of women that were revealed in previous sur-

continued on page 2

Many items at General Conference directly impact women's lives

As the 1992 General Conference approaches, The United Methodist Church has reached an evolutionary point in its history. We must make key decisions about how we face the world we live in. We must overcome our fear—be bold in new things. As we move ahead, we must remember our identity in community and who we are in common mission. Amid the broad array of reports, studies, petitions, and legislative proposals that require action are many items that will have a direct impact on the lives of women within our church and society.

Doing mission and ministry

Local churches, annual conferences, and beyond are considering design and structure to serve more effectively local communities and the global community that is the church. Such decisions affect

- ◆ Location—General Board of Global Ministries
- ◆ Financial commitments/resources for ministry

Inclusive church

We as United Methodists have within *The Book of Discipline* the tools to help us reflect the fullness of God's creation.

- ◆ Vitality of GCSRW and General Commission on Religion and Race
- ◆ 1/3, 1/3, 1/3

Church and society

We continue to struggle with a number of issues for church and society. A major concern is violence against women, violence which may be manifested in many ways. As a church, we seek to discern what it means to live in community with all creation.

- ◆ Sexual harassment
- ◆ Domestic violence and sexual abuse
- ◆ Abortion
- ◆ Homosexuality
- ◆ Genetics

We as a church will be challenged to examine our roles as Christians, our responsibilities in life and in death, and our response to God's call for justice. *continued on page 3*

In this issue...

GCSRW Celebrates: This is the 20th birthday of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women **p4**

Special Pullout: A dramatic reading from the September 1991 meeting of the GCSRW **p5**

Surviving General Conference: Hints to ease the turmoil **p6**

veys were repeated in 1991. As the accompanying graph on page 3 indicates, the disparity between the participation of women in the work of local churches and their leadership still is the starkest in the boards and committees that exercise the broadest authority within local churches. (See *The Flyer*, Fall/Winter 1991-1992 for a more complete report.)

The work ahead

In 1991, the US Department of Labor released a study on "Thirtysomething Women," which found that the US leads the industrial world in its underutilization of its working women. The research of GCSRW indicates The United Methodist Church may also be underutilizing the leadership and ministry resources of its women.

With more than 60 percent of The United Methodist Church membership being women, fuller utilization of women would mean women represented in all areas of leadership comparable to the membership. Local churches would reflect women in all facets of decision-making and ministry. (See graph on page 3.)

The annual conference staff positions would also include a larger percentage of women in those leadership positions.

However, 8 of 72 conference council directors, or 11 percent, are women. With more than 10 percent of the clergy being female, women would hold at least 10 per-

cent of the membership of the Council of Bishops. Currently, 3 of 14 general secretaries of the general agencies are women.

To determine direction for the work beyond this quadrennium, the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women conducted a survey in 1990 of persons who have participated in training events; received *The Flyer* on a regular basis; have called for assistance from local churches; or are current and former commission members, bishops, or representatives from general boards and agencies. Priority issues reported include:

- 1 Need for the church to be present in difficult life situations surrounding controversial issues faced by women, such as abortion, racism, sexism, and homosexuality.
- 2 Opportunities for a more fulfilling spiritual life for women that include women's unique experiences.
- 3 Violence against women, including tragedies of rape, spouse and child abuse.
- 4 Special needs of women and men in challenging living situations such as single parenting, blended family parenting, child care needs, older adult care, divorce, homelessness and unemployment.
- 5 The need for increased acceptance of women in leadership positions and increased collegiality among women leaders.
- 6 Visible and positive role models for young women and men.
- 7 Continued threat of sexual harassment in the work place, both in the church and in the secular arenas.
- 8 Need for equal opportunity for women in the ministry including salary, benefits, and career advancement.
- 9 Ways for the church community to be in solidarity with women throughout the global community.
- 10 More examples of collegial working styles and change in structures to accommodate the different styles of operation.

Responding to the issues reported by the constituents of the General Commission will take constant attention, sensitivity, commitment, and vigilance by the Church as a whole community of God's people. In the spirit of the 1988 resolution to participate in an "Ecumenical Decade: Churches in Solidarity

with Women," men of the Church and in society are joining women in acts of reformation and even re-creation. It will be important for men and women to be in partnership as the issues are addressed.

