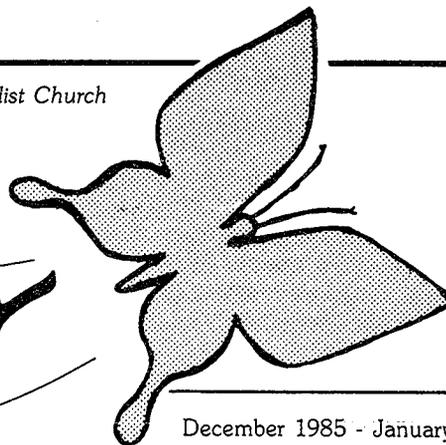


The Flyer



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Water Women

We do not want to rock the boat, you say, mistaking our new poise for something safe.

We smile secretly at each other, sharing the reality that for some time we have not been in the boat.

We jumped or were pushed or fell and some leaped overboard.

Our bodies form a freedom fleet our dolphin grace is power.

We learn and teach and as we go each woman sings; each woman's hands are water wings.

Some of us have become mermaids or Amazon whales and are swimming for our lives.

Some of us do not know how to swim. We walk on water.

—Alla Bozarth-Campbell
The Witness, 1985
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Naming the Void, Finding the Center: Connections in Feminist Spirituality

Beyond the arrogance of wanting to write the definitive word on feminist spirituality is the knowing that i am only one—bound by my sex, race, class, age—all experience.

Beyond the anxiety of being inadequately one is the knowing that i am bound to all connected through creation—sister to all.

She writes from West Virginia: "I am now my local church CSRW (Commission on the Status and Role of Women) chair. We had an interesting first year as a work area and I'm looking forward to different areas of study next year—We certainly are light years away from studying anything as strange (to the committee) as "feminist spirituality."

Strange animal, indeed, this "feminist spirituality," with its power to make strong men turn tail and competent women quake. Feminist. Spirituality. Two words loaded with apprehension and misunderstanding.

Spirituality: simply the orienting meaning of one's existence, the connection to something larger than self. To claim one's spirituality is to recognize the spirit's presence in all of life.

And feminist? Simply to value women, to value women's experience, to believe in the reality of women's experience, which may at points and times differ from reality as defined by men.

The spiritual quest begins with the simple recognition that humans are spiritual, unavoidably and undeniably. It begins with reclaiming the ability to name the intensely secular as spiritual, the spiritual as vigorously sensual.

Feminist spirituality like other spiritualities, has to do, with naming. "In a certain sense, the rebirth of spirituality will be a rebirth of the capacity to name. Spiritual experiences go unrecognized, (even though) the spiritual surrounds us." (1) Feminist spirituality has to do with women naming, with women defining the sacred, that which gives meaning to life. "The spiritual pilgrimage is the search within the commonplace for the informing patterns of providence." (2) Writes one woman of her journey in feminist spirituality: "I have been able to connect spirituality with activities I once thought were separate from it: eating, conversation, friendship, dancing. My participation in them is my participation in creation, in the rhythms of creation."(3)

(Cont. on pg. 4)



I AM A WOMAN
GIVING BIRTH
TO MYSELF.

For Coffee Lovers

Coffee drinking's just a simple thing.
Dip. Brew. Instant.
Cream. Sugar. Black.
Cupped in china or plastic.
Thermosed hot or glassed in ice.

Coffee drinking's just
a simple thing.

But when the aroma arises,
what dark sharpness seeps in.

Two tv lovers leer across their
rims,
and she,
going to the cupboard
on commercial break,
takes two cups down for habit's
sake,
and then remembers,
returns one slowly to its place.
No more tea for two.
Salty water makes a bitter brew.

The boycott lifts on Nestle's friends.
But in the dregs of daily news
an angry aftertaste remains.
Brown hands.
Brown beans.

Roasted in the heat of Revolution.
Which is the taster's choice?
the incorporated Juan
the incarcerated many

Coffee drinking is an unjust thing,
complex
Abstinence will not make innocence.
Responsible guilt is a bearable blend.
Proverbial hot water
Nicaraguan ground
Purchased by those
whose
coffee
can
stand
up
for
itself.

To sorrow. To strength.
Life's required toast.
May it be an acquired taste.

—Heather Murray Elkins
McMechen, WV
from "South of the Garden"

Women's quest seeks a wholeness that unites body and spirit, spiritual and social, life and death. It includes moments of solitary contemplation, (and) it is strengthened by being shared.

—Carol Christ

Naming the Void, Finding the Center:

(Cont. from pg. 1)

It is not new, this thing called feminist spirituality. It was there in the beginning, as God gave birth, "straddling the heavens, and widening, giving forth the scream to push the mighty spinning worlds to birth, heaving and panting in creation till the earth too awoke with a scream." (4)

Feminist spirituality was there in the garden when God looked around at all S/He had created, looked at the woman, looked at the man, nodded with deep satisfaction at what S/He had birthed, and said, "Ah, yes, this is good."

