



FEBRUARY 2012

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



To honor the Commission's work and ministries toward full participation of

women throughout The United Methodist Church, GCSRW offers our commemorative pin. To purchase, please send your name, mailing address and a \$25 check payable to GCSRW, 77 W. Washington Street, Suite 1009, Chicago, IL 60602.

Give now to the Advocacy for Women

ENDOWMENT FUND

You can make a donation to the Advocacy for Women Endowment Fund to fund antisexism ministries around the world, a permanent GCSRW internship, and research about women. Click [HERE](#) for more information.



The people of the United Methodist Church®

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Find us on



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GCSRW TURNS 40!

You're invited to celebrate all God is doing in us!

GCSRW offers worship helps, a video and skits to enhance your 40th anniversary celebration.

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40 YEARS OF GCSRW

Inclusive language for an inclusive church

GCSRW was—and is—strongly committed to inclusive language.

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GENERAL CONFERENCE

Should our denomination have a 'set-aside bishop?'

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WOMEN BY THE NUMBERS

Women and U.S. people of color lose representation

While delegates to General Conference have increased in diversity on a global perspective, U.S. delegations have decreased in diversity.

[read more»](#)

MARCH IS WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

GCSRW offers free worship resources to celebrate women's history

The commission is providing reproducible bulletin inserts, bulletin covers and litanies to be used in March and throughout the year.

[read more»](#)

SEXUAL ETHICS

Responding well after misconduct

A tool is offered for revitalizing congregations and preparing principled leaders

[read more»](#)

BOOK REVIEW

Young clergywomen find a voice

[read more»](#)



GCSRW TURNS 40!

You're invited to celebrate all God is doing in us!

Worship helps, video, skits can enhance your festivities

It's 2012, and the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women is celebrating its 40th anniversary! The commission, known by many United Methodists as COSROW (KAHZ-roh), was created by the 1972 General Conference, first as a study commission and—four years later—as a permanent agency of The United Methodist Church.

Our mandate from the church was, and is:

- » To lead the church in addressing and overcoming institutional sexism.
- » To identify barriers to the full participation of women in leadership in the church, including the ordained ministry.
- » To evaluate churchwide systems, structures and practices to ensure that women are treated fairly and equitably.
- » To support and foster increased participation of women in all areas of the church as disciples of Christ and leaders in Christian justice, holiness and wholeness.
- » To advocate for women affected by—and to help church leaders prevent and bring justice in the aftermath of—sexual misconduct, abuse and harassment.

We've got a lot to celebrate, because we've accomplished a lot, thanks to the hard work of commissions in annual conferences, districts and congregations, and the fire of the Holy Spirit, which has kept us faithful.

In this issue and upcoming issues of *The Flyer*, you will read about the history, achievements and ongoing work of the commission. And we are asking each annual conference and congregation to plan a GCSRW celebration. Spend the month of March (Women's History Month) in study and celebration, using resources on our website. Contact your bishop and the secretary of your annual conference today and ask for time during your 2012 conference session for a special worship service and recognition of the work of GCSRW in your areas.

Create a website, a special edition of your newsletter, a bulletin board or a video to capture stories of how women in your church or conference have overcome sexism to serve God. Invite young people to do a video project featuring pioneering women—and men—who have helped champion full participation of women in your congregation or conference.

To help your 40th celebration, GCSRW will have the following resources available:

- » **An 8-minute commemorative video.** The video will debut at General Conference, and it will be offered to annual conference commissions on the status and role of women for local celebrations.

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In addition, excerpts of the video interview with GCSRW leaders will be available beginning Feb. 15 at www.gcsrw.org.

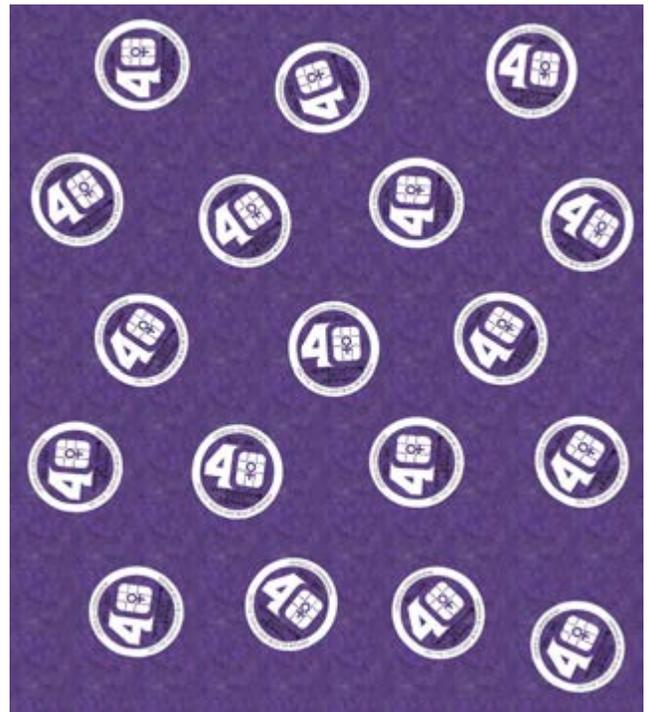
» **Worship bulletin covers, inserts and litanies.** In addition to our annual series of inserts and bulletin covers for Women's History Month (March), GCSRW will offer a new, free, downloadable insert each month, featuring stories of GCSRW's past, present and future. Look for the first insert in January, and plan now for your congregation to observe a "Celebrate the Ministry of GCSRW" Sunday at least once during the year.

» **Original worship resources.** These are prayers, readings and suggested songs from the Rev. Cynthia Wilson, recording artist and interim dean of students at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, who is designing and leading a special GCSRW worship service on Sunday, April 29 during the 2012 General Conference in Tampa. These will also be available for annual conference and local church celebrations.

