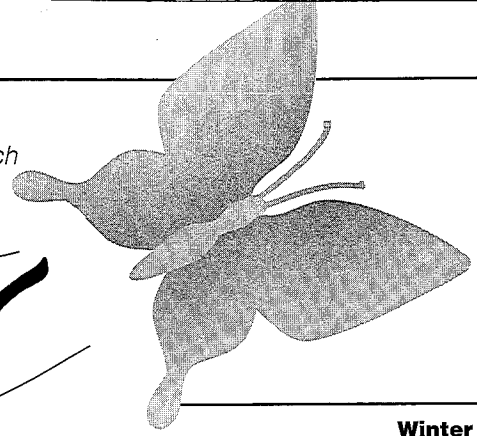


The Flyer



Vol XIX, No. 1

Winter 1999

The road from Harare . . .

Ecumenical Decade letter urges accountability

A letter to the World Council of Churches outlining initiatives for battling violence, racism and other ills is an "energizing point" for taking action, according to Lois Dauway, assistant general secretary and head of the Section of Christian Social Responsibility for the General Board of Global Ministries.

The letter, "From Solidarity to Accountability," was composed by a diverse group of women and men following the Decade Festival of the Churches in Solidarity with Women. The festival marked the end of a 10-year period set by the WCC in which women were encouraged, in the words of the letter, "to share their spirituality, their daily struggles and their gifts." The Decade Festival preceded the assembly.

"This is an energizing point for us," said Dauway, who is a member of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, a United Methodist delegate to the WCC's Eighth Assembly and member of the WCC Central Committee.

"I think this will help us get our batteries recharged" with respect to the issues raised in the letter, she said in a Dec. 8 interview with United Methodist News Service. The letter was presented to the Eighth Assembly on Dec. 7. Some 4,500 people were attending the Dec. 3-14 gathering at the University of Zimbabwe. The WCC's assembly, convened every seven years, draws together members of the Protestant, Anglican, Orthodox and other churches.

The Roman Catholic Church also is represented at the meeting but is not a WCC member.

The Decade Festival letter calls upon the WCC members to embrace the vision "of a human community where the participation of each and everyone is valued, where no one is excluded on the basis of race, sex, age, religion or cultural practice, where diversity is celebrated as

continued on page 2



Photo by Phoro Oikourme

Standing, left, Lois Dauway joins other leaders at the Ecumenical Decade Festival in Harare, Zimbabwe, Nov. 27-30 to celebrate the World Council of Churches' Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women.

Supreme Court rulings underscore need for sexual harassment policies

In an October memo from the General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA) and the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW), the United Methodist Church reiterated the church's stand against misconduct of a sexual nature in the church. The memo, addressed to active bishops, district superintendents, annual conference treasurers, and conference council directors/equivalents, underscores the importance of local church sexual harassment policies by outlining related Judicial Council decisions and recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions. As Mary K. Logan, general counsel of GCFA, explains, "Two summer 1998 decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court have changed the law of workplace sexual harassment. As a result of the two decisions, we need to pay closer attention to written sexual harassment policies and training of all staff, including clergy, and volunteers about these policies and enforcement of them."

Furthermore, "we are concerned about the number of local churches that have not begun to consider their own policies," emphasizes Stephanie Anna Hixon, member of the general secretariat, GCSRW. "Developing a policy statement is also a good way to raise awareness and educate members of congregations."

See Summary of Key points in the 1998 U.S. Supreme Court decisions on workplace sexual harassment on page S2. ■

Special Supplements:

Preparing for General Conference 2000 p. 7

Sexual Harassment and Clergy Misconduct:
The Church Responds p. S1

The road from Harare... *continued from page 1*

God's gift to the world."

The letter was received well by the assembly, some festival participants said. "It was a document upon which we struggled to reach consensus," said Dauway, who was on the decade planning committee.

The letter spells out initiatives in

processes in which both victims and perpetrators can experience forgiveness and reconciliation; denouncing wars and seeking nonviolent alternatives for handling conflict; and denouncing female genital mutilation, "sex tourism" and trafficking of women and children.

Toward a world of economic justice,

The letter spells out initiatives in three key areas: full participation of all in the human community, the elimination of violence and racism, and the establishment of a world of economic justice.

three key areas: full participation of all in the human community, the elimination of violence and racism, and the establishment of a world of economic justice.

The letter urges the churches to direct WCC resources toward creating programs, educational materials, networks and "opportunities that support and empower women." Churches are asked to monitor their structures and practices "so that all forms of exclusion are eradicated."

Initiatives proposed to that end include providing theological education opportunities and programs for women that honor their voices and experiences; theological school materials that include gender studies and women's perspectives; training for women, girls and boys in how to live as just communities of women, men and children; liturgies, gender and language policies that affirm all who participate; policies that promote a balance of gender, age and race in leadership positions and roles and that honor people's cultural identities.

The letter also condemns violence and racism. It sets forth initiatives for creating opportunities for women to speak out about violence and abuse that they have experienced; exposing sexual abuse, "especially by those in positions of church leadership"; creating restorative justice

the letter demands that the debt burdens of the poorest countries be canceled and the resources that are saved be used to help the poor, especially women and children. It also recommends the establishment of program desks on economic issues in local, regional and national churches; asks for laws that protect women's rights to property, reproductive rights and other rights; and calls for structures that ensure justice, equal pay for equal work, living wages, and honorable labor practices.

Dauway said she hopes people will be challenged by the statement. "One of the things that was powerful about it was we named those things that we knew we could not agree on," she said.

