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Court reduces damages for Missouri Conference

Agrees conference is at fault

“There are no winners in cases of alleged sexual misconduct—except maybe for the attorneys and the news media,” said Mary Taft, chairperson of the Status and Role of Women’s section of the Missouri Conference Values Team.

In September, Judge J. Miles Sweeney ruled on motions filed by the conference to overturn the jury’s May verdict in a civil suit against the conference. In the original suit, Teresa Norris was awarded \$6 million by jurors in a civil case that alleged that the Missouri Annual Conference should have supervised the Rev. David Finestead differently because “they were certain or substantially certain that Finestead would cause harm” in his role as pastor of Campbell United Methodist Church in Springfield, Mo.

Finestead allegedly raped Norris, then music director for the congregation. After the review by the court, the \$2 million in compensatory damages stands, but the \$4 million in punitive damages has been reduced to \$1 million. Norris alleged she was attacked by Finestead in 1998. Complaints about Finestead were filed as early as 1996.

“I think it’s gratifying that the judge agreed with the jury,” said Sid Norris, Teresa Norris’ husband. “We feel that it was a good judgment.”

Taft attended two days of the original trial as an observer. “I had such mixed feelings,” Taft said. “This is my church we’re talking about! I want to believe it’s wonderful and perfect—and The United Methodist Church is wonderful, but it’s not perfect. We have to do better as a church.”

“My regret in all of this is that there was never any kind of resolution or justice between Teresa and Finestead,” Taft said. Finestead, who died shortly after the verdict, was not criminally charged in connection with the assault and did not testify. A suit against him was filed but has never gone to trial.

“As to the actual damages,” Sweeney wrote in his decision, “the jury obviously concluded that Teresa Norris was raped and they concluded that the church did not do enough to prevent that from happening.”

“We don’t have a perfect system,” Taft said. “If we did, we’d all have extrasensory perception and we’d know there was a problem beforehand.”

The total ruling is under appeal. Norris’ attorneys offered to settle with the conference the first day of trial for \$750,000. 

Key
The



Fall homework: Crunch some numbers

A report in the last issue of *The Flyer* revealed that the number of clergywomen across the denomination doubled in the last decade—from 8 percent in 1992 to 15 percent in 2002. Add to that the fact that we now have 19 women on the churchwide Council of Bishops, and it's obvious that we've got a lot to celebrate.



At the same time, a closer look raises some interesting questions for those of us doing God's work in local congregations, districts, annual conference offices, seminaries and extension ministries. Has the presence of women increased in the places where most of us live and move? Are there more women teaching and preaching in churches and theological schools? More women overseeing the finances of churches and annual conferences? Are women of color gaining at the same rate as white women? Are the women who are making strides reaching out to empower other women?

This fall, why not undertake a research project in your district, conference, congregation or seminary? Or include a line for research in next year's budget. Count the number of leadership positions held by women, as compared to men, and the number of new women coming into ministry—lay and clergy. Take stock. Compare. Then, celebrate. Or agitate. Question. Listen. Push.

Do the ministry of number crunching. See if we are becoming the church that God hopes we will be.

M. Garlinda Burton, General Secretary

The Flyer

October–December 2005

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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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Seminaries, colleges must make women's research a priority

By Barbara Fears

Prior to completing my master of divinity degree at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary last May, I had the privilege of working with the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women. One of my assignments was to locate women-related research conducted by faculty or by students since 1980 at the 13 United Methodist seminaries.

Specifically, I tried to find any master's theses, doctor of ministry projects, Ph.D. dissertations, or published articles about issues confronting women in professional ministry, such as retention, pastoral appointments, sexual harassment/misconduct, salaries, or changing leadership styles. After a few weeks, my assignment proved to be frustrating and disappointing.

I began my research by visiting the website of each school. Using each site's search engine, I entered a variety of subjects related to women and ministry. If my search came up empty, I phoned or sent email to various departments, such as the school of theology or women's studies departments. Or I attempted to contact a specific person, such as the school's academic dean or librarian.

Many times, I received no response to my inquiries. When someone did respond, the answer to my inquiry was always the same, "I'm not aware of any such research."

