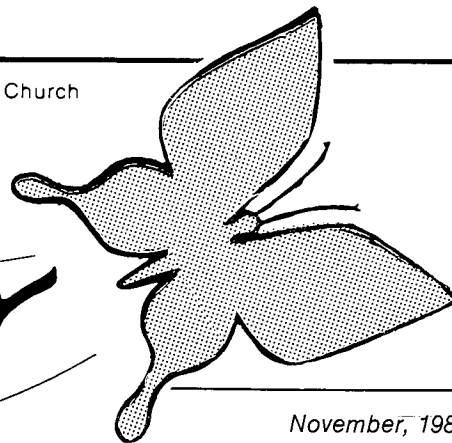


# The Flyer



VOLUME III, No. 5

November, 1981

## BCS NAMES WOMAN HEAD

The social action arm of the United Methodist Church has selected Haviland Houston as its chief executive, making her the first woman general secretary of a United Methodist program board and only the second lay person.

Houston, 50, won the approval of the General Board of Church and Society by a secret ballot vote of 70-0 in early October and is expected to be approved by the General Council on Ministries in its Oct. 27-31 meeting.

Houston (pronounced house-ton) has lived most of her life in Georgia and spent much of her career as a Christian educator in the local church. She is currently an associate general secretary of the UMC General Board of Discipleship in Nashville.

Most directors and staff—as well as Houston—acknowledge that she does not have the stereotypical trappings of a social activist. Her nomination represents a commitment to a new emphasis by the board, many said.

“The Discipline-defined responsibilities of this board are advocacy and education,” said Bishop Leroy C. Hodapp, board president.

“Traditionally this board has been strong on advocacy but not on the education aspect. Houston’s local experience is very recent and helps to give her real understanding of the local church.”

In her first address to the board, Houston said, “My vision is to find ways to turn those resolutions (on social issues passed by the board) into local church realities. We must move away from elitism that denies people the right to struggle with issues themselves.”

She said she will use her experience working with volunteers and her past contacts to build up new coalitions to be involved in social issues.

“Instead of just looking for those liberals out there—and we will want them—we are going to get all kinds of active lay people who are in leadership in the local church,” she said.

She said the Board of Church and Society has tremendous opportunities if it works with annual conference lay leaders and church schools. “There are a half-million teachers and workers. All of these have access to people at the grassroots level. And people are needed to effect change.

“Personally I’ve always been involved in social action. In Atlanta as a director of Christian education, I was helping adults and youth to wrestle with social issues and to become involved in the community.”

(cont. on pg. 4)

## GCSRW GRAPPLES WITH BUDGET, BIBLE, BICENTENNIAL

Budgeting, biblical and theological reflection, a bicentennial resolution, and action on a case of alleged sex discrimination comprised much of the agenda of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women meeting in Madison in September.

In the commission’s opening session, President Carolyn Oehler called on the group to “center,” choosing goals that are “meaningful, possible, and achievable.” (See story, page 3.)

With regard to charges of sexism in the termination of Nancy Richardson, director of student and community life at the Boston University School of Theology, the commission asked the Board of Higher Education and Ministry and the University Senate to investigate.

Dr. Rosemary Radford Ruether, Georgia Harkness Professor of Applied Theology at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, gave the biblical/theological introduction to feminist theology. (See story, page 6.)

The bicentennial resolution urged that the contributions of the general agencies to the 1984 Methodist observance “be intentionally sensitive to the participation of women in the history of our church.” The planning committee was asked to monitor the contributions “to ensure an inclusive history can be celebrated.”

Recognizing that “the sexist and racist parts of our history are episodes painful to us,” the resolution read, “we call on all observers of the bicentennial always to be mindful of our need to recount our ‘errors, sorrows and need for genuine repentance.’”

Much of the commission’s work was done in three work units. They made the following recommendations accepted by consensus:

*Monitoring and Research* prepared an instrument to be used in meetings of boards and agencies of the United Methodist Church to monitor participation of women and ethnic minorities. Information gathered by liaisons to these boards will measure participation leadership and decision-making and the use of inclusive language.

*Education and Advocacy* proposed two “Changing Sexist Patterns Workshops” to be offered next year to one agency and to annual conferences with participants asked to bear part of the expense. (See story, page 3). Several other projects will stress gender-inclusive language, work with ethnic minority women, and designing a workshop on sexism for seminaries, conferences and local churches.

(cont. on pg. 3)

## OPTIONS FOR ACTION

*Suggestions for local activities—from the minutes of Annual Conference Commissions on the Status and Role of Women.*

**WISCONSIN**—CSRW sponsored in late September an "Inclusive Church Workshop: Respecting God's Gifts," with a focus on "seeking and celebrating full participation of women and men in the church, according to each one's gifts." Workshops included 1) inclusive language and worship, 2) Biblical models for men and women, 3) "Madam chairperson": when women chair decision-making groups, 4) "when the Pastor is a woman," 5) spiritual enrichment, especially (but not only) for men.