Feminist spirituality bore testimony when a woman, bent over for 18 years, stood upright, stood upright because she had been healed, named as a Daughter of God by the One who knew God intimately.

Feminist spirituality took form when a woman at a well talked to Jesus, reaching across racial lines, across sexual lines, speaking to Jesus and receiving the deep-flowing waters of life.

Women today are experiencing a hunger for a connection with the spirit, for the empowerment that comes with a deep recognition of that connection. Many are feeling a "desert of the heart: that depth of hunger and deprivation which lies only just below the surface of our unattended lives." (5)

For many women "an experience of nothingness . . . typically precedes a spiritual awakening. Impasse and crisis are often turning points in both personal and spiritual development." (6)

This nothingness, this void, is sometimes only sensed. It is a fear of spiritual dryness and death—and the paradoxical fear of exploring one's own depths. It is a deep knowing that only in going into the void of one's utter aloneness can one know deep connectedness. "Whoever for an instance can endure the void," said Simone Weil, "either receives the supernatural bread or falls. Terrible risk. But we have got to run it." (7)

Women who explore that void find power, power for personal relationships, power to heal the world.

"As long as the dark, chaotic, instinctive side of ourselves is divided off from the rest, we are unaware of our own power. It is precisely the dangerous aspect of the woman warrior that will, I am convinced, provide the energy we need to break the dualistic deadlock which threatens to destroy us all. We have to accept and reintegrate into ourselves the dark aspect

of our psyche, the crone weaving webs in her cave, before we can challenge the patriarchal nightmare, with its power of terror and despair." (8)

Often women begin this spiritual journey by telling stories, by naming the truth of their lives. Feminist spirituality begins when one woman tells her story. It begins when a second hears her own truth in the words of the first. It begins when a third recognizes God within and starts to love God fiercely.

The essence of feminist spirituality is the affirmation of woman. It starts with facing the void within, the void named "never good enough," and "never get enough." It moves toward knowing a God who said "I am who I am," a God who names each woman daughter, and gives her permission to be who she is. It moves towards finding God in oneself and loving her fiercely.

Feminist spirituality brings renewed names and images for God, the Creative Power. Some women, limited to male images of God, find themselves unable to experience themselves as made in the image of God. Women long for images, symbols, language that are empowering.

Naming God as Mother, as She, as Womb, as Dwelling Place, as the One in whom "we line and move and have our being," (even as a baby before it is born dwells inside another), gives many women a sense of connectedness, empowerment, relatedness to Divinity not experienced previously. And this Divinity is as imminent—in the world—as transcendent.

Essential to most forms of feminist spirituality (and there are many forms) is a recognition that nothing lies outside the bounds of the sacred, that the personal is political, that the sexual is spiritual. All of life is connected, in union.

In particular feminist spirituality refuses to deny femaleness, insists that women's bodiliness is not irrelevant to their spirituality, rather that the way women experience the world—through female bodies—is integrally tied to the way women experience the divine. It says there is good women's rhythms, in their cycles, in the life-giving potential that ebbs and flows through women's bodies.

"For me wholeness began when I began to own the goodness and power of my sexuality—my femaleness—when I began to understand the need to use that power in the political arenas of my life (which meant understanding that my private life is a political arena—that how I live at home

Connections in Feminist Spirituality

is as important as how I live at my job), and finally when I was totally lucid that the only way to survive those demands of affirming our sexuality and using our power is to create a faith story that affirms and empowers us as women. Thus I understand politics, spirituality and sexuality as a delicate, though strong, intricately woven single reality and self-identity." (9)

Inasmuch as this spirituality encompasses all, it has a word about power, relationships, and oppression. That word is justice, right relations. Power, thereby, is not over-againstness, rather power on behalf of. One's power is not diminished as another's is enhanced. And women's power is affirmed rather than denied or negated.

This spirituality recognizes it is not enough to create a private functioning world view which sustains one personally while leaving untouched the oppressive and alienating realities which operate for most women in most parts of the world. "Sisterhood" becomes an emotional, intellectual, spiritual and political reality which unites women across racial, class, and national bounds.

There is a space in which this spirituality finds a home. Often it is in small circles of women sharing, for this is a spirituality in which Jacob's ladder becomes Sarah's circle. It is a space where women find healing, because they are heard, heard into being. It is a space bounded only by love, the willingness to risk, and a hunger for connection.

—Patricia Broughton

Notes

(1) W. Paul Jones, "A Search for Definition: Inclusiveness," pg. 3, Section I, Paper A, of the Spiritual Formation Resource Packet published by the Division of Ordained Ministry, Board of Higher Education and Ministry, UMC.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Michele Roberts, "An Exploration of Faith," pg. 64, in "A Time to Weep, A Time to Sing" (Winston Press, 1985).

