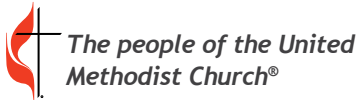




SEPTEMBER/
OCTOBER 2012

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



Advocacy for Women

ENDOWMENT FUND

Donate 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.

GCSRW Staff:

M. Garlinda Burton
LeeAnn Goldman
Elaine Moy
Darryl Stephens

FLYER editor:

Heather Peck Stahl

Web coordinator/editor:

Lindsey Graham

www.gcsr.org

www.umsexualethics.org

Find us on



In this issue:

- » Perspectives on General Conference – **Page 2**
- » New GCSRW board members meet, elect officers – **Page 5**
- » Nhanala re-elected bishop in Africa Central Conference – **Page 6**
- » How to have a successful women's advocacy ministry in your annual conference – **Page 7**
- » How your church can help end sexual violence – **Page 10**
- » The four women of Haywood are celebrated in new book – **Page 11**

2012 GENERAL CONFERENCE

Four first-person perspectives

Reflecting on the decisions made by the delegates of the 2012 General Conference, four women tell The FLYER what they think are the lasting implications and what lessons they think GCSRW should learn. [read more](#)

BOARD UPDATE

New GCSRW board members meet, elect officers

Commission members plan the next four years and celebrate general secretary's years of service [read more»](#)

BISHOPS

Nhanala re-elected bishop in Africa Central Conference

Last month, Bishop Joaquina Filipe Nhanala was re-elected bishop by delegates in the Africa Central Conference, held in Nairobi, Kenya. [read more»](#)

TIME TO GEAR UP!

How to have a successful women's advocacy ministry in your annual conference

Right now is the best time to assemble an effective work team and to lay the groundwork for compelling, helpful and change-agent work in your conference and the larger community. [read more»](#)

SEXUAL ETHICS

How your church can help end sexual violence

Faith groups and community partnerships are effective vehicles to preventing ministerial sexual abuse and bring support for victims/survivors. [read more»](#)

BOOK REVIEW

The four women of Haywood are celebrated in new book

[read more»](#)



2012 GENERAL CONFERENCE

Four First-Person Perspectives

Reflecting on the decisions made by the delegates of the 2012 General Conference, Four women tell THE FLYER what they think are the lasting implications on women and women's concerns and what lessons they think GCSRW should learn.

Leanne Nakanishi, of Los Angeles, is the California-Pacific Conference United Methodist Women's president (believed to be the youngest woman in this position) and California-Pacific Conference co-secretary (believed to be the first laywoman elected to this position).



This year was my first General Conference and I served as a lay delegate from the California-Pacific Annual Conference. I attended the United Methodist Women (UMW), General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR) and General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW) pre-General Conference briefing and thought this was one of the best educational conferences I have ever attended. After hearing a powerful and enlightening presentation by GCSRW General Secretary M. Garlinda Burton, I was inspired to work more closely with GCSRW in our conference.

The historic vote by the 2012 General Conference on UMW becoming an autonomous organization within The United Methodist Church will have significant impact on the church. This action showed the world the importance of women in the leadership of the mission of the church.

Yet I was surprised by the lack of support for the GCSRW and the GCORR to remain as two independent general agencies of The United Methodist Church. So many delegates were not aware of exactly what GCSRW and GCORR's ministry and mandates are. I spent a lot of time talking about the differences between GCSRW, GCORR and UMW.

In regards to moving forward, there was too much "we" verses "they" rhetoric, and that saddened me. Unless individuals can see how the critical the work of all three of these organizations is, the support will not be there. We, at the local level, do not hear enough of what all our general agencies are doing between General Conferences.

I have not worked closely enough with GCORR and GCSRW in our conference. We do not have active conference organizations making the particular work of COSROW and CORR a priority. Now that I am educated and aware of the critical work of these agencies, I am committed to helping this work thrive in our Conference.



STORY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Carlene Fogle-Miller of Lakeland, Fla., serves on the 2013-2016 GCSRW Board of Directors. She was a lay delegate to General and jurisdictional conferences (believed to be the youngest in her delegation).



The General Conference 2012 decision to eliminate guaranteed appointments is a huge one. I followed the Twitter feed pretty closely throughout the proceedings; and I think the continued monitoring of this decision is important. I have spoken to women who are ecstatic about the end of guaranteed appointment and to women who are very frightened. I come from the Florida conference, and I am proud to say that Florida has been a place where clergywomen are able to flourish. However, I know this is not always the case in other conferences.