**SOUTH DAKOTA**—Three fall projects included a joint meeting with the North Dakota CSRW and Nan Self, member of the GCSRW General Secretariat; an ecumenical weekend retreat with South Dakota women in ministry (ordained, diaconal, religious education, religious orders, lay support services) and a weekend "Midlife Journey Workshop." Issues for the midlife workshop include love, work, power, identity, death, body, career, sexuality, spirituality, marital situation.

**NORTH ARKANSAS**—With the support of the conference CSRW, 40 local churches in the conference had ratified "covenant for an inclusive church" as of June 2, 1981. The covenant declares the local church's intention to become an "inclusive church:" a church without ethnic or gender boundaries. A portion of the covenant reads: "We shall accept into membership and into leadership, both lay and clerical, of our local church all qualified persons, regardless of race or sex."

**WEST VIRGINIA**—At the request of a district superintendent, the conference CSRW is making available four workshops; in preparation for leading these workshops commission members, district representatives and others met in October for training. The four workshops are 1) what does an inclusive Church look like? 2) the changing roles of women and the church school 3) a workshop on inclusive worship 4) women and the Bible.

The chairperson of the commission led a workshop on sexism at the Winter Awakening Event of the United Methodist Youth; future workshops with youth are anticipated.

**EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA**—CSRW and the United Methodist Women are in the process of interviewing women from retirement homes and local churches to gather the rich history of women in the conference. Stories will be shared with the 1984 Annual Conference. Of particular interest, the CSRW reports, is "hearing and sharing the history of our ethnic minority sisters."

Seven representatives from the conference attended the GCSRW-sponsored training event on male/female dynamics. These persons will train two teams (male and female) from each district during the winter of 1982, making 16 teams available to facilitate small groups within local churches.

Two new projects for 1982 include a resource packet with worship materials and a guide for non-sexist hymns and a "women in crisis day." The "women in crisis" workshop, to be cosponsored with United Methodist Women, will allow sharing of information and resources and exploration of specific ways the church can support "women in crisis."

**PACIFIC AND SOUTHWEST**—A "Women in Crisis" information event, sponsored by the CSRW and United Methodist Women, was held simultaneously in five locations in October. Workshops focused on domestic crisis issues (violence, displaced homemakers), legislative issues (equality, who owns your body? war), and theological issues (women as leaders in the church; inclusive language, the doctrine of submission). The "Women in Crisis" information events were in response to the 1980 General Conference resolution (Book of Resolutions, pp. 66-68) urging Annual Conferences and seminaries to provide awareness training, advocate for community services, and to deal with physical violence, economic exploitation, loss and dependency. All workshop leaders were local to the area of the event so they can then become resources for local congregations and/or districts which plan further workshops throughout the year.

**IOWA**—CSRW published a 27-page basic information handbook for clergy spouses, alerting them to conference resources and benefits which affect their present and future lives. Included is information on pensions, social security, estate planning, widowhood, divorce, and a directory of resources. In August 1981 the CSRW sponsored a communication workshop "Men and Women in Dialogue" with consultants Carol Pierce and David Wagner from New Dynamics Associates. Projected for October 1982 is a joint retreat with the Commission on Religion and Race focusing on the interrelationship of racism and sexism.

**WEST MICHIGAN**—With the conference Commission on Religion and Race, the conference CSRW held a retreat on "Monitoring and Advocacy in the 80s." The long-range planning, strategizing and resource retreat set up concrete steps for the work of the two commissions. Retreat agenda included 1) becoming clear about their role as monitors and advocates...what's the difference between the two?...how does one act as advocate when one is not to do programming? 2) beginning long-range planning processes with futuring for the role in annual conference for the next ten years; 3) working together as commissions but with time for separate agendas as well. GCSRW General Secretariat member Trudie Preciph, whose responsibilities at the general commission include advocacy, provided resources for the retreat.

**RED BIRD MISSIONARY**—CSRW, discussing the problem of spouse abuse, will circulate information about local women's shelter to pastors and units of United Methodist Women. The shelter maintains a 24-hour hotline, a counseling service and an emergency shelter for victims of spouse abuse.

**MEMPHIS**—Conference newspaper is doing a series of articles on the 13 clergywomen in the conference. CSRW is establishing a data bank with the names and qualifications of competent women interested in serving the church as a partial answer to the excuse "We couldn't find a qualified woman."