(4) Julia Mosse, "Mother Julian's Daughter," pg. 92, in "Walking on the Water," ed. by Jo Garcia & Sara Maitland (Virago Press, 1983).

(5) Sarah Bentley, "Coming into Balance: Moving Beyond Spiritual Survival for Women," paper delivered at Council on Women in Ministry—National Council of Churches forum, spring, 1985.

(6) Mary Lou Randour, "An Exploration of Faith," pg. 199, in "A Time to Weep. A Time to Sing."

(7) Quoted by Rosemary Powers, "Enduring the Void," pg. 7, "The Flame," Sept, 1984.

(8) Leonie Caldecott, "The Dance of the Woman Warrior," pg. 15, in *Walking on the Water*.

(9) Valerie Ford, "How Sexism in the Church Affects the Spiritual Journeys of Women," from an unpublished speech.

- a proposed centennial birthday lecture series
- drama presentation
- on-going research.

Persons with oral or written reminiscences of Georgia Harkness are invited to send them to Bishop Marjories S. Matthews, advisor to the project, Box 115, G-ETS, 2121 Sheridan Road, Evanston, IL 60201. Members of the student planning team include Barbara J. Harr, Louise D. Miles, Mary Vick Roth and Lana Thompson Sutton. G-ETS professors Rosemary Skinner Keller and Rosemary Radford Ruether direct the institute.

Happy 100th, Georgia Harkness!

A project designed to celebrate the 100th birthday of Georgia Harkness in 1991 and to recover her contribution as a scholar, author, seminary professor and social activist has been undertaken by the Institute for the Study of Women in The Church. Proposed projects include:

- a *Festschrift* publication
- a collection of Harkness primary source documents in a published edition
- a group independent study course at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary (home of the institute)
- in-depth research including the 39 volumes of her published books
- oral history project on cassette tapes

Middle Passage

you can
always
tell
when old black
women
go to church
cause they
smell so good.
and after
they been
your
way,
the heavy odor
lingers in
the air.
and you
smile
'cause
one
day
you hope
you
can be
an
old
black
woman
too.
—Emilie Townes

The Calling

The Spirit of God is calling, calling,
Breaking into the lives of people,
Saying, "Come. Be ministers and
Lead my people."

God is calling Carol and Marta and Janice
And Susan and Karen and Charlene and
Martha
And Marcia and Denise.

The seminaries are filling up with lovely
Feminine names, because
God is calling.

The seminaries that only accept
John, James, and Joseph
Are dropping in enrollment.
Because God is calling Theresa and
Charlotte
And Mary and Judy and Helen and
Sharon and Beverly.

Maybe God knows it's time to move
beyond a dualistic,
Patriarchal view of the world and wants to
create
A new world concept of relatedness and
wholeness.

Thanks be to God for the women who are
answering
The call.

Thanks be to God for the pioneer women
who opened
The structures to let it happen.

—Rose Thomason, is a reading specialist
in Alexandria, Virginia, and she is a
member of the Virginia Conference
CSRW.



'I have realized the ordained ministry is my destination.'

As I look back now at the road I traveled after completing seminary education and serving my first church for the last eight years, there is one question that keeps coming to my mind, "Why did I take so long to say 'yes' to evangelize the Christian faith?" I fought and took many detours along the way, but the unsure journey is over, the map has been charted for me. I have realized the ordained ministry is my destination.

I received my inspirations from my mother—a remarkable Christian person. She was my mentor in my childhood. I owe her much gratitude for her positive influence. I'm still amazed at the wisdom which flowed so easily and spontaneously from her lips; the stories, legends, proverbs and myths which were combined with gentle humor, affection and innate reverence and respect, sometimes deeply moving. Her knowledge of God was outstanding. One of my last fond memories was going with mother to Church every Sunday. Through her example and unconditional love I began to understand the nature of God.

At the same time, I began to lose my faith in a Church and the Church leadership, because they went along with the oppressive customs in the society in which I lived. The double standard this society exercised for men and women was even supported by the Church. The social injustices on women were completely ignored. My mistrust in the Church was strengthened by the treatment received by my mother from society.

I was born near Bombay, India in a male dominated society where sons were much more highly regarded than daughters. I was the fifth daughter out of nine. According to Hindu tradition, to have daughters was a disgrace for a woman. On the other hand, a woman who had sons was very blessed and praiseworthy in society. Sons fulfilled the demand for racial continuity and would carry on the family name. There was a cruel sexist custom to bless a bride by saying, "Mayest thou have eight sons, and thy husband survive." My mother, having only daughters, was harassed and looked down upon by her in-laws and the neighborhood women because she had no sons. This in-

creasingly created pain, isolation and much anxiety for my mother.