For many, guaranteed appointments was seen as a way of ensuring women clergy and minority clergy could not be elbowed out of a job. For other conferences, like Florida, guaranteed appointments kept some people when they were no longer effective.

I think the main thing GCSRW and all of us can learn from General Conference 2012 is that there is a serious lack of trust throughout our denomination, whether it be a lack of trust in the Council of Bishops, lack of trust in the general boards and agencies, or just lack of trust between delegates. It is clear that our decision making process is hindered by our inability to trust in one another and in the process.

I don't know how, if at all, this can be resolved. But I think it is important that we all remember, regardless of our own personal views or political stances, we are, first and foremost, the body of Christ, his hands and feet in the world. So we should stop trying to conform our brothers and sisters to our point of view, (stop trying to make a hand a foot) and remember that as a whole body, together as many individuals, unique pieces, we are doing a lot of good.

Betty Kiboko of Laurel, Iowa, is a former board member of GCSRW and was an interpreter for Swahili/French-speaking delegates at General Conference.

As I reflect on the decisions made by General Conference delegates in 2012, I see 988 delegates from more than 60 nations, who dealt with some 1,200 petitions. The most significant decision having impact on women, which I celebrate, is the Judicial Council's decision to declare the proposed restructure of the church unconstitutional.

This Judicial Council decision [which preserves GCSRW as a free-standing commission] will be a blessing to women in the Africa Central Conference, especially the Mozambique episcopal area who are already working with GCSRW. It will also help continue the work on sexual ethics under GCSRW in the Congo Central Conference.

Other General Conference decisions I believe impact women are:

- Stopping "guaranteed appointments" for clergy. I can see many women being affected by this decision as I know that women are often not treated well in our church. Minority women, in particular, are going to suffer as the appointment might be biased unless we put in place mechanisms that would protect them.



STORY CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



STORY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

- Approving the United Methodist Women as an autonomous organization that would help all women around the world to work together.
- The creation of the Global Theological Education Fund that will help increase the number of central conference women in theological studies, which is needed as churches in these areas grow.

I think GCSRW should realize that The United Methodist Church is a global church. In this global church, we should ask ourselves: Who has the agenda? Who is leading the discussion? Are we really in conversation with one another? Are we really having a holy conferencing? Are we listening to each other?

I also think we should invite all United Methodist members to participate in the discussion from the very beginning, not just when we need their votes. I dream of the day when we, as United Methodists, will be really united, sitting at the table and having holy conferencing from the local church, to annual conference instead of the conversation coming from the top down. Holy conferencing can only take place when people are connected in meaningful way.



Harriett Jane Olson is general secretary and chief executive officer of United Methodist Women.

The 2012 General Conference showed that there is a lot of support for the work of GCSRW (and GCORR) from many places across the connection. Many of the people who addressed the General Conference talked about gaps in equity that still exist for women (both inside and outside the church). This confirms that the mission of GCSRW is not yet accomplished.

The challenge for GCSRW is, as it has always been, to work on strategies that are relevant to the church and the community to help us see women as “normal” (not “lady journalists,” or the only woman to be among the presidential moderators for 20 years, for example) so that women do not have to be extra-ordinary to respond to God’s call to service. All of us are in the process of being transformed, but none of us should have to conform to dominant norms in order to contribute our gifts.

Other lessons from General Conference include that “leadership” must include mutuality and dialogue. “Boldness” of individual leaders or small groups, as opposed to broad consultation, is suspect in our current milieu.

Of course, this presents a conundrum for leaders—how to have significant dialogue with a broad representation of the church without being “stuck” in our present fears and realities of decline. I believe that this is the challenge of leadership; and GCSRW as well as others can put their considerable expertise to work on this. We must be more focused on what we are becoming, than on what we have been.



New GCSRW board members meet, elect officers

Commission members plan the next four years and celebrate general secretary's years of service

At the September organizing meeting for the 2013-2016 term, the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women elected as officers: president, Bishop **Debbie Wallace-Padgett** of the Birmingham (Ala.) Area; vice president, Bishop **Joaquina Nhanala** of the Mozambique Area, and secretary, **Ryan Russell** of Tacoma, Wash., a student at Garrett-Evangelical Seminary in Evanston, Ill.

Officers, like all members of the 19-member commission, are elected for the quadrennium.



New GCSRW board member Carlene Fogle-Miller of Florida shares an idea for reaching local churches.

New president Wallace-Padgett, a clergywoman from Kentucky elected to the episcopacy in July, had just completed an eight-year term on the commission, where she had served as chairperson of the human resources committee.

