

The Flyer

Vol XIII, No. 2

Fall 1992

New women bishops share visions for an inclusive church

To help our readers become acquainted with our three new women bishops, **The Flyer** talked with each bishop about her gifts for the episcopacy, her experience of learning about the elections of her sisters, and her vision of how the United Methodist Church can become more inclusive. Here is a report of those conversations.

ANN B. SHERER
South Central, Missouri Area

FLYER: What are the gifts you bring to the episcopacy?

SHERER: I bring a deep concern for persons and a desire to be in relationship with persons, a vision of an inclusive church, and a commitment to work for that kind of church. I've been pastor of a church with over 30 nationalities and have experienced the way in which many different cultures can live and work and do ministry together. Thus, I believe it is possible for us to come from many cultures and work together in ministry, to be in a community of faith doing ministry in the world.

I have a deep commitment to nurture. I believe that the means of grace are available to us, but we have to place ourselves in a position to receive God's grace. It is important for us to live a disciplined, Christian life that includes prayer and Bible study and regular atten-

dance at worship. For regular involvement in a community of faith and regular participation in the sacraments are essential for our spiritual well-being.

It is not enough just to get persons to become part of a church, but that we must grow disciples. It is important to offer persons an opportunity for nurture, so they can reach out in mission and be equipped for ministry in vocation, family and outreach projects.

With that vision of nurture and outreach, I also have a real interest and commitment to worship. I've been involved in developing our new *Book of Worship*. I think worship is the center of the Christian community and am deeply committed to helping us grow in our joy and creativity in worship.

FLYER: The Commission celebrates the election of three women bishops. When did you first learn about the election of the other two women? How did you feel at that time?

SHERER: As persons were elected, the news was announced in our jurisdictional conference. There was a great sense of excitement and joy each time that a woman was elected.



Ann Sherer, wearing the stole presented by the Women's Leadership Team, speaks at her consecration as bishop.

I felt that we are becoming a more inclusive church, a more inclusive college, and a more inclusive council. That enables us to be the diverse church we need to be.

We can't continue to be a church that is limited in our outlook or limited in our constituency. We must have leaders who are women and men, who are Asian and Native American and African American and Hispanic and white. That's necessary in the college, and that's necessary in the church. We have to find a way to reach out to folks

continued on page 2

First Native American woman, Lois G. Neal, named district superintendent

Lois G. Neal, a Cherokee, believed to be the first Native American woman district superintendent in the United Methodist Church, has begun her duties with the 42 churches comprising the Southeast District of the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference.

Originally from Tahlequah, OK, Neal raised seven children and served churches for 25 years alongside her pastor husband, Oliver Neal, until his death in 1979. Within two years, she was called to fulltime service

as a pastor and entered Oklahoma City University in 1981. After receiving a BA in religion in 1984, she entered St. Paul School of Theology and graduated in 1988.

While attending seminary, she served as pastor of Kahbeah Chapel UMC on the Kickapoo-Potawatomi Reservation in Horton, KS. Upon graduation, she was appointed to Angie Smith Memorial UMC, Oklahoma City, where she served until her appointment this summer as district superintendent at the age of 62. ■

In this issue...

Reflections on election:

Regarding the election of the first woman bishop in SC jurisdiction **p3**

GCSRW September meeting:

An organization meeting for the 1993-1996 quadrennium **p5**

Cabinet members: Largest group of first-time cabinet members **p8**

New women bishops share visions continued from page 1

who are different from ourselves.

We have in our jurisdiction a wonderful story about reaching out to become a more inclusive church. Four years ago at jurisdictional conference we knew that unless we united, unless we were more intentional, we were not going to elect women and persons of diverse cultural backgrounds. We formed the Women's Leadership Team with that goal.

In February of this year, we had an historic meeting at Perkins Seminary of the Women's Leadership Team, Hispanic Caucus, and Black Methodists for Church Renewal. We agreed that our agenda was to

worked together. We had a commitment among ourselves that we would support each other, that we were not running against each other, that we were offering ourselves for the episcopacy. Janice [Riggle-Huie, Southwest Texas] and Jean [Scott, Missouri East] and I worked together. There was that same kind of sisterhood working throughout the process. It gave me the sense that any one of us could serve as bishop. I just happen to be the one that has that opportunity. Either one of those women could do just as well. I felt they were standing with me and continue to stand with me. Jean Scott helped in my consecration.