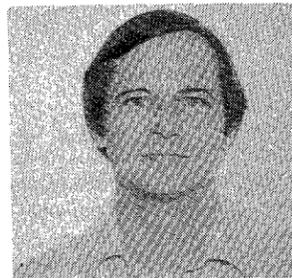
Neither of my parents regretted having nine daughters. They were determined to prove to the family and society that girls are equally capable of thinking, and they can compete with man so far as knowledge and ability are concerned.

Due to the above oppressive customs and beliefs that women are incapable, and they should stay in the home, the ordained ministry was considered a vocation for men only. Therefore, even if I was called to the ordained ministry, I was denying my social heritage and withdrawing from God. But, I learned no one can withdraw from God. God is and always will be there, ever ahead as a road sign offering guidance and counsel.

As I pursue my journey in my ministry I am overwhelmed with the feeling of God's immeasurable love that embraces and accepts us, whether we are men or women. We have nothing to fear in the world, and this is the freedom I have found in God's grace.

I am grateful to the United Methodist Church for allowing me to continue my journey. There are some hardships I have experienced on my journey, and sometimes the road is stony and steep, but it is a good way in which Christ leads me.

—Margaret Misal, is the first East Indian ordained clergywoman in the United Methodist denomination in the U.S.A. She currently serves the Glenarm and New City Methodist Church in Illinois.



'I have abandoned the ladder and begun the dance'

I was fortunate to come to the Commission as a young adult; not being part of the official power structure (D.S., etc) freed me from arriving at the Commission with turf to defend. So, my experience has been one of liberation and expansion. My life has been enhanced by the feminist combination of gentleness and honesty/integrity/confrontation I have experienced in CSRW circles.

Nurture and faith spring forth naturally—not a devotional tacked onto the beginning of a meeting (as often occurs in non-feminist circles). Incarnation was experienced as persons in the group exercised the gift of awareness, or alertness, to others who were estranged or who felt on the fringe rather than in the center. Non-feminist

The Truth of Our Lives: Our Spirituality, Our Stories

Carol Christ, in her essay "Spiritual Quest and Women's Experience," (in *Womanspirit Rising*) says: "In consciousness raising groups, in conversations, and in study, women are engaged in the immensely important and exciting task of recovering and discovering the shapes and contours of our own experience. We tell each other stories which have never been told before, stories utterly unlike the stories we have all learned from the culture . . . we

have gained power to create new being." Men, too, are finding that they have untold stories, stories which lead them to the unexamined, undisclosed 'feminine' parts of themselves.

Here, then, is a diverse collection of stories, submitted by current and former GCSRW members, in response to an invitation to share parts of their spiritual journeys.

faith is sometimes monologic, not dialogic or engaging or listening. Feminist spirituality listens and cares and responds actively.

The Holy Spirit takes the shape of a smile and a light-hearted dance, which allows room for tears of grief, when expressed and experienced in feminist spirituality. Compassion and judgment greet one another and go about their business without pity or rancor.

Feminist spirituality is eucharistic—thanksgiving in the context of receiving and giving, waiting (gestating), birthing, dying/rising. Preventing grace is feminist—waiting, brooding, coaxing, nurturing, confronting, living-in-spite-of (sin, etc.) and as-if (one was already justified, or in grace). Feminist spirituality is a helpful expression of sanctifying grace, too. Feminist spirituality is at home in the world of not-yet.

I feel less violent, less compulsive, less competitive yet more competent because I have been graced with those who embody feminist spirituality. I have abandoned the ladder and begun the dance.

—Ted Leach is pastor of the Dora, AL, United Methodist Church.

'I became very aware of the presence of the Spirit'

I had been brought up in parsonages, always gone to church and sung in the choir (even in rebellion of life), and after work, marriage, children, and much Bible study through United Methodist Women and its predecessor, felt there was something missing in life. There had even been a few years of Yokefellows and prayer group. I continued searching and reading all types of material pertaining to the spiritual.

One day I was making beds and in silence voicing my loneliness to God. All

at once I found myself thrown on the bed and surrounded with great light and warmth. It was as though a funnel was put in the top of my head and knowledge was poured in. A voice said, "Search for the truth." I did not want to leave this light and warmth. Several nights later I was awakened in the middle of the night and the experience repeated itself.

In later reading and study, certain portions would stand out clearly and proclaim themselves as truth, as that which had been poured into my mind. Over several years I developed a theology based on this experience which was very different from that which I heard each Sunday. It saw all persons as equal and the need to say this in inclusive language. I felt a oneness with God and all creation emphasized by the understanding that God intended this oneness. An awareness that no person has the right to judge or question another's experience. That all experience is valid and each of us grows in our own way to add to the totality of God's experience. All that God makes is good. This is affirmed by reading what Jesus SAID and basing my religion on that rather than the historical story ABOUT Jesus. Jesus became my elder brother helping me to understand God and live a full life rather than taking a position as a sort of human God. I became very aware of the presence of Spirit in my life, as God within. None of this is to deny the Trinity, only to affirm and understand the relationship more fully.

