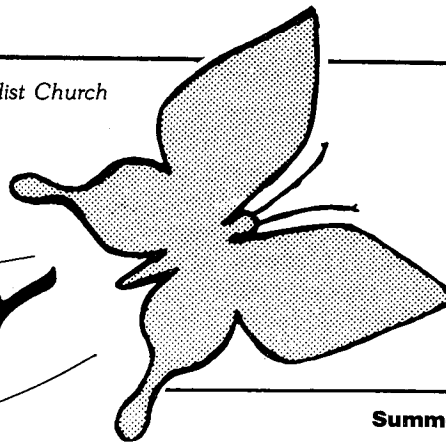


The Flyer



Vol 11, No. 2

Summer 1990

BMCR sponsors leadership symposium

Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR) sponsored a leadership development symposium in Nashville on March 14, 1990. The theme, "Women in a Strange Land," focused on the issue of Black women striving to provide leadership in churches that are not always responsive.

Cecelia M. Long, a member of the general secretariat of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, was one of the leaders. She began her presentation by asking each woman to complete a questionnaire containing a variety of leadership situations. Participants were asked to focus on how they saw themselves as a leader at that time.

A discussion of the topic, "Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Faithful, Black and A Committed Disciple," helped participants recognize the aptness of the topic as a description of their roles as church leaders and the ways in which those roles keep them humble and forever fighting for a cause.

Another discussion focusing on "The Definition of Power" and "How to Generate Power" led participants to understand how negative images of power have caused them to refuse to be labeled as powerful. However, when participants focused on positive images of power, they

could be more open to taking on the power necessary for effective leadership.

At the conclusion of the session, participants committed themselves to support other women in leadership positions and to serve as mentors for women seeking ways to use their gifts. ■

Status and role of women in SWTC

By Judy Seewald chairperson
Southwest Texas Conference CSRW

The Southwest Texas Conference has "come a long way, baby," but there are many ways and times women are still excluded from options in ministry to which they feel called.

We as clergy and lay women are fortunate to find ourselves in a conference which affords women opportunities for service in many ways.

Problems still exist for women called to the ordained ministry because many laity

have never had the opportunity to serve with women in ministry, and there is much uncertainty and apprehension of the unfamiliar. Many congregations have never had the opportunity to even hear a woman preach, much less be in ministry with a woman pastor.

The Commission on the Status and Role of Women (CSRW) would like to have a woman preach in every pulpit in the Southwest Texas Conference during 1991, when the conference emphasis will be on worship.

Many people are surprised and appreciative after hearing a woman preach if they have never had the opportunity before. We as a commission feel that is an important priority for the conference.

The appointment of women as pastors is another area where much work needs to be done as women are introduced to congregations as the appointment process takes place. Many times there are ques-

continued on page 2

In this issue . . .

- **Reflections** on Women's Assembly 1990
- **Pullout:** Assessing our needs
- **Spanish feature:** Ecumenical Decade—Churches in Solidarity with Women
- **And more...** in regular Flyer features



UMW Assembly—a time for connecting and challenging Ressie Bass, left, former member, GCSRW, and Minerva Carcano prepare to lead during the UMW Assembly. See Reflections on page 3.

Focus on the local church:

Bread & Roses—a study, support group

Out of a need for a women's support and study group, as recognized by the local church Status and Role of Women work area (LC/SRW) has emerged Bread & Roses. Bread & Roses is a feminist theology group led by Penny Robbins, member of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW) and associate pastor at St. Paul's United Methodist Church in Stevens Point, WI, Wisconsin Annual Conference.

The 15-member group meets twice a month for intense study of feminist theology, support for one another, and unique worship experience. Bread & Roses participants also discuss church school curriculum and the Sunday morning worship experience, looking for ways to create a more inclusive environment.

While Bread & Roses is comprised primarily of United Methodists, the group includes women from the Lutheran, United Church of Christ, and Catholic traditions, as well.

The group is concerned not only with enriching their own spiritual lives, but also with reaching out to enrich and support the church and community. During March, Bread & Roses sponsored National

Women's History Month events, including a presentation on women's history and a special celebration of women in worship at St. Paul's.

In April, Bread & Roses participated in the Stevens Point "Take Back the Night Rally," a rally and march protesting violence against women.

Status and Role of Women continued from page 1

tions and skepticism which go unresolved in the hustle and bustle of the appointive process. There are now resources available to help churches with questions and concerns about a woman serving as their pastor. Women as pastors have some unique situations in their own lives which need to be addressed through our commission. We hope we can help clergy women with spouses, with those who are single, with those who have children, with those who have suffered pain and experienced loss as a pastor.

Lay women have always had a vital and significant role in the church. Now, those roles can and are being expanded by many "new" opportunities to serve on committees and commissions within the local church, the District, and the Conference. CSRW has surveyed churches in the

Group member Michelle Tollefson says, "The group has been empowering and supportive." Comments group member Paul Hughes, "Because of the supportive nature, all of us have felt free to explore our faith. Feminist theology makes faith come alive." ■

SWTC and found that women serve in a variety of positions of leadership in the local church and are making an impact as never before. We celebrate their willingness to venture into new and exciting ministry for themselves and for the church as a whole.

CSRW in the church hopes every church would consider the opportunity to be in ministry with a woman pastor and to experience the leadership of women in the local church as well. We all need to be reminded that "different" is neither better nor worse, only different, and that God calls all of us to be in ministry together.

Judy Seewald is associate pastor at Northern Hills United Methodist Church, San Antonio, TX. Reprinted by permission from the Southwest Texas Conference edition of The United Methodist Review, May 11, 1990.

FYI

Speakers sought for 1992 laity address

Since the announcement in the Spring 1990 issue, **The Flyer** has received more complete information on the search for a speaker for the laity address to be presented at the 1992 General Conference. Here are the details:

The theme is "Ministry of the Laity: Serving God in Our Private Lives and Public Responsibilities—Connecting Faith and Action." Special consideration should be given to: how laity are currently fulfilling God's call to love and to serve where they live and work; and challenges, possibilities, and strategies for action.