Those issues included the ordination of women, abortion, divorce and human sexuality. "During the decade, human sexuality in all of its diversity emerged with particular significance," according to the letter. "... We acknowledge that there is divided opinion as women and men on this particular issue. In fact, for some women and men in our midst, the issue has no legitimacy. We seek the wisdom and guidance of the Holy Spirit that we may continue the conversation in order that justice may prevail."

One section of the letter forcefully

addresses racism and related evils. "We declare that racism and ethnocentrism are against the will of God and have no place in God's household."

"The emphases in the decade that came out very strong ... had to do with economic justice, overcoming racism and violence against women," said Dr. Janice Love, a United Methodist delegate from Columbia, SC, and member of the WCC's Central Committee. "It's essential to keep focusing on those because they are very real, ongoing, often crushing circumstances of women's lives."

However, the area that will be difficult for keeping a continued presence "without question is going to be women in theology," she said. "I think it's quite



clear there's been a backlash against feminist theology in our church and all churches in the United States," she said. "We're not unique there."

Dauway and Love plan to share the document with

others when they return home. Likewise, Stephanie Anna Hixon and Cecelia Long, members of the general secretariat of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, will provide it to their board members.

Some of the calls made in the document resonate with them and also relate to work going on throughout the United Methodist Church on behalf of women, Hixon said. She cited work being done in the area of violence against women as an example.

The letter calls upon the Eighth Assembly to declare that "violence against women is a sin." As many voices as possible were heard in the development of the document, Long said. "There really was a consensus model being used."

It's kind of another way to be testing and sensing the pulse of what's going on in the life of our churches," Hixon said. ■

This article is excerpted from a press release by United Methodist News Service, Dec. 9, 1998.

You may call the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women toll free. Just use our 800 number:

800/523-8390

To learn more...

For more complete coverage of the Ecumenical Decade celebration and the World Council of Churches meeting, see the web site:

www.wcc.coe.org/wcc/

Maud Keister Jensen dies . . .

First woman to receive full clergy rights in Methodist Church

Maud Keister Jensen, 94, the first woman to receive full clergy rights as an ordained pastor in the Methodist Church, died Oct. 12 in Madison, NJ.

Jensen, a long-time missionary to Korea, was admitted to the Central Pennsylvania Annual Conference "on trial" on May 18, 1956, which made her eligible to become a full member after two years.

The 1956 General Conference had approved full clergy rights for qualified women pastors only a short time before Jensen was admitted in Central Pennsylvania. Previously, women could be ordained as "local preachers" and appointed as "supply preachers" but were not permitted to be voting members of an annual conference and could not be assured of pastoral assignments.

In fact, Jensen had been ordained deacon by the Central Pennsylvania Conference in 1948 and ordained elder in 1952, so in 1956 the conference admitted her on the usual two-year trial basis. The action was taken in absentia because Jensen was serving as a missionary in Korea at the time. In response to a wire from the Board of Missions requesting a comment for the press, Jensen humbly replied in a telegram (punctuation added for clarity),

"I AM DEEPLY GRATEFUL FOR PRIVILEGE BUT HONOR COMPLETELY UNEXPECTED AND DUE ENTIRELY TO EARLY MEETING OF MY ANNUAL CONFERENCE. FEEL GEORGIA HARKNESS AND OTHER ACTIVE WOMEN MINISTERS DESERVED FIRST RECOGNITION AFTER LONG STRUGGLE AND ABLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO CHURCH. PRAYING FOR WISDOM AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT IN FURTHER SERVICE IN THIS NEW RELATIONSHIP. KRIS [spouse] JOINS IN APPRECIATION GENERAL CONFERENCE ACTION. MAY GOD'S BLESSING BE UPON ALL WOMEN CONCERNED."

Born Sept. 27, 1904, this native of New Cumberland, PA, had become a member of her Methodist church at an early age. During a worship service when the pastor called for those seeking baptism to come forward, Jensen stepped to the front of the church and proclaimed

herself ready for baptism, much to her parents' surprise. She started teaching Sunday school at 12 years old. At a young age she felt called to ministry. As Jensen recalled in an interview, "I just knew that that was the thing I should do.. I had no doubt about my talents. I believe God had called me to the ministry and expected my proper response, as he [sic] had provided the essential qualifications."



Maud Jensen

Jensen was drawn to missionary work while a student at Bucknell University in Lewisburg, PA. On Jan. 25, 1925, she received her license to preach. After graduating in 1926, she was sent to Korea by the Methodist Church. She had met her future spouse, A. Kris Jensen, when they were both missionary candidates, and they married in 1928. The Jensens would devote the rest of their missionary careers to Korea.

Jensen also earned a bachelor of divinity degree from Drew Theological School in 1946. She applied for deacons orders in 1948. But the bishop of the New Jersey area, where she was living at the time, was unsupportive of her desire for ordination. Recalled Jensen, "I remember it was quite discouraging. He wasn't interested in the least in having a woman be ordained. But since I was interested, I applied to another one and to my own conference."

Thanks to her persistence, Jensen was ordained by Bishop Charles Wesley Flint of Central Pennsylvania. As she was ordained, her spouse Kris stood by her side, "just as the wives stood by their husbands who were also getting ordained."

Jensen was honored twice by the Korean government for her contributions to social welfare work in that country. She continued her ministry there until her retirement after almost 40 years of service.

She then returned to Madison, where she returned to school and received a doctorate from Drew Theological School at the age of 74, along with several awards, including an honorary doctorate and outstanding alumni award. She was an active member of Madison United Methodist Church and tended a large rose garden in front of her house.

