A Night with Kathe Darr

By Amanda Norris

On Friday night, April 24, students, faculty, friends, and family all gathered to honor Professor Katheryn Pfisterer Darr as she received the Anna Howard Shaw Award. In addition to enjoying a fantastic meal, guests listened to a procession of speakers who shared their personal memories of Kathe Darr, both humorous and moving.

The evening of ribbing began with our new dean, Mary Elizabeth Moore, who performed an ingenious rap in honor of Kathe's scholarly expertise to much fanfare. Hot on her heels was Kathe's mother, Dr. Ann Rader Pfisterer, who shared a humorous story about the death of "Perry the Parakeet," one of Kathe's (and her sister Pam's) first pets. Dr. Pfisterer knew then Kathe would one day be a theologian as she expressed her lofty theological concern that the feisty-in-life parakeet would now, in death, naughtily peck Jesus.

Following this humorous anecdote, one of Kathe's current students read a letter from Rev. LaTelle Miller Easterling, who was unable to attend.

From the Director

By Choi Hee An

The Anna Howard Shaw Center has much exciting news to share this year. We started this semester with our traditional retreat. Many students, faculty, and Shaw Center board members joined this retreat and made cold February warm and nice. For our weekly Thursday program, we invited many guest speakers, such as STH staff and faculty, local pastors, missionaries, General Board of Higher Education staff, chaplains, and students, and had a great conversation with them.

A special program, "Violence in the Bible," a series of lectures by Dr. Katheryn Pfisterer Darr, was co-sponsored by the Anna Howard Shaw Center and Marsh Chapel in March. Dr. Darr brought her audience to re-think and reconsider violence in the Hebrew

"with all love and all apology." The singers cheerfully praised both Kathe's Hebrew expertise and her taste for vintage Chanel.

Kathe's sister Pam Pfisterer Johnson shared a poem titled "Ode to Kathe." One of Kathe's colleagues, Dr. Dana Robert, shared her memories of her many years of friendship with Kathe, listing three of the many "facets" of this Continued on page 2

Kathe Darr and her husband, John, enjoy an evening of teasing and encouragement.
New Dean at STH

Boston University School of Theology has newly welcomed the first female dean in its history. All the members of our community are excited to receive Dr. Mary Elizabeth Mullino Moore as dean of the School of Theology and professor of theology and education at Boston University. The Anna Howard Shaw Center would like to celebrate this new “herstory” and give her a big and warm welcome.

Dean Moore sees her primary role as working with others and contributing her small part toward the healing of the world (zikkun olam). Her recent books include Teaching as a Sacramental Act, Ministering with the Earth, and Teaching from the Heart, as well as the co-edited volumes Children, Youth, and Spirituality in a Troubling World and Practical Theology and Hermeneutics. She has also written many articles on education, process and feminist theologies, and justice and reconciliation. She is married to Allen, and they have five children and eight grandchildren.

A Night with Kathe Darr
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“precious jewel”—teacher, mother, and loyal friend. Kathe’s father, Dr. Fred R. Pfisterer, spoke about Kathe’s very first speaking engagement, prior to which she had no experience or training in public speaking. Nevertheless, her speech for the educational campaign at annual conference became widely known as the “quarter-of-a-million-dollar speech” as it was credited for the unexpected success of the fundraising campaign.

Rev. Laurel Scott, a sister board member of the Anna Howard Shaw Center and former student, gave a moving speech in which she expressed her gratitude and admiration for both Kathe’s “perseverance” and “fashion,” praising Kathe for her ability to hold together both scholarship and grace. Kathe’s son, Joshua Pfisterer Darr, spoke of his mother’s constant support and encouragement, her “mama bear” attitude, and the priceless gift of editing which she has passed on to him. He credited his own success in political science, from the pursuit of his own Ph.D. to his ongoing involvement with the Barack Obama campaign, to his mother’s firm encouragement and steadfast love.