Rules

1. Search is open to all lay persons throughout the world who are member of The United Methodist Church except presenter at 1988 General Conference, oversight committee, screeners, and judges.
2. Each person can submit only one manuscript.
3. Speech should take approximately 20 minutes when presented orally. (This is about eight typed double-spaced pages.)
4. Writer may designate another UM lay person to present the speech.
5. The Laity Address manuscript must be submitted as complete text (not just an outline). It must be typed (double-spaced) in English.
6. The writer's name, address, and phone number must be on a cover page but *not* on the pages of text.
7. A signed manuscript release must also be included on the cover page. It shall read: "I hereby give permission for the National Associate of Annual Conference Lay Leaders and/or the General Board of Discipleship, The United Methodist Church to use this laity Address Search manuscript in whole or in part in print and/or audiovisual resources." (Signature.)
8. Manuscripts must be postmarked between January 1, 1991 and June 30, 1991. No early or late entries will be accepted. Send manuscripts to National Association of Annual Conference Lay Leaders, C/O Section on Ministry of the Laity, General Board of Discipleship, P.O. Box 840, 1908 Grand Avenue, Nashville, TN 37202.

Finalists will present their speeches orally during the Annual Meeting of the NAACLL Feb. 14-16, 1992 where a panel of judges will select the laity Address to be presented at the 1992 General Conference. ■

The Flyer

Summer 1990
Vol. 11, 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 \$5.

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:

Linda Thomas, President * Joetta Rinehart, Vice-President * Winonah McGee, Secretary

General Secretariat:

Kiyoko Kasai Fujii * Cecelia Long * Nancy Grissom Self

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

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Reflections on Women's Assembly 1990

By **Cecelia M. Long**, member, general secretariat, GCSRW

This Women's Assembly, held in Kansas City, MO, in May, was the first which I had attended. I had heard nothing but praise and accolades about the previous assemblies and had prepared myself to be impressed with everything. I think that's the word for my overall evaluation of the assembly—impressive.

With more than 10,000 women and a smattering of men, the throngs of people were a sight to behold. I felt proud that women from the United Methodist Church could be so enthusiastic about attending a common event and had come in strong numbers to be fed spiritually and to be educated about environmental issues.

The lines of people waiting to enter or moving from activity to activity were sometimes difficult to handle. But most people were patient and readily carried on conversations with those around them.

I found the assembly to be an appropriate time to renew existing friendships and begin new ones. I saw women whom I had met at Status and Role of Women workshops. It felt good to know that women from all parts of the church were gathered for an event in which they had mutual interest.

I particularly appreciated the global perspective of the gathering. Women from outside the U.S.A. had been invited as special guests and had several days of meetings to discuss the impact of issues and actions on their people. This example of intentional inclusiveness can be a model for the church.

While it still seemed that U.S. racial ethnic minority women were not largely represented among those assembled, those who did attend were as enthusiastic and supportive of the United Methodist Women as any women attending.

I applaud the Women's Division for making Women's Assembly the success that it was. I sensed that the excitement and energy that women had as they were arriving was multiplied as they were leaving. They had a renewed sense of purpose and mission which will be spread through the country.

As I boarded my plane, I, too, had a new sense of mission and purpose. For the issues of environment, spirituality, women and work, living as single women, the church and the differently abled are some of the common themes which Status and Role of Women also attempts to address. None of us operates in a vacuum. We are all in this together. As we work in our church, it is good to be reminded that our goals can be accomplished if we all work together.

Further reflections

By **Kiyoko Kasai Fujiu**, member, general secretariat, GCSRW

On Thursday, May 3, after a meeting of the Council of Bishops, the Midway flight I took from Detroit to Kansas City made a stopover in Chicago. There I met a number of friends from Northern Illinois Conference on their way to the 1990 Assembly of United Methodist Women. In contrast to the usual anonymity of flight among businessmen, primarily, I had the rare experience of being among a majority of women whose antici-

pation of attending the Assembly charged the plane with the energy of exhilaration, expectation, and joy.

We were among the 10,100 registrants called to be "Witnesses for a New World." It gave me a new sense of connectionalism. Here it was made visible. At this my fourth Assembly, I continue to be awestruck by the tremendous skill and organization which the directors and staff of the Women's Division employ to gather us together.

The Women's Division and the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW) have consulted with each other to encourage cooperation between the Annual Conference Commissions on the Status and Role of Women and the Units of the United Methodist Women (UMW). I was touched deeply by how clearly exemplified and embodied this concern has been in the lives of our former General Commission members whose gifts and graces also were shared in the mission of the UMW.

I risk a faulty memory, yet wish to pass along a warm hug from Doris Handy, Geraldine Heilman, Evelyn Strong, and Georgiana Ward. What a wonderful thrill it was to see Ressie Mae Bass, our immediate past vice president, presiding at the Saturday morning gathering! She is now vice president and chairperson of the Section of Christian Social Concerns.

I continue to ponder the question raised by Minerva Carcaño in the Bible study where she described a drawing made by a 7-year-old El Salvadoran child who had placed a flower in the blood-oozed hand of one killed by bombs from a plane: "What have you learned from children lately?"

What I have valued through the years of itinerating as a clergy spouse in the local units of the UMW is the emphasis upon study and action based upon information so gathered. True also at the Assembly was time for study with opportunity to pre-select from among 63 focus groups. After I had found my way to a table at the "Images of God in a New World" focus group/luncheon meeting, I learned that Carolyn Henninger Oehler was the leader. Soon recognizing that the two small-screened TV monitors would be insufficient for showing the video "Glancing Visions of God," Carolyn with consummate skill combined both presentation and questions for table talk. She led about 350 women in the discovery of how each of us had changed our images of God from childhood to the present. I was impressed that such a great number had chosen this issue and asked probing and thoughtful questions with little sense of acrimony and hostility.