She is survived by her son, Rev. Philip

K. Jensen, who retired from Drew in June, and three grandsons. A daughter, Clair Lee, died in 1996.

A memorial service was held Oct. 31, and Jensen's ashes will be returned to Korea and buried next to her husband and daughter at the Foreign Cemetery in Seoul.

"Being the first woman [to receive full clergy rights in the Methodist Church] was, for her, not the most important accomplishment of her life," recalls Philip K. Jensen, son of Maud Keister Jensen. "She would say that she wanted to be most remembered for her missionary work in Korea." Indeed, that distinction may not have been most important for Maud Keister Jensen, but it marked an important milestone in the United Methodist tradition.

Quotations from Maud Keister Jensen are excerpted from Maud Keister Jensen: United Methodist Women's Oral History Project, Carolyn DeSwarte Gifford (General Commission on Archives and History, 1984). The Flyer is also indebted to Jennifer Williams, Central Pennsylvania Conference and student at Duke Divinity School, for additional research on Jensen.

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The Flyer

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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.

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Status Report

Changes in Social Security threaten women: leaders

Proposals to privatize Social Security overlook the possible adverse effects on women, say executives of two denominational agencies. Privatization especially threatens the livelihood of older and disabled women, and this concern is a justice issue for United Methodists, noted Jane Hull Harvey, a staff executive at the General Board of Church and Society, in a statement released before the White House conference on Social Security, Dec. 8-9.

"In the United States, millions of aged and disabled persons, especially women, depend on the U.S. Social Security system for the basic necessities of life," she said.

Anna Rhee, executive secretary for public policy for the Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries, encouraged women to follow the discussions and to let their congressional representatives and administration officials know of their concerns.

"Women stand to be greatly affected by any change in the Social Security system (60 percent of recipients are women)," Rhee said. "So far the public debate has spent little time on the importance for women of a sound social security system. The White House conference is one way to learn about the debate. However, no women's policy or advocacy organization has been invited to speak."

Rhee said the topic ties in with one of the United Methodist Women's study themes, "Humanity Comes of Age," which will be explored in the 1999 schools of mission and relates to the U.N. Year of Older Persons.

Harvey pointed out that most of the proposals for change would replace a portion of or all of the Social Security program with a new system of personal retirement accounts. These plans would undermine the financial security of older women, she said.

"Women over the age of 65 are already in poverty at twice the rate of men over 65," Harvey stated. The current system, while not perfect, recognizes the inequity that most women face since they are more likely to spend fewer years in the workforce and earn less than men when they do work, she observed. Women also tend to live longer than men in the United States.

She said that most of the privatization proposals before the U.S. Congress make no provision for the differences between men and women. "In fact, any system that relies even partially on privatizing the social security system with personal savings accounts would perpetuate these differences into retirement, leaving most women to bear an inequality of sacrifice for their entire lives," she added.

The denomination's Social Principles urge policies and programs that ensure respect and dignity for senior members of society, Harvey said. The General Board of Church and Society affirms the protections offered women in the current system: lifetime benefits, dependents' benefits, progressive benefits formula and adjustments for inflation. These are not included in the privatization plans, she said.

—United Methodist News Service, Dec. 9, 1998

AIDS increasing in women and people of color in U.S.

Though the number of people dying of AIDS dropped for the first time in 1996, the incidences of new infections are rising among U.S. women and people of color, according to Rob Janssen of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Janssen spoke Nov. 9 to some 200 religious leaders at a four-day Atlanta meeting on "AIDS & Religion in America."

In 1995, the incidence of AIDS dropped slightly among whites by 3%, followed by a 13% drop in 1996, as treatments began having a greater effect. However, among African Americans and Hispanics, increases continued through 1999, according to the CDC. In 1996, the number of cases declined by 5% among Hispanics and leveled off among African Americans. In 1997, 641,086 Americans were reported as having AIDS, and at least 385,000 of them died. Of all U.S. AIDS cases, African Americans account for 36% and Latinos 18%, according to CDC.

—Newscope, Nov. 27, 1998

Gender-inclusive language urged to combat patriarchy

"Unless we are using [gender-inclusive language for God] to the extent possible and are consistently working to educate the congregation toward inclusive language,"

we are "contributing to the maintenance of a patriarchally oppressive church." That's the assertion of George D. McClain, former executive of the Methodist Federation for Social Action.

Writing in the Sept./Oct. issue of the group's newsletter, McClain notes there are situations in which pastors must "move step by step" toward the goal of using gender-inclusive language. "When I worship where there's no sensitivity to language about God's gender, I feel cheated and undercut in my own faith journey," says McClain.

—Newscope, Nov. 13, 1998

Ruling on "labels" draws mixed reaction

The recent United Methodist Judicial Council ruling that annual conferences, church agencies or other official bodies may not identify with or take the "label" of an unofficial group has met with mixed reactions from representatives of such organizations.

The Confessing Movement is "fine with the decision" because its purpose is to refocus church attention on doctrine, discipline and scripture, said Executive Director Patricia Miller. She credited the increasing influence of the Confessing Movement as a factor in the Judicial Council decision.

The October ruling (UMNS #641) by the denomination's supreme court arose out of the Northwest Texas Annual Conference's decision last June to become a "confessing conference." The Judicial Council disagreed with the opinion of the presiding bishop that the label was only an expression of opinion and not in conflict with *The 1996 Book of Discipline*.

The council noted that the denomination's Articles of Religion, Confession of Faith and General Rules are protected from change, paraphrase or summary. By affirming doctrinal statements in its resolution to become a confessing conference, Northwest Texas violated the church's constitution, the council ruled.

