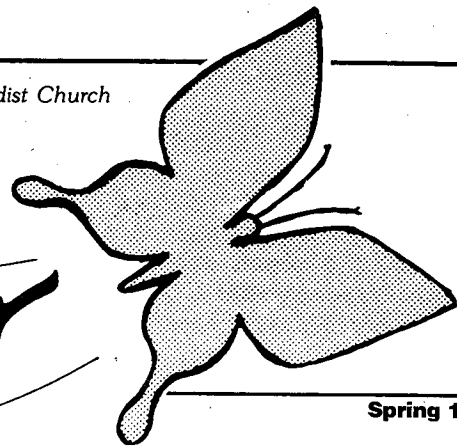


The Flyer

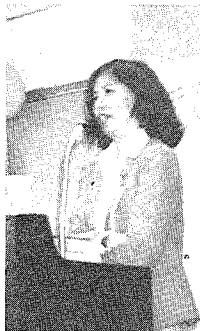


Vol XII, No. 1

Spring 1991

Native American women, Oklahoma meeting focus

St. Francis de Sales Archdiocesan Pastoral Center in Oklahoma City was the site of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW) meeting on Feb. 21-24. The meeting provided a time for continuing important dialogue with Native American women through a listening event and a time for celebrating the ministry of two retiring members of the general secretariat, Nancy Grissom Self and Kiyoko Kasai Fujii. [See article below.]



Keynote speaker was Becky Thompson of Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference.

In the opening plenary, Becky Thompson, member of Creek tribe, diaconal minister, and director of the Conference Council on Ministries of Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference delivered the keynote address

focusing on the role of Native American women in the church.

On Friday evening, Commission members were served a Native American meal and invited to participate in a revival held at the Nagawee United Methodist Church in Shawnee, OK. The service included special music in several native languages, including sign as well as English.

Women from the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference and the Oklahoma Annual Conference participated in the listening event on Saturday.

The session began with a panel presentation by Ruth Harris Jacob, Choctaw and local pastor from the Southeast District; Anita Phillips, Cherokee and social worker from Hulbert and newly elected member of GCSRW; and Betty Brown, Kickapoo,

from Kansas East Annual Conference.

Among items of business, Commission members elected three persons to fill vacancies on the GCSRW: Elaine Jefferson, Southern New Jersey; Gary Long, Desert Southwest; and Anita Phillips, Oklahoma Indian Missionary.

The Legislative Committee, chaired by Marcus Dickson, led the Commission in the consideration of legislation for General Conference 1992.

The Commission, responding to recommendations from the Personnel Committee, agreed to a model of a two-member general secretariat, effective July 1 after the retirement of Self and Fujii. The Personnel Committee appointed a search subcommittee to fill the position: Winonah McGee, chairperson of the subcommittee, Sam NeSmith, Randy Day, Joetta Rinehart, and Naomi Southard, chairperson of the Personnel Committee. ■

GCSRW celebrates Self, Fujii ministries

A high point of the Oklahoma City meeting of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women was the celebration of the ministry of retiring members of the general secretariat Nancy Grissom Self and Kiyoko Kasai Fujii. In her featured presentation Bishop Leontine Kelly called them "two prophetic voices, two women of wis-

dom, God-given, it seems, to create, nurture and impact the church through the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women."

Kelly continued, "Nan and Kiyo have enabled the church to minister to and through many men and women who witness to the wholeness and the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all persons. They have given a large portion of their lives facilitating, informing, and encouraging the presence of women at



GCSRW celebrates the ministry of Nancy Grissom Self and Kiyoko Kasai Fujii: from left, Bishop Dan Solomon, Self, Bishop Leontine Kelly, Fujii, and Bishop Robert Spain.

every level of the church so that new perceptions of God's love and mercy, new understanding of God's forgiveness, new linguistics of God's love, and new images of God would

continued on page 2

In this issue...

- **Pullout:** Preparing for General Conference 1992
- **Spanish feature:** Guidelines for Preparing General Conference Petitions
- **And more....** in regular *Flyer* features

Ovations

To **Zelle W. Andrews**, who has been appointed national coordinator of the Religious Network for Equality for Women, an interreligious coalition of over 40 Protestant, Catholic, Jewish and other faith groups committed to legal and economic justice for women.

