

get to know our new women bishops

Hope Ward • Deb Kiesey • Jane Middleton • Mary Virginia Taylor • Sally Dyck • Minerva Carcaño

In July, United Methodist jurisdictional conferences elected six women bishops, a record number for a quadrennium. To get to know them better, *The Flyer* asked them:

- Who are your role models?
- What are the gifts you bring to the episcopacy?
- What particular challenges do clergywomen face in the UMC today?
- If you hadn't become a pastor, what might you have been?
- In 50 years, how do you wish to be remembered?

Hope Morgan Ward

53, assigned to the Mississippi Conference

Role models: My parents, who are committed United Methodists in a small rural church in eastern North Carolina—energetic, salt-of-the-earth people who were married at 18 and had five children by age 29. I learned from my parents a strong sense of family, teamwork, and community.

Gifts: A strong sense of God's creativity that continues in and through us. I also have a strong sense of God's abundant provision. I enjoy creating with other people the next faithful steps. I enjoy serendipity, watching ideas and resources come from surprising places.

Challenges: Our small membership churches are places where women are often appointed. Resistance continues in many smaller congregations to the appointment of a clergywoman. Large membership churches continue as a last frontier for clergywomen. Yet my recent experience is



Photo by Bill Norton, North Carolina Conference

Sam Wynn, the first Native American episcopal nominee in the Southeastern Jurisdiction, congratulates Hope Morgan Ward.

one of increasing openness of larger churches to the leadership of clergywomen.

Churches are more likely to generalize about women than about men. When the appointment of a clergywoman does not work out, churches are tempted to respond that they have "tried a woman and it did not work." When a clergyman's appointment does not work out, that sort of generalization about men seldom occurs.

When I talk with clergywomen who have young children, I continue to hear their struggle with stretching their life space.

Alternate path: As a child, I dreamed of being an archaeologist. Also, I love artistry of language and might have been a teacher of literature.

Remember me as a person who trusted that God's creativity continues in us and as a person of faithful courage.

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one more step **forward**

I'm not yet 50 years old, but there were some things I never dared dream that the United Methodist Church would accomplish in my lifetime. It reminds me that my faith is puny compared to the miracles God does every day.

This summer, for instance, our denomination elected six women as bishops, including the first Latina. It was only 24 years ago that the election of our first woman bishop, the late Marjorie Matthews, made international headlines. And now we have fifteen active and four retired women bishops giving witness and leadership across the church.

True, we still have miles to go. Some annual conference cabinets still allow congregations the discretion to refuse a woman pastor or rebuff a cross-racial appointment. Women are still bumping against glass ceilings when we pursue certain posts in the denomination. And women and people of color in two jurisdictional conferences this summer claim they were excluded and marginalized from the process of naming representatives to general church agencies.

Still, God is doing a new thing through our church. As more women move into positions of influence over our ministry, mission, theology and biblical interpretation, our understanding and application of the faith becomes more whole. And a more holistic understanding of our Christian life and work is good for the church—and the whole of God's world.

The Book of Acts has promised, "Your sons and daughters shall prophesy." The consecration of six woman bishops in a single year is a reminder that even centuries of institutional sexism are no match for the will of God. And that you can't keep a good prophetic down. Somebody ought to say, "Amen!"

—M. Garlinda Burton, interim general secretary, GCSRW

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The Flyer

sept-nov 2004

Vol. XXV, No. 1



The Flyer is published four times yearly by the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW) in The United Methodist Church. Primary distribution of The Flyer is through the Annual Conference Commissions on the Status and Role of Women and Response Network Resource Teams. Women outside the United States, please ask your bishops' office to make sure you get The Flyer.

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The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, an agency of the worldwide United Methodist Church, acts as an advocate, catalyst, and monitor to ensure the full participation and equality of women in the church.

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Individual subscriptions of The Flyer are \$10 (U.S.) annually. Send a check with your mailing address, e-mail address and phone number to: The Flyer, GCSRW, 1200 Davis St., Evanston IL 60201. Direct change-of-address information to the above address.

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

Printed on processed chlorine-free, recycled paper.





Joy erupts as Mary Virginia Taylor's election is announced.

