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Give Voice

January–March 2008

Volume 39, Number 1

www.gcsr.org

www.umsexualethics.org

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Are women leaders less healthy than their male counterparts?

By Cathy Farmer

Medicine has just begun to grapple with the health issues of women in leadership. Despite reports that women experience declining health when they assume roles of authority, no studies comprehensive enough to cover all the variables have been conducted.



In fact, until recently, the impact of stress on women was not studied, because many researchers believed that monthly fluctuations in hormones created stress responses that varied too widely to be considered statistically valid, said Shelly Taylor, lead investigator of a groundbreaking study on women and stress at UCLA.

The lack of statistics, however, doesn't stop many women from believing that they are suffering more than their male counterparts.

"It's ironic that you're asking me at this moment what I think about the health of women in leadership in the church," said Lois M. Dauway, associate to the deputy general secretary for the Women's Division of the General Board of Global Ministries.

"I'm on a dialysis machine right now," she explained. "I may not have any statistics as they relate to women's health, but my belief is that women tend to care for others rather than themselves. They assign priority to others. ... The support, the partnerships that males have traditionally had, are generally not there for women. The expectations are different.

"My educated hunch," she continued, "would be that a study would show women have more health challenges. And that the study would indicate stress is clearly a factor because all the societal pressures of sexism, racism and classism are there."



Lois M. Dauway believes women have more health challenges partly because they tend to care for others rather than themselves.

Women more likely to seek support

Teresa Cutts, a clinical psychologist and senior scholar of the Methodist Interfaith Health Program, said, "The UCLA study shows when faced with stress, women "nest" instead of exhibiting

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I'm voting for the most courageous candidate

Barack Obama is black—like me. Hillary Clinton is a woman—like me. John Edwards is an unapologetic Southerner—like me. So curious folks in my circle (and even relative strangers) assume that my choice for U.S. president hovers among the three, and want to know how I'll choose which to vote for. They might be surprised.



Also coming up in 2008 is the election of new United Methodist bishops in the United States. Elected for life, they will lead our corporate ministry, evangelism, Christian discipleship and social witness for the next two decades. In 2004, we elected a record six women to episcopacy (a seventh, Bishop Rosemarie Wenner, became bishop of Germany the following year) and we elected seven men of color.

Having women and people of color is important to our church and our world. Still, inclusive leadership does not always translate into more openness throughout our church. In some annual conferences led by women bishops, their COSROWs have been abolished or gutted of their power and voice. We hear from clergywomen of color that some white women bishops and district superintendents foster “women’s empowerment” only so long as it benefits white, middle-class women.

And we have observed that some bishops of color are less strident in addressing racism unless it pertains to their own racial group, and some racial-ethnic male bishops (U.S. and beyond) engage in sexist behavior while fighting for racial justice.

With so many challenges facing today’s church and society, those seeking office should be multifaceted, spiritually strong, administratively savvy, compassionate and forward-moving disciples of Jesus Christ.

But whether called to the U.S. presidency or the United Methodist episcopacy, leaders who earnestly seek to do God’s will in the world should demonstrate unwavering commitment to the vision of God’s beloved community by refusing to let racial, gender and class discrimination destroy our church and world. Fear of losing one’s own power and privilege is not an option. They must be willing to speak the truth, to tear down walls of prejudice, and to re-direct resources in order to bring forth new and more diverse leaders and ministries that move us beyond the status quo.

So, I’m supporting the candidates—episcopal and presidential—who live out justice and love for the widest spectrum of God’s people, who won’t forget where they came from when they take the “big chair,” and who are willing to shake things up for the sake of those who are still ignored and forgotten at the power tables.

A word to the wise,



M. Garlinda Burton, General Secretary

The Flyer

January–March 2008

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 Teams. Women outside the United States, please ask your bishops’ office to make sure you get The Flyer.

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

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Women leaders health

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the fight or flight reaction of men. They seek friends, social support. They don't isolate themselves.

"When we look at the [women] bishops and leaders in The United Methodist Church, they're more passionate about self-care, about being healthy," she said.



Bishop Hope Morgan Ward

Mississippi Bishop Hope Morgan Ward agrees that women support each other. "The women bishops have entered into community to support one another in living healthy lives.

"I think women tend to see health in a holistic way," she added. "That's a strength for women in leadership roles."

Still, while women leaders are more likely than men to cope with stress by seeking support, they also admit that gender and racial bias can add additional pressure in already high-profile jobs. The Rev. Dawn M. Hand, associate pastor at 4,000-member Mathews UMC in the Western North Carolina Conference, is the first black clergywoman in her conference to serve a predominantly Anglo congregation.

Report analyzes relationship between clergy health and job characteristics

The General Board of Pension and Health Benefits recently released the report *The Church Benefits Association: Health, Well-Being, Spirituality, and Job Characteristics*. The next issue of *The Flyer* will provide a greater analysis, including these highlights from the United Methodist clergy:

- + Clergywomen deal with the stress of the job better than clergymen.
- + Older clergywomen tend to have stronger mental health than older clergymen.
- + Marriage is a health detriment to clergywomen but a health benefit to clergymen.