Nhanala, elected in 2008 as the first-ever African woman bishop in mainline Christendom, was also a member of GCSRW last quadrennium. Russell is a first-term commission member.

In discussion on long-range plans for the next four years, commission members agreed to emphasize the

STORY CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



The Reverend Nan Self presenting to the 40th anniversary celebration.

New commission members celebrate GCSRW's 40th anniversary

Continuing GCSRW's 40th anniversary celebration for 2012, new commission members heard a presentation Sept. 20 by the Rev. Nan Self, a retired California clergywomen who was one the first executives of the women's commission.

Self and Judith Leaming-Elmer, were the first co-executives of the commission when it began in 1973, and Self continued as a member of the agency's "general secretariat" until she retired in 1991.

In her address to the newly constituted GCSRW board of directors, Self reminded members that the work of full equity for women in The United Methodist Church—and the world—has yet to be realized.

"It is amazing to me to see all the progress we've made. When I heard recently that women make up 20 percent of United Methodist clergy today, I was so proud," Self said.

"But we still have places in the United States and around the world that will not welcome a woman pastor, a woman lay leader or a woman bishop. So we've still got work to do."



STORY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

development and support of church-based justice for women ministries in United Methodist annual conferences in Africa, Europe and the Philippines, as well as among local churches and conferences in the United States.

The commission also celebrated the ministry of M. Garlinda Burton, GCSRW general secretary since 2003, who plans to retire from that position Dec. 31. A search is underway for a new staff executive.



New GCSRW board secretary
Ryan Russell



New GCSRW board president
Debbie Wallace-Padgett

BISHOPS

Nhanala re-elected bishop in Africa Central Conference

Last month, Bishop Joaquina Filipe Nhanala was re-elected bishop by delegates in the Africa Central Conference, held in Nairobi, Kenya.

Nhanala, who in 2008 became the first African woman elected to the United Methodist episcopacy, was recently elected the GCSRW board vice president. She was a member of GCSRW's 2009-2012 board of directors and has been reassigned for the 2013-16 quadrennium.

Nhanala's episcopal area encompasses the Mozambique North and Mozambique South Annual Conferences as well as the South Africa Provisional Annual Conference.

Central conferences (groups of annual conferences outside the United States) may change and adapt the *Book of Discipline* as local conditions require, as long as they do nothing contrary to the Constitution and General Rules of the denomination. In some cases, they may print their own *Book of Discipline*.

Unlike U.S. bishops who are elected for life, persons elected to the episcopacy in central conferences are elected for a limited time. In some cases, such as the Africa Central Conference, if they are re-elected, they are elected for life. In such cases, central conferences establish retirement ages.





TIME TO GEAR UP!

How to have a successful women's advocacy ministry in your annual conference

By M. Garlinda Burton

By now, your conference has named the leaders for work areas and ministry teams, among them the Commission on the Status and Role of Women (or an equivalent structure).

If you are on the COSROW leadership team, right now is the best time to assemble an effective work team and to lay the groundwork for compelling, helpful and change-agent work in your conference and the larger community.

Recruit passionate participation

Whether COSROW is a stand-alone ministry or part of a larger team, it is imperative your members reflect a passion for justice for women, diversity of interests, region and ability, and credibility with a wide number of constituents. Invite youth and young adults, clergy and laity, persons with strong communications skills, and persons representing diverse communities (racial-ethnic congregations, United Methodist Women, campus ministries, clergywomen's groups and the conference cabinet) to be part of the COSROW team.

Know where you're headed

Schedule an orientation meeting early in the quadrennium; a 24-hour retreat is an ideal setting. Ask members to prepare in advance by reading and review the history of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women and recent issues of *The Flyer* newsletter. For your first meeting, invite a veteran commission leader from yours or another conference to talk about past and current issues that COSROW has addressed, and for frank conversation about what has worked—and what hasn't—in your conference.

Invite key women leaders from your conference to talk about their pressing concerns and hopes for gender justice, reflecting as a group on such questions as:

- » What specific issues are women facing in local churches?
- » How are young women—lay and clergy—engaged in ministry and mission in your area?
- » How do growing vital congregations successfully reach and empower women and girls?

It is imperative your members reflect a passion for justice for women, diversity of interests, region and ability, and credibility with a wide number of constituents.

STORY CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



STORY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

- » What prevents women from more active leadership in worship, mission, outreach and decision-making ministries in your region?
- » Are there some women who are “invisible” in church leadership and decision-making? Why are those women not more active and visible in the work of The United Methodist Church in your region?