The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women continues to foster awareness of issues for women and to give guidance on how the Church can live its mission and ministry in ways which attain and maintain full and equal participation of women and men. ■

Ovations

Patricia A. DeVoe, who is the first woman to be named district superintendent of the Holston Conference, serving the Oak Ridge (TN) District.

Elaine Jenkins, from Johns Island, SC, who has been elected associate general secretary of the General Commission on Religion and Race with responsibility for the Black Concerns portfolio.

To **Maria Oteró**, a United Methodist and head of the Washington office of Accion International, who has been elected chair of Bread for the World's board of directors. ■

CLICK...

During the past year, GCSRW had discussions with the district superintendent of one annual conference to address a complaint lodged by one of the clergywomen who was appointed to a local church where a clergyman had served prior to her appointment. The woman was offered a salary package which was \$10,000 less than the clergyman had received even though she had been ordained longer and had served longer in the annual conference. The rationale for offering her the lower salary was "she was single and he was the sole breadwinner for his family of three."

The Flyer Winter/Spring 1992 Vol. XII, No. 4

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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.

GCSRW officers:

Joetta Rinehart, President/Winonah McGee, Vice-President/Margie Titus, Secretary

General Secretariat:

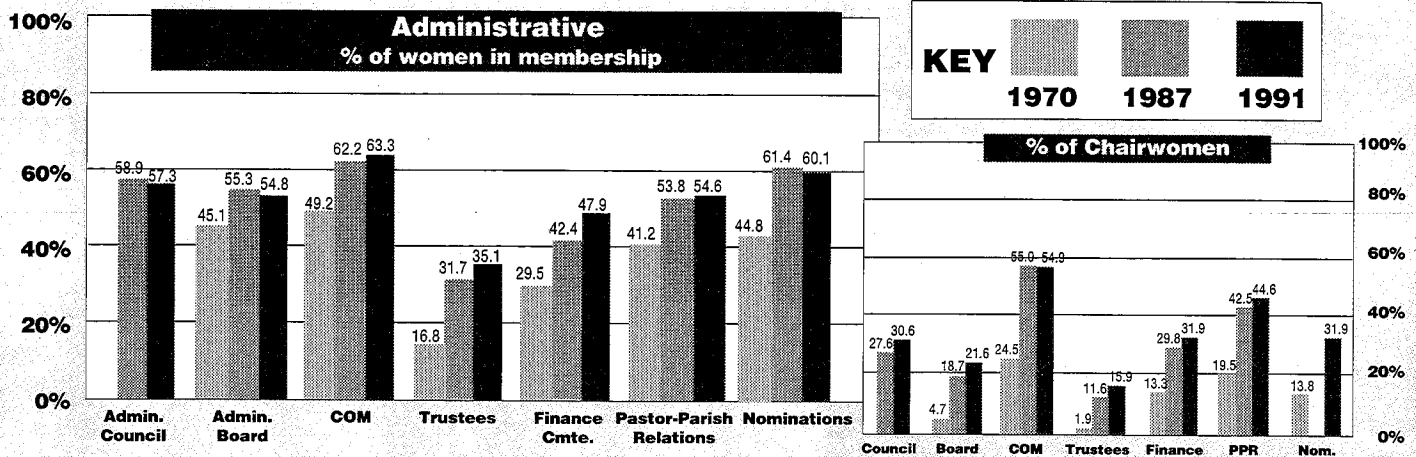
Stephanie Anna Hixon/Cecelia Long

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Participation of Women in Local Church Organizations



National Women's Caucus to speak out on women, church

The National Women's Caucus of The United Methodist Church is preparing to speak out and write about issues of women and the church at 1992 General Conference.

Since the caucus is not an agency of the church, the women who comprise it are free to speak out on issues because the group receives no funds from the official bodies of the church.

The caucus's main goal in the upcoming months is to support the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women.

The primary activity as a caucus is the publication of the newsletter, *The Yellow Ribbon*, named for the freedom represented in yellow ribbons worn by suffragettes in the nineteenth century. It is published once prior to General Conference with pre-conference

information about legislative issues and daily during General Conference.

Issues of *The Yellow Ribbon* are distributed free to all members of the General Conference. Members of the caucus also receive copies mailed from Louisville.

To become a member of the caucus, send \$20 for a regular membership to Judith Johnson Siebold, 1713 Castle Garden Road, Vestal, NY 13850. ■

GOD NOT JUST MALE . . .