As writings on feminist theology began to be printed, they seemed to follow and affirm what I had learned. I covet this understanding for the whole church, as a way of understanding what Christ taught which was probably dropped by the early church as too individualistic in favor of a more controllable patriarchal theology.

—Ruth Steach is an active lay woman retiring to begin an ecumenical feminist ministry in her area.



'I could no longer put "church" first as every point of reference'

A council of churches executive friend and feminist started it all for me about four years ago. Having previously been invited by a Roman Catholic priest to receive the eucharist at his hands as a gesture of ecumenical hospitality in a Roman Catholic mass, she intended to do so until she found herself confronted by four male priests concelebrating. She said, "When I am forced to choose between my sexuality and the Church, I'll choose my sexuality every time!" and refused to leave her seat. The incident led to a heated debate between us on patriarchy in the church, as I emphasized that such a gift of eucharistic hospitality and experience of Christian unity was far more important than objecting to the absence of women at the altar. But I realized that my vehemence and anger was covering up my own unwillingness to face up to the truth that was within me: that I could no longer put "church" first as every point of reference. It was a turning point as I began to explore other means of Christian expression, other theological affirmations beyond traditional Christian doctrine, and other avenues of spirituality.

From that point, my reading shifted. Novels such as *Medicine Woman* (Andrews) and *The Mists of Avalon* (Bradley) transported me into Native American and Celtic traditions of spirituality. *Spiders and Spinners* (Weigal) linked me with women of many ancient and tribal cultures in their religious expressions. Poetry by Adrienne Rich and Marge Piercy plumbed the depths of women's "soul" (another name for "experience"). *Dreaming the Dark* (Starhawk) and *Womanspirit* (Iglehart) suggested concrete ways of meditation and journey along a woman's path into the self and out again. *The Politics of Women's Spirituality* (Spretnak) and *Womanspirit Rising* (Christ and Plaskow) helped me understand how "the personal is political." And with the Christian faith as a point of reference, Mary Daley's linguistic spells, Carter Heyward's interpretations from "the underside" and Phyllis Trible's "Texts of Terror" forced me to look at the Christian Tradition in a totally different way. I pursued the concerns in workshops and retreats: attended a weekend conference on goddess imagery, a week's summer

Solstice camp, now participate in a monthly women's liturgy group made up of dissident Roman Catholic nuns, and broadened my interests into anthropology and mythology where secrets of women's truth and experience still lie.

For now it feels as if I live in two worlds: drawn deeply to all of these writers as those who reveal an authoritative word for me, yet living and working in an arena with even more of the classical Christian Tradition as subject matter than many of my friends.

Nelle Morton's recent book, *The Journey is Home*, shifts the noun "transcendence" (hierarchical and separated from body and from woman) to the verb, "transcending" (synonymous with breath and spirit) and transforms the descending dove ("down from up above") to the ascending dove ("up from down under"), emerging out of the hearts of people. Its the difference between the image of a dove or the image of a phoenix.

So for me, much of the shift in the spirit-journey of "To whom do we look" has to do with the "Where do we look?" And for me, I'm looking in different places.

—Rev. Jeanne Audrey Powers works in the national ecumenical office where "spiritual journeys" come with the job!



'I came to see myself as created both male and female'

My most vivid experience of becoming all God wants me to be happened during a workshop on male and female dynamics at Kirkridge some years ago. I was long aware of the femininity of Jesus' love . . . giving-caring-trusting, in claiming me as one of God's family. I remember my tears of joy in discovering a new "inside-gut-caring" for persons of both sexes in the group. It was within the context of that group that I came to see myself created as both male and female and that my potential to be what God wants me to be could be enhanced by living out my new awareness. Many times I am inhibited by stereotypical images holding me back in my spiritual journey. I seek always for new horizons.

—Gerald G. Heilman, is pastor of Simpson-Temple United Parish, a union of United Methodist and Lutheran Church in American congregations, Altoona, PA.



'I, too, am a feminist whose spirituality has grown immensely'

At first for me the term "Feminist Spirituality" was mere words meant just for women. I, like all too many others, had equated "feminist" with "feminine" and since I was not a woman, I had absolutely no part in it. But since I am so deeply committed to justice, I thought that if this "turned them on" then I would say nothing.

Although I cannot point to any "lightning flash" experience or "sudden tearing of the curtain," gradually I grew. This was undoubtedly due to repeated exposure to the inclusiveness and acceptance I found in feminist spirituality. This has led me to a new and deeper understanding and appreciation. I no longer feel uncomfortable and estranged with the words for I now realize that I, too, am a feminist whose spirituality has grown immensely thanks to CSRW.

—Jim Kardos is a layman from the East Ohio Conference.