» **A dramatic skit.** This skit, suitable for worship settings, will be based on the debate at the 1968 and 1972 General Conferences, which lead to the creation of GCSRW.

» **African-style cloth.** GCSRW has commissioned specially designed cloth with the 40th anniversary logo. We will use this cloth on the worship altar during General Conference. We will also have limited supplies of the cloth for sale. (Please call our offices at 312.346.4900 or email gcsrw@gcsrw.org after March 1 to inquire about the fabric.)

» **Finance Women's Futures.** The commission has an endowment fund that supports a permanent internship for seminary women, provides seed money to plant gender justice ministries in annual conferences around the world, and fund research by and about women and the church. Mark our 40th by making a generous donation on behalf of a woman or girl in your family, congregation, annual conference or seminary, by giving to the **Advocacy for Women Endowment Fund**.



African-style cloth with the 40th anniversary logo will be used on the worship altar during General Conference.

So plan now for the 40th anniversary celebration in your church, district, seminary or annual conference. And if you would like Garlinda Burton or other GCSRW staff, board members or former leaders to join your celebration, contact us at gcsrw@gcsrw.org or call 312.346.4900.



40 YEARS OF THE GCSRW

Inclusive language for an inclusive church

40 Years of the United Methodist Commission on the Status and Role of Women

By Elliott Wright

Language is a basic building block of any society or institution, including the church. For Christians, words form scripture, transmit heritage, shape worship and convey hope. Words set boundaries and express rules; they open new areas of vision. Language undergoes change and stirs disagreements.

Considerable attention in the second half of the 20th century focused on the issue of how to bring the language of Christianity including United Methodism into parallel with an expanding emphasis on full equality for all persons. Could “mankind” continue as the generic meaning for all people and should God’s gender always be given as male? Should masculine language be continued—even such everyday terms as “chairman” and “fellowship”—even if it seems to exclude women from leadership in the community of faith.

Inclusive language questions were—and still are—theologically serious and socially sensitive, but, as hard as it was to achieve, an inclusive church needed inclusive language. The debate has often been heated and at times confusing.



Bishop Susan Morrison

GCSRW made a difference

The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW), provisionally authorized in 1972 and made a standing commission in 1976, was strongly committed to inclusive language but also provided thoughtful guidance and sound resources for the necessary dialogue.

Creation of GCSRW provided an official structure for addressing long-term concerns. Discrimination against women was by tradition written into much of the law and practice of Methodism. Exclusion of women not only from the clergy but other positions of leadership came under increasing criticism with the growth of the “women’s liberation” movement. A history of GCSRW noted that a United Methodist task force set up in 1970 concluded that “women have a legitimate right to revolt against the role in society that has imprisoned them.” It noted that “obsolete social mores and church practices continue to resist the emergence of new roles for women...”

From the outset the commission sought to end stereotyping of women, to open minds to the images women forge of themselves—both issues involving language. The general commission office, augmented by annual conference commissions, began to develop resources equipping pastors and the laity for the use of inclusive language.

Reaction, resources

Now retired Bishop Susan Morrison was a pastor in the Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference in the 1970s. She recalls the enormous value of resources provided through GCSRW. “There was a lot of reaction to the inclusive language effort,” she says in a 2012 interview. “It became clear that it was not an immediate, all

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or nothing matter. Acceptance came gradually, starting with the leadership, and resources from GCSRW were pivotal in that cause.”

In the early 1980s the denomination itself undertook a study that would lead to significant guidelines on ways to decisively move toward inclusive language. Based on a four-year study, in which GCSRW was involved, the 1984 General Conference accepted a report which would directly impact the movement toward inclusive language.

The result in 1985 was the publication of “Words that Hurt; World that Heal: Language about God and People,” a slim publication of big importance. Learning to use inclusive language takes concentration and practice. Unintentional exclusionary words or phrases—“each man has a right to choose”—can be as discriminatory and stereotyping as a deliberate slur.

GCSRW, along with United Methodist Women and other organizations, did a great service to the church in providing checklists of alternative, gender-neutral terms and phrases that promote both inclusive language and inclusive thinking. Examples are available on the [commission’s website](#). Also helpful with inclusive language in general and church communications are [GCSRW guidelines](#) on gender balance in the church media.

Bishop Morrison says that by the late 1980s, when she was elected to the episcopacy, the use of inclusive language in denominational affairs and local church worship and governance was becoming the norm. “It was not as controversial as earlier,” she states. “Pastors and members were grasping the reasons.”

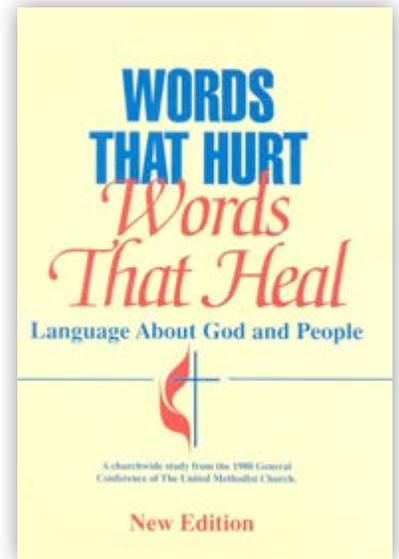
In the meantime, new scholarly work had produced Bible translations using inclusive language in a way that did not alter original meanings. One example is the *New Revised Standard Version*, published in 1989. Efforts had been taken to come up with gender-balanced alternative wording for exclusively masculine lines in hymns. *The United Methodist Hymnal*, also printed in 1989, share inclusive language options for music dating back to the 19th century.

However, Bishop Morrison, as a long-time student of Methodism, thinks that the time may be right for a renewed emphasis on inclusiveness, gender balance, language and its values and rationales.