The latest ruling reverses an earlier Judicial Council decision allowing the Wisconsin Annual Conference to become a "reconciling conference" and the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns to become a "reconciling commission."

Six annual conferences, 150

continued on page 5

Status Report *continued from page 4*

congregations and 23 campus ministries have aligned themselves with the Reconciling Congregations Program, a movement that welcomes all persons to the church, regardless of sexual orientation.

In a statement issued in response to the October ruling, the program's board of directors called the action "further evidence of a desperate and defensive denomination trying to squelch the movement of God's spirit. We grieve for our ailing church that increasingly attempts to enforce obedience and unity by coercion instead of building up the Body of Christ through the bold proclamation of God's unconditional love and grace."

The continued marginalization because of sexual orientation "brings pain to faithful United Methodists who are gay, lesbian and bisexual as well as their family members," the directors stated. "An increasing number of United Methodist individuals and groups recognize that this discrimination is contrary to the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

The Reconciling Congregations Program board called on United Methodists to

continue wearing the reconciling label "until all divisive policies of exclusion within the United Methodist Church cease."

The Rev. Bruce Robbins, general secretary of the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns, noted that it was the witness of the Reconciling Congregations Program that inspired his agency to become a "reconciling commission."

In his opinion, when gays and lesbians "became public in our churches, they offered the United Methodist congregations a 'test case' for hospitality. Are we welcoming of all people into the life of our church, no matter how uncomfortable they make some of us?"

"The commission's action was an attempt to say that, even though we may disagree with each other regarding homosexuality and the Christian faith, everyone, including gay men and lesbians, is welcome among us," he continued. "We are baptized into one Body of Christ."

Robbins said he hopes the commission will find other ways to advocate its

mandate, "the unity of the Body of Christ in all aspects of the church's life."

The Judicial Council's ruling on annual conferences has received tentative support from the Transforming Congregations movement, which considers homosexuality a sin but believes the Holy Spirit can transform the lives of those struggling with homosexuality.

The Rev. Robert Kuyper of Transforming Congregations said he welcomes an end to the debates within annual conferences over whether to become a reconciling or transforming conference. "Every dollar spent on political battles is a dollar taken away from ministry," he explained. "It seems to take a lot of time and a lot of resources."

While he thinks there is value in the "transforming" label at the local church level, especially in demonstrating the ministry of the congregation, Kuyper said he agreed with the council that labels could be divisive, "particularly at the annual conference level."

—United Methodist News Service, Nov. 16, 1998

FYJ

Harkness Scholar program invites applications by April 1

The Georgia Harkness Scholar in Residence option at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston, IL, invites interested church women, both lay and clergy, to apply for a sabbatical quarter on campus.

The program is designed for women who wish to spend a sabbatical quarter renewing and developing their knowledge of feminist studies in theology, to enhance their work in the church, in education, or in other areas, as well as their own personal development.

The option allows one or two women to spend a quarter in residency engaged in feminist and other theological studies. Garrett-Evangelical offers subsidized housing at the student rate and free auditing privileges in classes, as well as library privileges. The Women IMAGES Center offers space for study and networking with women students.

Garrett-Evangelical is part of the 11-seminary Association of Chicago Theological Schools, where additional opportunities for study are available. It is

on the campus of Northwestern University with access to major library resources and an active women's studies program.

Interested women should begin the application process by contacting Dr. Rosemary Ruether by April 1. Written materials including a letter of interest and resume/vitae should follow by May 1. Write to Dr. Ruether, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, 2121 Sheridan Rd., Evanston, IL 60201. (847) 866-3900. Web site: www.garrett.nwu.edu.

Racial Ethnic Minority Fellowship applications

United Methodist Communications (UMCom) invites candidates to apply for the 1999-2000 Racial Ethnic Minority (REM) Fellowship by March 29, 1999.

The fellowship is awarded to one person each year (July 1 through June 30) who will be placed in a United Methodist communication office somewhere in the U.S. The fellowship recipient receives \$30,000 for the year's salary, plus benefits, travel and moving expenses.

The candidate must be a recent or spring 1999 graduate of a college, univer-

sity or seminary; must be a United Methodist of racial ethnic minority heritage; may have interest in pursuing communications or communications ministry as a career; should have an educational background or experience in communications; and must be able to work for one year, beginning July 1, 1999, in a United Methodist communication office selected by UMCom.

Application forms may be obtained by writing to REM Fellowship Committee, UMCom, Conference Resourcing Team, P.O. Box 320, Nashville, TN 37202-0320. (888) 278-4862. E-mail: REM@umcom.umd.org. Web site: www.crt.umc.org/info/rem.asp.

Women's Division adopts green principles

Strengthening its commitment to be environmentally responsible, the Women's Division, General Board of Global Ministries adopted eight "green" principles during its Oct. 16-19 annual meeting in Stamford, CT.

The division also is producing a book, *Green Guidance: How to Plan Environmentally Responsible Events*.

Resources

Athena's Disguises: Mentors in Everyday Life, Susan Ford Wiltshire (Westminster John Knox Press, 1998). Wiltshire explores the multitude of ways mentoring occurs in our lives: through serendipitous contacts with friends, family, children, elders, artists, community peace-makers—even chance encounters with strangers. She shows through examples that mentors often are not recognized as such until many years after their contributions are made. \$19.00.

Daughters of Thunder: Black Women Preachers and Their Sermons, 1850-1979, Bettye Collier-Thomas (Jossey-Bass, Inc., 1998). This collection shows that good preaching is an art form. \$25.00.