'I knew the Goddess was holding me in her hand'

I was told of a women's worship group in the summer of 1984. It was a small group and informal. We sang and prayed for one another. We spoke and sang of God as "she". After about 4 weeks with these women, I had a dream. In the dream, I was out in a rocky, hot, desert area, alone and thirsty. In the dream, I compared my situation to Jonah's once his shading vine had died. I was sure I would die if I didn't find shade or water soon. But then, instead of being the thirsty person, someone else was that person and I grew into a tree of gigantic proportions and shaded that other person. Then again, the scene shifted and I was in the ocean, being pounded by breaking waves. (In real life, I don't know how to swim and our coast has dangerous undercurrents.) Immediately I heard a voice saying: "there

is calm beyond the breakers," and so I swam through the waves out into the ocean and floated safely in the gently rocking water. I knew that the Goddess was holding me in her hand.

The dream gave me a strong sense of confidence that there would be a "calm beyond the breakers" in my life, a confidence that eventually everything would be alright, even if difficult times were all I could see ahead then. I had never before felt as if God had spoken to me personally. I had never before paid any attention to dreams. I had a new ability to be patient and to wait for the world to "get its act together," with the Goddess guiding. I had not felt that patience or trust before when all the powers had seemed male.

There was no connection between this women's worship group and the congregation where I work and worship, reflecting, I guess, a gap between what touches me spiritually and regular church. Often the church seems to be the cause of the hard times, not the conveyor of assurance of the cradling hand of the Goddess.

—Kristan Burkert is a pastor in the Oregon-Idaho Conference.



Death Comes Disguised as a Midwife

Death comes disguised as a midwife,
Taking my child away.
And even though I know
The time has not yet come
Death is grabbing and pulling
My baby out of my belly
And claiming it for herself.

I wrestle death!
Cling to my cold dead child!
Desperately I try
To breath in her
The warm life air!
But death pulls her
Away from me
And runs into the cold night air—
Not stronger than death,
I am left weak and
bleeding from my heart and womb
And in such great pain
That I will cry and bleed
for a thousand years.

Death comes disguised as a midwife.
And takes my baby away.

—Lydia Salazar Martinez, is pastor of Principe de Paz UMC, San Antonio, TX.



'We put limits on God when we use only masculine terms'

I spent a lot of the years of my life teaching pre-school children in Sunday School and as a laboratory leader (teaching teachers of children). Because young children are very literal, teachers must take great care in the ways they speak of God and Jesus. We talked about God as the one who planned and made an orderly world. Who because of deep love for us sent Jesus, who showed us what God is like and how God wanted us to live. Prayers are simply addressed to God. To explain other names that are used for God and Jesus, we used the example of nicknames. When we care about someone we often have other names to call them. When one young boy from the city streets of York heard God described as a Father, his reply was: "If God is like my father, I sure would hate him." I've never forgotten that.

When I was on the Women's Division the issue of inclusive language was raised (early '70's). At first I tended to dismiss it. I knew that I was a child of God. I knew that Jesus was my Saviour. I knew that I was married so to be addressed as "Mrs. Gerald Heilman" didn't trouble me. Even though I always used the double signature, i.e. Geraldine B. Heilman (Mrs. Gerald Heilman). I knew the rules, a married woman gives up her middle name and uses the initial of her maiden name in signatures.

As my consciousness was raised, (and that process continues), I realized that we put limits on God when we use only masculine terms for descriptions. When we fail to see and understand the numerous Biblical references to God that describe the feminine traits of the divine we are seeing God in such a limited way. God is both male and female and transcends both.

While on GCSRW my understanding continued to grow. A high point for me came when I was asked to attend the Evangelical Women's Caucus meeting at Saratoga Springs, New York as an observer for GCSRW. During that event I realized as never before that as Christian women we had not fully claimed the scriptures as our authority for our liberation.

—Geraldine Heilman is staff coordinator for the UM Appalachian Development Committee.

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Catch the Spirit' Focus: Women

The United Methodist Church's new nationwide television program, "Catch the Spirit," will frequently include segments which highlight the role of women in the church, according to the program's producers.

Program segments planned for broadcast in early 1986 include:

- a discussion of the use of inclusive language in the church;
- a profile of Irene Auberlin, an 88-year-old woman from Detroit who organized and now runs World Medical Relief;
- an interview with Holly Elliott, President of the United Methodist Congress of the Deaf;
- a look at PhoneFriend, a ministry with latchkey children in Phoenix, featuring the Rev. Lucy Jones-Johnson.
- Dr. Marjorie Stewart Joyner, an 80-year-old Black businesswoman and social activist from Chicago, will be featured the first weekend of February; the entire program will have a Black emphasis. Dr. Joyner was a longtime friend of Mary McLeod Bethune and still serves as a trustee of Bethune Cookman College.