Commenting on the GCSRW video, "Glancing Visions of God," one woman said, "I've never seen anything so beautiful and so well done. I am glad to see the Church finally admit that God is everywhere in the creation and not just as a male figure."

A clergyman said he had not used the different images before, but after the video he understood how much he had limited God.

Major items affect women's lives

continued from page 1

Other reports and studies

Regarding additional reports to General Conference, here are some questions we might ask: How do these items reflect the diversity of the church? How do they respond to the role and needs of women and racial ethnic minorities?

- ◆ Book of Worship
- ◆ Study of the ministry
- ◆ Healthcare plan
- ◆ Peace with justice
- ◆ Substance abuse
- ◆ Native American plan
- ◆ Hispanic plan
- ◆ Deaf ministries
- ◆ Older adult ministries

Delegate concerns

According to survey results from General Conference delegates (780 respondents or

78.2 percent) recently released by the General Council on Ministries' Office of Research, the most frequently cited issues facing General Conference included some of the items identified earlier which have an impact on women: homosexuality study/ordination; ministry study/orders; financial crises/budgets/apportionments; baptism study; and UMC organization/structure.

The most frequently cited "societal" issues facing the church were homelessness/poverty/hunger; homosexuality; abortion; drugs; and racism/race relations.

As delegates once again gather for General Conference—the United Methodist Church's unique decision-making and policy-building body—we seek God's guidance for United Methodists from this moment into the next century. ■

In memoriam

Gene Elizabeth Maxwell, retired staff member of the General Board of Global Ministries' Women's Division, died Jan. 5.

Dorothy "Glenn" Moore, 102, a long-time Methodist missionary who at the time of her death had been commissioned a deaconess in the denomination longer than any other living person, died Jan. 26 in Medford, OR.

Founded 1972

GCSRW marks 20 years of challenge and progress

This year marks the 20th birthday of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW). For all of those 20 years, the Commission has taken a leadership position in addressing emerging issues facing the church. Comments GCSRW president Joetta Rinehart, "Surely the birthing of the General Commission on the Status and

'Surely the birthing of the (GCSRW) in 1972 was one of the moving moments depicting the faith and vision of The United Methodist Church.'

Role of Women in 1972 was one of the moving moments depicting the faith and vision of The United Methodist Church."

Rinehart continues, "To try to describe the life of the Commission for the past 20 years would require untold numbers of manuscript pages, so I simply point out that the Commission has brought to light and life those unsung heroines of the past and the present whose whole lives are a living testimony of the love and graciousness of God. Women whose lives give hope to us."

As Rinehart points out, "The Commission has sensitized the church and planted seeds of justice and equality for all persons, has broken down barriers of all kinds, and has built up mutual love and understanding. GCSRW has helped women take their rightful place in leadership roles and has bound together women of diverse ethnicity, lifestyles and cultures. The Commission has brought the liberating love of Christ to our sisters of other countries, has brought freedom to our struggling brothers in the faith, and has sought to speak words that heal, not words that hurt."

"As the Commission reflects on those 20 years," reports general secretariat member Cecelia Long, "we take pride in not having been afraid to work for raising the church's awareness and providing education on challenging issues such as racism, sexism, homophobia, and sexual harassment." (See sidebar "Where we've come from...") ■

Where we've come from...

Firsts to celebrate . . .

Here are a few of the groundbreaking events for women—1972 to 1992:

Leadership

- Local church leadership: percentage of women serving as lay leaders increased from 21% in 1983 to 32% in 1991.
- Marjorie Matthews elected first woman bishop, 1980. Bishops Leontine Kelley, first Black woman bishop, and Judith Craig elected 1984. Bishops Susan Morrison and Sharon Brown Christopher elected 1988.
- First woman elected as general secretary of a general board/agency other than GCSRW: Barbara Thompson, General Commission on Race and Religion, 1985.
- Charlotte Ann Nichols named first Black woman district superintendent; Mary Oliver Brown named second Black woman district superintendent, 1990.