There was a special moment at my election that illustrates the spirit of standing together. A stole with fabric figures of women had been made by a woman in each of the 17 annual conferences in our jurisdiction. The moment I was elected, a woman from Nebraska came back and placed it around my neck. It emphasized the sense that all are doing this together. Some-

one must carry it, but it is all of us moving together with a sense of empowerment by the spirit. I feel that there are many women standing with me, and this is not something I have to do alone.

As we began to see that happening in other jurisdictions, we rejoiced in it and felt the presence of the spirit among us enabling women—not just one woman, but many women.

That was the focus of the Women's Leadership Team, and that was why we wanted more that one woman running for the episcopacy. There is not just one woman to be elected to the episcopacy; there are many women. We care about the model of many women being available to be elected to the episcopacy. I think that is a new way of looking at empowerment—that we move together. It's not enough that we elect a single person and make her a token. It's extremely important that that empowerment be for all kinds of women in many settings.

The Women's Leadership Team was co-chaired by JoAnn Miles, lay woman from Arkansas, and Susan Davies, clergy from Nebraska. Those of us who were not endorsed by our annual conferences were helped financially to be able to participate in interviews. All three of us women received many notes offering support and prayers—probably 50 notes during the two weeks before jurisdictional conference. In addition to the stole, two lovely wall hangings were made and given to Janice and Jean as an expression of appreciation for being part of the process and for their willingness to be vulnerable in this process.

50 active UM bishops

Ethnic/gender	1992-96	%	1988-92	%
White males	31	62	35	70
Black males	9	18	10	20
White females	6	12	3	6
Asian males	2	4	1	2
Hispanic males	2	4	1	2

There are 1,711 Black UM pastors (5.3 percent of all UM pastors) and 2,425 Black churches (6.5 percent of all UM churches). Also, there are 4,356 female pastors (11.3 percent of all UM pastors). The Southeastern Jurisdiction has more than half (1,312 or 54 percent) of all Black UM churches. The Northeastern Jurisdiction and North Central jurisdictions both have high percentages of female pastors (20 percent and 19 percent respectively).

elect a woman, an Hispanic and an African American. The Black Methodists for Church Renewal led the way by declaring that the election of an Hispanic American, a woman and an African American was their first priority.

During the balloting at Jurisdictional Conference, we saw persons withdraw and throw their votes to another candidate to help achieve these goals. There was constant interaction as we worked to achieve more inclusiveness.

The women who were offering themselves as candidates roomed together and

one must carry it, but it is all of us moving together with a sense of empowerment by the spirit. I feel that there are many women standing with me, and this is not something I have to do alone.

As we began to see that happening in other jurisdictions, we rejoiced in it and felt the presence of the spirit among us enabling women—not just one woman, but many women.

That was the focus of the Women's Leadership Team, and that was why we wanted more that one woman running for the episcopacy.

FLYER: In the history of The United Methodist Church, only one racial/ethnic woman has been elected—Leontine Kelly—and that occurred with extraordinary effort. One of the Commission's visions for the future is for the election of more racial/ethnic women to the episcopacy. What needs to happen for the church to do this?

The Flyer Fall 1992 Vol. XIII, No. 2

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 \$7.50.

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

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.

Cause for celebration: Election of women bishops, racial/ethnic minorities

The five jurisdictional conferences held in July across the country offer women cause for celebration as three women were elected to the episcopacy: Ann B. Sherer, South Central; Sharon Zimmerman Rader, North Central; and Mary Ann Swenson, Western. (See story page 1)

While the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women continues to hold a vision for the election of racial/ethnic women, we can celebrate the election of Hae-Jong Kim, Northeastern, the first Korean American; Joel N. Martinez, South Central, the second Hispanic bishop in United Methodist history; Alfred L. Norris, African American from South Central; Charles W. Jordan, African American from North Central; and William W. Morris, African American from Southeastern. ■

SHERER: I think it takes the kind of intentionality that happened in our jurisdiction. We need to identify candidates and help them to be elected to the conference delegation. We have to hold up these women and work together to ensure that they are part of the interview process. We have to affirm that one doesn't have to lead an annual conference delegation to be a viable candidate. We need to provide financial resources.

All along we should all listen for the spirit and try to discern who those leaders might be. Then we must enable those persons to gain visibility: teach at school of mission, be conference preachers, and other similar activities. As they gain visibility, we must sup-

port them so that their election becomes a real option for the church.