To **Rose Arroyo**, a laywoman from Chicago, who was named chair of MARCHA, the United Methodist Hispanic caucus.

To **Elizabeth Beams**, a religious broadcaster in Omaha, NE, who received the United Methodist Association of Communicators (UMAC) Communicator of the Year Award for 1990. Among recipients of top awards in the annual UMAC competition for best work were **Ann G. Whiting**, Boston, editor of *Zion's Herald*;

Judy Smith and **Terri Hiers**, Board of Higher Education and Ministry; **Carol Marie Herb**, Board of Global Ministries; and **Cynthia Astle**, United Methodist Reporter.

To **Vidette K. Bullock**, who has been named director of the United Methodist General Board of Pensions' department of corporate relations and social concerns.

To **Susan Henry-Crowe**, director of the South Carolina Annual Conference Council on Ministries, who has been named chaplain of Emory University in Atlanta, effective June 19.

To **Lynn Strother Hinkle**, Hendersonville, TN, a staff member of the UM Board of Higher Education and Ministry, who has joined the staff of the National Youth Ministry Organization (NYMO) as project director.

To **Peggy A. Johnson**, pastor of Christ United Methodist Church of the Deaf in Baltimore, who has received the 1990 Circuit Rider Award from the General Board of Publication for contributions to local church growth.

To **Norma Kehrberg**, chief staff executive of the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) since 1983, who has become a senior consultant for the United Mission to Nepal, an organization of 35 churches and agencies.

To **Mary E. McNamara**, a Presbyterian clergy, who has been named new executive director of The Interfaith Center in New York, an ecumenical center that provides office space for 80 agencies, including the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries, General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns, and the Public Media Division of United Methodist Communications.

To **Connie R. Metzger**, director of communications for the Peninsula Annual Conference, who for the second consecutive year has been honored by the Maryland-Delaware-D.C. Press Association. She received a second-place award in the news release category.

In memoriam

June B. Ammons, 62, wife of United Methodist Bishop Edsel A. Ammons of Columbus, OH, died Dec. 17 in Columbus of cancer. In addition to her husband, survivors include six children and two grandchildren.

To **Nellie Moser**, executive editor of United Methodist church school resources for adults, who has been named editorial director and editor for the Disciple Bible study program of the Board of Dis-

cipleship. And to **Sharilyn Adair**, manager of staff training for church school publications, who has been named executive editor for children's publications.

To **Rose Thomason**, former member of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women and co-founder of the United Methodist Women's Caucus, who has been awarded Reading Teacher of the Year for Virginia and Greater Washington Reading Teacher of the Year.

To **Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann**, prize-winning editor of the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan newspaper, *The Record*, who has been named new editor of *The Witness* magazine, a publication of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company.

To **Marilyn Whaley Winters**, a management consultant and former director of the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries, who has been named interim deputy general secretary for the board's National Division.

To **Yolanda Yong de Vivas**, who has been elected as the first woman president of the United Methodist Church of Ecuador. Women also form the majority of the church's executive committee. ■

Ministry

continued from page 1

pervade the narrow limitations of our comfortable life in the church of Jesus Christ.

"They have discomfited us. We have no right to comfort in the kind of world in which any human beings are abused."

As Kelly emphasized, "Nan and Kiyoko, no history of United Methodism in America and beyond this country can be complete without your contribution. May our individual commitment be to keep the Commission alive and vital in the church. That is going to take some hard work and clear interpretation and strong theology."

The celebration included testimonies from numerous persons currently and previously associated with the Commission.

Self, a member of the Women's Caucus that developed the idea for the Commission, was selected in the first general secretariat in 1973, and has served since that time as a member of the general secretariat.

Fujiu became a member of the general secretariat in 1977. ■

The Flyer

Spring 1991
Vol. XII, No. 1

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 72 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 \$5.

Editor: Bonny Stainaker 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:

Kiyoko Kasai-Fujiu * Cecelia Long * Nancy Grissom Self

GCSRW, 1200 Davis St., Evanston, IL 60201 (708) 869-7330

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

Resources

This listing of resources contains recent publications of general interest.