**MINNESOTA**—Two fall programs featured a single woman's retreat and a day-long workshop entitled "Spiritual Images of Male and Female." Sessions in the workshop looked at male sexuality, parenting, adolescent development, violence, incorporating spirituality into masculinity and male and female roles in the church setting.

## GCSRW MEETING

(from pg. 1)

*Annual Conferences/Constituencies* asked commission support for a basic Male/Female Dynamics Workshop in Los Angeles in early 1982 and an advanced workshop in Madison in July. (See story, page 3.) It recommended five issues of the commission's newsletter, *The Flyer*, with donations of \$5 to be suggested to help defray costs. It called for a committee to begin planning regional training events prior to election of 1984 General Conference delegates.

The commission endorsed a proposal from the **Women's History Project** asking GCFA to provide \$200,000 for the 1981-84 quadrennium to fund the third phase of the project.

The 1980 General Conference gave a sweeping mandate in women's history to the General Commission on Archives and History, but no funds were attached. If appropriated, the funds will provide a full-time project coordinator, publications and pilot projects to recover women's history in churches and conferences.

The three-member executive secretariat was re-elected unanimously. They are Kiyoko Kasai Fujio, Trudie Preciphs and Nancy Grissom Self. Preciphs was granted a maternity leave (March-April 1982) and Self was given a four-month extended study leave beginning in November to prepare a history of the first decade of GCSRW's existence. (See story, page 3.)

The commission sent a telegram to new Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. It read: "Blessings. May you judge wisely and justly. We support you and your potential for improving the status and role of women."

## GCSRW PRESIDENT CALLS FOR CENTERING

Pointing to assaults on all sides, President Carolyn Oehler called for the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women to "center," choosing and implementing goals that are "meaningful, possible and achievable."

Speaking to members at the commission's September meeting in Madison, WI, Oehler decried the federal government's abandonment of affirmative action, its military build-up and its social cuts.

"Mourning for those who dared to dream of liberty and justice for all," she said. "Cheers from the god of war. Tears from the Prince of Peace."

"In our own church, you can catalogue as well as I those conditions and systemic oppression which cry out for our attention," she said. "The challenge becomes not, 'What shall we do?', but 'How shall we choose?'"

Oehler mentioned two forces at work on the agency: the scarcity of money, and the demands placed on the agency by General Conference and the General Council on Ministries. (The two forces continued to make their power felt throughout the three-day meeting as committees grappled with budget cuts, program evaluation and monitoring demands.)

"We will be able to budget for 1982 the same amount of money as for 1981," Oehler said. "It really is no exaggeration to say that we must continually ask ourselves: 'How can we implement these goals without spending money on them?'"

She cited the irony that "this commission is being forced to the same economies that women have traditionally been forced to—hoarding nickels and dimes to meet our special needs and accomplish our goals. We have 'cookie jar' funding. But thanks to our fine staff and dedicated commission members, we have first class program and plans."

## PLAN MORE MALE/FEMALE WORKSHOPS

With the success of the Male/Female Dynamics workshop held in August in Nashville, the GCSRW will sponsor two more workshops in 1982 and another eight from 1983-1986.

The 1982 workshops, designed to deal with role stereotyping, collegial relationships and male/female issues, will be held in Los Angeles (basic training), and Madison, Wisconsin (advanced training).

Evaluations from the Nashville event indicated satisfaction with both personal growth and skill development. Among the 18 participants were five laywomen, four clergywomen and nine clergymen—seven of the clergy were from the Eastern Pennsylvania conference.

The five day workshop included simulation games to experience power and victim behavior, small groups to process experiences, and reading assignments.

For more information on the 1982 workshops contact the GCSRW, 1200 Davis St. Evanston, IL 60201.

Carol Pierce and David Wagner of New Dynamics Associates will facilitate the 1982 workshops as they did in Nashville.

## STRUGGLE TO BALANCE BUDGET

Budget problems again claimed much of the energy at the GCSRW September meeting as members scrambled to plan programs, give staff a cost of living increase and stay within a balanced budget.

Faced with only a \$1,000 increase in its 1982 projected income (from \$234,000 in 1981 to \$235,000 in 1982), the 48-member commission voted to hold only one meeting instead of the usual two, and to cut one of the two yearly meetings of its 10-member Coordinating Committee. Almost every work unit had to cut projected programs; both executive and support staff were given 10.5 percent cost-of-living increases.

In an attempt to raise additional income, the group named a committee to draw up a request for \$25,000 in World Service Contingency Funds to be used to monitor general agencies and seminaries. These funds are administered by the General Council on Ministries. The commission also agreed to seek approval from the GCFA to solicit World Service Specials, focusing on the empowerment of women for GCSRW's second decade.



Members of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women struggle to bring "first class programs" from "cookie-jar funding."