Photo by Bill Norton, North Carolina Conference

Mary Virginia "Dindy" Taylor

54, assigned to the South Carolina Conference

Role models: During my youth, my pastor (now retired bishop) Bevel Jones and Bill Cole, the director of Christian education, at Decatur (Georgia) First United Methodist Church were very important in my Christian formation. Two persons I met at Candler School of Theology continue to have a profound impact upon my life: my friend Brenda Carroll and my husband Rusty Taylor.

Gifts: I think I bring joy, hospitality, consensus building, and relational skills. I value people. This life is a gift, and the people in it are gifts.

Challenges: I think the acceptance of women as pastors continues to be a challenge for clergywomen. There are still churches that are reluctant to give women a chance. Appointments should be made by matching the needs of local churches with the gifts and graces of pastors. There should be no other criteria.

Alternate path: I might have been a counselor or a teacher. I chose my undergraduate degree in psychology because I wanted to do something with people.

Remember me as one who was faithful and loved the church. ●

Jane Middleton

63, assigned to Central Pennsylvania Conference

Role model: My grandmother was very influential in my life. She completed eighth grade in school, but since she was the oldest child she had to quit school to help with her family. She earned her Licensed Practical Nursing degree and began a nursing career. A member of the Evangelical United Brethren Church, she was a person of deep faith.

Gifts: Others say I am compassionate and have a gentle spirit. I have deeply held opinions and beliefs, but I am also open to the ideas of others. I can be tough when I need to be, but I also believe we must be open to the Spirit working in every person.

Challenges: One challenge is complacency that results from women having been given leadership in many aspects of our church life. In the 27 years since my ordination as a deacon, I have seen many changes.

As women have moved into leadership positions, it is easy to say that women have arrived. But I am the first woman elected bishop from my annual conference and the first to serve the Central Pennsylvania Conference. I know that I still will not be given authority automatically in some places. Women have to earn authority in ways that men do not.

Clergywomen serving as associate pastors typically are much affirmed. Women who serve as pastors in charge must do very well to be found acceptable. Women who serve as senior pastors must be superb, for they face lots of resistance, especially from the congregation.

Alternate path: I might have been an artist. I take precious little time to exercise that gift for drawing and sculpture.

Remember me as one who brought people together to recognize their unity in Christ. We are a church in desperate need of claiming our unity in Christ so that we can move forward in our mission, which is not inward, but outward. ●



Jane Middleton

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Sally Dyck

50, assigned to the Minnesota Conference

Role models: So many laywomen, especially in my early years of ministry, took me under their wing. Some are not United Methodist; all gave me a chance.

Gifts: I love Christ and the church, although I am engaged in a "lover's quarrel" with the church. Because we love the church, we get passionate about our differences, but seek to find unity within them. Other gifts are my leadership and my experience of bringing diverse people together.



Photo by Kay Panovec, East Ohio Conference

After her election Sally Dyck, center, is escorted to the stage by Bishops Jonathan Keaton and Judith Craig.

Challenges: So many forms of media—Christian but not United Methodist—have created a backlash against women in the church. This backlash has undermined the UMC that says we are all called to use our gifts. We need clergy and laity to remind the world that gender is not a basis for discrimination.

Alternate path: I might have been a district attorney. I believe everybody needs to have their cause brought to light and deserves due process. My mother taught me to root for the underdog!

Remember me as someone who has inspired a lot of people to live with compassion, justice, and grace. I hope I can be part of a movement that helps the church reach out and make disciples of Jesus Christ and make the changes that need to happen. ●



Photo courtesy Dakotas Connection

Deb Kieseley and Brad, her spouse, celebrate her consecration as bishop.

Deb Kieseley

53, assigned to the Dakotas Conference

Role model: Anna Howard Shaw has inspired me with her ministry, her courage, her stick-to-it-iveness, and her willingness to speak and not count the cost.

Gifts: My ability to listen and build bridges with people of differing theologies. I have learned so much from those with whom I disagree. And my deep love and appreciation for the local church. I also bring a sense of joy. I love what I do.

A gift that is often hard for others to understand is my disability. It has taught me that I cannot do things alone. It has also given me compassion for others who may not have voice. I could look at my disability as a problem, but I see it as a gift that has helped shape who I have become.