An important part of our job is to articulate a vision of what the reign of God looks like and how that inclusive community can be visioned. Then we must hold up that vision and allow persons to see that kind of church and world.

FLYER: The last 20 years in the UMC have been significant in the lives of women: We now have eight women who have been elected bishop. Over eleven percent of the clergy are women. We have seen increases in local church leadership among women, although the most recent survey indicates that we

are still lagging behind in some traditional male leadership positions. In the general church, there is still no woman serving as a general secretary of a major board or agency. And we continue to recognize the subtle ways in which women's participation is not valued with sexual harassment being one dramatic example. What do you think needs to happen for the church to be able to reflect the gifts of women more equitably?

SHERER: We have to be more intentional. We have to be sure that as committees are formed to search for general secretaries and for local leadership that those search com-

continued on page 4

Reflections on election of first woman bishop in SC

"Women Who Dared," the title of the wall calendar hanging in my kitchen, pictures on each page a woman who led society in new directions. The words "Full Moon" appear next to the date July 14, and several weeks before South Central Jurisdictional Conference, I wrote "due date for bishop!" Many births occur at full moon.

South Central Jurisdiction's first female bishop was welcomed on July 14, 1992 at 7:30 p.m. amidst glorious celebration, the culmination of a three-year effort by the Women's Leadership Team (WLT).

Highlights of the conference at Ft. Worth, TX, included:

Coalition Prayer Time: On Monday evening, July 13, following the opening worship service at First United Methodist Church, caucus participants gathered to sing and offer prayer in the chapel—Black Methodists for Church Renewal, MARCHA, WLT, along with others who supported inclusiveness. The Holy Spirit was present through an outpouring of prayer, praise and joyful song.

Election Process: With the election of Al Norris on the first ballot through the election of Joel Martinez on the ninth, God's spirit continued to surprise and delight us. Led by Liz Lopez Spence [member of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women], the WLT gathered and shared information at a table in the corner of the meeting room.

JoAnn Miles, co-convener of WLT [and new member of GCSRW], described her feelings, "As we sat at our table and watched, we were confident and excited. As the numbers shifted, the room seemed electric-charged with energy and expectation. And when Ann Sherer was elected, we experienced pandemonium, celebration and a sense of confidence in the future of the church—the 'ministry of presence.' The shift in thought, theology and action in the College of Bishops will be changed, and our world will be different in good ways."

Not only was the election of Ann grace-filled, but the process toward that election provided a new model. Barbara Sheldon, WLT secretary, shared her thoughts about the manner with which Jean Scott and Janice Riggle-Huie, candidates for the episcopacy, conducted themselves, "I admired Jean and Janice. As they

individually withdrew, each spoke to her concern for inclusiveness for our College of Bishops and thereby publicly placed themselves in support of our coalition agreement with the other caucuses. They thanked their supporters and with grace and dignity withdrew their names from the election process."

Election Celebration: Ann Cardwell, WLT Steering Committee member and North Texas Annual Conference coordinator, described the Wednesday evening celebration, "Of course, we cried and screamed and hugged each other as a Black American, an Hispanic American, and a woman were elected.

"But the real spirit of celebration came Wednesday night after the conference adjourned, as the Inclusive Coalition gathered for a service prepared by Jeanette Fagerberg, WLT Steering Committee member. There we lifted up the names of all those who had offered themselves to be a part of the episcopacy process. We sang. We gave thanks. Those elected were presented with special stoles from their colleagues. Like the coalition prayer service that began the conference on Monday night, the celebration service was a high and holy moment, lifting our joy to new heights because we came together in community and invoked the presence of God."

Consecration Service: The Spirit manifested her presence as Jean Scott and Margaret Sims, Texas AC coordinator, presented bishop-elect Ann Sherer for consecration. Ann wore the stole designed by Nancy Flader from material sent from each annual conference.

Four years ago I wrote for the *Yellow Ribbon*, newsletter of the National Women's Caucus of the UMC, "The women of the South Central Jurisdiction applauded as the names of Susan Morrison and Sharon Brown Christopher were announced as bishops-elect. It was as if they beckoned encouragingly, 'Come on in, sisters of the South Central Jurisdiction, the water's fine.' Our reply, 'We hope to join you there four years soon.'"

And now four years later, we have come through the waters, the life-giving water of new birth. We have been transformed!