Made in Her Image: Exploring New Perspectives in the Bible and Christian History, Carol Castle (Re-Imagining, 1997). This resource and the accompanying guide for facilitators make gentle introductions to biblical materials for mainline church people searching for something more. Resource and guide, \$25 set; guide alone \$10.

Not Just Race, Not Just Gender: Black Feminist Readings, Valerie Smith (Routledge, 1998). From 19th century articulations of Sojourner Truth to contemporary thinkers like Patricia J. Williams, Black feminists have always recognized the mutual dependence of race and gender. This text explores the myriad ways race and gender shape lives and social practices. \$18.99.

Prayers Encircling the World (Westminster John Knox Press, 1999). This anthology of contemporary prayer includes prayers from more than 60 countries, representing a wide spectrum of Christian traditions and themes. \$15.00.

Preacher's Daughter, Maurita Hinton. Hinton offers a glimpse of God's grace among families of the Central Jurisdiction of the Methodist Church, which was disbanded in 1968. Available from the author, 32 Marquis Road, Ewing, NY 08638. (609) 883-0644. \$10.00.

Rights of Women: A Guide to the Most Important United Nations' Treaties of Women's Human Rights, published by International Women's Tribune Centre. The manual provides a "right by right" guide to issues such as education, marriage, employment, refugees, sexual exploitation and trafficking, and torture by providing a global overview and then a description of relevant UN conventions. Order from Women, Inc., 777 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017, USA. Phone: (212) 687-8633. Fax: (212) 661-2704. E-mail: wink@womenink.org. Web site: www.womenink.org. Cost is \$15.95 plus shipping and handling (free to women's groups in the global South).

Sister to Sister: Meditations for and from African American Women, ed. Suzan D. Johnson Cook (Judson, 1995). Meditations on love, loss, failure, success, faith, dreams, parenting, and the unique strengths of African-American women. \$10.00.

Sisters of Dust, Sisters of Spirit: Womanist Wordings on God and Creation, Karen Baker-Fletcher (Augsburg Fortress, 1998). Cultivating the ecological side of black womanism, the author combines a keen awareness of environmental racism with reflection on her own journey and a constructive theological vision. \$16.

When True Simplicity Is Gained: Finding Spiritual Clarity in a Complex World, Martin Marty and Micah Marty (Eerdmans, 1998). Photographs and classic prayers depict life ruled by the joy of simplicity, providing a soothing balm for frenzied souls. \$16.00.

Women and Redemption: A Theological History, Rosemary Radford Ruether (Augsburg Fortress, 1998). The first comprehensive analysis of the patriarchal paradigm and its challenge by the feminist paradigm over twenty centuries of Christian theological history. \$19.00.

Women at the Well: Meditations on Healing and Wholeness, ed. Mary L. Mild (Judson, 1997). Provides daily devotions from women who share their experiences as health professionals, pastors, caregivers, survivors of illness, and persons with disabilities. \$16.00.

Jobs

Academic Dean, United Theological Seminary, Dayton, OH. Appointment begins with 1999-2000 academic year. Applicants should have a Ph.D. or equivalent degree, classroom teaching experience, commitment to scholarly work, and an active interest in the church. Contact F. Thomas Trotter, Educational Consultants, 75-136 Kiowa Dr., Indian Wells, CA 92210. E-mail: tomtrot@earthlink.net.

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on the web:*

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Preparing for General Conference 2000

When approximately 1,000 delegates from around the world gather in Cleveland, OH, on May 2-12, 2000, their presence for this quadrennial happening will represent the equivalent of days and weeks of preparation by each individual, annual conference, and general board and agency. General Conference is the only body authorized to create and modify *The Book of Discipline*, United Methodism's "church law."

During the 1999 annual conference sessions, lay and clergy members of the annual conference will be electing the delegates to the 2000 General Conference and jurisdictional conferences.

Outline of dates and events

Annual conference 1999

Delegates to the 2000 General and Jurisdictional Conferences will be elected during 1999 annual conferences. Delegates and alternates from their respective annual conferences will meet several times between their election and 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 particular issues.

Deadline for petitions

Petitions must be postmarked by Dec. 3, 1999, 150 days before the opening day of the General Conference.

General Conference 2000

May 2-12, 2000, Cleveland, OH, U.S.A.

Annual Conference 2000

Persons will be nominated for election by the Jurisdictional Conferences to serve for four years on general boards and agencies (in accordance with ¶ 705 of *The 1996 Book of Discipline*).

Episcopal candidates may be endorsed by annual conferences for consideration in their jurisdiction. At the present writing the following number of bishops will retire: North Central, 1; Northeastern, 1; South Central, 2; Southeastern, 3; and Western, 2.

Jursidictional Conference 2000

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

Election of delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences

To begin . . .

- Make contact with other lay women and clergy women in your annual conference about the upcoming elections.
- Know what *The 1996 Book of Discipline* says about election of delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conferences (see especially *The 1996 Book of Discipline*, ¶502, ¶513, ¶12, ¶21-23, ¶33, ¶ 34).

The deliberations at General Conferences have been enriched by the participation of a significant number of women delegates. Although the numbers have been increasing, we cannot assume that women will automatically be elected. Given prospective legislation to come before General Conference and the need for the whole church to be represented, the election of women delegates is important.

This supplement offers an overview of steps to help our readers prepare for these important elections.

- Know the process for balloting in your annual conference. (This may vary from conference to conference.) Contact the secretary of your annual conference and your conference journals.
- Who is eligible to be elected? Among lay women? Among clergy women? (It is important to name more than one person.) (REMINDER: Diaconal ministers who are now deacons in full connection are no longer eligible to be elected as lay delegates.)
- How can their gifts and willingness to serve as a delegate be made known in the annual conference?
- How will the annual conference be reminded of the church's commitment to inclusiveness? (See ¶117 of *The 1996 Book of Discipline*.)