Catalyst

- First Clergywomen's Consultation, 1975. Now sponsored by General Board of Higher Education Support Systems and Spiritual Formation. First established in 1980 with Kathy Sage, director. Current director, Lynn Scott.
- Local church work areas on Status and Role of Women initiated by General Conference action, 1984.
- First Regional Training Event, co-sponsored with Women's Division and Women's Caucus, 1975.
- Racism-sexism Joint Task Force, co-sponsored with General Commission on Religion and Race, 1974. The group coordinated legislative activities and worked with Project Equality.
- First Native American Women's Consultation, 1987.
- First National Hispanic Women's Consultation, 1985.
- First listening events—to hear concerns of women—held in Puerto Rico, Oklahoma City, and California, 1990-1991.
- Pullout sections of *The Flyer* added to provide broad distribution of basic resources, 1989. "Violence Against Women: A Call to Respond," the pullout from Winter 1990/91, has been widely used across the church.

Advocate

- Maternity/paternity leave and clergy salary study initiated by action of General Conference, 1976.
- *Words That Hurt, Words That Heal* completed, 1983. Implemented by action of 1984 General Conference. GCSRW inclusive language study, 1980, led to GCOM task force which presented this report.
- Sexual harassment policies developed in general agencies, 1981. GCSRW served as catalyst and has continued advocacy leading to churchwide recognition of the issue. Sexual harassment study completed by General Council on Ministries, 1990.

Monitor

- Supported 1/3, 1/3, 1/3 when it was challenged in 1978. Judicial Council ruled unconstitutional to "mandate" representation, 1989. GCSRW calls for "recommended" representation, 1992.
- Local church leadership by women: chairwomen of COM increased 30.4% from 1970 to 1991. (See graph on p. 3.)

Worldwide Solidarity

- General secretariat members Kiyoo Fujii and Geneva Dalton attended a review of the U.N. Decade of Women in Nairobi, 1985.
- "Ecumenical Decade 1988-1998: Churches in Solidarity with Women"—a World Council of Churches emphasis to address the unfinished agenda from the U.N. Decade of Women calling churches to "stand together with women" locally and globally. ■



A SPECIAL LITANY: "I DREAM A WORLD"

At the September 1991 meeting of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, President Joetta Rinehart and members of the general secretariat Stephanie Anna Hixon and Cecelia Long presented the following dramatic reading as their president/staff reflections for the gathering.

The raised hands among those present—over 40 persons—in response to each question served as striking testimony to the joys and pains of women and men in the church.

This litany identifies one Speaker, but two or more persons may alternate reading the Speaker part, while the group responds as All speakers.

Speaker:

Who among us is aware that women and men are created in God's image?

All speakers:

I dream a world of women and men together or no world at all. I dream a world where men and women are recognized as full and equal members of God's human family.

Speaker:

Who among us is aware of a United Methodist who has sexually harassed or sexually abused another?

All speakers:

I dream a world in which no person will be unjustly subject to another's will.

Speaker:

Who among us comes from a local church which values the ministry of the church secretary? Church organist? Other lay staff?

How many of us come from churches that have benefit packages for lay church staff including insurance, pensions, continuing education, adequate vacation time, and flextime for family needs?

How many of us come from local congregations that have personnel policies? Those who have personnel policies, do they include a sexual harassment policy?

All speakers:

I dream a world where issues like equal pay, child care, abortion, rape and domestic violence will no longer be cast as women's issues! They will be viewed as economic issues, family issues, ethical issues, of equal resonance to men and women.

Speaker:

How many of us come from congregations or annual conferences which have female lay leaders? Female finance chairs? Female chairs of boards of trustees? Female chairs of conference council on ministries?

All speakers:

I dream a world in which women share real, not cosmetic power, where leadership in the local church is truly reflective of congregational membership; where women not only infiltrate male-dominated structures, but side by side with men begin to shape new forms of partnership.

Speaker:

How many of us come from annual conferences which have female chairs of benevolent homes, children's hospital boards, Methodist foundations? Have a female president or dean of United Methodist institutions of higher education?

All speakers:

I dream a world in which women set policies regarding healthcare for themselves and their loved ones from birth to death and are instrumental in shaping women's education.

Speaker:

Who among us comes from annual conferences where there is an ethnic woman serving as district superintendent? As conference council director?

All speakers:

I dream a world where racial ethnic minority women and men guide us in renaming, recreating, redefining European-American Protestant norms.

Speaker:

Who among us comes from local churches which value women's gifts, leadership and input? How many of us have witnessed a situation where a woman in a committee shares an idea—everyone listens politely and immediately discards the idea. Later in the same meeting, a man picks up the idea, and it becomes focus for action. How many of us have seen that?