—Sandra Lydick

New women bishops share visions continued from page 3



Sharon Rader, center, speaks with other newly elected bishops Don Ott, left, and Charles Jordan, right, at consecration.

mittees and Nominations and Personnel committees are inclusive and that their vision of leadership is inclusive. That takes lots of education, lots of political awareness, and lots of prayer. Out of that interaction, I think persons grow. We cannot allow persons to sit comfortably when that doesn't happen. We have to press gently, kindly, and firmly that we need to consider these factors. And this vision has to be taken seriously.

SHARON ZIMMERMAN RADER North Central, Wisconsin Area

FLYER: What are the gifts you bring to the episcopacy?

RADER: What I hope I am, what I try to do is be a bridge builder in and among folks—bridges across gender, racial/ethnic, sexual givenness, or theological lines. I try to enable people to engage one another in what's important about life and living for them.

I want to be a person who lives out of a perspective of being part of a denomination that is global in its very being. That is very important to me to give expression to.

In terms of leadership, I try to live out of a predominant leadership style that embraces people, affirms who they are and their gifts, and then invites them to share that in the world and in the church.

FLYER: The Commission celebrates the election of three women bishops. When did you first learn about the election of the other two women? How did you feel at that time?

RADER: I learned about Ann Sherer before it was announced to our jurisdiction because the people that worked in the press room knew I would be concerned about what was happening elsewhere, particularly about women. So I received a note saying that Ann had been elected. It was wonderful to hear!

When I had preached last spring for the Central Texas Conference, I had an opportunity to meet with the group that was working for an inclusive episcopacy and knew about their concerns and real commitment to making that happen—both the election of women and racial/ethnic persons. I found myself just celebrating for that jurisdiction the movement toward inclusiveness and ever greater wholeness in the church.

I didn't hear about Mary Ann, of course, until after my own election. In an interesting serendipity at General Conference, a mutual friend of ours had invited Mary Ann and me and another friend to go to lunch one day where we talked about possibilities of being episcopal candidates. Upon hearing about Mary Ann's election, I felt an interesting moment of remembering our lunch and that important conversation.

It's wonderful to know that you don't go into a place as a solo person. And it's a gift for me, particularly, in this North Central Jurisdiction to know that I am not the solo woman in the college of bishops. There will be three of us.

FLYER: In the history of The United Methodist Church, only one racial/ethnic woman has been elected—Leontine T.C. Kelly—and that occurred with extraordinary effort. One of the Commission's visions for the future is for the election of more racial/ethnic women to the episcopacy. What needs to happen for the church to do this?

RADER: First of all, I think we need to name the vision as plainly as possible. I don't have any doubt that it's going to happen; my hunch is soon.

I do think it is in naming the vision that folks who want to be supportive and enable that process will have it lifted to their consciousness. Then they can begin their own discerning processes for making it happen.

It is incumbent upon others who are in appropriate places to enable the nurturing of racial/ethnic women. Then racial/ethnic women can have the training and experience to be considered for the episcopacy, and thus we can enable that vision to happen.

FLYER: The last 20 years in the UMC have been significant in the lives of women. In the midst of great strides, we continue to see discrepancies and subtle discrimination. What do you think needs to happen for the church to reflect the gifts of women more equitably? (See Sherer interview for complete version of this question.)

RADER: This is in part an insight that I learned from European Bishop Rudiger Minor last summer in Singapore at the World Methodist Conference. There is representation, and then there is inclusiveness. We can do some ensuring of representation through the law. Inclusiveness is a matter of spirit and heart, of conversion.

We need to stay steady with the call for representation, but we also need to continue to preach a gospel that names that we are all loved and included—all of us. The grace that is available for everybody, when preached long enough and clearly enough begins to change people's lives. And finally you can't preach it and hear it preached and speak it without being confronted about how you are living it.

I think we are living in an interim time in which we need to both continue to call for representation and to be open to the Spirit's moving that will change vision and world view so that it's not surprising any more to witness inclusiveness integral to our church and our lives.

MARY ANN SWENSON Western, Denver Area

FLYER: What are the gifts you bring to the episcopacy?

SWENSON: I love. I vision. I have high energy. I have enormous enthusiasm for the church's mission in the world and what we can do as community to transform the world in which we live.

Throughout my lifetime, I have known myself and understood myself as a person in ministry regardless of what my job might be. I have always had a perspective of myself as a person in ministry in the context of that job. So as I enter this new job, I will take that perspective of being a person in ministry with me and enter into my new role and new arena in that way.