# GCSRW OFFERS WORKSHOPS ON 'CHANGING SEXIST PATTERNS'

In response to the increasing volume of sex discrimination charges and a need for preventive advocacy, the GCSRW will offer two workshops in 1982 on "Changing Sexist Patterns."

A July workshop will be held at Stony Point, New York, for a general church agency (yet to be selected) and a November workshop at Scarritt College in Nashville for annual conference staff members and leaders.

The major goals of the events, according to GCSRW General Secretariat member Trudie Kibbe Preciphs, is to "develop and improve one's ability to diagnose sexist patterns within interpersonal, group and organizational settings and to make effective interventions that initiate change."

Much of the workshop is experiential, with participants developing working definitions of sexism and an awareness of its cultural roots. They will gain, in addition, an increased awareness of personal behaviors that may be sexist.

Workshop leaders are Bessie "Bess" Cobb Howard of Washington, DC and Bill Hoffman, of Roanoke, VA. Howard is director of the Washington, DC Howard University Teacher Corps project and a consultant and trainer. Hoffman serves both the private and public sectors by "designing applications of behavioral science to improve human interaction in organizations and personal life."

## HOUSTON TO HEAD BCS

(from pg. 1)

Bishop Hodapp said, "She hasn't been as removed from social action as some people think. You can't be the head of a major YWCA in the South and be removed from social issues."

After 20 years as an educator in the local church, Houston became the executive director of the YWCA of Greater Atlanta in 1972. During her five years at the helm, the YWCA prepared and implemented an affirmative action program and dealt with issues of institutional racism. It created service programs for battered women, rape victims, deaf mutes, young women in need of inexpensive housing and women who suffered from credit and job discrimination. Houston oversaw an operating budget of \$650,000 and a \$2 million capital funds drive that expanded the YWCA from two to six buildings.

—By Roy Howard Beck

Reprinted with permission from the Texas Methodist/United Methodist Reporter.



— Haviland Houston —

## SELF TO COMPILE GCSRW HISTORY

Boxes will come out of basements and words out of memory as GCSRW General Secretariat member Nancy Grissom Self begins her four-month study leave in mid-November.

Self, who has been with the commission since its inception almost ten years ago, will spend her sabbatical organizing the history of the GCSRW and preparing it for the archives of the Commission on Archives and History (to be located in a new building at Drew University in 1982).

"In those first four years of establishing a national agency of the denomination without full time support staff, files and records were kept, but no ongoing orderly procedures were maintained," Self said. "Those formative years (from 1972-1976) contain a great deal of valuable history which needs to be a part of the archives of the United Methodist Church."

Self will be working with Rosemary Skinner Keller, a professor at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, and with two seminary students: Joyce Piper-Laue and Joyce Alford. The team anticipates producing a document for publication by the commission.

In addition to ordering existing files and records, Self will interview persons connected with the early years of the commission, including Thelma Stevens and Louise Branscomb, both of whom have had strong influence on the founding of the GCSRW.

## STRUGGLING FOR VISIBILITY

It was as simple as two sentences being dropped, and as weighty as decades, even centuries, of history. It was at once just a mistake, and at the same time a symbol of the ongoing struggle of women for visibility.

It began in September, 1979, with presentation of a preliminary draft of a booklet: "Developing and Strengthening the Ethnic Minority Local Church," to the Interagency Coordinating Committee for the Missional Priority.

The committee approved the addition of two sentences: "In addition, it is forthrightly acknowledged that ethnic minority women are intentionally and essentially part of all of the goals and strategies in this document. Nevertheless, the literary style that follows is self consciously devoid of sexist language."

A revised edition of the booklet was distributed to General Conference delegates before the 1980 General Conference: the sentences were included.

An edition for general use was produced by United Methodist Communications. The sentence—the only one that explicitly addresses the concerns of ethnic minority women—was inexplicably left out.

The General Secretariat of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, deemed discovery of the missing sentence "shocking" and the omission a "horrendous and devastating disappointment."

But they noted in a letter to Norman E. Dewire, General Secretary of the General Council on Ministries:

"That ensuring inclusiveness of the gifts and graces as well as needs and concerns of racial ethnic minority women in the Missional Priority in The United Methodist Church should hang literally on one sentence is not without precedent in the long history of women's struggle toward the whole community of God in both church and society."

## MINISTRY AND SEXUALITY

"Men and women, ministry and sexuality" was the theme for the 1981 Perkins School of Theology's Women's Week, October 20-22. Through panels, workshops and guest speakers, the conference addressed places where topics of male/female, ministry and sexuality meet: in worship, preaching, pastoral care, staff relationships, colleague relationships and in the appointment system.