Particularly meaningful for me was the liturgy in the services of worship at the Assembly. Director of Liturgy for the Assembly was Diane A. Mosely, formerly chair of the South Carolina Conference Commission on the Status and Role of Women. Each of us had been asked to bring a small stone selected carefully to represent our "connectedness to God's creation and to the particularities of the earth where you have made your individual journey."

During the Ritual of the Stone, Margie Titus, member of GCSRW, and I exchanged our precious stones. Mine came from Barbara Thompson at a worship time she led at a General Secretaries Meeting and Margie's from her garden.

My hope is expressed in the words of the collect, "Holy

continued on page 4

Options for Action

SEJ hosts SRW workshop

The Southeastern Jurisdictional Administrative Council sponsored a workshop for church leaders of Status and Role of Women (SRW), along with Church and Society and Religion and Race. The workshop took place Aug. 6 to 8 at Lake Junaluska, NC.

The SRW portion included these topics: Equipping Leaders for Ministry (annual conference, district, local); Strategizing for Implementation of Missional Purpose of CSRW; How-to's for Annual, Jurisdictional and General Conference; and Sharing Time: "It Worked for Us."

Leadership was provided by Bishop Leontine Kelly, Peggy Halsey, and Robert McLean. Halsey addressed the topic of families in crisis—the needs of families struggling with such issues as sexual and domestic abuse, incarceration, economic crises of single parent families, drugs and alcohol abuse. The focus was on outreach ministries congregations can develop to respond to these needs.

Pacific Northwest opens dialogue

A major focus for the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference Commission on the Status and Role of Women (AC/CSRW) has been interviews with congregations

Reflections *from page 3*

God of our yesterdays and tomorrows, we celebrate the common heritage we share, and ask Your wisdom and strength as we build a common future together. Our lives have been changed by the witness of strong women in mission who made a difference in their time. Our sisters called upon You as their source of Hope. Empower us as You did them to take risks in our own day."

Little did I dream that day years ago when Theresa Hoover came to speak at a district IMW meeting in Northern Illinois that I would be among 10,100 women, including men, in 1990 stirred and challenged to address the root causes affecting the needs of women and children and to be engaged on the side of those whose voices are not heard. For her faithful commitment, I am truly grateful to Theresa. ■

served by clergy women, ethnic minority clergy, clergy couples, clergy with handicapping conditions, and clergy not currently married.

Through these interviews, the commission has opened dialogue between receiving congregations and pastors by hearing of the concerns, joys and unexpected relationships that have developed.

The commission plans to offer audio tapes to each district for use as conversation starters in an open forum.

Virginia publishes first newsletter

The Virginia Annual Conference Commission on the Status and Role of Women (AC/CSRW) has begun to publish an occasional newsletter to be sent to the AC/CSRW and district CSRW members.

The first issue is dated Nov./Dec. 1989 and carries contributions from several AC/CSRW members. The publication is, for the time being, entitled *The COSROW Cursor* for this reason: "A computer's cursor runs, finds, reveals. This is our dream for our newsletter."

For more information, contact the editor William E. Olewiler, 3810 Stratford Park Dr., SW #8, Roanoke, VA 24018.

Kansas West expands communication links

The Kansas West AC/CSRW has taken two important steps toward increasing their communication links around the conference: they have expanded the number of persons receiving *The Flyer*, and along with its distribution, the conference includes its own newsletter.

A follow-up on 1989 annual conference: The AC/CSRW display featuring the mural "Images of the Family" by Addy Carlberg continues to be available for viewing. Carlberg, who specializes in religious art, has other work on display at St. Luke's United Methodist Church in Wichita.

For more information, contact Diane Watters, St. Luke's UMC, Wichita, KA 67203. (316) 943-1884.

Florida AC/CSRW sponsors workshop

On Feb. 9-11, the Florida Annual Conference Commission on the Status and Role of Women sponsored an inclusive church

workshop.

Held at the Life Enrichment Center in Leesburg, FL, the workshop was designed for local church Status and Role of Women chairpersons and committee members, as well as others seeking an inclusive church.

Workshop leaders included Pat Broughton, Terrie Brown, Jaynie Nell Hickman, Eloise Nenon, and Vivien L. Postell.

For more information, contact Emily Ann Zimmerman, 945 40th Avenue North, St. Petersburg, FL 33703.

Virginia CSRW studies conflict resolution

On March 20, the Virginia Annual Conference Commission on the Status and Role of Women (CSRW) sponsored a workshop on conflict resolution. The district superintendents, conference CSRW, and district CSRW representatives met at the United Methodist Building in Richmond, under the leadership of Dr. James H. Laue, professor of conflict resolution at George Mason University.

Following an introduction to conflict and its resolution, Laue led the group in two role play exercises focused on local church situations.

Then the groups brainstormed needs within the Virginia AC and next steps to be taken.

For further information, contact William Olewiler, Windsor Hills United Methodist Church, 3591 Windsor Road, S.W., Roanoke, VA 24018. (703) 774-4730.

Minnesota holds conference on violence against women

In response to the Minnesota Annual conference commitment "to assist the local church in ministry in the areas of violence including . . . sexual and domestic abuse," the Minnesota AC/CSRW sponsored a conference in January on "Violence Against Women: The Church's Participation and Response."

The conference was designed to educate and empower participants to facilitate change within the church on the issue of violence against women.

For further information, contact Susan Dunlop, 448 Morgan S., Minneapolis, MN 55405. (612) 374-2181.

continued on page 5

All women's ministry Sunday

The Melbourne (FL) District Commission on the Status and Role of Women (CSRW) prepared an information brochure encouraging all churches to participate in "All Women's Ministry Sunday Worship Service."

The district Council on Ministries designated a specific Sunday for the service. The brochure emphasizes the church's need for the full and equal participation and responsibility of all members, men and women, in its ministry, mission, worship, witness, study, nurture, and service.

The brochure also contains a sample order of worship with inclusive language resources.

For more information, contact Lia Icaza-Willetts, CSRW District Representative, 65 Needle Blvd., Merritt Island, FL 32953. (407) 452-2420.