Rev. Nizzi Digan and Anna Howard Shaw Center Work-Study student Nory Leachon presented a “Life Story in Video” of Kathe’s life and career. Guests enjoyed a montage of pictures from Kathe’s childhood, high school years, marriage, and her long and vital career. Rev. Nizzi called Kathe’s office “a place of hospitality,” and thanked her for her dedication to students like herself whose native language is not English.

Following these presentations, guests were invited to share briefly their own memories of Kathe. Pat Joy Thompson, Dr. Shelly Rambo, and Page Blair all shared their heartfelt gratitude. Kathe’s father concluded the open mic time with a short, proudly told story about the time he got to say “I told you so” to Professor Harrell F. Beck. Kathe is now the Harrell F. Beck Scholar of Hebrew Scripture.

As the evening came to a close, Kathe was presented with a plaque and a scrapbook to commemorate the occasion and the honor. She very succinctly expressed her deep gratitude for the heartfelt comments of her friends and family. She said she felt blessed both to have such a community around her and to be at Boston University School of Theology.

Kathe Darr expresses her gratitude in receiving the Anna Howard Shaw Award.
Lead Women Pastors Project Survey Summary

By HiRho Park, D.Min., and Susan Willhauck, Ph.D.

The United Methodist Church celebrated the 50th anniversary of clergy rights for women in the Methodist tradition in 2006 with a new project sponsored by the Office of Continuing Formation for Ministry of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM). As the United Methodist Church greets a new era of women's leadership in the Church, the question is, “How can the church equip younger generations of clergywomen to fulfill their calling to serve the needs of the present age, which demands gender inclusivity in its theology and practice?” The Lead Women Pastors Project (LWPP) was initiated in response to this question, sparked by the 2006 International Clergywomen's Consultation. The purpose of the LWPP is to affirm, empower, research, and nurture leadership of clergywomen who are serving churches with a membership of 1,000 or more. (The term “lead pastor” was defined by the General Board of Council on Finances as clergy who are serving churches with 1,000 or more members within the United Methodist Church.) Lead women pastors have been “cracking the glass ceiling” within the Church in spite of an apparent lack of support, affirmation, and recognition of their unique contributions. As of December 31, 2004, there were 34,659 United Methodist churches in the United States; 1,154 churches had a membership of 1,000 or greater and 64 of those had a woman as lead pastor.

The LWPP was a comprehensive twelve weeks of continuing education that consisted of online learning, retreats, and the creation of a support network. One of the components of the LWPP is to research lead women pastors’ leadership styles. The Lead Pastors research has been conducted by GBHEM to describe the unique ways that women leading in large church ministry settings compare to men. In the past, most understandings of leadership styles have been defined from male perspectives.

The surveys were sent to 94 lead women pastors and a randomly selected sample of 300 male lead pastors. The response rate was 50.8%.

Age, Race, and Marriage Status of Lead Women Pastors

The average age of lead women pastors (LWP) was 53 years old, which is 3 years younger than lead male pastors (LMP). Although LWP are younger, they are more likely to have served more appointments prior to a large church (see Career Trajectory below). Of those who completed the survey, 99% were Caucasians. And 69% of LWP were married, compared to 99% of LMP.

Career Trajectory

According to the survey, LWP average four appointments, and men average 3.75 appointments, before becoming a lead pastor. Most of them, 70% of LWP and 68% of LMP, had been ordained between 29 and 39 years of age. One out of five of both LWP and LMP have served as a district superintendent. However, more women have served as a district superintendent prior to their current appointment. More LWP have served appointments beyond the local church prior to their current appointment. More LWP have been associate pastors prior to becoming a LWP. Less than 10% of LWP have served as chairs of the Board of Ordained Ministry or have been an Episcopal candidate. More LWP have been candidates for Episcopacy in the past than LMP.

It appears that a common career trajectory within the United Methodist Church for women is through the denominationally controlled leadership structure of the Church. The most frequent experiences of women pastors prior to serving as a lead pastor of a large church have been as associate pastors, district superintendents, and candidates for Episcopacy.