"I was told that this appointment needs to go very well. People can pile stress on you, but I choose not to accept the added stress. I can't change my color or my gender."



Teresa Cutts

Hand adds that while she doesn't notice women in her conference to be less healthy than their male counterparts, women do seem to be under more stress.

'We don't have a wife to help us'

A few months ago, the Rev. Gail Gaddie, pastor of Good Shepherd UMC in Memphis, Tenn., underwent surgery to remove the lower right lobe of one lung.

Gaddie says she doesn't think female church leaders in Memphis are suffering more physically than men, but she does feel they endure more stress working in a profession that is predominantly male.



The Rev. Gail Gaddie

"You want to do as well as you can," she explained. "If it means you work 12 hours a day, you work 12 hours a day. In my first appointment as a pastor, anything that the pastor who preceded me did, I would do—including learning a new computer program to keep the church's books."

Gaddie also said many women pastors tend to establish more intimate relationships with their congregations. "And we carry our families in addition to the church. We don't have a wife to help us." ❧

Cathy Farmer is communications director for the Memphis Annual Conference.

Agency forwards resolutions on sexual ethics

Sexual harassment and misconduct remain a concern of the church, according to the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women.

By Linda Bloom

As the denominational watchdog on issues of sexual ethics, the agency is submitting updated legislation for General Conference to consider when it meets April 23-May 2 in Fort Worth, Texas. The legislation was approved by the agency's governing commissioners at their Sept. 20-22 annual meeting.

GCSRW also prepared a resolution on what it has determined to be a "disturb-

ing trend": use of Internet pornography by clergy, laity or volunteers, often on church-owned computers ("Prevention of the Use of Pornography in the Church").

as "an exploitation of power." It also suggests action items for renewing the stand against sexual misconduct in the church.

Beyond the sexual misconduct issues, GCSRW continues to advocate for full participation of women within the denomination. An updated resolution, "Every Barrier Down: Toward Full Embrace of All Women in Church and Society," celebrates the advances and struggles of women serving in the church.



Members of GCSRW gather at last fall's annual meeting. Bottom row (from left): GCSRW staff members Kim Coffing, M. Garlinda Burton, Elaine Moy and LeeAnn Goldman.

ing trend": use of Internet pornography by clergy, laity or volunteers, often on church-owned computers ("Prevention of the Use of Pornography in the Church").

Updated resolutions

The updated resolution on "Sexual Misconduct (formerly called Sexual Abuse) Within Ministerial Relationships" lays out specific definitions of various forms of sexual misconduct and characterizes such behavior

Challenge to the church

GCSRW is challenging the denomination to "listen anew to women, with new emphasis on women of color." Other challenges include recruiting women leaders, championing economic parity and justice, adopting a "no tolerance" posture on sexual violence, harassment and abuse, organizing women in theological exploration, and teaching and creating a "report card" on overcoming sexism for each agency and annual conference.

The commission also is submitting a new version of "Being the Church Amid Disagreement," a resolution that encourages "a ministry of mindfulness" and care in areas of discord.

For the denomination's book of law, *The Book of Discipline*, the commission would like to see the word "gender" added to Par. 4, on inclusiveness of the church, and Par. 16, on the powers and duties of General Conference. ✍

Linda Bloom is a United Methodist News Service news writer based in New York.

The Rev. Brenda Vaca: ‘Day Labor Minister’

Associate pastor of Temple UMC to lead Latino ministries, the **Rev. Brenda Vaca** calls her ministry *Nueva Vida* (New Life), and works in the Mission District of San Francisco.

Begun in July 2006, *Nueva Vida* hosts a “Day Labor Ministry” in San Francisco and other areas of California. Church members collect gifts for men of all ages who work as day laborers. This ministry began as a gift drive at Christmas 2006, when the church gave more than 200 men gifts such as toiletries, gloves, underwear, socks and hats. Since then, Vaca has continued the ministry, delivering about 120 meals every Friday to unemployed men—many on their own and under the age of 18—who spend their days looking for jobs on the streets of San Francisco.

Vaca and others from the church also served Christmas dinner at a local shelter and have shown support for the city’s day laborers and immigrant population through prayer and acts of civil disobedience.

Vaca, a member of the Hispanic Ministries Committee of the California-Nevada Conference, also helped convene a task force to address and educate congregations about immigration. She hopes to begin English- and Spanish-language weekly worship services by Easter 2008 in the Mission District.

“I am passionate about making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world and do not intend to slow down any time soon. ... I pray that God will use me as a pastor to help crack the code in growing our churches on the left coast [of the country]. There aren’t many young Latina clergy in any denomination, and I believe they are a vital witness at this time.”