Calendar

Aug. 5-11

A Global Village for Young Women at Grailville. Open to young women, 14-18, the week's experiential learning will feature global awareness, ecological sensitivity, women's concerns and spirituality. Contact Audrey Sorrento, Grailville, 932 O'Bannonville Rd., Loveland, OH 45150. (513) 683-2340.

Sept. 21-23; Dec. 7-9

Women of Vision in the 90's. Enter into a multi-generational, multi-racial, multi-cultural process to evoke your capacity as a woman to connect the inner sources of life with commitments to self, others, the world, and the Mystery which is their context. Contact Audrey Sorrento (see above).

Oct. 19-21

Exploration '90: Is God Calling You? UMC convocation on ordained ministry to be held at Sheraton St. Louis Hotel, Cervantes Convention Center, St. Louis, MO. Contact KilSang Yoon, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, P.O. Box 871, Nashville, TN 37202-0871. (615) 340-7397.

Nov. 16-18

Women's Ways of Knowing. Seminar leader Mary Belenky is co-author of *Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice and Mind*, which has challenged the traditional male models of knowing and learning. The program offers a unique opportunity to gain insight into our own ways of thinking as well as to increase confidence in our abilities as learners, creative thinkers and policy makers. Contact Grailville (see above). ■

Iowa CSRW sets biennial goals

The following program proposals for the 1991-1992 biennium have been approved by the Iowa Conference Commission on the Status and Role of Women (CSRW):

Resourcing the local church work area

Goal To equip the local church Status and Role of Women (SRW) chair and/or the local church SRW members with the resources and training needed in keeping with the *Discipline* 261.8, and to encourage increasing numbers of local churches to fill the position of local church SRW chair.

Strategy

- Provide a subscription to *The Flyer* for every local SRW chair.
- Provide each local SRW chair with a resource packet at the beginning of the year.
- Annually send a letter to local church nominating committees encouraging them to nominate a chair and/or SRW.
- Encourage local church SRW chairs and commissions to visit the conference CSRW meetings.
- Publish and mail an annual news bulletin about what local church SRW chairs and commission are doing in their churches, sharing celebrations and ideas.
- Learn about UMW programs and publicize and support programs of mutual interest to SRW and UMW.

Budget 1991—\$775; 1992—\$775

Participation of women on conference boards/agencies

Goal To encourage full participation of women on conference boards and agencies.

Strategy The Board of Discipleship and each of its divisions shall be monitored by two observers for the 1991-1992 biennium, continuing with the plans set forth last biennium to comprehensively monitor all conference agencies over an extended period of time. Our monitoring will be done in cooperation with the Commission on Religion and Race.

Budget 1991—\$500; 1992—\$500

Seminar development

Goal To offer local churches and district events the opportunity to have training seminars on inclusive language as a justice issue, the development of monitoring and advocacy skills, and CSRW's mandate from the General Conference.

Strategy The commission will continue to find and train seminar leaders on the issues in the goal statement above. Periodic publicity pieces will be distributed to inform individuals in local churches about the offerings, and a list of seminar leaders will be maintained to fill requests.

Budget 1991—\$600; 1992—\$600

Clergywomen's consultation

Goal To provide support to small local churches whose pastors would benefit from the upcoming Clergywomen's Consultation.

Strategy: Travel costs to the event (scheduled for this biennium) will be subsidized for pastors from small local churches who lack an adequate continuing education budget. Funds will be administered by the Scholarship and Loans Committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry.

Budget 1991—\$2,000; 1992—0

Commission administration

Purpose To enable CSRW to function in committees and/or task forces by providing funds for resources, communication, meetings, and administration, and to communicate effectively with other boards and agencies. The budget provides funding for regular CSRW, Leadership Team, and task force meetings to cover mileage, lodging, meals, postage, telephone, minutes, and other administrative expenses. This budget also provides funds for communication with other boards and agencies to fulfill CSRW's role as outlined in the *Discipline*.

Budget 1991—\$2,000; 1992—\$2,000

For more information, contact Iowa Annual Conference Commission on the Status and Role of Women, 1019 Chestnut Street, Des Moines 50309. ■

Ovations

To **Cynthia B. Astle** and **Denise Johnson Stovall**, along with Glen Larum, who received an award for best critical review article in an international journalism competition sponsored by the Associated Church Press. Astle also won an award for the critical review category.

To **Mary Avram**, a doctoral candidate in spiritual formation at the University of the South, Sewanee, TN, who has been named director of spiritual formation at Scarritt-Bennett Center in Nashville.

To **Barbara Dunlap-Berg** and **Cecilia McClure**, whose work with United Methodist Communications received DeRose/Hinkhouse awards at the Religious Communication Congress in April.

To **First United Methodist Church of Germantown**, PA, from Jeanette Stokes, director of The Resource Center for Women and Ministry in the South, that offered this "died-in-

the-wool" Presbyterian the nicest thing that has happened since her venture to the north: the first Sunday she visited, a man from Guatemala was given sanctuary, the congregation was considering becoming a Reconciling Congregation (one that embraces gay and lesbian members), the sermon was about a retreat the men had just had to talk about their lives and feelings, and the prayers were to Our Mother-Father.

To recipients of the **Georgia Harkness Scholarship** for the 1990-91 academic year. Forty-nine women preparing for the ordained ministry in the United Methodist Church were chosen from 101 applicants from 35 annual conferences. Named after Georgia Harkness, a well-known UM teacher and scholar who died in 1974, the scholarships are awarded to second career women over age 35 who show outstanding potential for the ministry. The scholarships are presented annually by the Division of Ordained Ministry.

To **K. Cherie Jones**, pastor of San Marcos UMC in San Diego, CA, who has been named director of the Walk to Emmaus program of The Upper Room.

To **Lynne de Michele**, formerly business editor of the *Mesa (AZ) Tribune*, who has been named communication director for the Indiana Area of The United Methodist Church, and will edit the *Hoosier United Methodist*.