Challenges: I think the myth of being a superwoman persists. I continue to watch younger women struggle with balancing this career to which they are called with the demands of families.

Also, our system continues to struggle to appoint women as lead pastors of large churches. It seems that large churches often have clear expectations of who and what they want. Sometimes parishioners do not anticipate that women will be able meet those expectations.

Alternate path: I would probably have done something in music. I would still be involved with the church, but I probably would have taught.

Remember me as a person of integrity who tried to live by what I believed. Also as someone who trusted God's faithfulness throughout my life. ●

Minerva Carcaño

50, assigned to Desert Southwest Conference and Korean Mission

Role models: My mother Rebecca and my grandmother Sophia, traditional Mexican women, who were strong in the faith and gave witness to God's grace and mercy. Hosea Galindo, the pastor in my home church, preached that God loved those of us in this very poor community. It mattered to God that we did not have what we needed and did not receive justice.

Gifts: Spiritual groundedness and spiritual formation. I have known no other life than being grounded in faith. I want to be responsible in lovingly sharing the faith with a pastoral heart.

Challenges: We have reached a level of comfort with the assumption that our church accepts women's gifts. We aren't there yet. We continue to expect women to follow male models of strength and power. Women bring other gifts of nurture, care, and spiritual discipline. Women

have learned how to negotiate because we have had to negotiate to survive. Also, I am afraid that some women have attained power in the church and have lost their commitment to share power.

Alternate path: This ministry is where I have always meant to be, for I felt a call when I was five years old.

Remember me as a person of prophetic and courageous faith who inspired others to be courageous with their faith. ●



Photo by Wally Athey, Desert Southwest Conference

Bishop Carcaño offers the benediction at the consecration service in Los Altos, Calif. Youth choir is in background.

Wonder Woman

Name: Jacquelyn Dorice Hall

Home church: Metropolitan United Methodist Church, Montgomery, Ala.

Accomplished: A graduate of Alabama State University, who has received the 2004-05 Judith L. Weidman Racial Ethnic Minority Fellowship awarded by United Methodist Communications. She is working in the North Alabama Conference from July 1 to June 30.



Role models: "My family has shown me that life is not about trying to obtain material things. It's about being grateful for what you have, knowing how to appreciate it, and acknowledging the One who made it possible."

Motto/wise words: Ephesians 2:19: "My daughter, you are my workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works. I've already prepared you in advance for everything I've planned especially for you."

Clerical Corner

Diversity among U.S. bishops

UMC has 50 active bishops in five U.S. jurisdictions (plus the bishop of Puerto Rico) and 18 in Central Conferences. In the U.S., 21 bishops retired in 2004, and 21 new bishops were elected.

2005-2008 QUADRENNIUM

JURISDICTION	TOTAL ACTIVE	WHITE		RACIAL ETHNIC		WOMEN
		Men	Women	Men	Women	
North Central	10	3	3	3	1	4
Northeastern	11+	3	2	5	1	3
South Central	11	6	2	3	0	2
Southeastern	13	8	3	2	0	3
Western	6	1	1	2	2	3
Total	51+	21	11	15	4	15

2001-2004 QUADRENNIUM

JURISDICTION	TOTAL ACTIVE	WHITE		RACIAL ETHNIC		WOMEN
		Men	Women	Men	Women	
North Central	10	4	2	3	1	3
Northeastern	11+	3	2	5	1	3
South Central	11	6	2	3	0	2
Southeastern	13	9	1	3	0	1
Western	6	2	1	2	1	2
Total	51+	24	8	16	3	11

Note: Bishop of Puerto Rico is, per *The 1996 Book of Discipline*, a member with voice, not vote. He is included in "active" and "racial ethnic male."

For more historic information on women bishops, visit our website: gcsr.org.



Photo by Kay Panoyec, East Ohio Conference



speaking of women bishops...

Here's a book just published by Abingdon Press (800-251-3320) in April: *Leading Women: Stories of the First Women Bishops of United Methodism*. Compiler Judith Craig was among the first three women to be elected bishop in the United Methodist Church. She and Leontine T.C. Kelly were elected in 1984, following the election of the late Marjorie Matthews in 1980.