The Rev. Brenda Vaca

Q What is your favorite hymn?
“Lift Every Voice and Sing”
(UMH 519)

Q When you were young, what did you want to be?
I wanted to be a writer because I grew up in a family that loved to tell stories.

Q If money were no object, what would you like to do?
Pay off my student loans and buy homes for my family. I’d also set up an endowment for new churches in my annual conference and fund my own ministry.

Q What advice do you have for other Christians?
There are many young women and girls who do not think it’s possible to be clergy or church leaders. May we all strive to bring God’s justice into this world by liberating our sisters who are held in bondage by the concepts of racism, homophobia, classism and patriarchy. ✨



This regular feature in The Flyer highlights women who are making a positive impact on our society or our world. If you would like to nominate someone to be considered for Women Worth Watching, please email Heather Peck Stahl at flyer@gcsrw.org, or write the GCSRW office in Chicago.

Calling all annual conference COSROW leaders!

Ask delegates to General Conference to strengthen sexual ethics stance, add 'gender' as a protected class in the United Methodist Constitution.

By Pat Callbeck Harper

After a two-year process of prayer, discernment, research and listening to the stories of grassroots laity and clergy, GCSRW has forwarded proposals to the 2008 General Conference of The United Methodist Church that would, if passed:

- ✓ Define the use of pornography by United Methodist clergy and lay employees/leaders as a form of sexual misconduct;
- ✓ Launch a comprehensive approach to prevent sexual misconduct by clergy and laity, starting with basic training for congregations and leaders-in-training in seminaries and local pastors' and lay speakers' school, and develop churchwide protocols for supporting and restoring victims and congregations affected by sexual misconduct;
- ✓ Add "gender" to the Constitution of The United Methodist Church, making it a category of persons protected; and
- ✓ Offer a vision of what the church could become and accomplish if the denomination were to achieve "full participation of women in the church" and "eradication of sexism."

The next step in the legislative process is raising awareness and support. Your help is needed to get the word out to the 1,000 delegates from around the world who will vote next spring on legislative proposals received from the Commission, other church agencies and individual United Methodists.

District and annual conference COSROW groups should meet as soon as possible with members of your General Conference delegation to garner their support. (Contact your annual conference for a list of delegates.) You may want to collaborate with your conference Commission on Religion and Race and United Methodist Women to host a briefing for delegates. 

Pat Callbeck Harper is the associate state director of communications at AARP in Montana.



>> **COMPLETE TEXTS** for the six GCSRW proposals, along with "talking points" for each, are available at www.gcsr.org.

If you do not have Internet access—or if you need brochures or other materials for your delegates' briefing—call us at 312.346.4900. And please send us an email or letter after your briefing to let us know how it went, share any questions or concerns raised in the briefing, or give us feedback on the proposals and talking points.

March is Women's History Month

Unite lay, clergywomen together for study, prayer, action!

In recent years, resources to help churches and other groups mark Women's History Month have been offered by such United Methodist groups as GCSRW and the General Board of Discipleship.

For the 2008 celebration, the women's commission will again offer free bulletin inserts, available for download at www.gcsrw.org, starting Jan. 15. And both the commission and the Discipleship agency (www.gbod.org) will also offer worship resources that incorporate the history, gifts and perspectives of women in worship for March and beyond.

In addition, the commission has created a six-part study, "Women Called to Ministry" (also available for free download at www.gcsrw.org), which traces the history of women prophets, preachers and teachers from the Old Testament through modern-day Christianity.

Beyond celebrating women's history, however, March is also an ideal time to bring together women in your church or conference group for a time of study, prayer, worship and planning for advocacy and support. Consider bringing together clergywomen and laywomen to:

- ◆ Evaluate the worship and Christian education in your church in terms of their relevance to women and girls;
- ◆ Mentor teenagers and college-age women about church vocations;
- ◆ Plan a portion of weekly worship for each Sunday in March celebrating women;
- ◆ Honor "mothers" of the church or conference who have pioneered women's leadership in your area;

- ◆ Pray for, support and listen to the concerns of clergywomen and laywomen employed by (or in leadership in) the annual conference;
- ◆ Engage in a Bible study or a class meeting;
- ◆ Discuss issues of particular challenge to women in your church or conference and create a strategy for addressing them.

The following resources can help you plan for your Women's History Month observances—all available from Cokesbury, www.cokesbury.com, 800.672.1989:

- ◆ *Sisters: Bible Study for Women*, produced by Abingdon Press.
- ◆ *Reflect, Rekindle, Renew: Meditations Shared by Deaconesses of The United Methodist Church*, published by the General Board of Global Ministries.
- ◆ *The Sacred Selves of Adolescent Girls: Hard Stories of Race, Class, and Gender*, Evelyn L. Parker, editor. The Pilgrim Press, 2006.
- ◆ *Preaching the Women of the Bible*, by Lisa Wilson Davidson. Challis Press, 2006.