It was interesting to learn that seven males and one female became a lead pastor in their first appointment. Does this mean that these pastors already had leadership qualities that large churches demand when first entering into ministry? Or does this mean that more Cabinets perceive that males have a higher capability of leading a large church than women? This correlates with the most challenging issues for women in ministry today. In a later part of this report, both LWP and LMP agree that the “appointment process” is one of the most challenging issues within the UMC structure.

It was also interesting to find that one-fourth of LWP and one-third of LMP are second-career clergy who had been teachers, in business, or had military careers. This means that clergy who bring different skills

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Looking Back, Moving Forward

By Sally Paddock

A year ago this past January, I was driving through rural Manitoba on my way to my Grandma Lois’s funeral. She had passed away just as my second semester was starting at the School of Theology. I was close to my grandmother, but had only become so after my teenage years. We shared a love of books, a love for adventure, and an intellectually rebellious spirit. For a brief (too brief) week, my grandmother’s passing put the hectic pace and pressure of school in perspective. At the same time, I found myself wishing that the timing had been different. Classes were just starting. I had not yet received my loans, and I was desperately searching for a job. And then I had to just leave in the middle of it, find a way to buy a plane ticket to the middle of the continent, rent a car, and try to find time to settle my emotions. I was overwhelmed. And at times like that, I usually remember how critical it is just to sit and pray.

Now, I am not an advocate for the kind of prayer that is offered just to try to get something out of God. But during that drive to the funeral, something wonderfully unexpected did happen. At some point during the three-hour drive, my cell phone started ringing; it was my friend Amanda back at school. I picked up the phone and she said: “Hey, would you be able to work at the Anna Howard Shaw Center this year?” It was one of those unveiling moments when you wonder why you had spent so much time stressing and wringing your hands, trying to make life work on your own schedule. Of course I could work there, I said; the offer was an answer to prayer. I had not applied to work there, I did not know much about the Shaw Center, and I did not know much about feminist studies. But within the first couple hours of the retreat, I began to learn something that I believe is at the heart of the Shaw Center’s presence on the School of Theology campus. We stretched and danced, we drew pictures and ate warm food, we took some time to just go out for a walk and enjoy the trees and each other’s company. As out of place as I felt at that retreat, the experience was wonderfully unexpected did happen. At some point during the three-hour drive, my cell phone started ringing; it was my friend Amanda back at school. I picked up the phone and she said: “Hey, would you be able to work at the Anna Howard Shaw Center this year?” It was one of those unveiling moments when you wonder why you had spent so much time stressing and wringing your hands, trying to make life work on your own schedule. Of course I could work there, I said; the offer was an answer to prayer. I had not applied to work there, I did not know much about the Shaw Center, and I did not know much about feminist studies.

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Lead Women Pastors Survey
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into their ministry may do well in a large church ministry context, where previous leadership and teaching skills that deal with diverse opinions and deeper understandings of finances are expected. The Church needs to recognize and utilize skills that second-career clergy bring into ordained ministry, especially in the leadership of large churches.

From interview data, the perception of clergywomen is that male clergy are more likely to ask for an appointment to a large church. There is reluctance for women to self-identify as a lead pastor. There is a need to challenge clergywomen to recognize and affirm their gifts for serving a large church.

Education

Lead pastors are highly educated: 70% of LWP and 64% of LMP are educated in the United Methodist seminaries. And 88% of LWP and 84% of LMP hold a Doctor of Ministry degree; 10–15% of all lead pastors have academic doctorates or Ph.D.’s.

Lead pastors are high achievers academically. The fact that the United Methodist Seminaries have produced the majority of LWP is significant in terms of openness to women in our seminaries and thus valuing and nurturing their gifts in ministry in theological education.