In photo above, Bishop Craig prays over Sally Dyck at her consecration. Dyck was one of six women bishops elected this year.

COPY DEADLINES

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Oct. 29'04.....Dec.-Feb.'05 issue

Send to: Bonny Stalnaker Roth,
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UMMS photo by Maxim Kostroukov

Left to right, Julie O'Neal, Ciona Rouse, David Moreno, Lillian Smith, and John Miyahara at the final meeting of the Shared Mission Focus on Young People and the United Methodist Youth Organization Aug. 6-8 in Nashville, Tenn.

new young people's division marks a new era girls, women hold important place in new ministry

The formation of the Division on Ministries with Young People marks a new era for young people's ministries in the UMC. Unlike any previous structure, the division brings youth, young adults, and adult workers with young people around a common table to hold the church accountable to the needs of the young. It will be the first truly global organization of the United Methodist Church for youth and young adults.

Inclusion has been one of the guiding principles for the division, formed by action of the 2004 General Conference as part of the General Board of Discipleship. While special attention will be given to gender-representation, the concept of inclusion within the division extends to voices from across the global United Methodist connection.

Girls and women are critical to the division's work. On behalf of young people all over the world, part of the division's work will specifically target young women. Because the division will value diversity of voice, women will be active in its leadership. A representative from the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women will bring knowledge, resources, and programming information focused on women in the denomination.

This division is designed to empower young people as world-changing disciples of Jesus Christ, to nurture faith development, and to equip young leaders for ministry in our emerging world. As part of this mission, the current work of the United Methodist Youth Organization, the Shared Mission Focus on Young People and the Center on Ministries with Young People at the General Board of Discipleship will become essential efforts within the division.

The Division on Ministries with Young People is designed to enhance ministries for local settings by assisting local youth groups, campus ministries, young adult groups or other United Methodist-affiliated organizations—like college United Methodist Women groups—in building their ministries.

—Ciona Rouse, executive director, Shared Mission Focus on Young People,
General Board of Discipleship

UNITED METHODIST

Diversity, strength of World Methodist women

Diversity is perhaps the greatest resource of the World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women.

The organization's West African membership developed study materials for 2003-04 on HIV/AIDS. The East Asia area has produced study materials for 2004-05 on violence against women, which links with the World Council of Churches' Decade to Overcome Violence.

During the federation's 10th world assembly in 2001, delegates passed resolutions on five issues for study and action—racism, violence, gender justice, children and HIV/AIDS. The women also endorsed a resolution on "personal and community spirituality."

Janice Clark of Birmingham, England, the federation's world secretary and webmaster, sees links among the issues of gender justice, violence and HIV/AIDS—"a lack of respect for women in the area of sexuality."

See www.methodistandunitingchurchwomen.org.

—United Methodist News Service (UMNS)

Korean-American clergywomen meet to observe 20th year since organizing

Nearly 60 clergywomen assembled in August at the Korean United Methodist Church of Greater Washington in McLean, Va., to mark the progress made since organizing in Los Angeles in 1985, at the initiation of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.

Kyunglim Shin Lee, vice president of United Methodist-related Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, and president of the association, led the three-day event and spoke of the group's annual meetings. "These gatherings were very important to us because it was the only channel that we felt free to talk about our pain and struggles as women clergy in the Korean community," she said.

The organizing meeting in 1984 of the National Association of Korean-American United Methodist Clergywomen included "two clergywomen and a few seminarians," Shin Lee said. "Now we have 100 ordained women."

The clergywomen wore rainbow-colored stoles, a gift from the Association of Korean Clergywomen in Korea. They have accepted an invitation to attend that group's 50th reunion of the ordination of the first clergywoman



A UMNS photo by Linda Worthington

Korean-American clergywomen sing during their association's celebration at the Korean United Methodist Church of Greater Washington. The stoles were a gift from their sister organization in Korea.

in Korea next year, Shin Lee said.