Perhaps I was a bit naive in my expectations of institutions that prepare students for ordained ministry and Christian theological discourse. However, given the increasing presence of women at all levels of the church, including pastors, theologians, and ethicists—and given the rise of feminist theology in the 1970s and womanist

and *mujerista* theology in the 1980s—I expected to locate a significant number of articles, or at least statistics, related to women in ministry and in religious studies.

Instead, I discovered that church seminaries have relatively little research about women entering the ordained ministry, the retention of women in local parishes, the challenges that seminary women face, specific issues relating to women of color pursuing ordination, and the numbers of women moving into leadership in the church. Obviously, this is an open frontier for researchers—men and women—at United Methodist (and other) schools of theology.

The General Commission is still seeking research by and about churchwomen.

It is their hope to build a database of such research.

It is also hoped that through the Advocacy for Women Endowment Fund, GCSRW can provide resources for women doing research.

If you know of research by and about women in professional ministry, please send a brief description, the date the research was conducted and a contact person to fax 847.869.1466 or email gcsrww@gcfa.org.

Barbara Fears is currently a research analyst in corporate relations for the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits. She is pursuing ordination.



Anniversary of women's ordination approaches

The year 2006 heralds the 50th anniversary of full clergy rights for women in the Methodist Church.*

To celebrate this milestone, annual conferences, women, and clergy groups and agencies across The United Methodist Church are planning celebrations and worship resources to use throughout the year. The national theme for the event is "Courageous Past – Bold Future."

Coordinating the observance for the denomination is a special committee made up of laywomen and clergywomen leaders of the denomination. Chaired by the Rev. Patricia Bryant Harris of the Peninsula-Delaware Conference and the Rev. Dr. Susan W.N. Ruach, a staff member of the General Board of Discipleship, the committee is coordinating the development of denominational materials marking the anniversary. These include:

- information and study guides about women clergy;
- a poster suggesting 50 ways to celebrate the 50th anniversary,

which will be sent free to every U.S. United Methodist congregation;

- a comprehensive history of women in The United Methodist Church, including the Methodist Episcopal and Evangelical United Brethren churches, and the former Central Jurisdiction of the Methodist Church;
- related materials to be used throughout the church, and a bus tour of sites important to clergywomen in the New York and New England areas.

A highlight during this jubilee year will be the international Clergywomen's Consultation, to be held Aug. 13–17, 2006, at the Hyatt Regency McCormick Place in Chicago.

The committee is collecting litanies, prayers, and other liturgical resources for the commemoration of this event. Visit www.gbhem.org/clergywomen/information.asp or contact Shirley Broom at the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, P.O. Box 34007, Nashville, TN 37203-0007. ✂

**Women were ordained into full clergy rights in the United Brethren Church in 1889. When that denomination merged with the Evangelical Church to become the Evangelical United Brethren Church (EUB) in 1946, the ordination of women was once again denied until the Methodist and EUB denominations united in 1968.*

on the move...

Commission to relocate in December

The offices of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women will have a new location by the end of 2005.

The move has been in the works for nearly a year, when it was announced that our sister-tenant, the General Council on Finance and Administration was consolidating offices and moving to Nashville, Tenn.

A task force of the Commission explored possible new sites and made a recommendation to the full Commission. Voting members, in turn, agreed that the GCSRW offices should remain the Chicago

area. A final decision was to be made shortly after this issue of *The Flyer* went to press.

The Commission began its work in 1972, using offices at UM-related Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Ill. Since 1977, it has shared the space at 1200 Davis St., Evanston, a former headquarters for the Evangelical United Brethren Church.

Once the new location is confirmed, it will be announced via our listservs, postcards, website (www.gcsr.org), and in the *eFlyer*, our monthly e-newsletter.

★ **Ofelia Ortega**, professor and president of the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Matanzas, Cuba, has been named one of the vice presidents of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

★ **Sally Jo Snyder**, a clergy member of the Western Pennsylvania Conference, has been named Children's Sabbath Coordinator of the Children's Defense Fund in Washington, D.C.