A Dictionary for United Methodists, Alan K. Waltz (Abingdon Press, 1991). Includes definitions of almost 500 common organizational and worship terms used in The United Methodist Church. Terms are arranged alphabetically into categories of worship, structure and polity, basic theology, and some important proper names of people and places. \$9.95.

In God's Image: Archetypes of Women in Scripture, Craig Ballard Millet (LuraMedia, 1991). Through seven empowering archetypes, this book helps women identify their gifts and explore how they reflect the feminine attributes of the Deity. End of each chapter includes questions for reflection. Pb. \$10.50.

Inner Healing for Broken Vessels: Seven Steps to Mending Childhood Wounds, Linda H. Hollies (Welstar Publications, 1990). A pastoral approach to guiding the Christian woman—whose abusive childhood has caused her to live in painful, shattered adult relationships—through the healing process toward self acceptance.

Loving Yourself as Your Neighbor, Mark Lloyd Taylor and Carmen Renee Berry, (Harper & Row, 1990). The subtitle—a recovery guide for Christians escaping burnout and codependency—captures the essence of these case studies of unhealthy situations that responsible Christians may face in a church community. The book moves through a discussion of the cycle of burnout into an examination of the spiral of service. \$12.95.

Meditations for Women Who Do Too Much, Anne Wilson Schaefer (Harper & Row, 1990). Daily meditations to help women break the cycle of doing too much—for workaholics, rushaholics, and careaholics. Pb. \$8.95.

We Weep for Ourselves and Our Children: A Christian Guide for Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse, Joanne Ross Feldmeth and Midge Wallace Finley (HarperSan Francisco, 1990). Case studies of seven women who have achieved full recovery from childhood sexual abuse and have developed successful adult relationships. Pb. \$8.95. ■

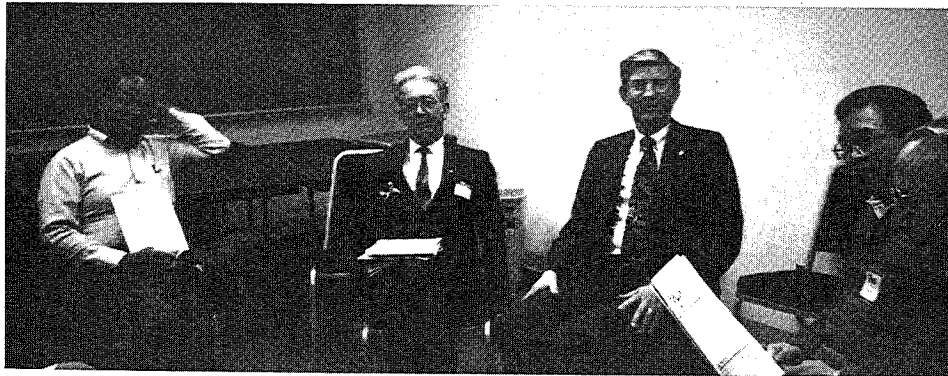
Stephanie Hixon named to GCSRW general secretariat

Stephanie Hixon, co-pastor of First United Methodist Church in Lewiston, PA, was elected to the general secretariat of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women by the General Council on Ministries on April 23. Effective July 1, Hixon will join Cecelia M. Long, who has served as a secretariat member since 1989.



Hixon

Hixon has previously served as pastor of Quincy UMC in Quincy, PA; as interim supply pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church, Harpers Ferry, WVA; and in several church and public school music positions. She holds a master of divinity degree from Gettysburg (PA) Lutheran Seminary and bachelor of music therapy and music education degrees from UM-related Shenandoah (VA) College and Conservatory of Music. ■



GCSRW holds first male discussion group as part of the listening event at the Oklahoma City Commission meeting. Participants include, from left, commission member Sam NeSmith, Bishop Robert Spain, Bishop Dan Solomon, and commission member Aquilino Javier.

More on violence against women—Connexions, an international women's quarterly. Issue No. 34, 1990, focuses on the theme "Defy Violence," with articles from women in numerous countries around the world. Back issues available for \$3.50 plus postage. Individual subscriptions are \$15. Connexions, 4228 Telegraph Avenue, Oakland, CA 94609. (415) 654-6725. ■

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 that you continue to receive **The Flyer** for one more year.