“What I am hearing today,” says the bishop, “is not so much intentional use of masculine language but a carelessness—even a sloppiness—in our language. Inclusive language is about more than being politically correct. ‘Inclusive’ means getting beyond ourselves to include others in the love and grace of God. That is why it is important.”

Currently GCSRW is participating in [Words Matter](#), an expansive language project of the National Council of Churches, USA, Justice for Women Working Group.

Elliott Wright is an author who has written for and about The United Methodist Church for more than a half-century.





GENERAL CONFERENCE

Should our denomination have a 'set-aside bishop?'

By Heather Peck Stahl

The 988 delegates to the 2012 General Conference in Tampa, Fla., will consider a proposal that would allow a member of the Council of Bishops to serve as president and carry other responsibilities without presiding over an episcopal area.

The Constitution of The United Methodist Church currently requires all active bishops to have “residential and presidential supervision in the jurisdictional or central conferences” (Par. 49 *Book of Discipline*). Therefore, the Constitution must be amended before the plan can be implemented. Constitutional amendments require a two-thirds majority vote of General Conference delegates and two-thirds affirmative vote of the aggregate number of members of all annual conferences (Par. 59 2012 *Book of Discipline*).

At present, the president of the Council of Bishops is elected for two years and must continue to serve an episcopal area while leading the council.

Bishop Larry Goodpaster, current president of the Council of Bishops, said at a pre-General Conference briefing in Tampa that he found it “nearly impossible” to meet the demands from around The United Methodist Church while still tending to the needs of his Charlotte (N.C.) Area.

Washington (D.C.) Area Bishop John Schol says he is concerned about the “set-aside” terminology. “The president is not ‘set aside’ from something but called to a specific role and responsibility,” he says.

Asked about the responsibilities of the bishop who would serve as president of the Council of Bishops, Schol says he/she would: (1) Serve as the chief ecumenical officer for the denomination; (2) Lead the strategic work of the Council of Bishops; (3) Focus on the Call to Action and growing vital congregations; (4) Work with leaders throughout the denomination to align the ministry and strategic direction within the denomination.

“The mention of a president of the council without residential responsibility has brought out the best and the worst in United Methodists,” says Schol. “Some have referred to the position as a ‘Methodist Pope’ stirring latent anti-Catholic sentiment. The position corresponds more closely to the role of a general secretary of a general agency. The authority of the position is within the Council of Bishops to shape the work and direction of the council and the ecumenical ministry of the church.”

Questions raised

The Rev. Tim McClendon, a superintendent of the Columbia District of the South Carolina Annual Conference, says he thinks the proposal for a set-aside bishop gives the bishops more power than General Conference. “For instance, in the new legislation, it is proposed that the Council of Bishops, ‘in consultation with the United Methodist Center for Connectional Mission and Ministry (CCMM),’ has power to set budgets for the denomination, and the ability to reallocate funds between General Conference sessions within World Service and General Administration.



Bishop John Schol

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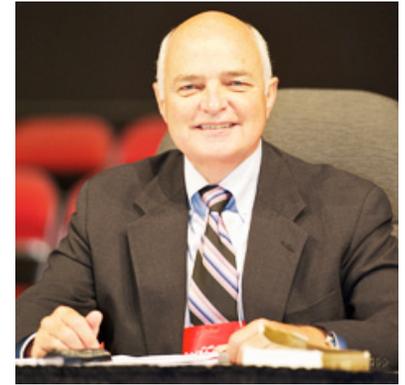
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“Not only does the CCMM have control over \$870 million in fixed assets plus millions in assets like land and buildings, but also would have ultimate control over the \$603 million quadrennial budget of the General Conference, plus have power to reallocate the World Service and General Administration amounts of that budget between General Conference sessions,” he says.

“I think most delegates will see these efforts as a ‘power-grab’ and vote ‘no,’” says McClendon. “Giving this much power to the Council of Bishops is like a local church council voting on a budget then allowing the pastor to change that budget between meetings sessions.”

Implications for women

In answering whether establishing a set-aside bishop would have any implications for women, Schol says, “The United Methodist Church is a leader in ordaining, appointing and encouraging women. The church is committed to both lay and clergy women in ministry and service to the church. The Council of Bishops remains committed to this value and to empowering all people to grow in their discipleship and leadership. Over the last eight years that I have been a bishop, I have experienced this commitment by council presidents and this same commitment of the council will continue as the role of bishops and council presidents continue to emerge.”



Rev. Tim McClendon

When asked about the effect a set-aside bishop might have on women, McClendon says, “I think that the set-aside bishop can be female, of course, and would welcome that move. However, we know all too well that the church and culture have a long way to go in its gender bias and racial prejudice.” McClendon is a member of the Connectional Table and a member of the writing team that prepared legislation regarding the new structure.

Central Conference issues

Asked if a Central Conference bishop (a bishop from outside the United States) can become a president without residential responsibilities, Bishop Schol says any non-retired bishop could serve in that office.

“For a Central Conference bishop, it will mean that she or he may not return to a Central Conference Area because an area may not be open after four years,” he says. “This may also be true for a jurisdictional bishop as well. With careful planning, these issues can be addressed.” Schol notes that the entire council, including bishops from outside the United States, voted for the proposal.

McClendon notes some of the difficulties that would be encountered if a U.S. bishop were to be named as presiding officer without an episcopal area. He suggests it might require convening a special session of a particular jurisdictional conference to replace a U.S. bishop.

McClendon notes that Central Conference bishops are elected from within their own episcopal areas and they have term limits. “What happens when a Central Conference set-aside bishop’s term expires?” he asks. “It seems to me very impractical at best to elect a bishop outside the U.S. as the set-aside. It would be costly, tumultuous, impractical and thereby hard to do.”

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Liability issues

Some people have questioned whether having the set-aside bishop serve as chair of the proposed General Council for Strategy and Oversight (GCSO) increases the possibility of lawsuits against the denomination.