Penelope Washbourne, author of "Becoming Woman," and Susan Morrison, a District Superintendent in the Baltimore Conference, lectured and participated. In addition, case studies dealing with issues such as competition, power struggles, and the appointment system were presented to panels.

## STUDENTS SEEK INCLUSIVENESS

The tasks are three: defining a workable structure, winning the moral and financial support of churches, and racism.

With the addition of sexism, those might well be the tasks of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women. But they're not—they're the agenda of the National Interim Committee created this fall to renew a national ecumenical student Christian movement in the United States.

Ruth Harris, a staff member of the UMC General Board of Global Ministries and one of two agency representatives to advise the interim committee, spelled out the tasks.

Another goal of the committee is gender and ethnic balance. Achieving gender balance on the 17-member interim committee has not been easy as ten women and only five men were elected to serve. The two remaining vacancies are to be filled by Native Americans to round out the ethnic minority representation which includes Hispanics, Asian Americans and Blacks.

The new interim committee is to rotate leadership in a collective decision-making style and to use sexually inclusive language (two other dimensions harmonious with GCSRW).

*Information from the  
Texas Methodist/United Methodist Reporter.*

## OVATIONS

To **FAYE WILSON-BEACH**, new staff member on the General Board of Global Ministries, with responsibility for mission education of children.

To **MARY JOHN DYE**, chairperson of the Mississippi Commission on the Status and Role of Women, for publication of a three-part article on "The Biblical Basis for Assertiveness," published in the March, May and July, 1981 issues of the Christian feminist magazine, *Daughters of Sarah*. (Flyer readers can get the issues at a special price by sending \$2 to 2716 W. Cortland/FY, Chicago, IL 60647.)

To **LEE-LEE CASTOR**, who was ordained deacon in the Holston Conference in July. She is believed to be the only Asian American woman ordained deacon in this conference; she is part of a clergy couple.

To **JANET LEE**, a diaconal minister at Clawson UMC in Clawson, MI, who has been named president of the Fellowship of UMs in Worship, Music and Other Arts.

To **VIDETTE K. BULLOCK**, a research assistant at Baylor University College of Medicine in Houston, who has been named an assistant general secretary in the benefits section of the General Board of Pensions in Evanston, IL.

To **KAREN GREENWALT** of Fort Worth, TX, who has been named to the staff of General Board of Discipleship, church leader development section.

To **DR. LOUISE BRANSCOMB**, who presented a collection of books by, for and about women to Birmingham-Southern College in memory of her mother, Minnie McGehee Branscomb, a parsonage wife, mother and volunteer.

To **UM BARBARA THOMPSON** of Washington, DC who will be serving on the preparatory committee for the World Council of Churches Sixth Assembly. The committee is chaired by British Methodist **PAULINE WEBB**.

To **JAN LICHTENWALTER**, communications coordinator of the Methodist Theological School in Ohio, who has been named communications director for the Baltimore Conference.

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

## ARCHIVES SUPPORTS EQUAL RIGHTS

The General Commission on Archives and History, at its September 1981 annual meeting, wrote the North Carolina governor concerning his state's failure to pass the Equal Rights Amendment, thereby "denying half of its citizens equality under the law." The commission also reminded him of United Methodist General Conference support for the ERA in 1972, 1976 and 1980.

## FLYER SEEKS CONTRIBUTIONS

Beginning with this issue. . .

In an effort to meet rising costs, persons who receive *The Flyer* directly from the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women are asked to contribute \$5 towards production and distribution costs. Make checks payable to *The Flyer*—GCSRW and mail to 1200 Davis St., Evanston, IL 60201.

**GEORGIA HARKNESS SCHOLARSHIP.** Women more than 35 years old who are in seminary preparing for ordained ministry are eligible for the Georgia Harkness Scholarship Award. Thirty-eight women received the scholarship in 1981-82 which is given in honor of the late Georgia Harkness, theologian and professor. About 100 women have received the Harkness since 1976.

**Deadline for applications is March 1, 1982.** For application and information write Division of Ordained Ministry, Board of Higher Education and Ministry, P.O. Box 871, Nashville, TN 37202.

**CRUSADE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM.** Scholarships for ethnic minority persons who are pursuing full-time graduate or seminary study are available through the Crusade Scholarship Program of the UMC General Board of Global Ministries.

**Deadline for receiving all applications materials** (to be considered for the 1982-82 academic year) **is Feb. 1, 1982.** Write Crusade Scholarship Program, BGM, Room 1470, 475 Riverside Drive, NY, NY, 10115.

## 'NEED TO FURTHER DEVELOP WOMEN'S STUDIES': RUETHER

MADISON, Wis. (UMNS)—Women's studies at theological seminaries are still "marginal and vulnerable," and the emergence of "cadres of hostile white male students" means a constant struggle is needed to maintain the present momentum.