Discover and work from baselines

COSROW exists to ensure that women and girls are engaged equitably as disciples, ministerial leaders, decision-makers and missionaries across The United Methodist Church as we all seek to be faithful followers of Jesus Christ. The commission seeks to address institutional gender bias so that it will not hinder God’s call to make disciples, foster vibrant congregations and witness to God’s transforming power in the world.

COSROW works primarily as an advocate for full and equal inclusion, as a monitoring and assessment agent to help the church address bias, and as an agent of change. Each annual conference has a unique set of challenges to full participation of women, and most conferences also have made strides in equality that are to be celebrated.

As your commission gears up for the quadrennium, it will help for you to have baseline information from which to measure the progress your conference will make in empowerment of women. Work with the conference statistician, the council on finance and administration and the director of connectional ministries to collect and publish your starting information, including:

- » The number and percentage of women pastors, superintendents, district lay leaders, lay members to the annual conference, delegates to the 2012 General and Jurisdictional conferences, members of the cabinet, women pastors leading the largest congregations, and those women who are assigned to plant new congregations.
- » Your conference policies and procedures for addressing sexual harassment and sexual misconduct.
- » The frequency of continuing education and leadership events for clergy and laity that are led by women and address topics such as women’s discipleship, nurture and recruitment of clergywomen, or specific skill-building for women of color or young women.

Publish these baseline statistics on your conference website and in conference publications, and set goals based on what you’ve learned. If your annual conference does not currently have a support network for clergywomen, COSROW can work with leading clergy to help start one.

If women are under-represented as delegates, COSROW and United Methodist Women can work together to help more women learn about church polity and nurture them to run for delegations in 2015.

If young women or women of color are virtually invisible in conference leadership, COSROW should collaborate with local young people’s offices and racial-ethnic caucuses. COSROW should engage lay and clergy women of color to support and provide an arena for those women to be heard. Of course, those women should be represented on your COSROW team as well.

STORY CONTINUED ON PAGE 9



STORY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

Set a quadrennial calendar now!

The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women plans to offer a national training event for annual conference COSROW leaders in spring 2013. Meanwhile, a suggested planning calendar for your conference team is available.

- » Plan now to promote and urge congregations to observe Women's History Month (March) each year. The general commission creates bulletin inserts and worship resources each year, and you can enhance the observance by featuring local women and issues.
- » Collaborate with other work areas. Your best work involves collaboration and conversation with leaders in your annual conference to ensure that women and girls are included at all levels of conference work and ministry. United Methodist Women, clergywomen's groups, the cabinet, youth and young-adult teams and racial-ethnic caucuses are all excellent partners in furthering the effectiveness of COSROW in bringing diverse women to the discipleship and leadership tables in your area.
- » Contact the general commission. You may also want to invite staff and board members of the general commission to visit your conference and assist with training your team and planning your quadrennial work. For more information, please visit www.gcsrw.org, email gcsrw@gcsrw.org, or call our office in Chicago at (312) 346-4900.

—M. Garlinda Burton is the general secretary of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women.



SEXUAL ETHICS

How your church can help end sexual violence

Faith groups and community partnerships effective in addressing abuse

Partnerships between faith groups and community-based agencies that address sexual abuse and violence are a little-used but potentially effective vehicle for helping prevent ministerial sexual abuse and bringing better support for victim/survivors and congregations.

This was the assertion of presenters at the **National Sexual Assault Conference**, which met in Chicago in August. In a workshop led by Darryl Stephens of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, front-line care providers like Kelly Anderson of the Rape Crisis Center in Madison, Wis., agreed that agencies like hers can be most effective working with survivors of clergy sexual misconduct when they are able to understand the particular ways in which this abuse is often shrouded in God-language and spiritual coercion.

Rape crisis centers desiring to partner in education and prevention efforts must also speak “the language of faith” in order to connect with churches, Anderson added.

Workshop members discussed the unique aspects of sexual abuse by clergy or in the context of a faith community, as opposed to sexual abuse in other contexts. The shame, secrecy and family-of-faith intimacy involved in clergy sexual abuse creates dynamics similar to incest and domestic violence. Suggesting to a survivor of clergy sexual abuse that she find support at a community rape crisis center presents a big psychological hurdle. Yet, clergy abuse survivors can be encouraged to turn to secular service providers, especially when churches lack their own trained support personnel for victim/survivors.

Furthermore, unlike rape and domestic violence, clergy sexual misconduct is not criminalized in every state or nation. Persons who have been violated sexually by their pastor cannot always rely on the criminal justice system for support. Most complaints are handled internally, through church officials.