Three of the 2007 bulletin inserts

As you plan for Women's History Month and beyond, remember that women around the world of all ages, nationalities and circumstances offer their gifts and ministry to the church as mission workers, administrators, counselors, care-givers, musicians, deaconesses, ordained ministers and lay employees of church agencies, teachers and domestic workers. Include their voices and their perspectives in your celebrations. ✨

reflect, renew, rekindle

Why should gender be added to the UMC Constitution?

A retired church jurist reflects

By Sally Curtis Askew

My first reaction to reading Paragraphs 4 and 16.4 of the 2004 *Book of Discipline* is amazement! It is hard to believe that our church with its traditional emphasis on inclusion has not included “gender” in the paragraphs that protect against discrimination.

Thankfully, proposed amendments coming from GCSRW to the 2008 General Conference would serve to correct that omission.

The Constitution is the only part of the *Discipline* that is binding for the denomination internationally; and it cannot be changed without a two-thirds vote of General Conference delegates and ratification “by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the aggregate number of members present and voting in the annual conferences” (Par. 61, 2004 *Discipline*). Although gender is mentioned in other parts of the *Discipline*, prohibition of gender discrimination and institutional sexism is not binding for all annual conferences worldwide. And most other sections of church law, as recorded in the *Discipline*, can be changed or even deleted by a simple majority vote at General Conference.

So adding “gender” as a protected category would serve to make gender equity a binding commitment in our global United Methodist expressions, and would strengthen the protections currently afforded in other sections of our denominational law book.

Judicial Council rulings related to gender

Paragraph 4 has been amended twice since the adoption of the Constitution in 1968 and other categories added to its protections. And the Judicial Council, which is the United Methodist equivalent of the U.S. Supreme Court, has been asked on several occasions

to rule further on precisely whose rights are protected by the Constitution.

Several Council decisions addressed the rights of the husband and wife who are both clergy to each receive all benefits afforded to unmarried/single clergy. Two other Council rulings dealt with the rights of clergy spouses who are lay or clergy to participate fully in the life of the church.

To add to Par. 16.4, specifically, would help emphasize the need to address bias in many annual conferences when it comes to appointing clergywomen and assigning lay and clergywomen as members of conference boards and agencies.

One-third formula

The Judicial Council Decision 601 ruled unconstitutional *Disciplinary* paragraphs stipulating that the membership of each churchwide program agency comprise one-third laywomen, one-third laymen and one-third clergypersons (women and men). The decision said the membership formula conflicted with Pars. 4 and 16.4, which guarantee no person will be excluded on the basis of “race, color, national origin, status or economic condition.”

It is interesting to note that this particular decision was based on gender (specifically spurred by concerns that women might have too much representation), even though gender was not then and is not now a protected category.

Proponents of the proposed one-third, one-third, one-third formula were concerned that women were (and still are today) underrepresented as voting members of general boards and agencies, and were attempting to legislate greater parity.



Sally Curtis Askew

Adding “gender” as a protected category would serve to make gender equity a binding commitment in our global United Methodist expressions.

From Desert to Wellspring

The following are excerpts from an address delivered to GCSRW voting members in September by guest speaker the Rev. Elizabeth Lopez, a former Commission member now serving as a district superintendent in the Minnesota Annual Conference.

“Give voice to the women... give voice to the church.”

Open itineracy

In Decisions 968 and 988, the Judicial Council considered the plan of the Kansas West Annual Conference to remedy gender-based inequity in compensation of clergy. Decision 968 was remanded to the conference because it was based on unproven assumptions, but 988 approved the reformulated plan.

Those two decisions relied on Par. 430, which espouses the denomination’s commitment to “open itineracy,” defined as making clergy appointments without regard to “race, ethnic origin, gender, color, disability, marital status, or age, except for the provisions of mandatory retirement.” Although Par. 430 includes “gender,” again, that protection could theoretically be removed by a simple majority of any General Conference.

While it may be argued that gender is implied because of decisions such as 601, 968 and 988, such implication does not offer the protections that a constitutional provision would. The Judicial Council at an earlier time did extend the protection to include gender, but that might not be true in every situation. To ensure that gender continues to be protected, the word should be explicitly added by the 2008 General Conference to Pars. 4 and 16.4 of the Constitution and submitted to the annual conferences for ratification. ✎

Sally Curtis Askew, a member of Athens (Ga.) First UMC, was a member of the Judicial Council of The United Methodist Church from 1988 until 2004. She served as secretary of the Council from 1996 through 2004. Before her retirement, she was law librarian for the University of Georgia law school.

“ My voice [has been] shaped, formed, molded, pushed, pulled, challenged, encouraged and given life and new life over and over again for now 32 years by this ministry known as the GCSRW. ... GCSRW has been that systemic presence and power to create the space for women to speak, find, empower and strengthen their voice. GCSRW has called this church into accountability from gender inequality, racism, social injustices, exclusivity and by addressing clergy and lay misconduct and sexual abuse.