What you need to know . . .

- Lay delegates are elected by lay members of the annual conference. *Eligibility*: Members in the United Methodist Church for at least two years prior to election; active participants in the United Methodist Church for at least four years next preceding their election; members within the electing annual conference at the time of the General or jurisdictional conferences. (*The 1996 Book of Discipline*, ¶34.)
- Clergy delegates are elected by clergy members in full connection of the annual conference. *Eligibility*: Members in full connection and traveling preachers in the United Methodist Church for at least four years next preceding their election; in full connection with the electing annual conference at the time of General or jurisdictional conferences. (*The 1996 Book of Discipline*, ¶33.) (A constitutional amendment, ratified by the Council of Bishops in 1997, deleted the words regarding traveling preachers and four-year requirement. This allows deacons in full connection to be elected as clergy delegates.)

There are an equal number of lay and clergy delegates elected in accordance with the formula outlined in *The 1996 Book of Discipline*, ¶502.

The bishop and secretary of the annual conference have been informed of the number of delegates to be elected during the 1999 annual conference session. ■

Watch for additional information on preparing for General Conference 2000 in upcoming issues of The Flyer.



**The General Commission on the
Status and Role of Women**

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

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Copy deadlines for Flyer information

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

March 15, 1999.....Spring 1999
May 15, 1999.....Summer 1999

Send to: Bonny Stalnaker Roth, GCSRW,
1200 Davis St., Evanston, IL 60201. (800)
523-8390. You may also submit informa-
tion through e-mail: gcsr@cgca.org.

Ovations

To **Justice Sophia O.A. Adinyira** of the Church of the Province of West Africa in Ghana, and the **Rev. Marion S. Best**, United Church of Canada, who were elected vice moderators of the World Council of Churches. The Methodist Church of Canada was a predecessor body of United Church.

To **Kathryn Bannister**, pastor of a four-church United Methodist parish in Kansas, who was elected one of eight regional presidents of the World Council of Churches during the organization's Eighth Assembly in Harare, Zimbabwe. She is the first North American president who is both female and a youth--that is, under 30.

To **Lois Dauway**, assistant general secretary of the General Board of Global Ministries and head of its Section of Christian Social Responsibility and a member of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, who was elected to the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches.

To **Diana Eck**, a United Methodist pastor and professor at Harvard University, who is among the nine 1998 recipients of the National Humanities Medal, selected by

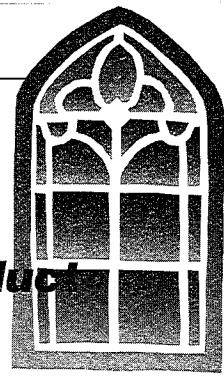
President Clinton from a list of nominees presented by the National Endowment for the Humanities. She is creator and director of the Harvard Pluralism Project on religious diversity.

To **Rosemary Gillett-Karam**, an associate professor at North Carolina State University, who has been named 24th president of UM-related Louisburg (NC) College.

To **Beate Kraus**, a seminary student from Germany and a youth delegate to the Harare Assembly, who was elected to the World Council of Churches' General Committee.

To **Sharon Patterson**, pastor of Jubilee United Methodist Church in Duncanville, TX, who received the 1998 "Katherine Ripley Award" from Planned Parenthood of Dallas and Northeast Texas for her work with the church's "Love Clinic." The clinic uses a television talk show format and a panel of experts to explore personal and social issues with an audience of congregation and community members.

To **Carolyn Warner**, Phoenix, AZ, who has been elected chairperson of the UM Foundation for Christian Higher Education. ■



Sexual Harassment and Clergy Sexual Misconduct The Church Responds

In Summer 1997, *The Flyer* included a special supplement, very similar to this one, as a tool for local churches and annual conferences as they continue to help our denomination work toward eliminating sexual harassment and clergy sexual misconduct in the denomination and its institutions.

As the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW) continues its leadership role in this arena, we offer this revised and updated supplement to assist various communities of faith.

Definition of Sexual Misconduct

Background

¶ 2623, *The 1992 Book of Discipline*: A bishop, clergy member of an Annual Conference (P. 412), local pastor, clergy on honorable or administrative location, or diaconal minister may choose a trial when charged with one or more of the following offenses:

"...(I) Sexual abuse or harassment;..."

¶ 2624, *The 1996 Book of Discipline*: A bishop, clergy member of an Annual Conference, local pastor, clergy on honorable or administrative location, or diaconal minister may choose a trial when charged with one or more of the following offenses:

"...(I) child abuse; (j) sexual harassment, sexual misconduct or sexual abuse;..."

What is sexual misconduct?

Different viewpoints

■ Marie M. Fortune, *Is Nothing Sacred?*, p. 137:

"Sexual misconduct is defined as sexual activity or contact (not limited to sexual intercourse) in which the pastor or pastoral counselor takes advantage of the vulnerability of the parishioner, client or employee by causing or allowing the parishioner, client or employee to engage in sexual behavior with the pastor or pastoral counselor within the professional relationship."

■ Peter Rutter, M.D., *Sex in the Forbidden Zone*, p. 28:

"The forbidden zone is a condition of relationship in which sexual behavior is prohibited because a man holds in trust the intimate, wounded, vulnerable or undeveloped parts of a woman. The trust derives from the professional role of the man as doctor, therapist, lawyer, clergy, teacher or mentor, and it creates an expectation that whatever parts of herself the woman entrusts to him (her property, body, mind or spirit) must be used solely to advance her interest and will not be used to his advantage, sexual or otherwise."