This view was expressed by Rosemary Radford Ruether, professor of applied theology at Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Ill., when she gave a formal address to the United Methodist Commission on Status and Role of Women here Sept. 25.

"Obviously women cannot impact theological culture until they have access to it," she said. "It has taken approximately 125 years for women to open the doors of most schools of theological education and then become represented in sufficient numbers to have their concerns recognized."

Oberlin College, a Congregational institution, was the first seminary to admit women in the 1840s, but women could not speak in class, she said. When a woman was named valedictorian, her address was read by a man. Some Methodist institutions admitted women in the 1870s. But Harvard Divinity School did not take the step until the 1950s.

### DEVELOPMENT OF FEMINIST STUDIES

Most seminaries which have dealt with women's studies at all have grudgingly permitted a generalist course taught outside the structure of the curriculum usually by someone marginal to the faculty.

"The male faculty tend to have little respect for the content of the course, about which they know nothing," she stated, "and they have no commitment to continue it as a regular part of the curriculum."

A second stage in the development of feminist studies is to acquire one or more faculty members teaching in some regular fields who are respected as scholars and are prepared to do women's studies. Even when such studies are based in the regular disciplines, such as the biblical field, church history or theology, they are taught as occasional electives. They attract only feminist students.

"The rest of the study body is not influenced by them. Most of the faculty ignore them. The new material does not impact the basic curriculum," she said. Women's studies occur as "a duplicate curriculum. Implicitly the patriarchal bias in theology is claimed to be the 'real' theology."

A third stage will come when feminist studies begin to impact the basic curriculum itself. The curriculum would continue as usual but there would be an occasional "Ladies Day" in which women's concerns are considered. For example, there would be 12 weeks of traditional male church history and one week in which to consider great women.

Dr. Ruether looked forward to a fourth and best stage when a feminist critique would penetrate the whole basic curriculum and "transform the way all topics are taught. It would be impossible to deal with any topic in theological studies without bringing out the sexist vs. inclusive options within that area of the tradition."

The speaker admitted that women's studies has not matured to the point where it is able to offer a comprehensive reconstruction of methodology and tradition. "A feminist reconstruction of systematic theology is yet to be written," she said, partly because women have not had the opportunity to teach the subject.

"We need to figure out how one would take all the structures of theology—the understanding of God, good and evil, creation, the church and salvation—and look at them from the point of view of a feminist critique and present a reconstruction that is inclusive rather than a patriarchal understanding of the Gospel."

She viewed as "even further down the road" the retraining of male faculty to be able to take such work into account.



Rosemary Radford Ruether

### TYPES OF FEMINIST THEOLOGY

Dr. Ruether pinpointed three types of feminist theology as dominant today.

"Evangelical feminists believe the message of Scripture is fundamentally egalitarian," she said. "The New Testament in particular proposes the mutual submission of men and women to each other. Unfortunately this notion of mutual submission has been misread as the subjugation of women. These feminists hope to clean up the sexism of Scripture by a better exegesis."

Evangelical feminists address themselves to "a very important group in American religion who typically use Scripture to reinforce patriarchal models of society and the family. These feminists are trying to lift up the neglected traditions and give biblical Christians the basis for affirming equality."

The liberation feminists take a more critical view of Scripture, she said. They see a conflict going on in Scripture itself between the "iconoclastic message" of the Prophets and the failure to apply this message to subjugated minorities such as women and slaves.

In prophetic faith, "God is not seen as the upholder of hierarchical social order, but rather as the one who comes to vindicate the victims and those who have been oppressed by the dominant order. It completely relocates the place of God, and instead of baptizing the dominant system, it points towards its over-throw and the construction of an alternative future society, which will be truly in keeping with God's demand."

In the liberation tradition, she said, the patriarchalism of the Bible is not denied, but it loses its authority. It is seen as a failure to apply the full vision of human liberation.

The third group defined by Dr. Ruether was "goddess religion." This group draws its sources from anthropology and historical scholarship, from matriarchal societies and ancient religions centered in the worship of the mother goddess, rather than the patriarchal god of Semitic religions. These feminists see the worship of the mother goddess as a women's religion stemming from pre-patriarchal and matriarchal societies, she said.

This group feels women waste their time in salvaging positive elements of the Jewish and Christian traditions. They take patriarchal religion at its word when it says Christ and God are essentially male, and they urge women to quit the church and synagogue.

Dr. Ruether said she was most sympathetic to the liberation tradition, but "all of the positions have elements of truth and respond to real needs of different constituencies." While it is unlikely that any of these views will predominate, she predicted that "all will work as parallel trends in coming decades to reshape the face of women."