If we believe the church needs to change in regard to full empowerment of women, then according to my mentor, Nan Self [clergywoman and former GCSRW executive], the good news and the bad news is that we all have to continue. We will all have to continue to be a part of the system. We will all have to continue to believe we can make—and we are making—a difference in this United Methodist Church we love and struggle with.

When I thought of GCSRW’s impact on my life and ministry, the memories flooded like a wellspring upon the parched desert of my soul. GCSRW, you ‘hear one another into speech.’ You are the voice for those of us who are finding our own, you are the voice that calls the church to be its full self.

Give voice to the women (yes, even give voice to the men), give voice to the church, so that we as The United Methodist Church can be faithful in giving voice in the world. ”



The Rev. Elizabeth Lopez

Most conference committee chairpersons are men

Women comprise 58% of United Methodist members, but they are the minority when it comes to regional leadership.

By Craig This and Elaine Moy

Of the 1,162 people named chairpersons of commissions, boards and committees in United Methodist annual conferences in the United States, approximately 490 (42%) are women. These numbers show phenomenal expansion of women's leadership, especially considering that, just 35 years ago, women comprised just 20% of all voting members of church agencies.

Overall, each of the five U.S. jurisdictions has shown a steady increase in the number of women serving as presidents or chairpersons of missional and administrative committees, according to data compiled from the "Annual Conference Committee Chairpersons Profile 2006," collected by the General Commission on Religion and Race and GCSRW.

The Western Jurisdiction has the greatest percentage of women chairpersons, with 48%. In the North Central Jurisdiction, women hold 45% of the committee chairs, and they hold 41% in the Northeastern Jurisdiction, 41% in the South Central Jurisdiction, and 38% in the Southeastern Jurisdiction.

However, while the number of women leaders is on the rise, there is evidence that women are "pigeon-holed" as heads of women's ministry and advocacy, racial-ethnic concerns and youth ministry, and are still largely excluded as leaders of trustees, boards of pensions, and conference finance and administration.

In general, women are more likely to head annual conference commissions, boards and committees of (in order of frequency): United Methodist Women; COSROW; Commission on Religion and Race; Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns; Commission on Youth Ministries; and Native American Concerns. These are often perceived as "soft" and "nurturing" ministries.

Men tend to chair at annual conference levels: United Methodist Men; Council on Finance and Administration; Conference Board of Pensions; Commission of

Equitable Compensation; and the Board of Trustees. Most of these are more concerned with setting the decision-making and financial goals for the conference.

The decisions about who should chair what committee in the church seems to reflect how women and men are socialized and stereotyped. According to psychologist Carol Gilligan, men are socialized—and believe themselves to be—strategic, logical and concerned with creating and following strict rules and, as such, volunteer for—and are named to—positions where they can be judgmental and make yes-no decisions and measure how well the rules are followed.

Women, in general, are still socialized to put primary emphasis on building and nurturing relationships, so they are often asked to head committees concerned with team building, emerging ministries and strengthening interpersonal relationships.

Further, it can be argued that male-dominated entities are still considered the most vital to the "real work" of the church, while those headed by women are more likely to be considered less critical to our corporate spiritual and administrative life. Thus, those committees are subject to be restructured, discontinued, merged or dismissed.

And those mostly male-led administrative committees exert considerable control over those headed by women, since funding and influence of conference committees depends on how money and personnel are allocated, and which ministry groups are "important" and should have influence.

Women of color account for only 9% or 104 of the 1,162 persons serving as chairs of commissions, committees and boards across the annual conferences (see Table 1), and they are more likely than men and white women to chair committees related to their racial-ethnic groups (e.g., several Native American women

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e numbers

Table 1: Racial and Lay/Clergy Status of Women Annual Conference Chairpersons by Jurisdiction, 2006 (men are included as an aggregate total for comparison purposes)

CLERGYWOMEN	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Native American	Pacific Islander	White	Total Clergywomen	Total Racial/Ethnic Clergywomen
North Central Jurisdiction	1	7	0	0	1	32	41	9
Northeastern Jurisdiction	5	6	1	4	0	38	54	16
South Central Jurisdiction	0	3	0	4	0	42	49	7
Southeastern Jurisdiction	1	4	0	2	0	14	21	7
Western Jurisdiction	0	0	0	1	0	27	28	1
UMC Totals	7	20	1	11	1	153	193	40

LAYWOMEN	Asian	Black	Hispanic	Native American	Pacific Islander	White	Total Laywomen	Total Racial/Ethnic Laywomen
North Central Jurisdiction	1	9	0	0	0	60	70	10
Northeastern Jurisdiction	0	9	0	2	0	47	58	11
South Central Jurisdiction	0	9	4	12	0	55	80	25
Southeastern Jurisdiction	0	6	0	1	0	51	58	7
Western Jurisdiction	0	4	2	4	1	20	31	11
UMC Totals	1	37	6	19	1	233	297	64

TOTALS	Total Women	Total Men	Total Chairpersons	Women as % of Jurisdiction Total	Total Racial/Ethnic Women	Racial/Ethnic Women as % of Jurisdiction Total
North Central Jurisdiction	111	137	248	45%	19	8%
Northeastern Jurisdiction	112	159	271	41%	27	10%
South Central Jurisdiction	129	183	312	41%	32	10%
Southeastern Jurisdiction	79	130	209	38%	14	7%
Western Jurisdiction	59	63	122	48%	12	10%
UMC Totals	490	672	1162	42%	104	9%

Annual Conferences that did not return profiles by the summary deadline (and therefore were not included) are: Florida, Holston, Illinois Great Rivers, Memphis, Mississippi, Pacific Northwest and Yellowstone.