★ ABC Television, Touchstone Television, and Battle Plan productions have aligned to put a woman in the White House—at least one night a week. “Commander In Chief” on ABC’s fall line-up features Academy Award-winner **Geena Davis** as the independent vice president who is thrust into the Oval Office when the current president does not survive surgery for a brain tumor. The series is created by Rod Lurie.

★ **Carolyn Tyler Guidry** and **Sarah Frances Davis** became the second and third women elected as bishops in the African Methodist Episcopal Church.



★ **Tyler Guidry**, who served on GCSRW’s board of directors from 2005–2008, will lead the AME’s 16th District which includes Jamaica, Haiti, and England. Davis is assigned to the 18th District which includes Botswana, Lesotho, and Mozambique in southern Africa.

★ Dove’s “Campaign for Real Beauty” is challenging the status quo and offers in its place “a broader, healthier, more democratic view of beauty.” The Unilever Company, owner of the Dove beauty products brand, conducted a national research project with the Downing Street Group, LLC, and the University of Michigan. The result is “The Dove Report: Challenging Beauty.” This report sparked the campaign that pictures “real women” in Dove’s advertising. In addition, Dove has partnered through the Unilever Foundation with Girl Scouts of the USA to sponsor *uniquely ME!* a program to foster self-esteem in girls 8–14 in the U.S. and Puerto Rico.

★ **Cathleen Coots** has been appointed superintendent of the Santa Barbara District in the California Pacific Annual Conference.

★ **Ana Kelsey-Powell** of Naperville, Ill., has been named the chair of the United Methodist Student Movement.

★ **Cristeta “Cris” Comerford** recently became the first woman in U.S. history to be named executive chef for the White House.

★ **Bavi Edna Rivera**, an Episcopal priest from California, is the first Latina bishop in the Episcopal Church. She is assigned as the assistant bishop for the Diocese of Olympia, Wash.



Worth Repeating

“ To think that I would need to stop eating and be anorexic and sick to get a job is the wrong message to send to girls and women in our society, and that really bugs me. I am all about health and to me size is not what defines your health. It never crossed my mind that if I was thinner I would get more jobs. ”

—Actress *Teri Hatcher*, in response to accusations that she has given in to Hollywood’s “thin is in” image.

Percentage of women superintendents on par with clergywomen statistics

Southeastern, South Central jurisdiction trail other regions in women DS's

Twenty-three percent of the district superintendents serving The United Methodist Church in the United States are women. This compares favorably to the 21% of the clergy in denomination who are women (see table on facing page). From this vantage point, clergywomen are represented in positions of leadership across the denomination.

However, not all annual conferences have 23% or more women district superintendents. Only half of the annual conferences (32) have 23% or more of their district superintendent positions filled by women. In the Alaska Missionary, Dakotas, Desert Southwest, New England, Northern Illinois, Peninsula-Delaware, Rocky Mountain, Western New York, and Wyoming conferences, women clergy account for 50% of the district superintendents in each annual conference. Interestingly, only Wyoming, Western New York, and the Dakotas have women bishops. Men oversee the remaining six annual conferences.

The Memphis, North Alabama, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oklahoma Indian Missionary, Red Bird Missionary, Rio Grande, and Texas conferences *have fewer than 10%* of their district superintendent positions filled by women. Three of these annual conferences (Memphis, Red Bird Missionary, and Rio Grande) have no women superintendents. Of these eight annual conferences, only Texas is served by a woman bishop.

The data show that increasing numbers of clergywomen have translated into increasing numbers of women serving as district superintendents. The gains, however, have not been uniform, and much work still needs to be done to increase the role of clergywomen in leadership positions.

This lack of women in leadership positions can be seen most clearly when status-gender pyramids are constructed (see table below). These “pyramids” show the female and male breakdowns in each jurisdiction by

Breakdown by Jurisdiction

North Central Jurisdiction	Female	Male	
Bishops	40%	60%	
DS	30%	70%	
Clergy	23%	77%	
Laity	57%	43%	

North East Jurisdiction	Female	Male	
Bishops	30%	70%	
DS	32%	68%	
Clergy	25%	75%	
Laity	60%	40%	

South Central Jurisdiction	Female	Male	
Bishops	18%	82%	
DS	13%	87%	
Clergy	20%	80%	
Laity	58%	42%	

South Eastern Jurisdiction	Female	Male	
Bishops	23%	77%	
DS	16%	84%	
Clergy	16%	84%	
Laity	57%	43%	

Western Jurisdiction	Female	Male	
Bishops	50%	50%	
DS	36%	64%	
Clergy	33%	67%	
Laity	60%	40%	

e numbers

status: lay, clergy, district superintendent, and bishop.