Salaries

Among the respondents, 31% of LWP earned $100,000 or more, including housing allowances, compared to 18% of LMP. According to the Lewis Center for Church Leadership, this finding does not match with other reports about clergy salary. For example, the largest of the top 100 United Methodist Churches are served by males as lead pastors and the majority of the male respondents for this survey are serving the middle and bottom third of the large churches. Very few LWP are serving the top third of the largest churches and their average salaries are about 27% lower than LMP, which is a significant finding. (Based on a 2007 report, large churches have three levels in the UMC: the small size (1,000–1,272 members), the medium size (1,273–1,809 members), and the large size (1,810 or more members). Among the small-size churches, women and men make comparable salaries; women are paid about 2% more. Among the medium-size churches, men are paid about 4% more. Among the large-size churches, men receive 27% more than women. [See Lovett H. Weems, Jr., Ann A. Michel, Joseph E. Arnold, and Tana Brown, Report on Lead Pastor Survey Conducted by The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, Fall 2008., 2.]

This means that there is still a “glass ceiling” for salaries. The Church needs to pay attention to this reality in order for women to break even among lead pastors.

The continuation of this study, which explores issues of leadership style, management, spirituality, preaching, etc., will be published in the next issue of this newsletter.
The Whole Truth: Isaiah 43:1-10

By LaTrelle Miller Easterling

A Sermon Given in Honor of Anna Howard Shaw

I swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help me God. Perhaps you have uttered these words prior to offering testimony or giving a sworn statement—or at least you have seen it on Law & Order. The witness: one having knowledge, the holder of facts, one viewing events and offering a recitation of the facts before the court. The best witness, or so it was once believed, is an eye witness, one with first-hand experience of the facts in question, able to offer a vivid account of what has taken place.

Israel, created by the sovereign hand of God, and Jacob, formed by the saving grace of God, is called into the assembly to testify about God’s proper place among the gods and idols of the other nations. Bear witness to my nature and how’s tell of the hand that loosed you from the bonds of captivity and led you through the waters of your birth, guided you through the pangs of the exodus and set your feet upon dry ground. Recount before the assembly the ransom paid for your liberation, the offerings poured out for your deliverance. Give an accounting of the ashes scattered around your feet, the ashes of judgment—through the fire but not consumed, kissed by the flames but not burned. Testify to your election and covenantal relationship. Tell the story of being in exile, but not extinguished, of being disciplined, but not destroyed. But, above all else, state clearly that your God loves you with an indescribable love and has redeemed you forever. Israel is an eyewitness to the omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience of God, and testifies concerning its creation and exalts the name of her Creator.

The creation story is not an event, but, in the words of the scholars, is a continuous activity that evidences from generation to generation that everyone who is called by name, whom God formed for God’s glory, everyone is precious and honored in God’s sight and loved beyond all comprehension. The election was made abundant and manifest through the Son who does a new thing and brings a new, comprehensive covenant into being. But, who is bearing faithful witness to this salvific act? Who is proclaiming the whole truth?

Throughout the years the elect of God, those who have experienced God’s love and studied God’s law and told of God’s ways, those who have benefited from God’s grace and been witnesses to God’s righteousness, have often failed to live lives that offer a full testimony to God’s true nature. They had ears but could not hear, and eyes but could not see. These curious clerics have been ordained, but refused to ordain; included but refused to include; anointed but failed to acknowledge the aroma of God’s anointing oil on others. They traveled across the pond to forge a brave new world, but regressed to old ways. They landed on the shores of promise but offered little to others.

The story of Anna Howard Shaw is an example of such tainted testimony and warped witness. Anna, acquainted with grief and familiar with the wilderness, learned to triumph over adversity and persevere in the face of hardship. Anna experienced the call of God, the call heard through the ages of a still, small voice calling, inviting one into sacrificial service. Anna, our sister who climbed the rough side of the mountain, recognized God’s voice, while others tried to drown it out. Family, friend, and foe alike dissuaded, threatened, and ridiculed, but she persevered. In the halls of this hallowed institution, Anna learned that “women theologians paid heavily for the privilege of being women.” Rejected, ostracized, marginalized, and sometimes penalized, she pressed forward.

Anna, the minister, doctor, suffragist, brilliant orator, debater, lecturer, distinguished medal recipient, trailblazer, and forerunner, was a woman of many firsts: she became one of the first women licensed by the Methodist Church; she was one of the first women to graduate

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tence itself opened a window for me and allowed me to look out at a different scene of feminist ministry than I had expected. I have always had a hesitant relationship with "feminism" and "feminist theology," never feeling quite comfortable with it; but no one at the retreat felt quite comfortable either, I found out. We were all discovering new ways of knowing each other that are impossible to discover in the narrow spaces of our School's hallways, and that discovery itself is a part of what feminist ministry is.