For tables that show “Racial and Lay/Clergy Status of Women Annual Conference Chairpersons by Committee” and “Women and Men Annual Conference Chairperson Totals by Committee,” please visit www.gcsrw.org.

Women by the numbers

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chair the conference Native American concerns committee). Racial/ethnic women are typically not assigned to those committees that provide overall leadership to the church or its annual conferences.

Yes, women in general are more visible than ever as leaders in United Methodist annual conferences. Still, this data demonstrates that gender and race often determine where women serve and how broad their influence will be. And since serving as an annual conference leader is often a requisite to election as a churchwide (general) agency leader, lack of gender and racial inclusiveness in annual conference agencies may spill over into general church leadership.

It would appear that the denomination still has work to do if our leadership circle is to reflect the racial and gender diversity of the nation and the world we seek to serve. White people cannot abdicate the anti-racism work of the church, just as men cannot leave anti-sexism work and caring for youth and children only to women. As men and women are represented more evenly on both administrative and mission committees, perhaps The United Methodist Church can become more balanced, creative, faithful and Christ-centered in all areas of our shared ministry. 

Table 2: Jurisdictional Representation of Women and Men Annual Conference Chairpersons by Committee, 2006

	NCJ	NEJ	SCJ	SEJ	WEJ	UMC
	Total Women/Men					
Council on Finance and Administration	2/8	1/11	3/12	0/9	2/4	8/44
Commission on Equitable Compensation	3/6	2/11	0/13	1/6	2/4	8/40
Board of Church and Society	6/5	4/8	6/7	2/7	3/1	21/28
Board of Discipleship	2/5	5/4	6/7	4/4	4/3	21/23
Board of Laity	7/3	4/7	4/9	4/4	2/3	21/26
Committee on Ethnic Local Church Concerns	2/7	1/3	4/5	5/4	1/3	13/22
Board of Global Ministries	6/3	5/5	2/7	5/4	3/1	21/20
Board of Ordained Ministries	6/5	4/6	6/8	5/4	0/5	21/28
Board of Higher Education and Ministry	7/5	6/8	3/11	1/8	1/5	18/37
Administrative Review Committee	3/5	1/7	5/7	1/4	3/1	13/24
Committee on Episcopacy	3/5	2/7	4/10	2/7	2/3	13/32
Conference Board of Pensions	4/8	6/10	3/11	1/8	2/4	16/41
Board of Trustees	4/6	5/8	3/12	1/8	1/5	14/39
Commission on Archives and History	3/8	1/13	6/8	4/5	2/4	16/38
Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns	8/4	3/8	7/5	2/6	5/2	25/25
Commission on Religion and Race	7/5	5/6	9/3	7/3	3/2	31/19
Commission on the Status and Role of Women	12/0	10/0	10/1	7/0	3/0	42/1
Commission on Small Membership Church	0/3	4/2	4/2	1/2	1/1	10/10
Commission on Communications	2/0	2/10	0/11	2/6	1/4	7/31
United Methodist Women	10/0	10/0	15/0	9/0	6/0	50/0
United Methodist Men	0/11	0/13	2/12	0/8	0/4	2/48
Conference Council on Youth Ministries	5/7	8/0	8/5	1/6	1/1	23/19
Conference Council on Young Adult Ministries	3/10	4/1	8/3	0/6	1/1	16/21
Conference Council on Older Adult Ministries	3/2	4/0	2/3	3/3	2/1	14/9
Joint Committee on Incapacity	0/3	4/5	1/3	3/4	1/1	9/16
Committee on Disability Concerns	3/5	4/4	2/4	3/2	2/0	14/15
Committee on Native American Ministries	0/8	7/2	6/4	5/2	5/0	23/16
Total	111/137	112/159	129/183	79/130	59/63	490/672

Key: NCJ: North Central; NEJ: Northeastern; SCJ: South Central; SEJ: Southeastern; WJ: Western; UMC: United Methodist Church.

Craig This is a faculty member of the Department of Sociology, Geography and Social Work at Sinclair Community College. **Elaine Moy** is assistant general secretary for finance and administration for GCSRW.

Myth-busting

Any lay or clergy person can serve on a general church agency; make sure your conference nomination process is an open one.

By Elaine Moy

Myth #1

Only delegates to General Conference or Jurisdictional conferences may be elected to a general agency or board.