By comparing the data side-by-side—as in a pyramid—it allows, at a glance, the ability to see if a particular status is balanced; that is, if percentages are nearly equal, and if not, to which side it leans.

The pyramids show that with the exception of the laity status, all the other statuses lean toward men rather than women. Although it is worth noting that the status of bishop in the Western Jurisdiction is an equal 50-50% split.

The number of United Methodist laywomen exceeds that of laymen in each jurisdiction. The difference, though, is at most 20 percentage points, with both the Northeast Jurisdiction and Western Jurisdiction leading the way.

The other statuses lean toward male dominance and do so by some very large differences. For district superintendents in the South Central Jurisdiction, there is a 74 percentage-point difference between the number of male district superintendents and female district superintendents. Those numbers are almost identical in the Southeastern Jurisdiction. 

Percent Male and Female District Superintendent and Percent Male and Female Total Membership (Lay and Clergy) by Annual Conference, 2004 (from highest to lowest percentages of women DS's)

Annual Conference	Percent Female DS	Percent Male DS	Percent Female (Clergy and Lay)	Percent Male (Clergy and Lay)
New England	50%	50%	61%	39%
Desert Southwest	50%	50%	60%	40%
Wyoming	50%	50%	60%	40%
Western New York	50%	50%	59%	41%
Rocky Mountain	50%	50%	59%	41%
Northern Illinois	50%	50%	57%	43%
Dakotas	50%	50%	56%	44%
California-Nevada	43%	57%	60%	40%
Oregon-Idaho	40%	60%	62%	38%
North Central New York	40%	60%	61%	39%
Western North Carolina	36%	64%	56%	44%
East Ohio	33%	67%	63%	37%
Greater New Jersey	33%	67%	61%	39%
Baltimore-Washington	33%	67%	61%	39%
West Michigan	33%	67%	60%	40%
Eastern Pennsylvania	33%	67%	59%	41%
Minnesota	33%	67%	59%	41%
Yellowstone	33%	67%	56%	44%
Detroit	29%	71%	60%	40%
West Ohio	29%	71%	58%	42%
Kansas West	29%	71%	56%	44%
California-Pacific	25%	75%	60%	40%
Troy	25%	75%	58%	42%
Wisconsin	25%	75%	58%	42%
New Mexico	25%	75%	58%	42%
Iowa	25%	75%	57%	43%
Illinois Great Rivers	25%	75%	57%	43%
Central Pennsylvania	22%	78%	56%	44%
North Indiana	22%	78%	42%	58%
Florida	21%	79%	59%	41%
Western Pennsylvania	20%	80%	57%	43%
Pacific Northwest	17%	83%	61%	39%
South Carolina	17%	83%	58%	42%
Kentucky	17%	83%	57%	43%
North Texas	17%	83%	57%	43%
Holston	17%	83%	57%	43%
Virginia	17%	83%	56%	44%
New York	14%	86%	61%	39%
Louisiana	14%	86%	58%	42%
Southwest Texas	14%	86%	57%	43%
Tennessee	14%	86%	57%	43%
Northwest Texas	14%	86%	56%	44%
Nebraska	13%	88%	57%	43%
Alabama-West Florida	13%	88%	57%	43%
South Georgia	11%	89%	57%	43%
Arkansas	11%	89%	55%	45%
OIMC	8%	92%	61%	39%
Oklahoma	8%	92%	58%	42%
Texas	8%	92%	58%	42%
North Carolina	8%	92%	56%	44%
North Alabama	8%	92%	55%	45%
Rio Grande	0%	100%	70%	30%
Memphis	0%	100%	58%	42%

The following annual conferences did not submit male-female membership data for 2004: Alaska Missionary, Central Texas, Kansas East, North Georgia, North Texas, Mississippi, Missouri, Peninsula-Delaware, and South Indiana.