All speakers:

I dream a world where there is interdependence and receptivity for both women's and men's ideas; where The Way is to opt for wholeness, to fully accept or integrate, to become whole persons, and out of this awareness and newness, operate in leadership roles that are mutual and just.

Speaker:

Who among us worships in a congregation where inclusive language is used in: liturgy? church publications? committee meetings?

All speakers:

I dream a world where the church balances male language with female language. Those of us who love the church and who know the power and possibility of words are given a task. That task is to communicate the gospel through language and images which share a reality of justice for all persons and point to a god beyond the boundaries of human language and imagination.

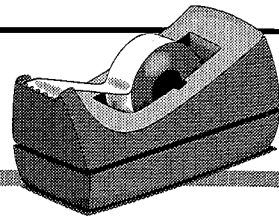
Speaker:

How many men among us are joining women in acts of reformation and recreation, working to transform old orders of relationships and systems to better serve the needs of women and men and whole communities?

All speakers:

I dream a world of churches in solidarity with women. Not a world of women for women—not a church to work for women—but for men and women to work together, to bring changes in ecclesiastical and social structures that are obstacles to women's full development and participation. We dream a world. ●

Surviving with Grace: Hints for Conference Delegates



Eleven days . . . 927 pages to read in the *Advance Daily Christian Advocate* (DCA) before arriving in Louisville . . . As many as 2,500 petitions to consider . . . Sessions stretching from morning 'til early morning.

All this and more awaits delegates to General Conference. To help those who look forward to their first encounter of the General Conference kind, the following hints may ease preparation and save conference turmoil.

Tools for organizing

File folders: Prepare one for each major subject, more divided into categories for voluminous subjects.

Notebook: Find one *large* notebook with *many* tab sections for subjects and sub-themes, especially for your particular legislative committee.

Book of Discipline: Tab the sections in the *Discipline*, especially the paragraphs with which your legislative committee is working.

Ideas for organizing

Categories: Consider separate files for

- names and information about General Conference delegates
- rules of order and procedures
- eleven legislative committees: issues and/or resolutions
- correspondence
- copies of petitions sent to you



General tips:

- Keep files up-to-date. Early information may be revised or changed completely as various boards and agencies take final actions.
- Give priority to reading material for your assigned legislative committee.
- Talk with members of your delegation or other persons whom you know about issues and subjects which will be assigned to their legislative committees.
- Cross file. Make copies of some items for cross filing. Example: Correspondence in one file; copy in file related to the subject matter under which it is to be filed.

Survival gear

Remember the first time you went to summer church camp and the list of items to bring? Well, things haven't changed that much, except maybe age and endurance. Here's a list of both handy and necessary items.

Rain gear: Count on at least one day of precipitation.

Portable toiletries: No, you can't always go home after lunch to brush your teeth! So consider—tissue, safety pins, headache remedy, bandages, nail file, alcohol pads, collapsible cup, toothbrush and paste, small pair of scissors.

Snack food: You may forget that a mid-day meal has existed in your former life.

Office supplies: You need all the help you can get to manage the preponderance of paper: paper clips, rubber bands, pencils, pens, markers, self-stick note pad, note paper, envelopes.

Comfort aids: You may need some help traveling distances and sitting for 16 hours on a straight chair: pillow, luggage carrier, comfortable shoes, camp stool to rest your feet.

A smile, a sense of humor, and the grace of God! ■

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Applications available for Hoover award

The Women's Division, General Board of Global Ministries, announces the beginning of the application process for the Theresa Hoover Community Service and Global Citizen Award for 1993.

This award honors Theresa Hoover for her service to the Women's Division and the ecumenical world. Hoover was a staff member of the Division from 1948-1990, and for 22 years was its chief staff officer.

The award will be given annually to a young woman (age 21-35) without regard to race or nationality, who has demonstrated concern for her neighbors and community; shown that concern in service to her commu-

nity; and exhibits an awareness of the total nature of our responsibilities in today's world.

The projected amount of the award for 1993 is \$8,000 to \$10,000 to be used as a grant for informal study, exploration, learning, research or observation in a subject area of the recipient's choosing in harmony with the current interests of the Women's Division. It is for travel to a country or region other than where the recipient resides.

All applications must be postmarked no later than August 1, 1992. Applications are available from GCSRW and the Women's Division General Administration, Hoover Award, Room 1504, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115.