To **Ethel Johnson**, professor emeritus of church administration at the Methodist Theological School and administrative consultant for the Muri Provisional Annual Conference of the UMC in Nigeria, who has been elected the first recipient of the Female Employees of Methesco (FEM) Award.

To **Laura Okumu**, editor of *Interpreter* magazine and liaison to GCSRW, who has been elected to the board of directors of the Associated Church Press.

To **Elaine Stanovsky**, who has been nominated to head the Church Council of Greater Seattle.

To **Mary Woods**, second year student in the Master of Divinity program at Iliff School of Theology, who has been awarded one of The Fund for Theological Education, Inc. Urban Ministry Internship Fellowships for the 1990-91 academic year. ■

Status Report

First women's history research grant awarded

The first Women in United Methodist History \$1,000 research grant has been awarded to Alice G. Knotts of Denver by the church's Commission on Archives and History.

Knotts is the program coordinator at the Institute for Interfaith Studies and the Center for Judaic Studies at United Methodist-related University of Denver. Her project is a study of three women who were leaders in race relations activities, according to Susan M. Eltscher, director of Women's and Ethnic History for the sponsoring commission.

—*Methodists Make New*
April 27, 1990.

Evangelicals affirm women/men equality

More than 200 prominent evangelical Christians from four nations have endorsed a statement affirming the equality of men and women on the basis of biblical teaching.

The declaration seems to support the ordination of women since it declares that "in the New Testament economy, women as well as men exercise the prophetic, priestly and royal functions" and that "man and woman were co-partici-

pants in the Fall: Adam was no less culpable than Eve."

The statement, along with endorsements, appears as a two-page advertisement in the April 9 issue of *Christianity Today*, the evangelical periodical. It was prepared by Christians for Biblical Equality, based in Grove Heights, MN.

Dr. Catherine Clark Kroeger of Brewster, MA, president of the sponsoring group, said some of those who signed the statement have shown "real courage" in doing so. She said they "risk job loss, condemnation from their own denominations and possible curtailment of ministry."

—Religious News Service
April 9, 1990.

YSF funds teen male program

A 1990 Youth Service Fund project, sponsored by the United Methodist National Youth Ministry Organization (NYMO), provides \$1,500 to fund a pregnancy prevention program for teenage males.

This program targets high risk teenage males in Albuquerque, NM. The youth are provided a supportive environment to question peer and media values and to reflect on responsibility and respect.

—Brochure on 1990 National Youth Service Fund Projects. ■

Attention — local church SRW work areas

The Flyer wants to help you—local church Status and Role of Women work areas—share your ideas and successes with other local churches. We plan to feature your stories as a source of inspiration for other churches.

As you think about what you can share, keep in mind that we are particularly interested in how local churches have developed programs and support for issues that affect women: child care, rural women's concerns, single parents, sexual abuse, and related concerns. We also welcome ideas about how local churches serve as advocate, monitor, and catalyst for women in their churches.

Please write a few paragraphs or an outline of your story. Be sure to provide the name and phone number of a contact person so that the editor may follow-up. Also provide the name, address, and phone of the church.

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

Decenio Ecumenico Solidaridad de las Iglesias con las Mujeres 1988 n1998

Note : English translation appeared in *The Flyer*, November 1989.

El Consejo Mundial de Iglesias decidió en enero de 1987 iniciar un Decenio Ecumenico de Solidaridad de las Iglesias con las Mujeres.

Este Decenio proporciona un marco a largo plazo para realizar acciones en un espíritu de solidaridad con las mujeres y es un signo del aumento de la sensibilización y la responsabilidad en el seno del movimiento ecumenico respecto a esta cuestión.

Les invitamos a aportar sus contribuciones a este Decenio.

¿Cual es el objetivo?

El objetivo del Decenio Ecumenico de Solidaridad de las Iglesias con las Mujeres (1988-1998) es:

1. capacitar a las mujeres para que se opongan a las estructuras opresivas que existen en la comunidad mundial, en sus países y en sus iglesias;
2. afirmar—compartiendo la labor de dirección y de adopción de decisiones, el quehacer teologico y la espiritualidad—las contribuciones decisivas de las mujeres en sus iglesias y comunidades;
3. dar a conocer las perspectivas y acciones de las mujeres en esfuerzos y lucha por las justicia, la paz y la integridad de la creación;
4. capacitar a las iglesias para que se liberen del racismo, el sexismo y el clasismo, y abandonen las prácticas discriminatorias para con las mujeres;
5. alentar a las iglesias a que emprendan actividades de solidaridad con las mujeres.

¿Quien realizara el trabajo?

El Decenio Ecumenico es una iniciativa del CMI pero no se limita a esta organización. Los consejos ecumenicos nacionales y regionales están suministrando ya información sobre el Decenio. En distintos países, reuniones y consultas nacionales están coordinando actividades. Las secciones de la mujer de los consejeros cristianos o de las iglesias miembros del CMI proporcionarán mas información.

Para que Decenio alcance sus objetivos, habrá que reunir los conocimientos y experiencias de mujeres y hombres de orígenes y actividades muy diversos. En particular, invitamos a participar en el Decenio a:

- las congregaciones locales, grupos y asociaciones demujeres en el marco de las iglesias; teólogos, dirigentes eclesiásticos, responsables de la adopción de decisiones y colaboradores de las iglesias;
- organizaciones ecumenicas de mujeres; consejos ecumenicos locales, nacionales, regionales e internacionales;
- movimientos femeninos; mujeres de grupos de juventud y movimientos estudiantiles, sindicatos y grupos de acción; mujeres de diferentes orígenes religiosos.

¿No se han resuelto ya la mayoría de los problemas?

¿Es realmente necesario prestar tanta atención a las mujeres? ¿No ha sido suficiente el Decenio de las Naciones Unidas para la Mujer (1975-1985)?