In some ways the gifts I have to bring will depend on what is needed in this new context. I may not recognize them until I live into the situation for awhile. I love people,

and I love being in relationship with people. I know myself as a woman in relationship.

FLYER: The Commission celebrates the election of three women bishops. When did you first learn about the election of the other two women? How did you feel at that time?

SWENSON: I had known about their election prior to my own, because being in the West our election is traditionally the last one. I was very excited about Ann and Sharon, knowing both of them and affirming the gifts and graces they bring to the office in their areas of leadership. For me, knowing of their election certainly heightened my enthusiasm when I was elected. I enter into my new job with a sense of community with sisters whom I value enormously. I also know Sharon Brown Christopher and Judy Craig and Susan Morrison. Their being there is comforting, and it's exciting being a part of this group.

In the West, I had been a part of campaigning for the election of Leontine Kelly in 1984. Even though she is retired and was not present at my election because she rep-

FLYER: In the history of The United Methodist Church, only one racial/ethnic woman has been elected—Leontine T.C. Kelly—and that occurred with extraordinary effort. One of the Commission's visions for the future is for the election of more racial/ethnic women to the episcopacy. What needs to happen for the church to do this?

SWENSON: First of all, I concur with that goal and hope we will continue moving forcefully and

firmly in that direction. I celebrate steps that happened in that direction in our own jurisdictional conference. I think that Nancy Yamasaki and Beverly Shamana are excellent candidates for the episcopacy. Their presence and their strength and their integrity through the Western Jurisdictional Conference was a powerful witness.

The three women elected across the church have all been superintendents. I think that having more racial/ethnic women as district superintendents and on conference staffs as well as pastors in congregations will help move us closer to achieving their election to the episcopacy.

We need to keep lifting the names of persons who are leaders and keep honoring their leadership and encouraging the church to listen and be responsive to their leadership. One of the kinds of transitions that we seek is one that moves from emphasis on competition toward emphasis on cooperation. That means seeking ways that we can be supportive and can mutually strengthen each other in ministry so that we help the whole church.

FLYER: The last 20 years in the UMC have been significant in the lives of women. In the midst of great strides, we continue to see discrepancies and subtle discrimination. What do you think needs to happen for the church to reflect the gifts of women more equitably? (See Sherer interview for complete version of this question.)



Mary Ann Swenson welcomes into the church newly baptized member Ada Rabinovich from Russia.

SWENSON: One of the realities with which I work is that change is slow. Yet as a pastor in a congregation and a person in a community in middle America, I have seen change occurring more completely. One of the things I've seen is that once a change begins to happen, people get a new vision of the rightness of that change and the potential for wholeness it brings. People begin to recognize ways that we can be in partnership in ministry in congregations and in towns and neighborhoods in such a way that witnesses something new from a time when men held all of certain positions in the church and society.

What I have experienced is that once people have lived with and embraced a vision for that change, they do not want to go back. They want to make sure that change continues to happen, so they end up with a new vision. Thus, I believe that in our places of work and other arenas, we need to push the boundaries and allow the vision to happen. When we live into a new vision and model it, people can grasp the new vision and proceed with it. Then they recognize, "Yes, this is the way life can be." And they never want it to be other again. That means taking the risks in places where the vision hasn't been tried.

Certainly, we may have setbacks, but then we try again and eventually the vision takes hold. ■

Election of UM women bishops

Bishop	Elected	Jurisdiction
Marjorie Matthews*	1980	North Central
Leontine T.C. Kelly**	1984	Western
Judith Craig	1984	North Central
Susan Morrison	1988	Northeastern
Sharon Brown Christopher	1988	North Central
Ann B. Sherer	1992	South Central
Sharon Zimmerman Rader	1992	North Central
Mary Ann Swenson	1992	Western

* Retired 1984. Deceased 1986. **Retired in 1988

resented the Council of Bishops in the Southeastern Jurisdiction, I felt her presence. I feel such comfort knowing that community of women among the Council of Bishops. I honor Marjorie Matthew's memory and know that she surrounds us as a part of the cloud of witnesses.

I think there are enough women on the Council of Bishops now that we really can make a difference in the Council, like the leaven in the loaf, in the collective influence of the whole body. As Sharon Brown Christopher said to me on the phone, "Now we're a critical mass!" I really do believe that many of our brothers in the Council welcome us and welcome the changes that we will bring, even though some of those changes will be uncomfortable for some of them.