The program, produced by United Methodist Communications, will be seen nationally on four cable networks:
CBN Cable Network (Saturdays, 7:30 a.m. EST)
Alternative View Network (Sunday, 10 a.m. EST)
ACTS (8 a.m. and 9:30 p.m. Sundays; 2 a.m. Mondays, EST)
Black Entertainment Television (Sundays, 2 p.m., EST)

(Check local listings for channel and time in your community.)

Ideas for persons, projects or topics for the television program may be sent to Shirley Whipple Struchen, UMC, Suite 1370, 475 Riverview Dr., New York, NY 10115.

The Flyer is published five times yearly by the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (GCSRW) in the United Methodist Church (UMC) as a communications link with the 74 Annual Conference Commissions on the Status and Role of Women.

Editor: Patricia Broughton
 Design and Layout: Penny Nichols

The GCSRW, a national agency of the UMC, acts as an advocate, catalyst, and monitor to ensure the full participation and equality of women in the church.

GCSRW officers:
 Sharon Howell, President • Ressie Mae Bass, Vice-President • Albert Jones, Secretary

General Secretariat:
 Geneva Harton Dalton • Kiyoko Kasai Fujii • Nancy Gossom Self

GCSRW, 1200 Davis St., Evanston, IL 60201 (312) 869-7330

The publication is on file with the Women's Collection, Special Collections Department, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL 60201.

Ovations

To **Boston University School of Theology**, which recently approved a policy on inclusive language (urging its use in publications, teaching, research and worship), on sexual harassment (denouncing it as exploitative behavior), and on sexual orientation (that it will not be used as a criterion in admissions, evaluation, recommendations).

To **Helen Kuang Chang**, who was selected to be Interpretation Assistant for the Board of Church and Society. She will be Assistant Editor for E/SA and will coordinate "Word from Washington."

To **Sharon Brown Christopher**, superintendent in the Wisconsin Conference, who has been named assistant to the bishop. She is believed to be the first woman to hold this position.

To **Angella Patricia Current**, past executive administrator of Shiloh Family Life Center, of Washington, DC, who has been named assistant general secretary for loans and scholarships in the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. She is the daughter of Bishop Leontine T.C. Kelly.

To **Betsy Ewing**, who was honored by the General Board of Ministries at its fall meeting on her retirement after 20 years of service.

To **Newtonia Harris**, a UMC staff member, who has been promoted to associate general secretary for planning and administration.

To **Lynne Josselyn and Rena Yocum**, United Methodists who were part of an 11-member delegation of US church leaders who spent four days in prayer with Soviet church leaders in Geneva during President Reagan's November summit meeting with Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev.

To the organizers of the **1985 Women's Week at Perkins School of Theology**, Southern Methodist University, who brought together psychotherapists, attorneys, teachers, clergy and laity to discuss "Family Secrets—Will the Church Break the Silence on Family Violence?"

To **Anna Rhee**, a program coordinator in the General Board of Church and Society department of peace and world order, who has been named chairperson of the Interfaith Action for Economic Justice, a coalition of religious groups in Washington, DC.

To **Phyllis Tyler-Wayman and Tricia Faris**, United Methodist pastors in Gardena, CA, who endorsed a resolution which

would declare Gardena a "Sanctuary City" for illegal refugees from El Salvador and Guatemala. Tyler-Wayman organized the resolution, endorsed by five other area clerics.

To **Jean Young**, one of four newly-appointed district superintendents in the Baltimore Conference. Susan Morrison leaves the cabinet after completing six years.

To **Dee Ann Kahn**, who was appointed Assistant General Secretary for Administration at the General Council on Ministries, after six years as an executive assistant to the General Secretary.

To **Peggy Welshans**, CPA and treasurer of United Methodist Communications, who received a "clean audit" for the agency this year with no additional recommendations to management, a highly prized outcome.

From the 46th Annual Report of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1915, comes this list:

Some First Things Of The Society In The Foreign Field

The Woman's Foreign Missionary Society sent out—

1869—The first woman physician, Miss Clara A. Swain, M.D., to non-Christian women, Luckow, India.

1873—The first woman physician to China, Miss Lucinda Combs, M.D., Foochow.

1886—First missionary entirely supported by Young People, Dr. Kaste R. McDowell, by Philadelphia Conference.

1887—The first woman physician to Korea, Miss Metta Howard, M.D., Seoul.

1900—The first Methodist Episcopal missionaries and the first woman physician to the Philippines, Mrs. Anna J. Norton, M.D., Manila.

The Society opened

1874—The first hospital for women in Asia, Bareilly, India.

1875—The first hospital for women in China, Foochow.

1888—The first hospital for women in Korea, Seoul.

1906—The first hospital for women in the Philippine Islands.

—with thanks to Carolyn DeSwarte Gifford, Coordinator, Women's History Project, General Commission on Archives and History.