■ Karen Lebacqz and Ronald G. Barton, *Sex in the Parish*, p. 239: "But much of a pastor's work has more the character of being a co-worker in a cause. Pastor and parishioner work together in the mission of the church, just as co-workers might work together for the good of a company. Pastor and parishioner are colleagues who work side by side, not just professional and client who work in hierarchical relationship. To be sure, we have argued that the power of the pastor should never be ignored. But we also make room for the possibility that the pastor and parishioner might meet as co-workers for whom sexual involvement is risky but not impossible. The burden of proof of this equality of power is always on the pastor, and we suggest structural protection for both parishioner and pastor. Within these limits, nonetheless, we would find some exceptions to the forbidden zone."

Definition of sexual misconduct for person engaged in a ministerial role of leadership or pastoral counseling

■ It is sexual misconduct when a person in a ministerial role of leadership (pastor, educator, counselor, youth leader or other position of leadership) engages in sexual contact or sexualized behavior with a congregant, client, employee, student, staff member, member, co-worker, or volunteer within the ministerial relationship. (See *The 1996 Book of Resolutions*, pages 128-132 for the complete resolution "Sexual Abuse Within the Ministerial Relationship and Sexual Harassment Within The United Methodist Church." The resolution is also available on the GCSRW web site: www.umc.org/gcsr.w)

■ Examples of ministerial relationships:

- Pastor/member of church
- Supervisor/church employee
- Youth pastor/youth
- Sunday school teacher/student
- Pastor/student intern
- Pastoral counselor/counselee

■ Examples of sexualized behavior: behavior that communicates sexual interest and/or content, not limited to the following:

- Displaying sexually suggestive visuals
- Making sexual comments or innuendos about one's own or another person's body
- Touching another person's body, hair or clothing
- Touching or rubbing oneself sexually in the presence of another person
- Kissing
- Sexual intercourse

Conclusion

"From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from the one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded." —*Luke 12:48*

"The abuse of power occurs when we use power to gratify our own needs rather than to carry out God's sacred trust. It happens when we refuse to own the responsibility of guardianship that comes with the privilege of power...in our society, we seek power for what we will get out of it, not for what it will enable us to give...until we understand that power is the responsibility to give, instead of the opportunity to take, we will continue to abuse it."

—Ann Smith, *Alive Now*, Sept./Oct., 1996.

Summary of Key Points of 1998 U.S. Supreme Court Decision on Workplace Sexual Harassment

- The decisions strongly suggest that employers will be held liable for any type of workplace sexual harassment (*quid pro quo* or hostile environment) regardless of whether they had actual knowledge of improper workplace conduct, if:
 - They do not have a written policy and/or
 - Staff are not aware of the policy, its enforcement, and the mandate to report any and all instances of sexual harassment.
- Employers, including churches, can defend themselves against sexual harassment claims if they can show that:
 - They have an up-to-date written policy, disseminated to all current and incoming staff members;
 - With known steps in place to uncover and stop harassment (key: a safe place to report harassment and a prompt response, investigation and follow-up); and
 - The complaining staff person failed to take advantage of these protections.
- Prevention starts at the top: top leadership (in the church, this means the bishop, district superintendent and senior pastor or pastor in charge at the local church) should issue annual statements emphasizing the importance of these policies and practices and the determination to require appropriate behavior from all persons in the church.
 - Training, training, training!

These key points are provided by Mary K. Logan, general counsel of the General Council on Finance and Administration. They do not constitute legal advice. Church employers should consult with competent legal counsel with expertise in this area. Cases: *Burlington Industries, Inc. v. Ellerth*; *Faragher v. City of Boca Raton*.

Guidelines for a Local United Methodist Church Policy Statement on Misconduct of a Sexual Nature

Why develop a policy

There are five critical reasons that a local church should work on a policy, if it has not already developed one:

- 1** A local church is a sanctuary, and all leaders and members need to feel safe there; a policy statement is a first step toward preventing misconduct of a sexual nature, because it is a strong pronouncement that the church is a sanctuary and that misconduct will not be tolerated;
- 2** The U.S. Supreme Court in two recent decisions made it clear that policies are crucial in defending sexual harassment litigation;
- 3** When misconduct occurs, the local church is seriously harmed, just as the immediate victims are harmed: members lose their deep religious faith; members are at odds with one another and with the church; and the church may become involved in a painful lawsuit(s); again, a policy statement is a first step toward preventing misconduct of a sexual nature and thus can help avoid these deeply painful and financially devastating problems;
- 4** Policies also serve as an educational tool and a very important part of prevention;
- 5** General Conference has directed local churches to do so.

Key components of a policy

A policy statement for a local church should include the following key components:

- underlying theology;
- definition of sexual abuse;
- definition of sexual harassment;
- a strong statement that sexual abuse and harassment will not be tolerated;
- a commitment to investigate any and all allegations of misconduct;
- a place for misconduct of a sexual nature to be reported (for lay misconduct and clergy misconduct).