Muchas de nosotras esperábamos que el Decenio de las Naciones Unidas produjera una mejora radical de la situación

de la mujer. En lugar de ello, la mayoría de las mujeres se encuentran en condiciones más difíciles que hace quince o veinte años. El aumento de los gastos militares y las injusticias del sistema económico (como se refleja, por ejemplo, en la crisis de la deuda y las actividades de las sociedades transnacionales) han empeorado la situación. La

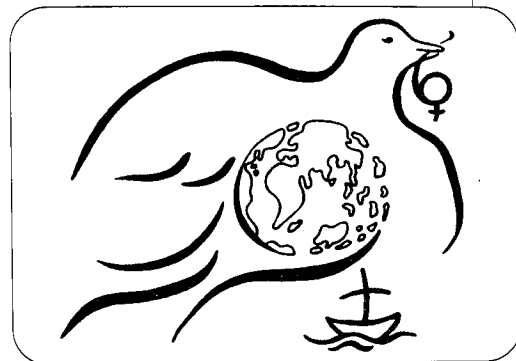
mayoría de las personas, tanto hombres como mujeres, siguen aceptando la cultura patriarcal que predomina en el mundo entero como algo <<natural>>.

En su mensaje a la Conferencia de las Naciones Unidas celebrada en Nairobi en 1985, el CMI describió los problemas a que han de enfrentarse los gobiernos, las iglesias y los movimientos:

- En un período de recesión económica, las mujeres se encuentran entre los primeros trabajadores que se quedan sin trabajo;
- Las mujeres que trabajan en el sector industrial carecen a menudo de protección y reciben los salarios más bajos tanto en las industrias locales como en las multinacionales, que explotan la situación vulnerable de la mujer.
- En los proyectos de desarrollo se concede una atención menor a las mujeres de las zonas rurales y no se les consulta sobre sus necesidades básicas.
- Entre las víctimas de las pruebas nucleares se encuentran las mujeres, que sufren un aumento de los abortos espontáneos.
- El apartheid y otras formas de racismo oprimen de un modo especial a las mujeres, quienes sufren así con frecuencia una doble o triple opresión: por ser mujeres, por pertenecer a una raza discriminada y por ser pobres.
- Las mujeres sufren los efectos más fuertes del hambre y la guerra ya que llevan sobre sus espaldas la responsabilidad mayor de la familia.
- A medida que la situación socioeconómica se deteriora y la frustración de los hombres aumenta, son mayores los abusos sexuales y la violencia contra las mujeres.
- El incremento de la pobreza, la extensión de las bases militares y el turismo sexual han producido un aumento de la prostitución, que afecta a mujeres cada vez más jóvenes.

A la luz de todo lo que precede, es evidente que queda mucho por hacer. ¡La lucha continúa! Las iglesias, que constituyen un movimiento mundial, tienen que participar en esta lucha junto a las mujeres de la base, tanto en las zonas urbanas como en las rurales.

Están llamadas a crear un ministerio destinado a capacitar, compartir y curar, y a denunciar el espíritu jerárquico y la opresión de que son víctimas las mujeres dentro de sus propias estructuras. ■



Resources

The Structure of the United Methodist Church. This videotape, developed by Nancy Grissom Self, a member of the GCSRW general secretariat, presents a discussion and graphic representation of the church's organization for outreach, nurture, vocation, and advocacy. Available from Ecufilm, 810 12th Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37203. 1-800-251-4091. \$24.95.

Job's Daughters: Women and Power. Joan Chittister (Paulist Press), 1990. An historical and sociological look at women's history in the church and the world, clearly written and filled with insight. It shows how women must take part in the process of empowering themselves. For this procedure to be successful, all women, especially those in developing nations, must be involved at all levels. Paper, \$3.95.

Parenting for Peace and Justice: Ten Years Later. Kathleen and James McGinnis (Orbis Books), 1990. Revised and updated version offers viable solutions to the perennial problem: how to act for justice without sacrificing our children, how to build family community without isolating ourselves from the world. Paper, \$9.95. (800) 258-5838.

Redesigning Women. Winter 1989 issue of *Media & Values*. Issue is designed as an education resource for classes and discussion groups. Addresses not only traditional topics such as stereotyping and employment but also emerging issues such as women as newsmakers, the myth of female "technophobia," and how women are using media for social change. Single copies are \$4.00; discounts for bulk orders. Contact Media & Values, 1962 S. Shendoah, Los Angeles, CA 90034. (213) 559-2944.

When Love Gets Tough: The Nursing Home Dilemma. Doug Manning (Harper & Row), 1990. A book dedicated to those families who confront the decisions and changes involved in caring for aging parents and relatives. Manning helps families to understand the needs of the aging relative, and then make the difficult decisions necessary to meet those needs without guilt. Now available in paperback; previously published as *The Nursing Home Dilemma*. \$7.95.

Wisdom Distilled from the Daily: Living the Rule of St. Benedict Today. Joan D. Chittister, O.S.B. (Harper & Row), 1990. Chittister presents The Rule of Benedict as a living guide which affirms the spiritual, psychological, and social values of

work, leisure, hospitality, community, listening, humility, stability, obedience, service, and care for the earth. \$15.95.

Books by Heather Murray Elkins: The Weaver. Uses the image of a single piece of fabric that is thread through Jesus' life. \$3.50

Woman and the Word. Includes Mary and Elizabeth, the woman at the well whose name is not given, and Martha and Mary. The poems can be used alone or with dramatic interpretation. \$5.95.

Testimony. Six short pieces that focus on Hebrew matriarchs and patriarchs. \$6.95.

Available from Resource Center for Women and Ministry in the South, P.O. Box 7725, Durham, NC 27708. (919) 687-0408. ■

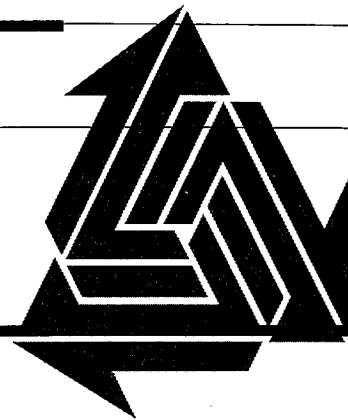


UMW Assembly Sachi Kajivara, left, retired, regional staff of United Methodist Women, and Connie Takamine reminisce before a UMW Assembly meeting. See Reflections on page 3.