Schol says the office will not increase liability. “The new structure does not create the possibility for lawsuits any more than our present structure and in the new structure, we will continue with at least five general agencies, which provides the same safeguards of 13 agencies.”

McClendon notes that language was added to the *Book of Discipline* to protect the church from litigation. “The set-aside bishop, the CCMM and the GCSO certainly seem to overturn the language put in place [to protect the denomination],” says McClendon. While the set-aside bishop is not the chair of the CCMM the bishop is an ex-officio member representing the GCSO, the supervising body over the CCMM. This absolutely overturns our mission outpost nature and consolidates power into the hands of fewer people. This has to incur more liability.”

Ecumenical issues

Bishop Schol notes that while every denomination is organized differently and our polity and structural organization do not always match, the set-aside bishop could serve as a counterpart to positions that are similar in other denominations. Presently the council has a retired bishop who serves one-quarter time in this role. “A full-time president of the council will allow The United Methodist Church to have a bishop to consistently meet with other denominations’ bishops/denominational ecumenical leaders.”

McClendon notes that that the United Methodist Church already has an ecumenical officer with the Council of Bishops, the president of the Council of Bishops and the general secretary of the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns.

“The larger question is whether we really need a set-aside bishop to be on par with other denominations,” says McClendon. “We don’t look like every other church body, never have, and never will. We need a person to foster ecumenical relationships but it certainly doesn’t have to be a set-aside bishop.”

Recommendations

Bishop Schol hopes General Conference will approve legislation creating the new post, and Superintendent McClendon hopes the assembly will turn down the proposal.

“I fully support a president who will align our resources to create more vital congregations and who strengthens our relationship with our missional partners from other ecumenical groups around the world,” says Schol.

“Every time we tilt the power too much one way or the other between bishops and General Conference, there’s been a problem,” says McClendon. “Our denomination has a historic balance of powers that this shift would unhinge.” He suggests that committees on episcopacy might be strengthened in order to help bishops focus on critical issues.

Heather Peck Stahl is communications coordinator for GCSRW.



WOMEN BY THE NUMBERS

Women and U.S. people of color lose representation at General Conference

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. jurisdictions will have fewer delegates to the General Conference of The United Methodist Church than they did in 2008. This has affected the representation of women and U.S. people of color as delegates. That's because the denomination's membership is growing in Africa, the Philippines and Europe, while membership continues to decline in much of the United States.

According to a statistical overview of The United Methodist Church provided by the General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA), from 2005 to 2009 (most current data), the membership of the U.S. jurisdictions declined from 8,071,938 to 7,772,966, a decrease of 4%. The Central Conferences over the same period of time increased from 3,497,512 to 4,400,510, an increase of 26%.

Furthermore, during that same period, the Central Conferences increased their share of the total membership of The United Methodist Church from 30% to 36%. And, while this has increased the diversity of the General Conference from a global perspective, it has decreased the participation of women and people of color from the United States.

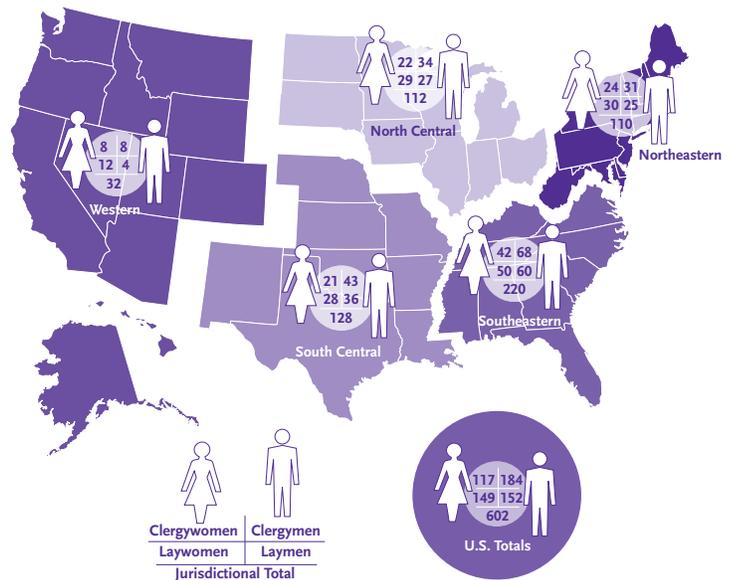
2012 STATISTICS

- » U.S. female representation at the 2012 General Conference is 44%, up from 43% at the 2008 General Conference
- » 117 clergywomen delegates represent the five jurisdictions, just five more than the 112 for the 2008 General Conference

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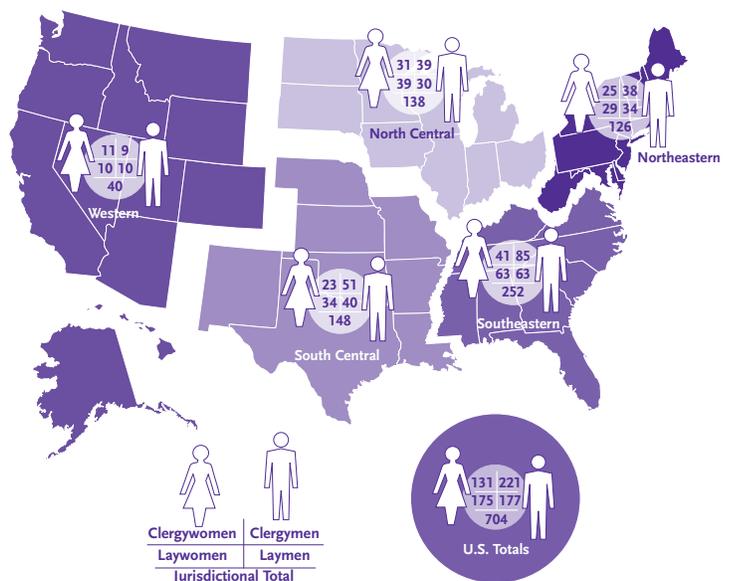
2012