By Frances S. Smith



## RESOURCES: ROSEMARY RUETHER

Feminist theologian Rosemary Radford Ruether, resource person for the September GCSRW meeting, is a prolific author and speaker. Listed below are just some of the books she has written and edited.

**MARY, THE FEMININE FACE OF THE CHURCH.** Written for Protestants, this 106-page book (includes a study guide) looks at biblical and church images of Mary, asking why all of the religious symbols of Protestants are male and why Mary is traditionally so neglected. Westminster Press, 1977, \$3.65 pb.

**FROM MACHISMO TO MUTUALITY.** Seven essays on sexism and woman-man liberation, with questions for reflection and discussion, 142 pages. Co-author Eugene C. Bianchi writes autobiographically on maleness, violence, mutuality, while Ruether looks more historically and theologically at sexism, the depersonalization of sex and the liberation of women. Paulist Press, 1976, \$5.95 hb. (presently out of print)

**WOMEN OF SPIRIT: FEMALE LEADERSHIP IN THE JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN TRADITIONS.** Edited with Eleanor McLaughlin, 400 pages. Thirteen essays discuss women as charismatic leaders, holy women, dissenters, martyrs, reformers and more. Historical and descriptive studies also look at theological images of the feminine in God and the church. Simon and Schuster, 1970, \$5.95 pb., \$11.95 hb.

**NEW WOMAN, NEW EARTH.** Eight sketches (221 pages) on the basic issue of sexism, studying the ideologies (religious and secular) which have supported sexism. Also explored are the interrelationships of sexism and other structures of oppression (race, class, technological power). Seabury Press, 1975, \$8.95 hb.

**RELIGION AND SEXISM.** Eleven essays (356 pages) on images of woman in the Jewish and Christian traditions, edited by Ruether. Included are Old and New Testament images, Talmud images and images of women in medieval theology and canon law. Simon and Schuster, 1974, \$3.95 pb.

**WOMEN AND RELIGION IN AMERICA.** Vol. I, The Nineteenth Century. Edited with Rosemary Skinner Keller. Seven female historians look at women in utopian movements, nuns, Jewish women, revivalism, preaching, lay women in the Protestant tradition, and women in social reform movements. Harper and Row, 1981. \$14.95 hb.

**THE LIBERATING BOND.** With Wolfgang Roth, Ruether looks at biblical and contemporary covenants. Ruether focuses on religious communities, marriage (and the need for partnership), and the exploitation of covenant (abuses of chosenness). With study guide, 107 pages. Friendship Press, 1978, \$2.95 pb.

**FAITH AND FRATRICIDE.** Ruether traces (294 pages) the source and origin of anti-Jewish trends in Christian tradition, looking at the Greek and Jewish roots, New Testament and Church fathers. Seabury Press, 1974, \$8.95 pb.

## SELECTED RESOURCES

**WOMEN OF FAITH IN THE 80S.** 30-minute video tape highlights portions of November 1980 conference of more than 100 key women leaders from religious groups (Catholic, Protestant, Evangelical, Jewish, Muslim). National CBS broadcast now available for local use: \$25. Write Interreligious Affairs Department, The American Jewish Committee, 165 East 56 St., NY, NY 10022.

**BREAD FOR THE JOURNEY:** edited by Ruth C. Duck. Book of resources for contemporary worship services. Included are baptism and communion liturgies, order for confirmation, funeral service. Inclusive language throughout. Order from Pilgrim Press (\$3.95), 132 West 31 St., New York, NY 10001.

**EVERFLOWING STREAMS.** Songs for worship edited by Ruth C. Duck and Michael G. Bausch; the companion volume to *Bread for the Journey* (above). Order (\$3.95) from Pilgrim Press (above).

**WOMANRIVER FLOWING ON.** Slide presentation, funded by Southern Methodist University's Women's Studies Dept., presents sketches of the lives of eight historical church women of various races and accomplishments. The Perkins Women Students (of the related Perkins School of Theology) have purchased a copy of the presentation. Write convener Connie Nelson, 217 Martin-SMU, Dallas, TX 75275.

**SEX EQUITY HANDBOOK FOR SCHOOLS.** This 352-page handbook addresses the roots of sexual discrimination, why it is one of the most serious problems of schools, and what teachers can do to promote sexual equality. Available from Longman, Inc., College and professional Book Div., 19 W. 44th St., New York, NY 10036. \$17.95 pb.

**NEW WITNESSES.** New, periodic newsletter published by the Division of Ordained Ministry, Board of Higher Education and Ministry, UMC, for "the acceptance and empowerment of United Methodist clergywomen." Cathie Kelsey, Editor. Write her, UM Center, Div. of Ordained Ministry, BHEM, P.O. Box 871, Nashville, TN 37202.