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

Assessing Our Needs



What concerns do you have? How can the church help?

In its role as advocate, monitor, and catalyst, the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW) provides resources to annual conference Commissions on the Status and Role of Women (AC/CSRW) and thus to local church Status and Role of Women work areas (LC/SRW) as they develop programming for women in the pews.

In the following pages, *The Flyer* offers an outline of how to develop a needs assessment survey as one important step toward developing effective programming.

While space limitations prevent us from providing a comprehensive plan for survey development and implementation, we do offer excerpts from actual surveys—one used in a local church, one used in an annual conference.

The examples contained in this discussion are taken from surveys and follow-up reports sent to GCSRW from two sources: The local church survey was conducted by St. Paul's United Methodist Church in Cedar Rapids, IA, in May 1989. The annual conference survey was conducted by the South Dakota Annual Conference.

Why survey the needs of women?

Any survey should explain to potential respondents why the survey is being conducted and why their participation is important. This rationale helps to motivate the community to respond and explains what action will be taken following the analysis of the results.

A cover letter attached to the survey, an introductory paragraph at the beginning of the survey—a variety of means may be used to communicate the purpose of the study.

The survey conducted by St. Paul's UMC was mailed to the adult women of the church, approximately 1,000. The cover letter accompanying the survey is addressed "To All Women at St. Paul's." In it, the members of the Status and Role of Women Work Area explain in the opening paragraph:

The Status and Role of Women Work Area is asking for your help in determining the needs and concerns of women members in our church community. Although it may seem exclusive to survey only the women of the church, we know that your needs are actually the needs of the whole church, for your needs and concerns are interwoven with those of men, children, parents and extended families. Typically, you are the spiritual and Christian leaders in your homes and relationships, nurturing and supporting the emotional needs of many other people, and therefore you are highly qualified to help us assess needs.

The letter explains in a later paragraph what will be done with the results:

As a result of this needs assessment, we hope to identify areas where we as a church can be of support to you. Our committee will compile and analyze the results. Based on these results, we will ini-

tiate programs, workshops, and support groups to respond to your needs. We will also share the results with the professional staff of St. Paul's and with appropriate work areas for further ministries. Finally, we will monitor these work areas to encourage that they respond to your identified needs. Our report will be available to any of you who wish to read it after we have compiled the results of the survey.

The South Dakota Commission on the Status and Role of Women made their survey available at the registration table at the 1988 Annual Conference. The introductory paragraph at the top of the survey read, in part:

If you are a WOMAN and a MEMBER of South Dakota's UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, the Commission on the Status and Role of Women is interested in what you think are the greatest issues facing women today. . . . We plan to use the results of this survey in our program planning for the future.

What questions can a survey contain?

St. Paul's UMC survey was divided into eight areas of concerns, each on a separate page, with the exception of two areas that were combined on page seven:

- Individual concerns
- Health concerns
- Spiritual concerns
- Relationship concerns—spouse/partner
- Relationship concerns—parent(s)/extended family
- Relationship concerns—child(ren)
- Relationship concerns—friends
- Lifestyle/career concerns

The South Dakota AC/CSRW survey focused on four general issues:

- Regarding the church
- Regarding family/marriage/parenting/home life
- Regarding employment
- Regarding personal life

Both surveys provided a means for listing concerns according to the priority in an individual's life. And both contained additional space for participants to add their individual comments and concerns.

The local church survey also contained a section on demographic data to give a basis for determining the concerns of particular groups within the church and to compare whether the responding group was representative of all women in the church. The demographic information included age, living status, and length of membership at St. Paul's.

Can participants respond anonymously?

Most surveys offer participants an opportunity to respond without signing their names. By offering participants anonymity, surveys may receive responses that are more honest and uninhibited, and thus receive information that is more useful.

In the cover letter, St. Paul's UMC wrote:

We'd like to assure you that this survey will be confidential. PLEASE DO NOT SIGN YOUR NAME. Although individual surveys will be read and tabulated only by members of the Status and Role of Women Work Area, we want to insure complete anonymity of participants.

The end of the South Dakota AC survey carried the sentence: "We respect your right to remain anonymous; sign only if you wish to."

How can a survey elicit usable responses?

Two key factors contribute to how usable the responses and thus how useful the information received from a survey will be: the design and the instructions. Survey design has evolved into a combination art and science that continues to be tested and developed by professional researchers. For a volunteer organization, survey design can become a seemingly insurmountable task, although it does not need to be.

A local church committee can benefit a great deal from the experience of others, such as those who have designed the surveys discussed here. A committee may begin by determining exactly what kinds of information they want to elicit.

From there, they may develop a draft of the survey instrument and ask several persons who will not be polled by the actual survey to complete the draft survey. Responses from this draft survey can help the committee determine areas that need

refinement, such as instructions, ways of responding, specificity of individual questions.

Often a committee can seek out the assistance of local business and college professionals who may be experienced in survey design.

Instructions at the top of page one of St. Paul's UMC survey specify the following:

On pages 1-7, you will be asked to check appropriate categories in relation to a variety of concerns. For example, the first area of concern is "INDIVIDUAL CONCERNS." The first category listed below that general area is "Feel overwhelmed/burned out."

—If this is an area of concern for you, CHECK YES IN THE FIRST COLUMN.

—If this is not an area of concern for you, CHECK NO IN THE SECOND COLUMN.

In the South Dakota AC survey, the opening paragraph includes these instructions:

We would very much appreciate it if you would fill out the following survey in the following way: first go through the survey and mark those issues you are concerned about, *adding your own*, which we have neglected to list, in the blank spaces in each category; **CHECK THESE ITEMS TO THE LEFT OF THE ITEM NUMBER**; second, go back over the items you checked and **PRIORITIZE EACH ONE TO THE RIGHT BY CHECKING EITHER 1st, 2nd, or 3rd**. PLEASE RETURN THESE SURVEYS TO THE BOX PROVIDED AT THE REGISTRATION TABLE.