U.S. Clergy and Lay Delegates to the General Conference by Jurisdiction



2008

U.S. Clergy and Lay Delegates to the General Conference by Jurisdiction





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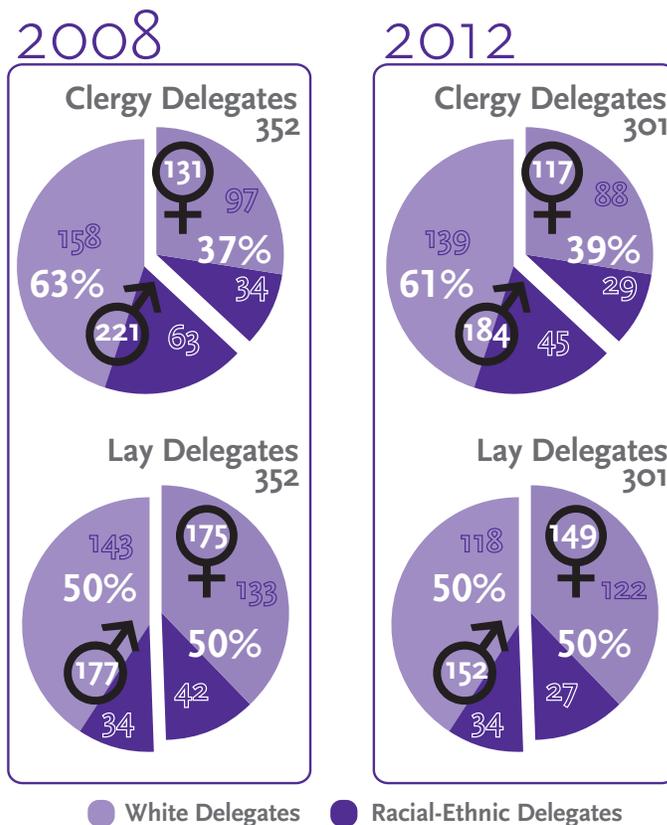
- » The 20 female delegates of the Western Jurisdiction represent the only jurisdiction where women are in the majority
- » For people of color, clergymen and laywomen lost the most representation from the 2008 General Conference to the 2012 General Conference
- » People of color delegates have fallen from 173 (2008 General Conference) to 135 (2012 General Conference)
- » People of color have 22% of the U.S. delegates at the 2012 General Conference (25% in 2008)

OVERALL

The number of U.S. female delegates has decreased from 306 (2008 General Conference) to 266 (2012 General Conference), a drop of 40 (see Table 1). During the same time period, the number of U.S. male delegates has decreased from 398 to 336, a decrease of 62 (see Table 1). As a result, these changes have slightly increased the percentage of U.S. female representation at General Conference from 43% (2008 General Conference) to 44% (2012 General Conference). From 2000 to 2012, the female delegates have declined from 324 to 266 delegates, a loss of 58 (18%), while male delegates have dropped from 506 to 336, a loss of 170 (34%).

Yes, all U.S. groups—clergymen, laymen and laywomen—have seen their numbers decrease over time; however, the great impact has been on clergywomen (see Tables 3 , 4 and 5). At 1992 General Conference, 81 clergywomen were delegates and by 2004 General Conference, that number had risen to 137, an all-time high (Table 2). Today, the decrease in clergywomen has reversed all gains over the past 12 years, so that the number of U.S. clergywomen to the 2012 General Conference (117) is almost equal to the 2000 General Conference (112). (Note: clergywomen represent 39% of the clergy delegation while clergywomen make up 24% of all clergy.)

While the number of Central Conference delegates has increased, people of color from the United States has lost representation over the past four years. The number of people of color has dropped from 173 (2008 General Conference) to 135 (2012 General Conference), a loss of 38 or 22%. The 38 persons of color represent 37% of the total loss of 102 persons by the U.S. delegations since 2008 General Conference. Clergymen of color took the biggest loss at 18 persons with people of color laywomen at 15. Clergywomen of color loss is at five persons, but the laymen of color showed no change. Unfortunately, no accurate numbers exist from previous General Conferences to track the impact of decreases on people of color.



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NORTH CENTRAL JURISDICTION

The North Central Jurisdiction dropped its representation from 138 to 112, a loss of 26 or 19% persons from the 2008 General Conference to the 2012 General Conference. Women had their representation decreasing the most with a net loss of 10 laywomen and nine clergywomen. These 19 represent 73% of the total loss of representation by the North Central Jurisdiction (see Tables 3 and 4).

Persons of color had a net loss of 15 representatives from the 2008 General Conference to the 2012 General Conference. They followed the national trend with laywomen and clergymen suffering the greatest losses. Persons of color saw their numbers almost cut in half from 33 to 18 in the North Central Jurisdiction. Consequently, their share of the overall jurisdictional representation fell from 24% to 16% (see Tables 3 and 4).

NORTHEASTERN JURISDICTION

The Northeastern Jurisdiction dropped its membership from 126 to 110, a loss of 16 or 13%. The female representation showed no net change staying at 54 delegates. The Northeastern Jurisdiction had a net increase of one laywoman and a net decrease of one clergywoman. The 54 delegates represent 49% of the total delegation (see Tables 3 and 4).

Persons of color also showed no net change. They had a net increase of four laity and a net decrease of four clergy. Clergymen lost three persons and laymen gained three persons. By holding their own, persons of color actually saw their total representation increase from 29% to 32% of the Northeastern Jurisdiction (see Tables 3 and 4).