Sung Hee Park, pastor of Trinity United Methodist Church in South Amboy, N.J., was one of two Korean-American clergy delegates to the 2004 General Conference, a big step forward, she said. "But there are no Korean women district superintendents or bishops—yet," she added.—UMNS

United Methodist clergywoman to face trial

A United Methodist clergywoman in Philadelphia faces a church trial as the result of an investigating committee decision. Irene Elizabeth (Beth) Stroud, 34, associate pastor of First United Methodist Church of Germantown since 1999, talked about being a lesbian in an April 27, 2003, sermon to her congregation. She also said she and her partner "have lived in a covenant relationship for two and a half years."

Church law forbids "self-avowed, practicing homosexuals" from being ordained or appointed as clergy to churches.

An investigating committee from the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference met July 23 to review evidence on a complaint brought against Stroud. "The committee on investigation voted 5-3 that reasonable grounds exist for a church trial as provided in the United Methodist Book of Discipline," according to a statement from the annual conference.—UMNS

Women's Edge Coalition launches 'Million Women Challenge for Better, Safer World'

United Methodists are being encouraged to join in a nationwide effort to challenge U.S. women to talk to their elected officials and candidates in the upcoming election about the importance of investing in women around the

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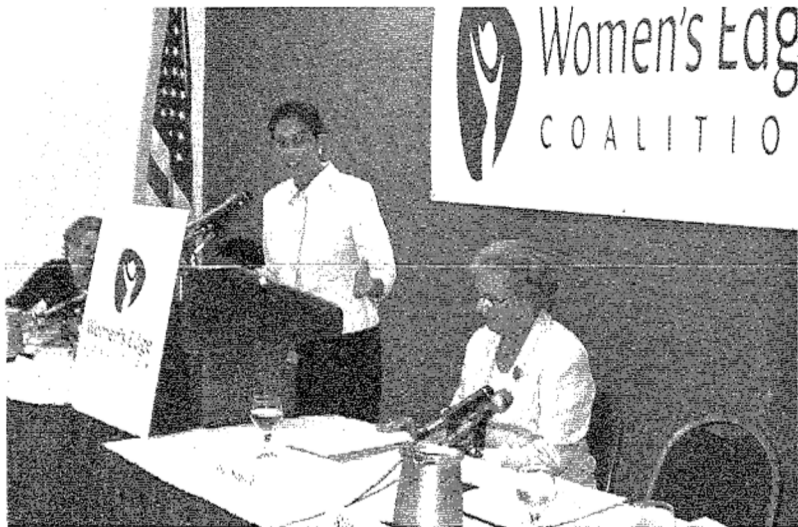


Photo courtesy Women's Edge Coalition

Ritu Sharma (at podium), executive director of Women's Edge Coalition addresses meeting launching "Challenge."

world as a way of fighting global poverty and building a more peaceful world.

The Washington-based Women's Edge Coalition, a coalition of more than 40 organizations, including the United Methodist Women, launched the "Million Women Challenge for a Better, Safer World" July 20.

See www.womensedge.org. Order the guide from edge@womensedge.org or call (202) 884-8376.

—UMNS

Delegates charge racism in Southeastern Jurisdictional episcopal elections

While delegates to the 2004 Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference celebrated the historic election of two women bishops to the jurisdiction, some were also left hurt, angry and empty by proceedings they felt were unjust and racist.

Geraldine McClellan, a clergy member of the Florida delegation to the July 14-17 session, said racism was blatant at the conference, both in the balloting and in the way delegates interacted with each other.

Referring to the record 34 ballots taken to elect the slate of six bishops, McClellan said the balloting went on so long "for one reason—the SEJ refuses to elect a qualified, visionary African-American woman."

Dawn Hand, a lay delegate from Western North Carolina, said "It's painfully obvious it's not the will of this conference right now to support a Native-American person who is qualified, a black woman who is qualified," she said. —UMNS

UNITED STATES

Women, children hit hard as poverty rises

The Census Bureau said that 1.3 more Americans were living in poverty than a year earlier as the ranks of the poor swelled to nearly 35.9 million, or 12.5 percent of the population.

The number without health insurance rose 1.4 million to 45 million, or 15.6 percent of the population.

Poverty hit children and women particularly hard. According to the report, 12.9 million children, or 17.6 percent of the under-18 population, live in poverty, an increase of 800,000 from 2002, the largest rise in child poverty in a decade. Poverty also increased sharply among adult women, reaching a 12.4 percent rate.