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1200 Davis, Evanston, IL 60201

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Phone _____

Annual Conference (if United Methodist) _____

Status Report

Only GC can mandate language about God

Authority to mandate language about God used in worship rests with General Conference, according to a Judicial Council ruling in October.

The committee developing a new United Methodist book of worship had asked the UM high court to rule on possible conflicts among five 1988 General Conference resolutions directing the panel on language about God in worship. Four resolutions support use of the traditional "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." The fifth rejects "all efforts to legislate specific addresses to God in UM worship and liturgy."

The nine-member council said it was unable to "determine the intent of the General Conference" in the petitions, reports UM News Service. "The General Conference is the only body which has final authority to decide the language of the Book of Worship," the panel said.

—*Newscope*, Nov. 2, 1990.

NCC calls churches to address family violence

Family violence is a sin that requires action of Christian churches. That position was affirmed in a new policy statement approved by the National Council of Churches (NCC).

The "Policy Statement on Family Violence and Abuse" reviews the social, legal, psychological, and pastoral contexts of domestic violence. It offers a scriptural basis for confronting the problem. The statement can

be used as an educational tool on family violence and abuse.

"Our churches have healed the wound lightly, saying 'peace, peace' in families where there is no peace," said Marie Fortune, a member of NCC's Commission on Family Ministries and Human Sexuality. Board members struggled with the plight of "adult female victims" who believe Christian marriage means "til death do us part" and suffer "a severe crisis of faith." The policy acknowledges that pastors compound the problem by counseling them to "turn to God in prayer" to remain in abusive situations or "accept the circumstances as part of God's will."

—*Newscope*, Nov. 23, 1990.

NCCC adopts equal pay for work of equal value policy

In the hope that the religious community can help lead the way to pay equity by its own example, the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. unanimously adopted a policy statement entitled "Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value" at its May 17, 1990, Governing Board meeting.

In part, the policy states:

...in light of the NCCC's steadfast record of advocating justice, the Governing Board ... endorses the principle of a wage policy requiring equal pay within an employer's wage structure for job classifications which, while different, are valued equally (a policy known variously as pay equity, comparable worth, or equal pay for work of equal value) and commits the NCCC to monitor relevant federal public policy development and to advocate policy that will lead to adoption of

pay equity as a national standard.

In the definition of equal pay for work of equal value and the historical background outlined in the policy, both sex- and race-based wage discrimination are included. The policy states:

Because of racism, racial/ethnic persons have ... [found] themselves paid less and clustered in work positions at the bottom rung of the career ladder. One legacy of slavery and colonialism is that work done by racial/ethnic people has been devalued. Employment positions decline in status if they are perceived to be minority-dominated.

—*National Committee on Pay Equity Newsnotes*, Oct. 1990. ■

Options for Action

The West Ohio AC/CSRW presented Images '90, a worship service and workshops to create positive images for God's people as we enter the 1990s.

Carolyn Bohler, United Theological Seminary, presented a keynote address, "Vital Images of and for Dynamic Women."

Workshops included "When You Need to Speak Up," Carolyn Bohler; "Men, Women, and Children, Together," Dolores Stoesz; "Dramatization, A Form of Worship," Carol Schunk; and "What Did You Call Me?," Don Williams.

For more information, contact Florence S. Woods, West Ohio Conference, 471 E. Broad Street, Columbus, OH 43215. (614) 228-6784. ■



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



General Conference 1992

Preparing for General Conference 1992

Now that the countdown has begun for General Conference 1992, activity surrounding General Conference is increasing at all levels throughout The United Methodist Church. When delegates gather in Louisville, KY, on May 5-15, 1992, their presence for this quadrennial happening will represent the equivalent of days and weeks of preparation by each individual, annual conference, and agency.

Legislative committees are reviewing and revising the disciplinary paragraphs to make them more relevant to our contemporary mission and ministry in a hungry and hurting

world and more faithful to the gospel. Resolutions (actions by the General Conference which are not legislated by *The Book of Discipline 1988*) are being discussed informally in hallways and caucuses and deliberated in official bodies. Speculation about potential candidates for the episcopacy has begun.

This pullout offers an overview of the process of General Conference (although some information applies to Annual Conferences which have already been held) and suggestions for ways in which Annual Conference Commissions on the Status and Role of Women (AC/CSRWs) may prepare for General Conference.