In fact, although delegates are automatically in the pool for possible agency assignments, *any* lay or clergyperson may be nominated to the pool, and assigned. According to Par. 705.1 of *The Book of Discipline*, “annual conferences, upon recommendation from a committee composed of the bishop and general and jurisdictional conference delegation, and having allowed opportunity for nominations from the floor, shall elect persons to be submitted to the jurisdictional pool.”

If you’re not a delegate but are willing to serve on the board of directors of a churchwide agency, you may nominate yourself—or have someone else nominate you—on the floor of your annual conference session. Contact your annual conference lay leader, your district superintendent or the bishop’s office to find out how to submit your name to the pool.

In addition to General and Jurisdictional conference delegates, the *Discipline* provides that each U.S. annual and missionary conference “shall nominate the persons most recently elected as delegates to the General Conference to the jurisdictional pool. In addition, it shall nominate at least 15 and not more than 45 persons to the jurisdictional pool...”

Myth #2

Delegates to General and Jurisdictional conference should be and are given priority in assigning voting members to general church agencies.

The Book of Discipline does not give priority to General and Jurisdictional conference delegates on being named first to boards of general agencies.

The highest priority in the church is that its agency be representative of race/ethnicity, gender, age, nationality, lay-clergy status, ability and region. For instance, the *Discipline* (Par. 705) recommends that at least 10% of each agency’s voting members be youth and young adults. Further, to ensure adequate representation of U.S. racial and ethnic persons, it is recommended that *each* jurisdiction’s assigned slate of members on *each* general agency be at least 30% racial ethnic persons and incorporate one-third clergy, one-third laymen and one-third lay women.

Myth #3

Only the jurisdiction’s total slate of nominees to the boards of general agencies needs to be inclusive.

The *Discipline* gives direction to the jurisdictional nominating committee on how inclusive the board membership should be for each general agency. Again, Par. 705.3.1 states that *each* of the general agencies seeks to be inclusive, not the *slate* for the jurisdiction. Nor should members of an agency be “pigeonholed” (i.e., assigning only people of color to the General Commission on Religion and Race, only women to GCSRW, only clergy to the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry). Each general agency should be inclusive.

As we prepare for our new quadrennium, please remember that if we are to grow a larger church community, we will need all people in every general agency, annual conference and local church to help. We will need young and old, men and women, boys and girls, racial ethnic and white, lay and clergy, and people from around the world working together. ✍️

Elaine Moy is assistant general secretary of GCSRW.

How to monitor annual conference sessions

By J. Bradford Burkman

This is the second of two articles from the Louisiana Annual Conference COSROW about the role and function of monitoring for inclusiveness.

In monitoring the general church, including General Conference, GCSRW measures the participation of women, racial-ethnic persons and young people. It also pays attention to the use of inclusive language and the respect given to diverse categories of speakers by the conference officiators and other participants.

Annual conference monitors may use these categories to measure inclusiveness or may choose to focus on fewer categories, depending on the specific concerns of the area. For instance, in 2005, the Louisiana Conference COSROW decided that the conference had been doing well in using inclusive language in conference worship and plenary sessions. As a result, we dropped the “language” category from our monitoring forms (although monitors may still note if there is an issue regarding language).

In 2007, we included tracking participation of laity versus clergy at conference sessions, and we paid closer attention to how well first-time delegates were engaged as speakers and leaders.

When evaluating the inclusiveness of your annual conference, it is helpful to distinguish between those persons who are invited as guest presenters, worship leaders, preachers and speakers, and those who give leadership by virtue of their office (e.g., the bishop, the conference lay leader, cabinet members and committee chairpersons). Those selected in the former category may be stronger indicators of your conference’s overall commitment to diversity with regard to race-ethnicity, gender, age and ability.

We want annual conference members to view monitoring as a ministry instead of an attack, so our team works in advance with the bishop and conference organizers. In fact, Bishop Bill Hutchinson attended one of our planning sessions to express his support and discuss monitoring. To facilitate monitoring, conference delegates this year completed a demographic survey.

If this is the first time your team has monitored an annual conference session—or if your bishop and cabinet have not been supportive—seek advice and support from an influential leader in the annual conference, and ask her/him to exert some influence on your behalf.

Those engaged as monitors are visible reminders that our congregations, annual conferences, agencies and ministries should reflect the inclusive, welcoming and just Body of Christ.

J. Bradford Burkman teaches mathematics at the Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts, and has coordinated COSROW monitoring in Louisiana since 2005. He may be reached at bburkman@lsmsa.edu.

This regular feature in The Flyer offers ideas for programming, monitoring and advocacy for your conference or district COSROW or related ministries. If you have a success story from your Commission, please let us know; email details to Heather Peck Stahl at flyer@gcsr.org.

Worth Repeating



“ Women have made headway, but there’s still bias. This perception lingers here that women don’t have the strength or authority to lead. ”

> *The Rev. Arlene Christopherson, assistant to the bishop, Chicago Area*

★ The **Women's Division** of the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries voted to join the *Campaign for a United America*, a new faith-based campaign promoting non-racist dialogues on immigration, civil rights and citizenship that's free of the intolerance and xenophobia that dominate current debates.