Status Report

New bishops among most diverse, youngest

The 16 United Methodist bishops elected July 14-17 make up one of the most diverse classes chosen for episcopal leadership in the U.S. since 1968, and among the youngest, averaging just younger than 54 years of age.

Of the 16, one is the first Korean American elected; three are black; and one, a Hispanic American. Three are white women. Only in 1984 with a U.S. class of 19, were more racial- and ethnic-minority bishops elected—five blacks, one a woman; one Hispanic American; and one Asian American. One white woman was chosen that year also. Never before 1992 have three women been elected in one year. A record total of six women now are active bishops.

—*Methodists Make News*, July 24, 1992

Woman wins "first" sexual harassment suit in Japan

On April 16, a Tokyo judge awarded a woman the equivalent of \$12,400 in a lawsuit dubbed the "first" sexual harassment case in Japan. Although other Japanese women have won suits against men for physical or sexual abuse, this case marks the first time in Japan's history that a woman has won a lawsuit for verbal abuse.

The anonymous plaintiff, a magazine editor, filed charges against the Fukuoka publishing company that employed her and against the senior editor who harassed her. Reportedly, the senior editor verbally abused the woman for two years, telling other workers that she was promiscuous and liked to drink and flirt with men.

The concept of sexual harassment is still relatively alien in Japan, where English words are often used to describe the abuse.

—*Boston Globe*, from *Sojourner: The Women's Forum*, June 1992

Korean woman theologian receives death threats

Dr. Chung Kyun-Kyung caused an uproar at the 1991 World Council of Churches assembly by confessing that she no longer believed in an "omnipotent, macho warrior God who rescues all good guys and punishes all bad guys."

Chung told an audience at Drew University, Madison, NJ, that she received death threats since she gave her keynote address, which included a performance with Korean and Australian aboriginal dancers and a shamanist paper-burning ritual for freeing spirits.

She has been forced to move from her campus housing at Ewha Woman's University in Seoul and her telephone line was tapped. The Orthodox churches branded her a "heretic" and "pagan" and have since suspended their membership in the U.S. National Council of Churches and are re-evaluating their relationship with the Geneva-based WCC.

—*Membership Newsletter*, Center for Women and Religion, June 1992

Major denominations soon to have female bishops

Three major Protestant denominations in the U.S. have bishops, and by September all three will have female bishops.

The 9-million-member UMC led the way when the Rev. Marjorie Matthews became a bishop in 1980. Of the 50 active bishops, six are now women.

Next came the Episcopal Church who consecrated the Rev. Barbara Harris in 1989. At the end of May, the 2.5-million-member

Episcopal Church elected its second female bishop, the Rev. Jane Dixon, who is expected to be consecrated later this year. The church has 136 active bishops.

The Lutherans were the last to elect a female, the Rev. April Larson, who was chosen June 12 as a bishop in the 5-million-member Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. She takes office as one of the church's 66 bishops in September. Maria Jepsen was elected bishop of Hamburg, Germany, in April.

—Adapted *The National Christian Reporter*, July 3, 1992 ■

**Coming next issue:
More highlights
from annual
conference programs.**

Ovations

To **Ann Hayes Die**, dean and chief executive officer of the H. Sophie Newcomb Memorial College, who has been named president of UM-related Hendrix College, Conway, AR.

To **James Holmes Dixon**, who was elected the second female bishop in the history of the Episcopal Church. She will be an assistant bishop in Washington, D.C.

To **Alice Lee**, a Monroeville, AL, attorney, who is the first recipient of the Alice Lee Award from the Commission on the Status and Role of Women, Alabama-West Florida Conference.

To **April Larson**, who was chosen as a bishop of the 5-million-member Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

To **Kate Lehman**, who was elected chair of the North Indiana Conference Board of Ordained Ministry. She is the first woman to hold the position.

To **Beth Marcus**, Holland, MI, who has become the first woman president of the Reformed Church in America in that denomination's 364-year history.

To **Judith L. Orr**, assistant professor of pastoral care, who has been named academic dean of Saint Paul School of Theology in Kansas City.

To **Kathleen Richardson**, who has been elected the first woman president of the 1.25 million-member British Methodist Conference.

To **Barbara R. Thompson**, general secretary of the General Commission on Religion and Race, who has been honored by Project Equality for four years as head of the program's national board. She continues as a member of the executive committee.