Anticipating 1991, 1992

Outline of dates and events

Annual Conference 1991

Delegates to the 1992 General and Jurisdictional Conferences will be elected. Delegates and alternates will meet several times between their election and the General Conference to be oriented to the processes of General Conference, to discuss issues, and in some conferences to hold hearings in the conference among those concerned about special issues. AC/CSRWs may want to plan stages of action, as outlined in the accompanying list "Actions for AC/CSRWs before and during General Conference."

Deadline for petitions

March 6, 1992

(See related article "Preparing Petitions for General Conference" for further details.)

General Conference 1992

May 5-15, 1992, Louisville, KY

Annual Conference 1992

Persons will be nominated for election by the Jurisdictional Conferences to serve for four years on general boards and agencies (in accordance with Paragraph 805 of the *The Book of Discipline 1988*.)

Episcopal candidates will be endorsed by annual conferences for consideration in their jurisdiction. At the present

writing the following vacancies will be filled: North Central, 2; Northeastern, 1; South Central, 6; Southeastern, 3; and Western, 1.

Jurisdictional Conferences 1992

Bishops are elected, general board and agency members are elected, and other jurisdictional business is carried forward for the following four years.

Late summer 1992

Shortly after the Jurisdictional Conferences, nominating committees for each general agency will meet to nominate additional members as designated in the respective disciplinary paragraphs. The nominating committee for each agency is made up of three members from each jurisdiction elected to serve. General provisions are discussed in Paragraph 806.

Fall 1992

Agencies at both the general and annual conference levels will be holding organizing meetings to elect officers and set agenda for the quadrennium.

Late 1992/Early 1993

A series of Joint Training Events will be held to train newly elected annual conference leadership.

Preparing Petitions for General Conference



An important process for influencing General Conference action gets underway this year: preparation of petitions. Petitions provide a means for groups throughout the church to suggest action to be taken by the 1992 General Conference. Here's how the process works.

Legislative committees may divide into subcommittees to read and consider each petition on a particular topic or

issue. They may recommend acceptance, amendment, or rejection of each. This is no small task considering that 2,661 were sent to the 1988 General Conference.

Legislative committees then vote concurrence or non-concurrence on the recommendations and report their actions to the full General Conference. The plenary session eventually votes on the committees' recommendations.

Here are instructions and guidelines:

1. "Each petition must address only one paragraph of the Discipline or, if the Discipline is not affected, one issue." (Para. 608.2)
2. Be succinct; say what is necessary in as few words as possible.
3. Check petitions for accuracy in spelling, terminology and punctuation.
4. Petitions must be typed, double-spaced.
5. For disciplinary material, indicate proposed *addition* by double underlining and proposed *deletion* by single underlining.
6. The same petition sent in quantity is wasted effort and money. Only the first received will be processed, although all will be recorded and kept on file.
7. "Each petition approved by a Conference must be signed: by the secretary and/or president/bishop." (Para. 608.3)
8. Three copies of each petition are to be sent to the petitions Secretary. (Para. 608.1)
9. "All petitions submitted to the General Conference, except

those submitted by individual members of The United Methodist Church and local church groups, which call for the establishment of new programs or the expansion of existing programs will be invalid unless accompanied by supporting data which addresses the issue of anticipated financial requirements of the program." (Para. 608.4)

10. "Petitions must be postmarked by a national postal service no later than 60 days prior to the opening session of the General Conference." (Para. 608.5) This date is **March 6, 1992**.
11. "If petitions are transmitted by a means other than a national postal service, they must be in the hands of the petitions secretary no later than 45 days prior to the opening session of the General Conference." (Para. 608.6) This date is **March 21, 1992**.
12. Sept. 1, 1991, is the deadline for receipt of Annual Conference petitions in order for them to be printed in the *Advance Daily Christian Advocate*.
13. Petitions Secretary is Ms. Odell Thompson, 1740 Sixth Street, Beloit, WI 53511. (608) 362-8444.