SOUTH CENTRAL JURISDICTION

The South Central Jurisdiction dropped its representation from 148 to 128, a loss of 20 or 14%. The female representation had a net loss of eight members (two clergywomen and six laywomen). The two clergywomen were both women of color, but only one of the six laywomen was a woman of color. Women delegates make up 38% of the South Central Jurisdiction, a one percentage point drop from the 39% at the 2008 General Conference (see Tables 3 and 4).

Persons of color had a net loss of seven delegates from 2008 to 2012. Clergymen, clergywomen and laymen had a net loss of two persons each. Persons of color fell from 35 to 28 delegates. Consequently, their representation dropped from 24% to 22% of the delegation (see Tables 3 and 4).

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Table 1: Gender of Delegates by Jurisdiction

	Female			Male		
	Total	R/E Total	R/E %	Total	R/E %	R/E %
North Central						
2012	51	10	20%	61	8	13%
2008	70	18	26%	68	15	22%
Northeastern						
2012	54	15	28%	56	21	38%
2008	54	15	28%	72	21	29%
South Central						
2012	49	9	18%	79	19	24%
2008	57	12	21%	91	23	25%
Southeastern						
2012	92	18	20%	128	24	19%
2008	104	23	22%	148	29	20%
Western						
2012	20	4	20%	12	7	58%
2008	21	8	38%	19	9	47%
Totals						
2012	266	56	21%	336	79	24%
2008	306	76	25%	398	97	24%

Table 2: Clergy and lay female delegates by General Conference

General Conference	Clergywomen	Laywomen	Total Women
1992	81	222	303
1996	107	221	328
2000	113	212	324
2004	137	206	343
2008	131	175	306
2012	113	149	266



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SOUTHEASTERN JURISDICTION

The number of Southeastern delegates fell from 252 to 220, a loss of 32 or 13%. Clergywomen had a net increase of one representative while laywomen had a net decrease of 13 delegates. In actuality, the Southeastern Jurisdiction added two women of color clergy. Women have 92 delegates or 42% of the Southeastern delegation (see Tables 3 and 4).

The number of persons of color dropped from 52 to 42, a loss of 10 or 19%. The loss of 10 persons represents one-third of the total delegation loss from 2008 to 2012. Clergymen dropped eight representatives and laywomen dropped seven representatives, which were offset by the gains of laymen and clergywomen. People of color make up 19% of the Southeastern Jurisdiction delegation (see Tables 3 and 4).

WESTERN JURISDICTION

The Western Jurisdiction number of delegates fell from 40 to 32, a loss of 8 or 20%. Females lost one delegate from 2008 to 2012 with clergywomen showing a net loss of three, while laywomen showed a net increase of two. Nevertheless, women make up 21 or 66% of the Western delegation, the only jurisdiction in which women

Table 3: Gender and Persons of Color Clergy by Jurisdiction and General Conference

	Female Clergy									Male Clergy									Clergy				
	White	Black	Native American/American Indian	Asian American	Hispanic/Latino	Multi-Racial	Pacific Islander	Total	R/E Total	R/E %	White	Black	Native American/American Indian	Asian American	Hispanic/Latino	Multi-Racial	Pacific Islander	Total	R/E Total	R/E %	Total	R/E Total	R/E %
North Central																							
2012	17	2		3				22	5	23%	27	5		2				34	7	21%	56	12	21%
2008	24	5		2				31	7	23%	27	6		3	2			38	11	29%	69	18	26%
Northeastern																							
2012	16	6		2	0			24	8	33%	22	7		2	0			31	9	29%	55	17	31%
2008	16	6		1	2			25	9	36%	26	7		3	1	1		38	12	32%	63	21	33%
South Central																							
2012	17	4						21	4	19%	30	8	1		3	1		43	13	30%	64	17	27%
2008	17	6						23	6	26%	36	9	2		4			51	15	29%	74	21	28%
Southeastern																							
2012	31	9		1	1			42	11	26%	56	10		1	1			68	12	18%	110	23	21%
2008	32	7		0	2			41	9	22%	65	16	2	1	1			85	20	24%	126	29	23%
Western																							
2012	7			1				8	1	13%	4	2		2				8	4	50%	16	5	31%
2008	8			2	1			11	3	27%	4	1	0	4				9	5	56%	20	8	40%
Totals																							
2012	88	21	0	7	1	0	0	117	29	25%	139	32	1	7	4	1	0	184	45	24%	301	74	23%
2008	97	24	0	5	5	0	0	131	34	26%	158	39	4	11	8	1	0	221	63	29%	352	97	19%



have a majority of delegates (see Tables 3 and 4).

Persons of color had a net loss of six persons, from 17 to 11. Clergywomen and laywomen had a net loss of two persons each while laymen and clergymen had a net loss of one person each. The decrease in persons of color from 17 to 11 saw their representation fall from 43% to 34% (see Tables 3 and 4).

CONCLUSION

As the United Methodist denomination continues to grow globally, the challenge for the U.S. United Methodists is to remain inclusive while its membership (and thus General Conference representation) gets smaller. Just because the U.S. delegations and representation are getting smaller, the decrease does not have to rest on the backs of women and people of color. Yes, the U.S. United Methodist Church is over 90% white, but the representation at General Conference—the highest decision-making body of the church — needs to be more than white. The United States — our mission field — is 35% people of color and growing. For The United Methodist Church in the U.S. to become the body of Christ, we need to become the inclusive and diverse church.

Craig This is data analyst at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio.