How can a survey be structured?

To help visualize how these sample surveys have been developed, we include below one complete section from each survey. These sample sections illustrate how similar information can be elicited in a wide variety of ways and in overlapping categories. Of course, questions may be constructed in dozens of other ways.

St. Paul's UMC

INDIVIDUAL CONCERNS

In my personal life, these are areas of ONGOING concern:

1. Feel overworked/burned out
2. Feel unappreciated
3. Feel there is not enough time to pursue my own interests
4. Feel alienated from family members/friends
5. Feel I am not meeting my life goals
6. Feel there is too much time on my hands
7. Feel socially isolated/lonely
8. Feel discriminated against racially
9. Feel discriminated against sexually

YES	NO
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

- 10. Feel anxious about supporting myself financially
- 11. Feel anxious about finding a life partner who shares my values and beliefs
- 12. Feel stress due to emotional/verbal abuse as a child
- 13. Feel stress due to physical/sexual abuse as a child
- 14. Often feel unfocused anger toward myself and others
- 15. Other (Please specify)

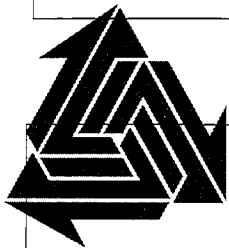
YES NO

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

The church can help me with my concerns in this area by

The church is already helping me with my concerns in this area by

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



South Dakota AC

A concern of mine: **Women's Issues:**

B. REGARDING FAMILY/MARRIAGE/PARENTING/HOME LIFE

1st 2nd 3rd

_____	1. managing 2 lives—homemaker/parent and outside work	_____	_____	_____
_____	2. survival (personal, emotional, spiritual)	_____	_____	_____
_____	3. divorce and the reshaping of a family	_____	_____	_____
_____	4. unwanted pregnancy	_____	_____	_____
_____	5. single parenting	_____	_____	_____
_____	6. the farm crisis (effects on the family, individuals)	_____	_____	_____
_____	7. marriage (enrichment, problem-solving, etc.)	_____	_____	_____
_____	8. sexuality	_____	_____	_____
_____	9. parenting in a nuclear age	_____	_____	_____
_____	10. child care	_____	_____	_____
_____	11. divorce	_____	_____	_____
_____	12. living alone after loss of spouse and/or children	_____	_____	_____
_____	13. support systems	_____	_____	_____
_____	14. abused and battered women	_____	_____	_____
_____	15. choosing to stay at home	_____	_____	_____
_____	16. abortion	_____	_____	_____
_____	17. choosing not to have children	_____	_____	_____
_____	18. adoption	_____	_____	_____
_____	19. racial issues including the inter-racial family	_____	_____	_____
_____	20. basic parenting skills/support group(s) for parents	_____	_____	_____
_____	21. in-law or family-of-origin problems	_____	_____	_____

What elements are important in closing sections?

A few considerations can help bring a questionnaire to a close: Include some indication of appreciation for the participant's responses. (This thank you may also be included as part of a cover letter.) Include space for further comments and suggestions. And design questions for demographic information to help determine who the respondents are, not by name, but by other descriptive information. Demographic information can also be used to compare responses among different age groups, living situations, and other significant factors.

St. Paul's UMC closed the questionnaire in the following way:

St. Paul's UMC

Please make comments on any other areas of need or concern in your life or the life of friends and family that we may not have specifically outlined already.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION:

Age: 18-30 _____ 31-55 _____ Over 55 _____

Living status: Always single _____ Living w/partner _____

Married _____ Separated _____ Divorced _____

Spouse/partner deceased _____

Length of membership at St. Paul's:

Less than one year _____ 1-5 years _____ 5-10 years _____

Over 10 years _____

If you need contact with a counselor or support group for any area of crisis or need in your life, you can contact [name] or any other member of the church's professional staff at [phone] for information about community and church resources.

Thank you for contributing your time and experiences to this needs assessment. Our purpose is to further God's work in our congregation through identifying and meeting needs. Please return this assessment to the church office in the enclosed pre-stamped and addressed envelope.

What do the responses mean?

Analyzing the responses may be as challenging a task as designing the survey instrument. Certainly, from the beginning of the design process, planners need to keep in mind the kinds of information they expect to receive and the ways they expect to analyze it.

While it is beyond the scope of this piece to summarize the many choices for data analysis, we can share a few samples of analysis and interpretation.

Here follow excerpts from the South Dakota AC report:

Sixty-one women filled out a survey which asked them to indicate both which issues they are interested in and whether they deserved first, second or third place priority. Items were weighted according to the priority given by the participant, as they were totalled.

The item which received the most points was . . . [Then follows a discussion of each of the top ranking issues.]

The remainder of the report discusses the average score for items in a category and thus how categories rank in priority. The written comments are also discussed and quoted to some extent, according to common themes and overall content.

Analysis of St. Paul's UMC survey is considerably more extensive, including a lengthy report followed by complete tabulated data in appendices. In general, the report covers priority concerns, areas of concern, statistics and analysis, recommendations, and observations. The appendices include a copy of survey; tabulation totals of survey questions; demographic results according to age, living status, and length of membership; comparison of survey response to total female membership; written comments; and respondents' lists of priority concerns and other comments.

A few more tips

- Begin the planning process well in advance of the date for distributing the questionnaires. More careful planning means higher quality data and thus more usable results.
- Be careful to explain to participants why their help is important.
- Assure participants of their anonymity and the confidentiality of the surveys themselves. Then keep your promise.
- Make contingency plans for a second distribution in case the first round does not yield a significant response.
- Seek the assistance of those who have planned and implemented successful surveys.
- Contact those who were kind enough to share their experience with *The Flyer*:

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Status and Role of Women Work Area
1340 Third Avenue S.E.
Cedar Rapids, IA 52406
(319) 363-2058

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423 No. Pine
Vermillion, SD 57069
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