—Chicago Tribune and Bureau of the Census

INTERNATIONAL

Clergy abuse makes church unsafe for women

The church is not a safe place for women because of continued sexual abuse by clergy, a gathering of Protestant women at the 24th General Council of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), has cautioned. This was a "particularly painful" observation, said about 300 women from Presbyterian, Reformed, Congregational and United churches from around the world, attending a WARC women's pre-council meeting on July 27-28. —ENI

Women's Ordination Conference supports newly ordained Catholic women

A group of six Catholic women from five nations, including the United States were ordained in June to the Catholic diaconate at a service on the Danube River in Europe. Two female bishops, Christine Mayr-Lumetzberger of Austria and Gisela Forster of Germany, and one alternative Roman Catholic male bishop, Rafael Regelsberger of Austria officiated at the ordinations. This continues the series of ordinations of women that began in 2002 when a group of seven women including Mayr-Lumetzberger and Forster were ordained to the priesthood by two alternative Catholic bishops.

The Women's Ordination Conference (WOC), a U.S.-based group promoting women priests, affirms all the ways women are living out their ministry of priesthood and Americans Victoria Rue, Ph.D., and Jillian Farley, Ph.D. who along with the four other women from Canada, France, Switzerland, and Latvia were ordained as Catholic deacons. —Women's Ordination Conference

annual meeting Sept. 23-26

GCSRW to continue modeling consensus

When the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW) meets in Evanston, Ill., Sept. 23-26, board members—the Commission simply refers to them as “members”—will conduct their business, as they usually do, using consensus decision-making, except when vot-

ing is required by United Methodist policy. Consensus allows the group to use procedures that are more inclusive of spirit, mind, experience, scripture, and tradition than allowed by *Roberts' Rules of Order*. Robert Williamson, Lombard Mennonite Peace Center, will offer instruction to the new Commission on how to make decisions by consensus.

With the theme “Drawing from the Well,” Commission members will indeed draw from a well of worship that evokes a God of justice and mercy. Most plenary sessions will take place at Sherman United Methodist Church, in keeping with the Commission’s value of a venue where constituents live out their ministry and where lower costs allow good stewardship of the money allocated to the agency.

Members will address one another by first names. As M. Garlinda Burton, interim general secretary, explains, “We believe this allows bishops and beach bums, superintendents and schoolteachers to be on equal footing in discussions and decision-making.”●



gender affects clergy salaries: survey

Women pastors in the Baltimore-Washington Conference earn significantly less than clergymen, the Commission on the Status and Role of Women reported at annual conference May 28.

Responding to the findings from a recent survey of clergy conducted by an independent research firm, conference members voted to provide \$15,000 to continue an examination of the survey results. The funding is expected to come from a grant from the denomination.

Terry Rae Chattin, clergywoman who chaired the Clergy Survey Task Force, reported that 63 percent of conference clergy completed the survey, that 42 percent of the respondents were female and that

18 percent were African Americans.

Among the findings were that women tend to enter the ministry on average a decade later than men and that white pastors tended to serve in more suburban settings, while black clergy served more often in urban churches.

The average salary of pastors in the Baltimore-Washington Conference is between \$30,000 and \$50,000, the survey found.

However, more than twice as many male pastors earn salaries of \$50,000 and over, while male clergy were more than three times as likely as their female counterparts to earn \$70,000 or more.

— Baltimore-Washington Connection

RESOURCES

Speaking Faith: The Essential Handbook for Religion Communicators (Religion Communicators Council, 2004). This 155-page, soft-bound resource covers issues ranging from establishing a strategic communications plan to crisis communication. The handbook is aimed at helping communicators at all levels of the church meet the challenge of communicating religion through varied forms of media. Includes a CD with printable samples, worksheets and training materials, and bibliographies of additional resources. Order from UMR Communications, Inc., 2400 Lone Star Drive, Dallas, TX 75212. Cost is \$19.95, plus \$6 for shipping and handling.

Fundraising Resources from Kim Klein

Ask and You Shall Receive: A Fundraising Training Program for Religious Organizations and Projects—Leader Manual (Jossey-Bass, 2000).

Fundraising for Social Change, 4th edition (Jossey-Bass, 2001)

Fundraising for the Long Haul (Chardon Press, 2000).