The following sample policy statement was developed by the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW) and the General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA) for use as a model by local churches. The policy contains all of the key components listed above, yet it may be modified to fit a church's unique needs. When a church has completed their own draft of a policy statement, we strongly encourage them to have it reviewed by local legal counsel for compliance with state laws and regulations and to ensure that it fully meets their needs.

continued on next page

Sexual Harassment and Clergy Sexual Misconduct *continued from page S2*

The sample policy, very simple in nature, does not describe procedures for addressing misconduct once it has been reported. Many larger churches no doubt will need to address procedures for responding to allegations of misconduct, keeping in mind that there are already procedural requirements set forth in *The 1996 Book of Discipline* with respect to complaints against clergy. We recommend that procedures for addressing misconduct be handled in a document that is separate from the policy statement, for four primary reasons that stem from our day-to-day experience with these matters: (1) policy statements which include detailed procedures may not be read or easily understood by all; (2) policy statements which include detailed procedures are more readily overturned by the Judicial Council; (3) procedures should be more fluid than a policy statement, with opportunity for easy revision to meet the needs of the organization; (4) the purpose of procedures is to give a set of guidelines on the "how to," for those who have the responsibility to address complaints of misconduct.

Notes:

To prevent sexual harassment by volunteers, some churches have chosen to enter into a covenant with volunteers regarding sexual harassment. Church leaders take responsibility to hold one another accountable for their behavior.

It is important to be aware of one's denominational policies regarding sexual harassment and sexual misconduct. In The United Methodist Church, there are policy statements as well as complaint procedures for clergy and diaconal ministers contained in *The 1996 Book of Discipline*.

Education

Education of church leaders and members is just as important as the development and adoption of a policy statement. Education helps church leaders understand how to prevent misconduct and how to respond appropriately to all reports of misconduct of a sexual nature; how to investigate; follow-up steps; etc. Education also helps church leaders and members gain increased awareness of and sensitivity to behaviors that might be viewed as sexual abuse or harassment. There are numerous opportunities for education that are available from various sources within and outside the denomination:

1 Seminars/workshops through an annual conference, experts and professionals in your community, or other sources.

2 Some additional resources include:

a "Ask Before You Hug: Sexual Harassment in the Church": This 31-minute video is intended for use in local churches and congregations as members learn to recognize inappropriate behavior, identify sexual harassment and develop appropriate responses. The video includes several church ministry scenarios with discussion. Available from EcuFilm, 800/251-4091. Note: This video resource is not intended for use in a congregation known to have experienced misconduct.

b "What You in the Congregation Need to Know About . . ." This brochure is designed to help the laity in a local church understand clergy misconduct in the ministerial relationship. Available from GCSRW, 800/523-8390.

c Caring Shepherds: This 18-minute video is designed for use by local church leaders as they begin to identify potential problems of child abuse or sexual misconduct, and develop a prevention program. Available from GCFA, Risk Management Department, 847/869-3345

d Safe Sanctuaries: Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse in the Church. This resource was produced by the General Board of Discipleship in cooperation with the General Board of Global Ministries, 1998. Call 800/685-4370. Order code: DR220.

e Insurance carrier: Some insurance carriers have educational materials designed to assist their insured in preventing sexual abuse and harassment. Call your insurance carrier or broker for more information about what resources might be available.

f Other sources: Not in My Church: This training video on prevention of clergy misconduct and sexual abuse within the ministerial relationship is one of the educational and training resources available from the following interreligious organization: The Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence, 936 North 34th St., Suite 200, Seattle, WA 98103. (206) 634-1903. ■

Call GCSRW for further information...

The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW) welcomes inquiries from individuals and groups throughout The United Methodist Church.

As you plan ways to address sexual harassment and clergy sexual misconduct, please send the Commission copies of materials you have developed.

You may reach us at

GCSRW
1200 Davis
Evanston, IL 60201
(800) 523-8390

Sample Policy on next page

Sample Policy Statement

The _____ United Methodist Church affirms *The 1996 Book of Resolutions*, Sexual Abuse Within the Ministerial Relationship and Sexual Harassment Within the Church, which states that sexual abuse within the ministerial relationship and sexual harassment within the church are incompatible with biblical teachings of hospitality, justice and healing. In accordance with *The 1996 Book of Discipline*, ¶ 65.F, all human beings, both male and female, are created in the image of God, and thus have been made equal in Christ. As the promise of Galatians 3:26-29, states all are one in Christ, we support equity among all persons without regard to ethnicity, situation, or gender.

Sexual abuse within the ministerial relationship occurs when a person within a ministerial role of leadership (pastor, educator, counselor, youth leader or other position of leadership) engages in sexual contact or sexualized behavior with a congregant, client, employee, student, staff member, co-worker or volunteer.

Sexual harassment is any unwanted sexual advance or demand, either verbal or physical, that is reasonably perceived by the recipient as demeaning, intimidating, or coercive. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the creation of a hostile or abusive working environment resulting from discrimination on the basis of gender (the *Book of Discipline* ¶ 65.I).

Sexual abuse within the ministerial relationship involves a betrayal of sacred trust, a violation of the ministerial role and exploitation of those who are vulnerable. Similarly, sexual harassment must be understood as an exploitation of a power relationship rather than as an exclusively sexual issue.

Misconduct of a sexual nature within the life of the Church interferes with its moral mission. _____ United Methodist Church stands in opposition to the sin of misconduct of a sexual nature in the Church and society at large and commits itself to fair and expedient investigation of any charge of sexual misconduct within the church and to take action deemed appropriate and in compliance with the *Book of Discipline*. Further, the _____ United Methodist Church seeks to create an environment of hospitality for all persons, male or female, which is free of misconduct of a sexual nature and encourages respect, equality and kinship in Christ.

Some instances of sexual harassment can be resolved easily and informally between the parties. In all other instances, misconduct of a sexual nature should be reported to the chair of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee and the pastor in charge. If the conduct involves a clergy person, it should be reported to the district superintendent or the presiding bishop.