And, in retrospect, that is what I have learned to appreciate about a feminist perspective as I look back on my experience of working for the Shaw Center over the past year and a half. It is a space in the School that encourages research and typical "feminist inquiry," yes; but it is also a place where people can come, eat, relax, and chat in a way that allows us all to discover the tangled intricacies and revelations of our personhood that lie dormant in other School spaces. I am glad that my role in the Shaw Center was primarily the coordinator of our Thursday Lunch Series. I have written about these lunch sessions in the past two newsletters. They are, I believe, wonderful opportunities to eat together in an intimate setting and wrestle with personal matters in a semi-public environment. And I have enjoyed having a role in facilitating those lunches.

But this past January (2009 now!) I was asked to play a different role for the Shaw Center—this time as the devotional leader at the annual retreat. And while I was far more comfortable at this retreat, recognizing almost every face, being able to intelligibly describe my job title, and even offer some of my own insights regarding feminism during the devotional, I also re-discovered the same lesson I had learned the year previous: that we are all a little uncomfortable in our individual conversations and spiritual journeys, that we need the space to discover new ways of knowing each other, and that we will always be wrestling with what it means to be a woman in each of our various situations.

I wish I was able to have this conversation with my grandmother before she passed on. We were asked by Dr. Choi at the retreat about women who had made an impact in our lives, and though I thought about my grandmother, I mentioned someone else (who has been equally important for me). I left my grandmother out because I was asked to play a different role for the retreat, recognizing almost every face, and that it is an unfinished conversation. And while I wish she were still here so I could ask her perspective on life, and her perspective on my life in particular, I know that she is not gone. Much of her impact on me will be revealed, in time, and I look forward to discovering that. And that is one lesson we can always bring to our conversations and studies about women in ministry and women in the world: many people have performed the heavy groundwork for us already, leaving a legacy that can only be discovered with time. Some of us are young still and are not aware of what has gone on before us, but we will learn, and we will also learn how to leave something for the generations after us. And I hope that the Shaw Center can continue to be a part of that generational conversation for years to come! I am grateful for the opportunity I had to work there, and my prayers are with the Center for the future.

From the Director
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scripture from ancient time to modern time and from Israelite context to American and global contemporary context. She gave these lectures in dialogue with three respondents, Bishop Peter Weaver, Rev. Dr. Aida Irizarry-Fernandez, and Rev. Dr. Robert Hill, who reflected on this issue in their own contexts. Understanding the biblical traditions and interpretations of the world and God, they raised serious concerns for reconsidering their current ministerial contexts. Addressing Dr. Darr's lecture, Bishop Weaver emphasized justice and peace in both local and global ministerial context, while Rev. Dr. Irizarry-Fernandez reminded us to look at our current immigrant context, where she deals with this issue in everyday ministry. Critically listening to the lecture, Rev. Dr. Hill, as a New Testament scholar and preacher, reflected on this issue in the context of Lent and the New Testament. For three Tuesdays in March, Dr. Darr's profound lectures attracted many people who intensively engaged in a serious conversation about violence and the Hebrew Bible. The Robinson Chapel was filled with great enthusiasm and energy to know God and who we are.

The Shaw Center and the office of field education worked on a year-long grant project together and made a wonderful presentation on March 24. Rev. Samuel Johnson and Rev. Dr. Choi Hee An worked with five Korean pastors (Rev. Young Ghil Lee, Rev. Dr. HiRho Yoon Park, Rev. Paul Chang, Rev. Sandra Bonnete-Kim, Rev. Kyung Moon Yoon) and four faculty members (Dr. Katheryn Pfisterer Darr, Rev. Dr. Robert Hill, Dr. Shelly Rambo, Dr. James Waters) to develop a new pedagogy of field education for Korean
from this School of Theology; she was the first woman to be ordained in any branch of Methodism by the New York Conference. Her gifts made room for her and she was asked to preach throughout the area to good effect, but her destiny was deferred at the hands of illegitimate authority. In the words of Leontyne Kelley, the first African-American bishop of the United Methodist Church, "No institution has the biblical right to determine who will witness for God." Anna became a proclaimer par excellence, commanding a national stage for issues of justice and equality, and lending her voice to many causes, including women's suffrage.