Photo by Art Russell



Robin Galiano Russell

Newly appointed editor of The United Methodist Reporter

Achievements:

- ✓ Won “Writer of the Year” award from the Religion Newswriters Association her first year as a religion writer
- ✓ Received special awards from a synagogue, mosque, and interfaith council for accurately representing diverse faith traditions
- ✓ Won first-place writing award for article about two churches visiting historic Civil Rights sites together

In a previous life: Growing up in the fourth generation of funeral directors, she chose not to follow the family business and pursued journalism instead. Taught journalism at LeTourneau University in Longview, Texas; began covering religion for the *Longview News-Journal* and discovered her niche. After being a single parent for eight years, she met her husband on an internet match site and moved to Dallas.

Role models: A Bible class teacher, Mary Morris, “showed me how to lead others with enthusiasm, kindness, and respect. My friend, Kay Baker, awakened in me the gift of hospitality as she opened her home to me on countless occasions. Kelly Beller, who lives with her medically fragile son, abandons herself to obedience in the things that are hard to understand. A managing editor, Ana Walker, showed me how to defuse upset readers and colleagues by listening to their emotional responses, yet holding firmly to her own sound editorial decisions.”

Words of wisdom: “Humility is being willing to let God have His way with you, even when it hurts. When (not if) there’s conflict, recognize your own issues and let others deal with theirs. You don’t have to fix everything. Be courageous and hard-working. Be true to your word.” 

Narcie McClendon Jeter

Interim campus minister at Emory University, Glenn Memorial UMC associate pastor, and director of religious life at Emory’s Clairmont campus

Achievements:

- ✓ First president of the reorganized national United Methodist Student Movement; Holly Self Drummond Service Award and Hurley Fellowship for Travel and Study Abroad at Winthrop University; South Carolina Conference Bessie Bellamy Parker Scholarship; Candler School of Theology Margaret A. Pitts Scholarship
- ✓ Commissioned in May as a probationary member in the South Carolina Conference

In a previous life: Jeter, a preacher’s kid, wanted to be a high school English teacher and writer. It wasn’t until college in the Wesley Fellowship that she began to feel a call toward ordained ministry.

Role models: Jeter’s grandfathers taught her to nurture “a strong and quiet faith.” She also cites her parents’ influence on her faith and vocation. “The campus ministers in South Carolina were all mentors, listeners, and friends who taught me to be genuine and enthusiastic. [Clinical Pastoral Education supervisor] Dorothea Lotze-Kola taught me about self-care and how to grow and trust my pastoral voice and instinct. [Emory University chapel dean] Susan Henry-Crowe has been instrumental in my living out the call to campus ministry.”

Words of wisdom: “Listen to your voice and trust your instincts. Follow where God leads and be open to wherever that is. Pray and never stop praying. Take time to recharge and re-energize and rediscover.” 



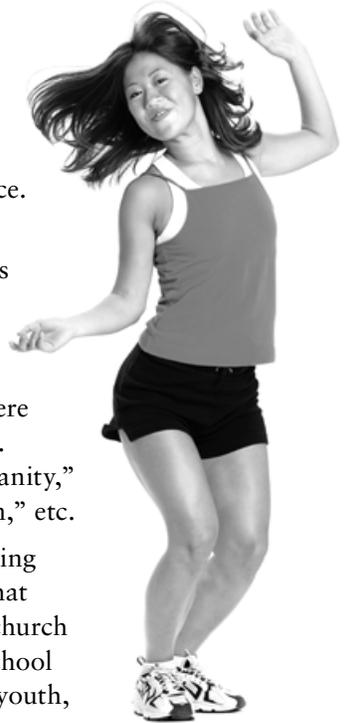


Create a girl-friendly congregation

By M. Garlinda Burton

We can never begin too early to counter the gender stereotypes and sexist messages that often permeate our institutions—even our churches. I’m lucky enough to interact with United Methodist congregations that practice what we preach about being equally beloved, gifted, and called by Christ, starting with children in nursery and Sunday school. Here are some ideas to make your congregation more nurturing for girls—and boys:

- Begin early to nurture freedom from stereotyped expectations—e.g., girls *and* boys bake cookies and help in the kitchen; girls *and* boys rake leaves and do outdoor stuff; girls *and* boys serve as ushers, acolytes, trustees, and liturgists.
- Watch and listen to girls and boys for early signs of leadership. Encourage adolescent boys and girls of promise to consider professional ministry and other aspects of church service.
- Provide toys that reflect the full range of children’s play. And remember, it is never too early to bust sexist stereotypes.
- Do NOT comment negatively about a child’s physical appearance. Girls especially receive negative messages from media, peers, and maybe even parents about their weight, hair, and other physical features. Praise children’s initiative, accomplishments, helping skills, kindness, and curiosity.
- Encourage boys’ development of nurturing and caring attributes. For example, Shaun, a youth in my church who just turned 18, is very caring of small children and all the small kids love him. My 5-year-old granddaughter loves for him to push her in the swing. He and his girlfriend want to have six kids when they marry (after college). She says fine, as long as Shaun agrees to be primary caregiver.
- Monitor curriculum and the sermon illustrations for gender bias and stereotypes. Some things to consider: Are the heroes or bosses in the story always boys or men? Are men and boys portrayed as strong, brave, competitive, rough, messy, and incompetent at housework? Are girls and women portrayed as frightened, quiet, passive, neat, obedient, and good at housework and minding children? If so, look for material (or modify existing materials) for more balance.
- Make language inclusive. “Fireman” implies that it’s a man’s job. “Firefighter” is a more accurate description and takes into consideration that there are women doing that job. Say, “humankind,” “humanity,” “layperson,” “chairperson,” etc.
- Self-monitor for stereotyping among adult leaders, so that women and men in your church are recruited as Sunday school teachers for children and youth, trustees, nursery workers, choir members, liturgists, Communion helpers, ushers, the altar-and-flower guild, the kitchen committee, etc.
- Do not offer beauty and make-up retreats, rap sessions on “finding a boyfriend” and “dating,” or aerobics or weight-control classes for girls. Church is the place where values, character, spiritual gifts and talents, intellect, compassion, and Christian leadership should be affirmed. An occasional class where girls and boys can ask questions about dating and other life lessons may be fine, but reinforcing the notion that a girl’s most important life pursuit is finding a husband is not. 



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

Ethics event registration opens Nov. 1

Registration for next year's national training event for annual conferences leaders involved in sexual ethics training and responding to sexual misconduct begins Nov. 1.

District superintendents, bishops, members of annual conference Response Teams and Safe Sanctuary ministries, and other interested persons who plan to attend the national gathering July 26–29, 2006, in Nashville, Tenn., may take advantage of an **early-bird discount** from Nov. 1 through Jan. 31, 2006. The early registration fee is \$400 per person. The fee increases to \$450 after Jan. 31.

The training event expected to draw 200 people from across the denomination, is designed to equip persons responsible for preventing and addressing sexual misconduct in church settings. The gathering will bring together experts in the field, such as the Rev. Karen McClintock, a United Methodist clergywoman and author of *Preventing Sexual Abuse in Congregations: A Resource for Leaders*; Kimberly Day-Lewis, attorney and trainer for the FaithTrust Institute; and Joy T. Melton, author of the Safe Sanctuaries series of books about protecting children and youth from sexual abuse in church settings.

The event is being sponsored by the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, the General Board of Discipleship, the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, the General Board of Global Ministries, and the General Council on Finance and Administration.

For more information, call 847.869.7330 or visit www.gcsr.org. 

Listen to your mothers

Seminary professors can now teach courses in your congregation through a new program of Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C. Wesley Ministry Network now offers three courses including *Women Speak of God*, an eight-week course for congregations on women in church history.

The course features weekly video lessons by Professor Amy Oden. *Women Speak of God* is one of a series of courses designed to facilitate deeper faith development among Sunday school and other local-church based study groups.