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Estas son las direcciones

1. Cada petición debe pertenecer a solo un párrafo de la *Disciplina* o, si la *Disciplina* no está afectada, entonces solamente una petición. (608.2)
2. Sea sucinto; diga solamente lo que es necesario en resumen.
3. Fijense que en la exactitud del deletreo, terminología, y la puntuación.
4. Es necesario que las peticiones están escrito por maquina con doble espacio.
5. Para material Disciplinario, es necesario subrayar doble veces, lo añadido y, subrayar solo una vez lo que quiere suprimir.
6. Endie la petición solo una vez. La primera recibida será la que se procesa; aunque todas las peticiones recibidas seran documentadas como recibidas y estarán archivados.
7. Cada petición aprobada por la conferencia tiene que ser firmado por: el/la secretaria y/o el presidente/obispo. (608.3)
8. Tres copias de la petición son necesarias y se deben enviar al secretario/a de peticiones. (608.1)
9. Todos las peticiones que se someten a la Conferencia General, excepto las enviadas por miembros individuales de La

Iglesia Metodista Unida y grupos de la iglesia local, que piden el establecimiento de nuevos programas o la expansión de los programas ya existentes, serán inválidas a menos que vayan acompañadas por información de respaldo que trata directamente acerca de los requisitos financieros anticipador del programa. (608.4)

10. Las peticiones deben estar mercadas por el matasellos de un servicio postal nacional a mas tardar sesenta (60) días antes de la sesión de apertura de la Conferencia General. (608.5) Esta fecha es 6 de marzo, 1992.
11. Si las peticiones son transmitidas por un medio diferente del servicio postal nacional, deben estar en manos del secretario de peticiones a menos tardar cuarenta y cinco (45) días antes de la sesión de apertura de la Conferencia General. (608.6) Esta fecha es 21 de marzo, 1992.
12. La fecha tope, 1 de septiembre, 1991, es cuando se reciben las peticiones para que sean imprente en el *Advance Daily Christian Advocate*.
13. La Secretaria de Peticiones es Ms. Odell Thompson, 1740 Sixth Street, Beloit, WI 53511. (608) 362-8444.■

Actions for AC/CSRWs before and during General Conference

■ Interview representatives from your Annual Conference on the General Boards: The General Council on Ministries (GCOM), Global Ministries (GBGM), Church and Society (GBCS), Discipleship (GBOD), and Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM). Each agency and many of the sub-units are chaired by bishops. Include your bishop in your interviews regarding the agency on which she or he serves.

When your conference has representatives on the General Commissions, interview them as well: United Methodist Communications (UMCom), Religion and Race (GCORR), Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns (GCCUIC), Status and Role of Women (GCSRW), Archives and History (GCOAH), General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA), General Board of Pensions (GBOP), and Board of Publications (UMPH).

In individual or group interviews, the AC/CSRW may discern the agenda of the agency in order to recommend appropriate candidates for membership in 1992. AC/CSRW may also inquire about how women's concerns are addressed within the agencies.

■ As an AC/CSRW, discuss criteria for a representative and inclusive delegation to General/Jurisdictional Conferences, general board/agency membership, Annual Conference boards/agencies, and episcopal candidates. Consider publishing and circulating your criteria for purposes of consciousness-raising.

■ Know your own Annual Conference rules and process regarding nominations both for delegate election and agency membership. Many variations are practiced within the disciplinary provisions.

■ Consider individual(s) to be supported. Explore with them their interest and availability, as well as their commitment to and knowledge of women's concerns.

■ Help give visibility to lay and clergy women in the life of the conference, both during the sessions and during the coming

year. It is important for candidates supported by AC/CSRW to have opportunities for name recognition and public visibility through participation in worship, floor debate, special presentations, or other conference events. If candidates have similar names, help clarify who you are supporting.

■ Work with AC/CORR and the ethnic caucuses to ensure that racial/ethnic minority women will be among those given prominence.

■ Work collaboratively with United Methodist Women on common strategies for women's concerns and action.

■ Listen carefully to floor debate and to hall talk to gain a sense of the mood and mind of the conference. Dispatch AC/CSRW members and friends to briefings or special issue events to listen and later share together what is happening and who is helping it to happen.

■ Get to know the frontrunner candidates for the General and Jurisdictional Conference delegation. Keep them informed of your AC/CSRW concerns. The delegation is given authority by *The Discipline* (Para. 805.1-4) to serve as a nominating committee to name the members to the jurisdictional pool to be approved by the 1992 Annual Conference sessions. The nominating committees of the jurisdictional conferences slate the general agency members from the jurisdictional pool. Nominations from the floor are provided to ensure inclusiveness. AC/CSRWs need to be prepared to advocate and to monitor that inclusiveness and to call it to the attention of the conference when appropriate.