Raise More Money: The Best of the Grassroots Fundraising Journal, eds. Kim Klein and Stephanie Roth (GFJ Publications, 2001).

These resources represent important contributions to grassroots fundraising. The author combines social justice values with strategies that make donors partners in the work.



"In general, this was the most successful monitoring ministry from the perspective of achievement," reported Pat Callbeck Harper, monitoring trainer and consultant to the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW).

For the fourth consecutive General Conference, the Commission in 2004 monitored the legislative, decision-making and programmatic elements of the denomination's quadrennial lawmaking assembly, giving feedback to leaders, delegates, bishops and conference staff.

The commission's staff and moni-

toring team built on past successes, worked more effectively with alternate monitors, offered broader diversity education, and used more extensive communication in the *Daily Christian Advocate*.

In particular, the three clergywomen who were elected chairs of legislative committees modeled leadership skills and styles different from those of their male counterparts. Delegates expressed more comments of concern than in the past about exclusive behavior in legislative committees and in plenary session—especially about treatment of

women and people of color, sensitivity to language translation, and support for Central Conference delegates.

Among recommendations for future monitoring are earlier scheduled training for members of the GCSRW, so they may monitor annual conference sessions at which General Conference delegates are elected; joint work with the General Commission on Religion and Race on monitoring training; and preparation of staff and board members of the new Division on Ministries with Young People for leadership in General Conference 2008. ●

Reflections on monitoring at jurisdictional conferences

Following are highlights from reports filed by monitors who observed the proceedings at the July jurisdictional conferences.

Southeastern Jurisdiction marks progress

The jurisdiction has moved forward, somewhat, over the past four years. With the election of two women bishops this year, one elected first of six bishops, perhaps a corner has been turned.

The nominations process for boards and agencies is, at its core, about control. The elected leadership of the nominating committee had as a goal "control" based on superior membership numbers by the Southeastern Jurisdiction. That mentality diluted the diversity of the pool. A minority of the committee tried to move beyond this narrow perspective. Stereotyping: women were placed in areas seen as "women's issues"; men were placed in finance and administration.

But even more prevalent was an attitude of "privilege" among those from larger conferences. Because "we have the numbers," the jurisdiction is entitled to a larger, "fairer" representation. Yet fairness did not extend the pool to a more inclusive slate.

Offering the first-ever orientation for women delegates was a great step forward.

— Doug Grove-DeJarnett, GCSRW monitor at Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference

Western initiates candidates' covenant

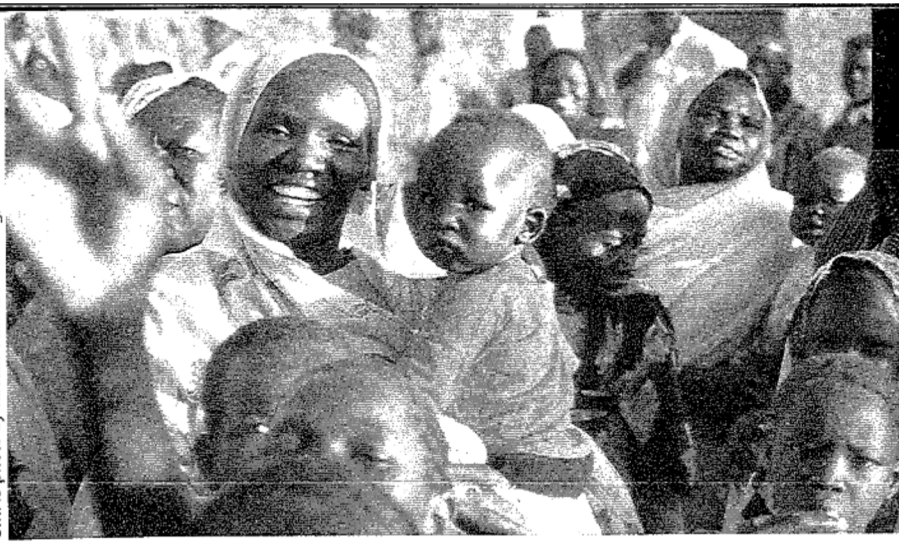
The jurisdiction's nominating committee established a set of guiding principles, including being open to learning about those from other conferences and working as a jurisdiction not as annual conferences; creating a report that would reflect the diversity of our jurisdictions; sending strongest, most effective leaders who would embody and articulate values of our mission statement; and working toward consensus only after all voices were heard.