Yet, even Anna's witness waned as she fell prey to rampant racism and political persuasion. Anna parted company with her sisters of color in order to secure the vote for white women. She called it a humiliation that former slaves gained the power of the poll before their slave owners' mistresses. Sometimes even as eyewitnesses to God's goodness, our testimony is incomplete and less than the whole truth. However, let us not linger on Anna's words too long without asking ourselves, Where have we failed? Where are we failing? Who is suffering today because we are failing to tell the whole truth? Yet, Anna's legacy transcends that fateful day and has opened doors for countless scores of women throughout the years. I count it no coincidence that the current Shaw Scholar and the woman asked to deliver the sermon to commemorate Anna's birthday are both women of color. Her courage has served as a catalyst for many who answer their calls amid ridicule and abuse. We stand on Anna's shoulders today.

We, too, are witnesses to the creation; witnesses to God's providential providencies; witnesses to God's sacred salvific acts. We have the evidence all around us. We should be, we must be, the evidence compels us to be witnesses to the truth that God liberates. God liberates through God's Word, God liberates through God's Son, and God liberates through us. Movements, misguided minds, and murderers have tried to suppress the truth of God, but God's truth will not be silenced. Joel's prophecy is still prolific, and in these latter days God has and God continues to pour out God's spirit on all flesh. God poured it on Anna and Jarena, and God is pouring it on us today. Creation witnesses to God's goodness, mercy, and grace even when human voices fall silent. God's truth whispers, echoes, sings, shouts, cries out. God's truth marches on. They try to extinguish it, but God's truth marches on.

Female genital mutilation—but God's truth marches on.
Honor killings—but God's truth marches on.
Rape as a weapon of war—but God's truth marches on.
Bride burnings and acid attacks—but God's truth marches on.
Forced to be comfort women—but God's truth marches on.
Hate crimes against lesbians—but God's truth marches on.
Bodies infected with HIV/AIDS by those looking for a cure—but God's truth marches on.

Unequal pay for equal work—but God's truth marches on.
Denominations still holding women back—but God's truth marches on.

Anna's spirit holds, I hold, we hold, God holds these truths to be divinely evident—that we are all created in God's image, precious and honored in God's sight, and we are loved! As one who has been through the denominational fire, I know that of which I speak, but my testimony is clear. In the words of Julia Ward Howe:

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord, he is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored, he has loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword, God's truth is marching on.

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea, with a glory in his bosom that transfigures you and me; as he died to make all holy let us strive to make all free—while God is marching on.

Glory, glory, hallelujah! Glory, glory, hallelujah! Glory, glory, hallelujah! God's truth is marching on.

My sisters we have been called, anointed, licensed, ordained, appointed, consecrated, tenured, hired for such a time as this. The assembly is listening and we must stand up and witness, we must gather all our sisters from the east and from the west, from the north and the south, we must shout it from the rooftops that God is liberation. This is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth—so help us God! *
Here's how you can help carry on Anna's work...

The Anna Howard Shaw Center at Boston University School of Theology seeks to empower women in ministry through research, education, support, and advocacy. If you would like to learn more about the Anna Howard Shaw Center, please fill out this form and return it to the address below. Thank you for supporting women in ministry!

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I have attended a Shaw Center event.  [] Yes  [] No

[] Please send me information about the Anna Howard Shaw Center.

[] Please add me to the Shaw Center mailing list.

To help underwrite the Shaw Center's operating costs, I am enclosing $______

(Please make check or money order payable to the Anna Howard Shaw Center.)

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Anna Howard Shaw Center
745 Commonwealth Avenue
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