**SEX EQUALITY RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS.** Seven resources from the Mid-Atlantic Center for Sex Equity (American University), providing information on films, fairy tales, lining up, extra-curricular activities. Write the center, Foxhall Square Bldg., Suite 252, 3301 New Mexico Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20016

THE FLYER, named after the Commission's butterfly symbol, is published as a communications link with annual Conference Commissions. Items for possible insert should be sent—by the 15th of the month preceding publication—to THE FLYER c/o the Commission office. No permission is needed to reprint; a credit line is requested. Annual Conference Commission members should send address changes to their chairpersons, not to the Commission office.

Next issue: March, 1982 Patricia Broughton, Editor  
United Methodist General Commission on the Status and Role of Women  
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## COMMISSION TALENT SCOUT

**ASSISTANT DEAN AND DIRECTOR OF D.MIN. STUDIES.** At Drew Theological School. Contact Dean Thomas W. Ogletree, Drew Theological School, Madison, NJ 07940.

**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, UNITED METHODIST DEVELOPMENT FUND.** Responsible for administration and promotion of \$28 million investor program for church loans, investor relations, financial reporting, Salary \$22,210 to \$33,315. Send resume to Bishop Ralph Ward, Room 300, 475 Riverside Dr., New York, NY 10115 by October 5. Phone (212) 678-6161.

**VICE PRESIDENT AND DEAN OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS.** New administrative position at Iliff School of Theology with academic oversight and responsibilities. Write Donald E. Messer, President, Iliff School of Theology, 2201 South University Blvd., Denver, CO 80210.

**ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, HISPANIC RESOURCES, BOARD OF DISCIPLESHIP, UMC.** Candidates should have ability to edit, translate and provide expertise in production of resources for Hispanic-speaking local churches in the areas of evangelism, stewardship, worship, church leader development. Salary range: \$21,185 to \$28,250. Applications due October 26, 1981 to Carl D. Case, Jr., Executive Director, Office of Personnel, BOD, P.O. Box 840, Nashville, TN 37202. Phone (615) 327-2700

**ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, KOREAN RESOURCES, BOARD OF DISCIPLESHIP, UMC.** Same position, salary, deadline, contact as above, but with relation to Korean local churches.

**PRESIDENT, WESLEY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.** Send information or names of qualified individuals to A. Wallace Moore, Jr., Chairman, Presidential Search Committee, Wesley Theological Seminary, 4400 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20016. Phone (202) 363-2171. Responsibilities begin July 1, 1982.

**MINISTER, PLANNING AND COORDINATION, RIVERSIDE CHURCH, N.Y.** To coordinate overall church program, working with a team of four other ministers. Write Donald J. Wilson, Chairperson, Search Committee, Riverside Church, Riverside Drive at 122nd St., New York, N.Y. 10027.

### ON THE CALENDAR

November 15-16, 1981 **WOMEN'S PENTAGON ACTION** A repeat gathering of last year when more than 2,500 women came to Washington, DC to protest the war-mentality of the nation's leadership. Contact Women's Pentagon Action, 339 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10002 or P.O. Box 9306, Washington, DC 20005. Mid-west contact: Cassandra Dixon, Rte. 2, Box 568, Wautoma, WI 54481. (715) 344-6158.

October 29-31 **CONFERENCE: WOMEN'S STUDIES.** Impact of women's studies on society, technology and the arts. With Catharine Stimpson, Professor, English, Rutgers University. Contact Office of Women's Studies, The University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee, P.O. Box 413, Milwaukee, WI 53201.

March 26-28, 1982 **GODDESS RISING CONFERENCE.** First large-scale conference bringing together writers, artists and scholars whose work centers around the Goddess. For information contact Goddess Rising, P.O. Box 19241, Sacramento, CA 95819.

October 26-28 **SURVIVAL FOR WOMEN IN MINISTRY.** UCC clergywoman Sally A. Dries leads exploration of survival issues, ways of handling situations, development of inner resources. Through Center for Professional Development in Ministry, 555 W. James St., Lancaster, PA 17603. Tuition: \$67.50. Phone (717) 393-7451.

December 2-6 **THE ETHNIC MINORITY LOCAL CHURCH (EMLC) IN AN INTERDEPENDENT WORLD.** Fourth national leadership seminar sponsored by the Board of Church and Society and the United Methodist Seminars on National and International Affairs. Opportunity for dialogue among different racial and ethnic groups in the church on various public policy issues. Registration due Nov. 13. Contact Manny Espartero, Board of Church and Society, UMC, 100 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, DC 20002. Phone (202) 488-5642.



the commission on the status and role of women  
the united methodist church

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