★ **Melanie C. Gordon** of Greenville, S.C., recently joined the UM General Board of Discipleship as its new director of Younger Children's Ministries.

◀ **Jane Dennis**, editor of the newspaper for Arkansas United Methodists, is the denomination's 2007 "communicator of the year." The award is given by the United Methodist Association of Communicators, which provides recognition, fellowship and vocational enrichment for the more than 145 professional and volunteer communicators of the church.



★ The United Methodist **General Board of Pension and Health Benefits** invests in nearly 40 of the top 50 companies for diversity. The board also advocates for diversity in the workplace, in management and on company boards of directors.

★ Oscar- and Emmy-winning actor Robert Duvall recently named his heroes as **Carmen Valesco** and **Lynne Patterson**—the two women who founded *Pro Mujer*, an organization that creates networks of microfinance institutions that help the most impoverished women and their families in Latin America.

★ Six United Methodists ranging in age from 15 to 28 have been chosen to work together to develop and deliver the first Young People's Address at the 2008 General Conference. They are **Becca Farnum**, 17, of Mount Pleasant, Mich.; **Kira Volkova**, 24, of Kirov, Russia; the **Rev. Anne Rigo**, 28, of Grand Junction, Colo.; **Andrew Craig**, 15, of Denver; **Matt Lockett**, 20, of Seattle; and **Jason Rathod**, 23, of Hastings, Neb. ✨

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» BUILDING STRONG LEADERS

How to make a great first impression

Acing an employment interview requires more than just answering a hiring manager's questions effectively. The subtle signals you send also factor heavily into whether or not you're offered the job.

By Doug White, Robert Half International

Following are tips for making a positive impression when meeting face-to-face with prospective employers.

BE NICE—TO EVERYONE.

You never know who might play a role in the selection process.

COME PREPARED.

Are you dressed to impress? Do you have extra copies of your resume? Did you bring a pen and paper? Showing up to an interview unprepared can cause a hiring manager to question your professionalism and interest in the position.

WATCH MORE THAN JUST YOUR WORDS.

A weak handshake, poor posture and downward gaze convey a lack of self-assuredness. Crossing

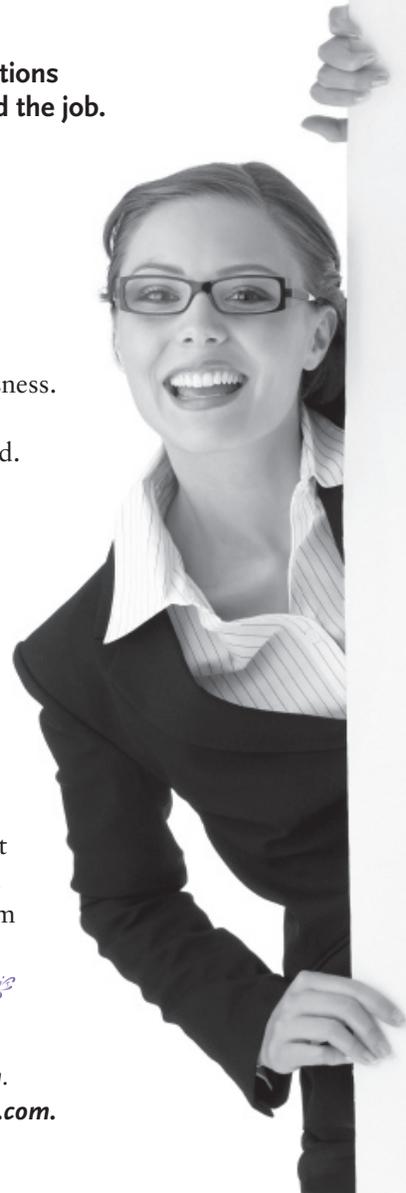
your arms make you appear hostile, defensive or disinterested. Constant nodding or foot tapping signify nervousness. However, an enthusiastic smile and eye contact imply you're affable and engaged.

OFFER YOUR APPRECIATION.

Promptly send a thank-you note to the key people you met as a way to show etiquette, reinforce your interest in the firm and recap your strengths. Even if you feel the interview went poorly, don't fail to follow up. After all, your thoughts about the meeting might be much different than the interviewer's.

Remember that hiring managers look at your behavior during the interview as a barometer of how you'd act and perform on the job. Put your best foot forward by being prepared, poised and polite. 

This article was excerpted from the article that appeared on <http://hotjobs.yahoo.com>. For more information, please visit www.rhi.com.



We want to hear from you!

This issue's cover story explores how some believe women church leaders endure more stress and possibly incur more health problems than their male counterparts. We want to know what you think about this topic. Please email us at flyer@gcsrw.org, and your comments may be posted on the GCSRW website or in a future issue of The Flyer.