Nominations sought for Circuit Rider Award

The General Board of Publications is now accepting nominations for the Circuit Rider Award, which recognizes an individual(s) who has made a highly significant contribution to membership and attendance growth in a United Methodist Church and/or Sunday school in the U.S. and Puerto Rico.

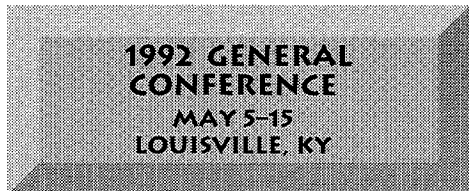
Nomination letters must be postmarked no later than June 30, 1992, to be eligible for the 1992 award. To request a nomination form and further details, contact Circuit Rider Award, ATTN: Dr. Walter H. McKelvey, P.O. Box 801, Nashville, TN 37202. (615) 749-6327. ■

Resources

This listing of resources contains recent publications of general interest on issues important to women.

The Abuse of Power: A Theological Problem, James Newton Poling (Abingdon, 1991). Weaving case stories with theory, Poling demonstrates that sexual abuse of children is not a private matter, but very much a matter for society and church—a question of structure and ideology, not just of individual character. \$15.95.

Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women, Susan Faludi (Crown, 1991). This Pulitzer Prize-winning author uncovers a growing backlash against women that has worked on two levels: convincing women that their feelings of dissatisfaction are the result of too much feminism and independence, while simultaneously undermining the minimal progress that women have made at work, in politics, and in their own minds. \$24.00.



DID YOU KNOW . . .

A total of 998 delegates were elected to the 1992 General Conference: 882 from the conferences in the US and Puerto Rico; 108 from the central conferences (Africa, Europe, and the Philippines); and 8 from other autonomous Methodist churches in Great Britain, the Caribbean and the Americas, and Mexico. Here are a few statistics on the representation of women:

- 15 of 72 annual conference delegations (US and PR) will be headed by women.
- Western New York's lay delegation is comprised entirely of women.
- Oregon-Idaho Conference elected Carol Colley, a Native American, to head its delegation (believed to be a first).
- Women make up 34.4 percent (303) of the total US and Puerto Rico delegation, an increase from 33.5 percent in 1988.
- Women make up 30.3 percent of the total 998 General Conference delegation, including the central conferences and autonomous Methodist churches.
- Women lay delegates account for 50.3 percent or 222 women in 1992, a decrease from 52 percent in 1988.
- Women clergy delegates account for 18.4 percent or 81 women, an increase from 15.1 percent in 1988 and 8.9 percent in 1984. ■

The Black Women's Health Book: Speaking for Ourselves, Evelyn C. White, ed. (Seal Press). This anthology, now in its third printing, is the first book to address the topic of Black women's health, written by and for Black women. \$14.95.

Resource for Ecumenical Decade

Dios tambien en la Decade Ecumenica. Recursos para la participacion en la Decade Ecumenica. National Ministries, Literature Resources Dept., P.O. Box 851, Valley Forge, PA 19482-0851. Paper, \$5.50.

The Dictionary of Bias-Free Usage: A Guide to Nondiscriminatory Language, Rosalie Maggio (Oryx Press, 1991). Along with 5,000 entries, the book contains helpful writing guidelines for recognizing sexist and non-inclusive language.

Talking Back to Sexual Pressure, Elizabeth Powell (CompCare Publishers, 1991). This book offers creative ways to cope verbally with uncomfortable and harmful sexual encounters. Paper \$9.95.

This River of Courage: Generations of Women's Resistance and Action, Pam McAllister (New Society Publishers, 1992). These stories—ancient and new, foreign and familiar—celebrate the truths of women's lives and the wondrous courage and diversity of women who have experimented with the power of nonviolent action. Cloth \$39.95; paper \$14.95.

Women in the Wesleyan and United Methodist Traditions: A Bibliography. Ed. Susan M. Eltscher (The General Commission on Archives and History, The United Methodist Church, 1992). This bibliography reflects the rich variety of women's work in the church. The primary focus is the UMC and its predecessors. Also included are titles from the British tradition, particularly from the time of the Wesleyan revival. Copies may be ordered from GCAH, P.O. Box 127, Madison, NJ 07940. (201) 822-2787. FAX (201) 408-3909. \$5.00 plus postage.