The process of episcopal elections initiated a new "Covenant of the Candidate," in which candidates promised to speak well of each other, to participate by collaboration and to respect each other. Our group of nominees was very inclusive and resulted in the election of an Asian-American man and a Hispanic woman.

When I first reported on participation levels of the delegates during plenary sessions, the results were: 15 percent women speaking (51 percent present); 26 percent lay (50 percent present); 0 percent youth and young adults; racial-ethnic men participated above parity.

From then on, not only did participation rates look more balanced, but people also began identifying themselves by age and ethnicity, in order to be counted.

— Susan Smalley, GCSRW monitor at Western Jurisdictional Conference



A crowd of displaced people from the Nuba mountains area greets visitors outside the Sudanese Church of Christ near Khartoum, Sudan.

Commentary

Sudanese women hope for peace

"Peace is coming. We will be able to go back home." This hope was voiced again and again by the displaced women we visited in camps and church communities in Khartoum and nearby Medani. The voice of hope sustains the church and the people of Sudan as they wait eagerly for lasting peace.

An ecumenical women's delegation, made up of five women from Africa, Europe and the United States and organized by the World Council of Churches and the All-Africa Conference of Churches, visited churches, community centers and women's groups in and around Khartoum, Sudan, earlier this summer.

**By Aruna Gnanadason
World Council of Churches**

From what the Sudanese women we met—mostly from the south of the country—told us, it is clear that women play the most important role in post-war Sudan. Their husbands have either been killed in the war or are still in the war zone, so the women have had to look after the children and be the breadwinners as well as the decision-makers of the family.

Twenty-one years of war have left deep scars on the psyche of this nation. The women we observed were hesitant to speak of the various forms of violence they have experienced and continue to endure.

The ongoing fighting in the Darfur region has once again shown how rape of women has been used as a systematic, intentional weapon of war.

According to the United Nations, the situation in Sudan's western Darfur region is currently the world's worst humanitarian crisis, and it has claimed more than 10,000 victims, with more than one million displaced people since the outbreak of the fighting in early 2003.

In Omdurman prison near Khartoum, most of the prisoners are displaced women of African background from the South. Some 823 women inmates and 227 children are currently crammed together here, sleeping on the dirty floors in a zinc-roofed, temporary building.

They are in prison for petty crimes such as brewing and selling a local beer—one of the few possibilities for uneducated women to earn some money to feed their children.

please turn to page 12

emPOWERment

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1200 Davis Street, Evanston IL 60201

Sudanese women's plight *from page 11*

In spite of these stories of suffering, we left Sudan with a tremendous sense of hope for the future. The women, through a deep spirituality expressed in their prayers, songs and dances, demonstrated that their profound faith has been the sustaining force throughout the war and their displacement.

The Sudan Council of Churches and the women's organizations of its member churches have all initiated projects for economic self-sufficiency and peace, crucial for women's daily postwar life. Churches are also responding to the problem of children affected by war, many of whom are either orphans or street children. ●

JOBS

Faculty appointments, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University

History of Christianity. Full-time, tenure-track position, preferably at rank of associate or full professor with particular attention to the history of Methodism. Demonstrated achievement as a teacher and scholar essential.

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Apply by Dec. 15, 2004. Both positions begin with the fall term 2005.

OVATIONS

To **Karen Meeker**, a UM chaplain, who received the Military Chaplain Association's Distinguished Service Award for 2004, the highest honor presented to clergy serving in the U.S. Army. She serves at Fort Bragg, N.C., and is the first female chaplain assigned to the Army Special Operations Command.

To **Karen P. Oliveto**, who has been appointed assistant dean for academic affairs at Pacific School of Religion.

To **Marjorie Putman**, Xenia, Ohio, who has become the first woman to lead the United Theological Seminary Board of Trustees. ●

For better health for women and a healthier environment for our children our newsletter is printed on chlorine-free, acid-free recycled paper.