Workshop participant Barbara Blaine, president of the Survivors’ Network of those Abused by Priests (**SNAP**), urged faith organizations and secular service providers to work together to lobby state legislatures to criminalize clergy sexual abuse.

The **National Sexual Assault Conference** is held annually, and will meet in Los Angeles in 2013. The 2012 NSAC conference drew 1,250 registrants from across the United States, including rape crisis center staff, U.S. military personnel, state sexual abuse coalition staff, government agency providers, Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE).

Ways your church can partner with community rape crisis and sexual violence resource centers:

- » Co-sponsor an educational event on healthy sexuality, sexual violence prevention or domestic violence.
- » Distribute brochures, pamphlets and other materials to educate church members about community resources for victim/survivors of sexual violence (including clergy sexual abuse).
- » Preach about sexual justice, nonviolence and respect for all persons as precious children of God. Join community partnerships to strengthen state and federal laws against sexual violence and abuse and to provide support for victim/survivors and their families.
- » **Support Sexual Assault Awareness month in April**
- » Provide safe, anonymous spiritual support for survivors of sexual abuse
- » Ensure that your church has a **sexual misconduct policy** to protect all persons from abuse, and provide regular training for lay and clergy.



WOMEN BY THE NUMBERS

The four women of Haywood are celebrated in new book

Former board member of GCSRW Cynthia Bond Hopson has written a book celebrating her women mentors and role models from her hometown in Tennessee.

The Women of Haywood, Their Lives, Our Legacy is about four professional African American women in Haywood County and is the seventh book by Hopson, a Haywood County native.

Assistant general secretary of the Black College Fund and Ethnic Concerns, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, Hopson includes in her book interviews with Susie Ella Taylor Ashworth, Nola Walker Bond, Mayme Dell Rives Bowles Dotson and Eva James Davis Rawls.

Almost 20 years in the making and recently released in Brownsville, Tenn., *The Women of Haywood* is now available at Amazon.com.

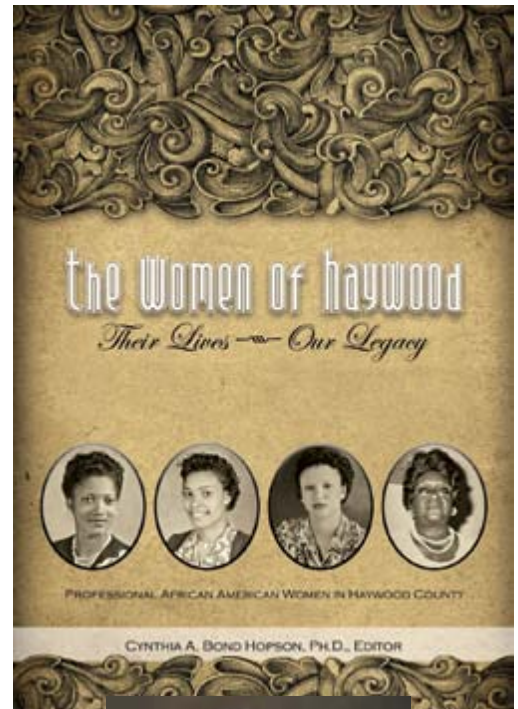
“These women used their lives and talents to make us and the world better,” Hopson says. “This book simply tries to chronicle how and what made them great. I think their stories will tickle and bless your heart. It is so important to hear and celebrate their voices.”

M. Garlinda Burton, GCSRW general secretary, says, “The stories in *The Women of Haywood* are those we seldom see translated into movies and documentaries, and rarely celebrated by news media. These are the stories of women, for whom pride in racial identity, good citizenship and the calling by God and family to leave the world better than they found it were marching orders for their daily living.

“From the grammar school teacher Dotson, to nurse Ralls, to activist/entrepreneur Bond, these women used their power, resources, self-respect and faith to infuse financial and spiritual wealth in their respective communities. They served as role models for young women and men in their lives, embraced the communities’ children as their own, and showed the world that women from relatively modest means were and continue to be the legs upon which America stands.

“Particularly for the African-American community, *The Women of Haywood* is a reminder that those institutions and values that we most cherish have been built and sustained largely by unsung women who donated dollars, sold box lunches, taught in modest schoolhouses, fed and nurtured people in mom-and-pop restaurants and storefronts, and prayed new roofs onto sanctuaries.

“The lesson from *The Women of Haywood* is that strong will, mother wit, self-respect, community spirit and an unshakeable faith in God combine as an irresistible force for positive change and forward movement for a family, a neighborhood, a people or the whole planet.”



Cynthia Bond Hopson