■ Reread the Options for Action column and Pullouts in past issues of *The Flyer* for examples of AC/CSRW involvements in the AC sessions.

■ Set aside and publicize a place for support, conversations and clarifications during the sessions to empower each other. ■

Preparing Petitions for General Conference

continued from page 2

Here are some essentials of effective petition preparation:

1. Include in your petition who is directed to take action, e.g. agency, bishop, structure, etc.
2. If a committee or task force is to be established, delineate its composition, thus insuring inclusiveness of people affected and representation of the church's membership.
3. Identify who is to appoint the committee.
4. Establish a timeline for beginning the work.
5. Prescribe who will receive the report of the work done, e.g. annual conference.
6. Provide interim accountability time lines for accomplishment.
7. Specify funding adequate for the task with sources, if at all possible, from which the funding should come.

Include essential *whereas* statement to give the context for the petition, but don't get carried away lest the decision makers lose interest before they get to the critical factors of "Therefore be it resolved..." It is important to state the case with as many specifics as possible. If it needs to be amended to a more generalized statement be wary, but strategic in accepting high-sounding phrases without implementation provisions. ■



Questions for Episcopal Candidates

To help ensure that women's concerns are taken seriously at the episcopal level, The United Methodist Church must elect women and men who are sensitive to and supportive of such concerns.

Members of Annual Conference Commissions on the Status and Role of Women (AC/CSRWs) have an important part to play as advocates, catalysts and monitors on behalf of women. Jurisdictional delegates need to know that their constituents have concern for women's issues and want bishops elected who understand those concerns.

One way to further these concerns is to interview episcopal candidates and to be in dialogue with them on critical church issues. Since conferences are permitted to rank their episcopal preferences, AC/CSRWs should also interview bishops being rotated into a new conference.

GCSRW suggests the following questions as a beginning guide for interviewing episcopal candidates:

1. How would you describe the linkages between sexism and racism? The uniquenesses of each?
2. How do you see the church most effectively working to eliminate racism? To eliminate sexism?
3. What actions would you, if elected bishop, take to eliminate racism/sexism?
4. Which social issues have you most strongly addressed in your ministry? during 1989-1992?
5. What particular roles do you see women taking in the areas of social justice? in decision making?
6. What does evangelism mean to you?
7. What linkage do you see between social action and evangelism?
8. Do you believe that guaranteed representation has been helpful? Why or why not? (e.g., one clergywoman from each jurisdiction on each program board; the 1/3, 1/3, 1/3; one member from each Annual Conference on each program board.)
9. What are your attitudes toward the appointment of clergy couples?
10. Do you believe that co-pastorates are a viable option? Why or why not?
11. What priority would you give to the appointment of women as district superintendents and/or conference council directors?
12. What exposure have you had to the secular women's movement? In what ways do you see its having influenced the church?
13. How would you describe the women's movement within the church? How aware are you of its presence ecumenically and in The United Methodist Church? Have you given visibility to the Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women (1988-1998)?
14. How do you feel about term episcopacy? What might be its advantages or disadvantages?
15. What unique contributions do you bring to the office of bishop? How would you see yourself maximizing those gifts in the exercise of your office?
16. What is your overarching goal as you consider the possibility of being a United Methodist bishop? ■



Criteria for being elected to GC

Adapted from Northern New Jersey Annual Conference, June 1983

While *The Discipline* does not specify particular qualifications for lay delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences, the following items deserve consideration:

- Candidates are usually visible and electable.
- Knowledge of structure and experience at all levels of the church—local, district, conference, jurisdiction, general—is helpful.
- Articulatness—able to express themselves and speak well on their feet.
- Understanding of issues—willingness to study and become better informed.
- Aware of and understands the Annual Conference's directions and goals—how people in the conference feel on various issues.
- Available to attend both General and Jurisdictional Conferences (dates are clear on their calendars) and then to be available for interpretation and possible itineration during the following quadrennium.
- Endurance for very long days and nights of deliberation and high tolerance for frustration in being heard, recognized, and taken seriously. ■