To **'Ana Moala Tiueti**, First Tongan United Methodist Church in San Bruno, CA, who has become the first native Tongan woman ordained an elder in The United Methodist Church.

To **Wesleyan College**, Macon, GA, which the 1992 General Conference named an historic shrine of The United Methodist Church. It was founded in 1836 as a college for women, and was the first institution anywhere in the world to be chartered as a regular college for women (as opposed to a ladies' seminary or finishing school). It is also the first historic shrine or historic landmark specifically and exclusively connected to the history of women in the United Methodist tradition. ■

In memoriam

Vera V. Zimmerman, 83, a staff member of the former Methodist Board of Education from 1949 until her retirement from the Board of Discipleship in 1973, died July 5 at Lee's Summit, MO.

Resources

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

The Bridge to Wholeness: A Feminine Alternative to the Hero Myth, by Jean Benedict Raffa (LuraMedia, 1992). Drawing extensively from Jungian psychology, theology, and her own life story, Raffa offers a description of the journey toward integration through a return to the inner feminine way of being. Paper \$14.95.

Double Stitch: Black Women Write about Mothers and Daughters, edited by Patricia Bell et al. (Beacon). Through poetry, essays, personal narrative, and fiction, 47 black women authors examine the universe of mother and child as configured in North America, during slavery and after. \$19.95.

Introducing third in the series—

Gender and the Biblical Tradition

Third volume—**Her Image of Salvation: Female Saviors and Formative Christianity**, by Gail Paterson Corrington (Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992). This study examines the image of the savior and the experience of salvation, two concepts that are inextricably entwined. Corrington asserts that Christianity set aside female images of salvation by emphasizing the maleness of Jesus. She draws on Jewish sources of Christianity and from the Greek-speaking classical world to show that the image of God could be seen as both male and female. Paper \$19.99.

Latin American Women and the Search for Social Justice, by Francesca Miller (University Press of New England). A history of women in Latin America showing their role in the politics of reform, national liberation, democracy, and international feminism. \$19.95.

Video

Parenting in a TV Age. This new media kit contains lesson plans, handout masters, background essays, ideas on how to teach media and positive actions for parents/families. Available from the Center for Media and Values, 1962 S. Shenandoah, Los Angeles, CA 90034. (213) 559-2944. \$21.95.

That All May Worship: An Interfaith Welcome to People with Disabilities, National Organization on Disability (1992). An

interfaith handbook to assist congregations, denominational groups, and seminaries to welcome people with disabilities into aspects of worship and religious life. Single copies available for \$10.00 from Religion and Disability Program, National Organization on Disability (N.O.D.), 910 16th St., NW, Suite 600, Washington, DC 20006. (202) 293-5960. TDD (202) 29305968. Fax (202) 293-7999.

Audiotape

Women's Spirituality: Worldwide Themes, Ana Matt. First presented at Center for Women and Religion "WomanSpace" event, April 1992. Audiotape \$6. Send check to the Center for Women and Religion, 2400 Ridge Rd., Berkeley, CA 94709.

Directory

Women of Color: Organizations and Projects. A national director from Women of Color Resource Center (WCRC) containing names, addresses, phone and FAX numbers and key staff people in 200 organizations. Also includes summaries of goals, programs, projects

and constituencies indexed by issue and by race, ethnicity, and nationality. Available in print and computer formats. WCRC, 2288 Fulton St., #103, Berkeley, CA 94704. (510) 848-9272. \$8.95, plus \$2.00 shipping. ■

GCSRW to hold organizing meeting

The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW) will organize for the 1993-1996 quadrennium with a meeting Sept. 24-27 at the Radisson Hotel in Lincolnwood, IL.

At that meeting Commission members will receive orientation about their responsibilities as GCSRW members, learn about consensus style of decision making, choose and commission officers, receive training (including sexual harassment training), and launch the work of the Commission in the new quadrennium. ■

F41

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Oct. 1-3: Violent Relationships: Wholeness & Holiness. A regional ecumenical conference at the Oklahoma St. University Hotel/Conference Center in Stillwater, designed for clergy, social work professionals, lay persons, and survivors of abuse or sexual assault interested in working for the prevention of violence in society and addressing the spiritual/religious needs of victims. Contact Bobbie Henderson, c/o DVIS, 1419 E. 15th St., Tulsa, OK 74120. (913) 585-3163.