“I highly recommend Wesley Ministry Network courses as the perfect follow-up to *Disciple Bible Study*,” said retired Bishop Richard B. Wilke, *Disciple* developer. “The content is superb and the combination of print, video, and Internet communication is dynamic.”

Lesson plans are designed for class sessions of 45–90 minutes (90 minutes is ideal). Each session includes:

- Video introduction for each class session
- Detailed Leader's Guide with lesson plans, discussion questions, and classroom exercises
- Weekly email from the noted expert who designed the course
- Online discussion with other students and teachers
- Online supplemental material
- Participant's Guide with reading assignments, reflection and discussion questions, summaries, and classroom exercises



The lessons cover the religious contribution of those who affected the church as early as the year 202–203 c.e. through more modern women shapers of the faith such as Susanna Wesley and Georgia Harkness.

For detailed information about *Women Speak of God* and our other courses, visit www.WesleyMinistryNetwork.com. 



Western Pennsylvania clergy spouse retreat focuses on wellness

The Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference took a look at clergy spouses and helped to improve their well-being by providing a three-day retreat.

Focusing on the theme “Complete Wellness: Body, Mind and Spirit,” the September event had the scriptural theme “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind and strength” (Mark 12:30) and shared ideas on how to work on each of those areas to achieve balance.

Featured speaker for the event was the Rev. Brett Probert, who discussed complete wellness that allows people to better serve God by caring for self and others.

Retreat coordinator Robyn McIllwain,

whose husband Keith is pastor of the Dawson charge in the Western Pennsylvania Conference, refers to the annual retreat for spouses of clergy as her time to come and see, come and share, come and rejoice.

“Here is a group of friends, old and new, that share many of my concerns,” McIllwain said. “We laugh and cry about our children’s antics in church and their adjustment to the itinerant system.” Informal conversations about what to do when spouses are called away on late-night emergencies and struggling with their own sense of identity are often more valuable to participants than the formal parts of the retreat. McIllwain’s greatest desire is to let clergy spouses know they are not alone. 

Your holiday gift can empower women



The ministry of advocacy for women in The United Methodist Church is funded at one of the lowest rates in our denomination. The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women receives .0001¢ for every dollar that is placed in an offering plate at a United Methodist Church.

With women making up more than half of the church’s total membership, it’s clear that the Advocacy for Women Fund—which provides research, scholarships, skill development, theological studies, and salary support for pastors outside the U.S.—is vital.

“The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women established this fund because the full inclusion of women within the church has not been completed,” said Bishop Mary Virginia (“Dindy”) Taylor, episcopal leader in South Carolina and chairwoman of the Commission.



Dindy Taylor

“I INVITE OTHERS TO JOIN ME, IN EXPRESSING GRATITUDE FOR WHAT HAS BEEN AND WHAT IS YET TO BE.” —DINDY TAYLOR

YES!

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in The United Methodist Church
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*For better health for women and a healthier environment for our children,
our newsletter is printed on chlorine-free, acid-free recycled paper using soy inks.*

Join us next August and swap tools for the journey

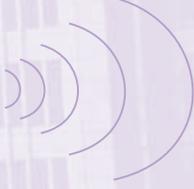
Reenergize your CSRW ministry with leader training

The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women invites all annual conference chairpersons of Status and Role of Women ministries (or equivalent work) for a day-long, mid-quadrennium training and sharing event on Aug. 18, 2006, in downtown Chicago from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The training is designed for those who have become CSRW chairpersons since the beginning of the 2005–2008 quadrennium and for those seeking a “refresher course” on planning and organizing the work

of your conference commission. Topics will include how to monitor effectively organizations in your annual conference, “best practices” for advocacy for women, how to do research to tell the story of women’s progress, and how to support and interact with Response Teams.

This event comes on the heels of the 2006 Clergywomen’s Consultation in Chicago, and is open to clergy and laity who lead (or are interested in leading) women’s advocacy at the annual conference level. 

Worth Repeating 

“ We have to pursue peace as aggressively as others want to make war. We need to be bold and imaginative and brave. We’ve got to be heroes.”

—Diane Wilson from her essay “Stop the Next War Now.”
Wilson is a long-time peace activist and founding member
of CODEPINK, a women’s group advocating peace.