Table 4: Gender and Persons of Color Laity by Jurisdiction and General Conference

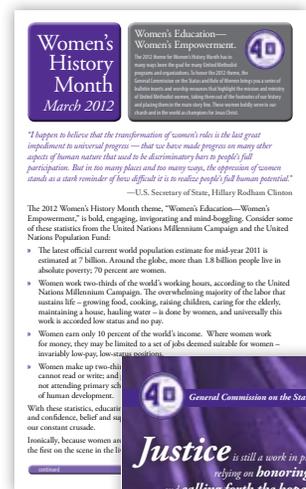
	Female Laity									Male Laity									Clergy				
	White	Black	Native American/American Indian	Asian American	Hispanic/Latino	Multi-Racial	Pacific Islander	Total	R/E Total	R/E %	White	Black	Native American/American Indian	Asian American	Hispanic/Latino	Multi-Racial	Pacific Islander	Total	R/E Total	R/E %	Total	R/E Total	R/E %
North Central																							
2012	24	5					29	5	17%	26	1						27	1	4%	56	6	11%	
2008	28	9	1			1	39	11	28%	26	4						30	4	13%	69	15	22%	
Northeastern																							
2012	23	6		1			30	7	23%	13	10			1	1		25	12	48%	55	19	35%	
2008	23	6					29	6	21%	25	6		1		2		34	9	26%	63	15	24%	
South Central																							
2012	23	1	3		1		28	5	18%	30	3		1	2			36	6	17%	64	11	17%	
2008	28	4	2				34	6	18%	32	4			4			40	8	20%	74	14	19%	
Southeastern																							
2012	43	6	1				50	7	14%	48	10	1		1			60	12	20%	110	18	17%	
2008	49	10		3	1		63	14	22%	54	8	1					63	9	14%	126	23	18%	
Western																							
2012	9			2			12	3	25%	1	2		1				4	3	75%	16	6	38%	
2008	5	1	1	2			10	5	50%	6	3		1				10	4	40%	20	9	45%	
Totals																							
2012	122	18	4	3	4		149	27	18%	118	26	1	2	4	1		152	34	23%	301	61	23%	
2008	133	30	4	5	1	1	175	42	24%	143	25	1	2	4	2		177	34	19%	352	76	19%	



March is Women's History Month

Use these free worship resources to celebrate God's women all year long

- The **2012 theme for Women's History Month** center on women's education and women's empowerment, and the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women is offering worship resources that highlight the empowerment, leadership and ministry of United Methodist women.
- For this March, GCSRW offers **six (6) reproducible bulletin inserts** with stories on women like Theressa Hoover, former United Methodist Women executive and human rights advocate, and Bishop Charlene Kammerer, the first woman elected to the episcopacy in the Southeast Jurisdiction.
- In addition, GCSRW offers **four (4) bulletin covers**, each with a historical photo and a litany on back. These can be used at any time to present material for helping congregations honor women who have played significant roles in our church and in the world as champions for Jesus Christ.
- And, because this year marks the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Commission, we are offering you **additional bulletin inserts - one for each month, April through December**. We encourage you to celebrate "GCSRW Sundays" in your congregation or other worship setting.



All of these free resources are available at www.gcsr.org.

How to use these resources:

- **Print out one insert and/or cover each week, photocopy them and use them in your worship services in the month of March.** (NOTE: GCSRW does not print or mail copies of these resources; you must make your own copies. If you want color copies, you must either print these resources from a color printer in your office or save the inserts to a disk or flash drive and have them printed at a color-print store.)
- **Print out all inserts at once and create a free Women's History Month booklet for members of your congregation.** Write stories of history-making women from your church and include them in the booklet.
- **Send us a copy of your bulletin or other creation using these inserts,** or send us ideas on how to use them. We'll share your ideas with future users.
- **Convene a small-group study for March (or any time), and use our six-session study, "Women called to Ministry,"** which explores the history of women preachers and prophets from biblical times though today. This free, downloadable resources is available in English and Spanish on our website.



SEXUAL ETHICS

Responding well after misconduct:

A tool for revitalizing congregations and preparing principled leaders

By Bonnie Glass MacDonald

Following the trauma of a sexual misconduct disclosure, a wounded congregation has a unique opportunity for revitalization. Facing the reality of clergy sexual misconduct inevitably forces a congregation into self-examination, during which basic assumptions of faith, congregational life and leadership are called into question. A congregation can be torn apart by conflict and divided loyalties. Or, it can become renewed through God's transforming grace. At this point of crisis, when leaders are overwhelmed and unsure how congregational life can ever be repaired, a judicatory can be most effective in offering support and guidance. Intentional intervention by persons with qualifications and experience in assessment, intervention or healing may make the difference.

Congregations that have experienced misconduct know what it is like to experience spiritual malaise, heightened conflict, a lack of trust, inward focus, stunted generosity and inability to welcome others, among other painful realities. These are congregations in desperate need of revitalization. And yet, they may also have strengths of survival; their stories of resilience are worth hearing and reframing for the future. These strengths are the stuff of congregations that have determined to live. Rather than being a distraction to ministry, the response to misconduct can be the time when the work of the church is done in all its messiness.

Congregations in conflict, particularly those dealing with the reality of misconduct, have a clear need for effective intervention and healing work if they are to recover well from the trauma as well as from the longer-term systemic dynamics of clergy sexual misconduct. When a situation of misconduct is discovered, there is often some history of abusive behavior in the congregation's past, as well as in the past of the offending clergy person. Within the United Methodist "connection," this reality creates a web of interconnecting relationships that can set off a chain reaction when one problem is disclosed. Because of the complexity of the fallout from clergy sexual misconduct, the church's response needs to be rooted within this systemic understanding. It is not enough to remove an offending clergy person or a person who has been victimized. An effective response should address the entire system.