The Women's Bible Commentary. Ed. Carol A. Newsom and Sharon H. Ringe (Westminster/John Knox, 1992). Commentary gathers the work of many outstanding women scholars, who offer a general introduction for each book of the Bible and articles on related topics. \$19.95. ■

Is there life outside legislative sessions?

While most General Conference delegates probably find only occasional respite from hectic legislative sessions, the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW) is sponsoring some events and resources that offer a change of pace.

■ **Daily Devotional:** Delegates, look for your copy of this booklet, available to you as a resource for spiritual renewal during General Conference.

■ **Orientation for Women Delegates:** On Tuesday, May 5, GCSRW and the Women's Division are sponsoring this orientation to help participants develop delegate skills and to receive a briefing on major issues before 1992 General Conference.

Time: 7:30 am continental breakfast

8:20 am singing/worship begins

Place: The Archibald Room, Galt House West

Theme: Living Out a Vision of an Inclusive Church

■ **Sunday, May 10 Worship:** GCSRW is leading the General Conference worship service at 10:00 am in the Cochran Room, Galt House West. ■

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The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women
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Evanston, IL 60201

Status Report

Anglicans consider ordination of women

Leaders of the Church of England have said that legislation will likely be approved which will permit women to become priests. The church's General Synod, its highest decision-making body, is scheduled to vote in November on legislation that would conclude a three-year process and end the church's exclusion of women from the priesthood.

Traditionalists are strongly opposed to women priests, and observers say the move could split the church. An attempt to mediate the dispute has drawn criticism from both sides.

The alternative legislation proposes two amendments calling for appointing auxiliary bishops who would minister to priests who disagree with their designated bishops on the issue of women's ordination, and for removing a provision that would bar priests opposed to women's ordination from serving as bishops. Opponents of the plan view it as a stalling tactic. If accepted, the amended legislation would have to be sent back to the church's 44 dioceses where the slow machinery of church polity would be set in motion again, perhaps delaying a final decision for years.

Meanwhile, plans by a bishop in the Anglican Church of Australia to ordain the church's first female priests were recently brought to a halt by a civil court.

—*The Christian Century*, Feb. 19, 1992

Coalition campaigns for national healthcare

A coalition of religious groups announced plans recently to begin a campaign aimed at

assuring a full range of healthcare services to every person living in the United States. Among the prominent Protestant and Jewish leaders who have thrown their support behind the campaign are Bishop Leontine T. C. Kelley of The United Methodist Church.

Legislation that requires "universal access" to healthcare benefits and "systematic reform" of health services are the goals of the campaign, which supporters say has the backing of 15 Protestant and Jewish organizations.

The coalition, called the "Interreligious Health Care Access Campaign," has limited its statement to broad principles, leaving practical application to legislators.

The campaign's three-page list of principles calls for broad access to healthcare regardless of a user's "race, income, gender, geography, age, disability, health status, sexual orientation, religion, country of origin or legal status."

—*The National Christian Reporter*, Jan. 17, 1992

Ethnic history volumes published

The first three of four volumes devoted to the historical relationships of racial and ethnic groups to the United Methodist Church in the United States has been released, and the fourth is due before the end of the year.

The work is a cooperative effort between the denomination's Commission on Archives and History and the United Methodist Publishing House. The volume devoted to Hispanic Americans is available in English and Spanish, the other is in English.

—*Methodists Make News*, Nov. 15, 1991

UM Women tell of harassment

Stories of harassment in both the church and the secular world were heard during the annual meeting of Women's Division of the United Methodist Church's Board of Global Ministries Oct. 16-19.

One woman said 50 years passed before she could finally talk about how a pastor had made sexual advances toward her. Another recounted how she had been sexually harassed by her supervisor when she had worked in a handbag factory 25 years earlier.

On Oct. 10, the Women's Division's section of Christian social relations sent a letter of support to Anita Hill as she began her widely televised testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee.

—*Methodists Make News*, Oct. 25, 1991

Planning begins for hymnal in Spanish

A new hymnal for Spanish-speaking United Methodist congregations is projected for release in the autumn of 1995, a planning committee agreed at its Sept. 9-10 meeting.

The volume will include traditional and contemporary texts and tunes and other worship resources. Bishop Elias Galvan, Phoenix, AZ, is chairperson of the 12-member committee.

—*Methodists Make News*, Sept. 20, 1991



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