Calendar

Feb. 24, 1986 **Parenting for Peace and Justice.** With James and Kathy McGinnis. Workshop for lay and clergy church leaders focuses on nurturing peacemakers for home, church, world. Cost: \$20. Contact Christian Theological Seminary, 1000 West 42nd St., Indianapolis, IN 46208.

Mar. 6-8 **The Power Equity Group: Making It Work.** Workshop with Carol Pierce and Bill Page, near New Haven, CT, to better understand the functioning of groups where there is an assumption of power equity. Write New Dynamics, 21 Shore Dr., Laconia, NH 03246.

March 18-19 **Counseling Victims of Sexual Abuse.** Two-day workshop for pastors sponsored by Planned Parenthood of Central Indiana and Christian Theological Seminary. Focuses on rape trauma syndrome and incest: impact on adult survivors. Cost: \$10—includes lunches for both days. Contact CTS (see Feb. 24 above).

March 27-30 **Resurrection and Renewal: the Greening Wood.** Part of the "Solidarity Series" at Womancenter at Plainville, MA. Opportunity for daily solitude, nightly reflection and ritual. Cost: \$50. Contact Womancenter, 76 Everett Skinner Rd., Plainville, MA 02762.

April 1-3 **Health and Wholeness in Ministry.** Spring 1986 Council on Women in Ministry (COWIM-NCC) forum focuses on maintaining health and wholeness in the midst of active ministry. Contact COWIM, Rm. 770, 475 Riverside Dr., New York, NY 10115.

April 11-12 **Women and the Economy: Analysis That Transforms.** Look at how women have helped create present economic structure, those women left out. Cost: \$35. At Womancenter at Plainville (see March 27-30 above).

April 17-20 **Assembly of United Methodist Women.** In Anaheim, CA. Theme: Into the Future By Faith. Contact Assembly Business Office, 7820 Reading Road, Cincinnati, OH 45237.

Commission Talent Scout

Faculty Openings, Colgate-Rochester Divinity School. In American Church History, Pastoral Theology, (both tenure-track) and as Director of Field Education. To start June 1, 1986. Contact Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, 1100 S. Goodman St., Rochester, NY 14620.

Associate Director, East Ohio Conference Council on Ministries, UMC. Focus of portfolio: evangelism and church growth. Also serves as liaison to designated district and conference agencies. Contact Rev. John Buchanan, Council Director, East Ohio CCOM, 8800 Cleveland NW, Box 2800, North Canton, OH 44720.

Director of media distribution and EcuFilm, United Methodist Communications. Contact Peggy J. West, UMC, P.O. Box 320, Nashville, TN 37202.

Program staff executive, West Michigan Conference. Contact Personnel Committee, 1837 Skyler Dr., Kalamazoo, MI 49008.

Campus minister, Emory University. Contact Hall Brady, Glenn Memorial UMC, 1652 N. Decatur Rd., NE, Atlanta, GA 30307.

President, West Virginia Wesleyan College in Buckhannon, WV. Contact Robert E. Heaton, PO Box 494, Washington, PA 15301.

Ethnic Youth and Young Adult Internship Program, Board of Church and Society, UMC. For 12 persons, in Washington, DC, June 10 to Aug. 8, 1986. Apply to Manuel C. Espartero, Director, Department of Ethnic Minority Local Church Concerns, BCS, 100 Maryland Ave., NE, Washington, DC. 20002-5664. (202) 488-5600. To be selected by late February.

American Friends Service Committee. For a listing of current job openings send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to AFSC, 1505 Cherry St., Philadelphia, PA 19102. (215) 241-7105.

Education and Music Position Openings. For a list of church position openings, write the Division of Diaconal Ministry, BHEM, UMC, PO Box 871, Nashville, TN 37202. (615) 327-2700, ext. 215.

Two Associate General Secretary positions (Field Service, Issue Development), General Board of Church and Society, UMC. Require experience with issue education, justice ministries, media, executive management. Ethnic minority candidates, male and female, particularly sought. Contact Bishop C.P. Minnick, Jr., chair, search committee, GBCS, 100 Maryland Ave., N.E. #300, Washington, DC 20002. Deadline Jan. 31, 1986.

Associate Program Coordinator for Ethnic Minority Local Church and New Church Development/Redevelopment (NCD/R), Rocky Mountain Conference, UMC. To staff Missional Priority Coordinating Committee, NCD/R, Commission on Religion and Race. Contact Rev. Margaret Rush, UM Hdqtrs, 2200 South University Blvd, Denver, CO 80210.

General Secretary, General Council on Ministries (GCOM), UMC. Requires relationship skills, Christian commitment, extensive knowledge of the UMC, a vision of what is and what might be, and effective management competencies with ability to handle details. Must be United Methodist. Salary range for 1986: \$50,000-\$54,720. Write Bishop Felton E. May, GCOM search committee, 900 S. Arlington Ave., Rm. 214, Harrisburg, PA 17109. Deadline: March 1.



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