Understanding the church as the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12), those very aspects that contribute to the depth and power of congregational community—relationships of support, challenge, nurture, trust—also are the points of woundedness when leaders of the community break trust. These points of brokenness cannot be healed by quick answers or, as the prophet Jeremiah warns, by hearing "peace, peace, when there is no peace" (Jeremiah 6:14). Understandably, it is tempting for leaders involved to end the abuse, patch the holes, bring in new staff, pump the people up and declare the mess cleaned up. The business of healing and recovery—revitalization—is hard work, however, and happens over a long period of time. The community will need to relearn (or learn for the first time) how to be a healthy body that does not tolerate boundary violations by persons in ministerial leadership. Without the commitment of a sustained response, congregations are too often left to react to their next leader or challenge, without clear direction for how to change unhealthy patterns of congregational life.

A bishop can help a wounded congregation during the supervisory response by providing for healing, as mandated in the *Book of Discipline* (Par. 361.1b, e). Specially trained persons can help the congregation understand how this particular breakdown of trust has impacted them as individuals and as a community and, most importantly, *where God's presence might be felt in the midst of this experience*. With reflection,

STORY CONTINUED ON PAGE 16



STORY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

congregations can identify their strengths and their resilience: those aspects of community life that have helped them survive, but which may have grown unhealthy or allowed for pain. How might God be calling them into new ways of being? Effective congregational response is about listening and leading toward a path of growth unique to that congregation, paving the way for growing disciples active in the transformation of the world.

These questions are not greatly different than the questions any congregation should ask itself, which is exactly the point. After a congregation has experienced the trauma of misconduct, it may re-examine itself in a way that would challenge most congregations. In other words, these congregations have the potential to become revitalized congregations made up of principled leaders, equipped in the crucible of challenging congregational life, supported by the United Methodist connection, bringing the gospel to life for the world.

Bonnie Glass MacDonald, a member of the Kentucky Conference, offers training and support for clergy and congregations and may be reached through her website, www.bonnieglassmacdonald.wordpress.com.

Resources on congregational healing in the aftermath of sexual misconduct may be found at <http://umsexualethics.org/ConferenceLeaders/ResponseTeams.aspx>.

Join us in worship at General Conference

SUNDAY, APRIL 29, 2012, 10AM-NOON
CONVENTION CENTER, TAMPA, FLORIDA

Worship leader: Cynthia Wilson, deacon, Kansas West Annual Conference

Preaching team:



*Pamela Lightsey,
elder, Northern
Illinois
Annual Conference*



*Debbie
Wallace-Padgett,
elder, Kentucky
Annual Conference*



*Erica Granados
de la Rosa,
laity, Fort
Worth, Texas*



*Carmen Scheuerman,
elder, Pampango
Philippines
Annual Conference*



*Joaquina Nhanala,
bishop of
Mozambique
Annual Conference*



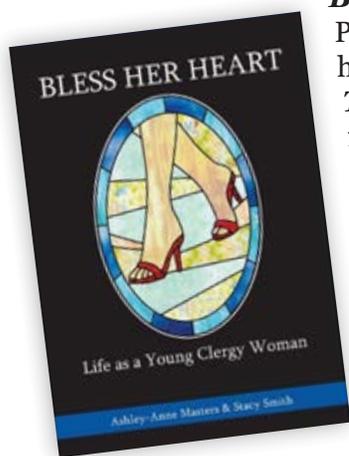
BOOK REVIEW

Young clergywomen find a voice

By Tasha Sargent

No matter what job setting you are in, there are challenges and it does not take long for you to collect a library's worth of stories illustrating each and every one of those challenges. As a seminarian who also happens to be young and a woman, I am not only concerned with the challenges I may face as a clergyperson but also the unique challenges of being a young clergywoman. Luckily, two books have emerged in the past year out of or in connection with The Young Clergy Women Project (www.youngclergywomen.org) that shares the challenges of being—what else—a young clergywoman.

The Girlfriends' Clergy Companion: Surviving and Thriving in Ministry features the voices of Melissa Lynn DeRosia, Marianne J. Grano, Amy Morgan and Amanda Adams Riley, all ordained clergywomen in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Sassy, serious and just enough sarcasm and humor to keep it all balanced, *The Girlfriend's Clergy Companion* offers personal insight into the challenges of ministry as a young clergywoman from women who can say that they've "been there, done that." Although the stories come from four Presbyterians, the core themes of each of the chapters is something a young clergywoman from any denomination can relate to in one way or another. Some of the language may be strange or different to those from other denominations and can be a bit distracting at times (at least it was for me). For example, "calling" is referenced which, in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), refers to what churches a person may or may not apply to be a pastor. Clergypersons in connectional systems, like The United Methodist Church, where a person is appointed by the bishop and may only get minimal input on where that appointment will be, have a very different set of challenges that their Presbyterian sisters and brothers do not experience.



Bless Her Heart: Life as a Young Clergy Woman, also written by two Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) clergywomen, Ashley-Anne Masters and Stacy Smith, hits upon many of the same challenges young clergywomen face that are mentioned in *The Girlfriend's Companion*. However, it also seamlessly ties short personal stories from unnamed clergywomen into Masters and Smith's own experiences. My favorite feature of this book was the way Masters and Smith relate the challenges of young clergywomen to the Bible. For me, it was a beautiful reminder of how Scripture describes the struggles women have been confronting for generations, and how some of these same struggles are faced by current and future young clergywomen today. *Bless Her Heart* offers a realistic look into the challenges of young clergywomen. In every chapter you hear the times of joy and the reaffirmation that ministry for young clergywomen, while having its own unique challenges, is a blessing and worth every email concerned about the color of one's toenails because you decided to wear sandals last Sunday.

The Girlfriend's Companion and *Bless Her Heart* are not how-to guides for young clergywomen. Though they both address many of the issues young clergywomen face, it does not, and cannot, get at them all. Every young clergywomen will face her own challenges based on her particular context but what these two books offer is a blessed reminder to young female seminarians of some of the challenges they need to be aware of and a reminder to young clergywomen that they are not alone.

Tasha Sargent is a student at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston, Ill., and the seminary intern for GCSRW.