Oct. 11-13: Women, Theology, and the Earth. A retreat for women in ministry sponsored by the Resource Center for Women and Ministry in the South. With Elizabeth Dodson Gray, author of *Sacred Dimensions of Women's Experience*, at Camp Bethel, near Roanoke, VA. Contact RCWMS, P.O. Box 7725, Durham, NC 27708. (919) 687-0408.

March 9-11, 1993: Sexuality and Power: Clergy Sexual Ethics and the Community. Leaders are Maura Tucker and Ron Barton. Sponsored by Auburn Theological Seminary, 3041 Broadway, New York, NY 10027. (212) 662-4315.

April 26-30, 1993: Play and Passion in Preaching. Leaders are Christine Smith and Margaret Moers Wenig. Sponsored by Auburn Theological Seminary (see above).

UM-related job openings

Chief executive officer, Gammon Theological Seminary. No later than Oct. 23, contact Bishop W. T. Handy, Jr., Chairman of the Search Committee, Gammon Theological Seminary, P.O. Box 92426, 653 Beckwith Street S.W., Atlanta, GA 30314. (404) 527-7770.

Entry-level, tenure-track position in church history. No later than Oct. 12, contact Judith Orr, Academic Dean, Saint Paul School of Theology, 5123 Truman Road, Kansas City, MO 64127. (816) 483-9600. ■

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

Yes, I would like to continue to receive **The Flyer**:

- \$7.50 for one year
 \$12.50 for two years

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Annual Conference (if United Methodist)

Send your check to: **The Flyer**, The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, 1200 Davis, Evanston, IL 60201.

Largest group of first-time cabinet members takes training

In August at Lake Junaluska, NC, 16 first time district superintendents and 2 conference council directors, the largest class ever, gathered for training.

Pictured are from left to right: front row—Ruth Mathis, Pacific Northwest; Sheila Rogers, South Carolina; Ruth Harper, North Carolina; Shiela Swanger, Western New York; and Linda Kimmelman, New York. Second row—Rebecca Youngblood, Mississippi; Lois Glory Neal, Oklahoma Indian Missionary; Barbara Williams Riddle, Florida; Patricia DeVoe, Holston; Sharon M. Watt, Texas; Linda Jacobus, Baltimore; and Linda Campbell-Marshall, Maine. Third row—Virginia E. O'Malley, Wyoming; Gerry Harrison, Wisconsin; H. Sharon Howell, Kansas East; Janet Rhind, conference council director, Kansas East; and Deborah Pritts, North Central New York.

Also present at the event (not present for the photo) was Janet Forbes, conference council director, Rocky Mountain. ■



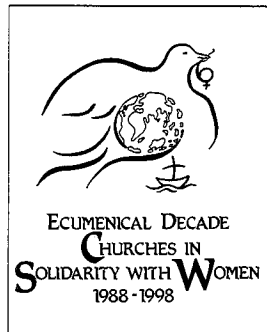
Men hold consultation on Women's Decade

An ecumenical meeting of key men leaders took place Sept. 10-12, in Oklahoma City to support the Ecumenical Decade: Churches in Solidarity with Women.

The theme "We Belong Together" reflects the belief that men in the church need to gain ownership of the Decade and the full participation of women and that there are men ready to help in this process of defining what it means to be in solidarity with women.

The Decade Men's Consultation will attempt to be the critical next step in developing a wider constituency of men working in solidarity with women in the church.

Dr. Randall Bailey of Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta provided the Consultation's keynote address. ■



Sabo-Shuler withdraws as superintendent

Following controversies over a July 25 "Celebration of Holy Covenant" between two gay men, Ilona Sabo-Shuler, who took part in the ceremony, has backed away from accepting an appointment as district superintendent.

In an Aug. 26 letter to pastors, Bishop Judith Craig (Michigan, now Ohio West) announced that she has granted "with deep regret" Sabo-Shuler's request to "step back" from an appointment as superintendent of the Grand Rapids District in the West Michigan Conference. Craig called the situation that prompted Sabo-Shuler's withdrawal "grievous and border(ing) on the ludicrous."

Craig's letter said Sabo-Shuler asked to withdraw "because I do not want to embroil the conference, at this time of episcopal transition, in the controversies often surrounding pastors who are actively involved in the Reconciling Congregations Program."

[Report adapted from Newscope, Sept. 4, 1992.]



The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women

in the United Methodist Church
1200 Davis Street, Evanston, Illinois 60201