

Anna Howard Shaw Center Newsletter

Volume 11 Issue 2

Spring 1995

Women and the Word 1995:

*Embodied Selves,
Embodied Preaching*

The Women and the Word, 1995 Conference *Embodied Selves, Embodied Preaching*, was a rich and vibrant celebration of women's spirituality and embodiment as it comes to life through our preaching and ministries. Speakers Dr. Toinette M. Eugene, Dr. Mary E. Hunt, and Bishop Sharon Z. Rader challenged and enlightened participants during the two-day event, which included plenary sessions on the topic of embodiment, preaching workshops, embodiment workshops, worship, and opportunities for dialogue. People responded favorably to the event.

Dr. Toinette Eugene began the morning with her presentation "In This Here Place, We Flesh': Womanist Ruminations on Embodied Experience and Expressions." Dr. Eugene challenged participants to think about embodiment from the perspective of black women whose bodies have not historically been treated with respect or admiration.

She began at the point of historical and contextual foundations for black women's embodiment, illustrating how throughout history, in art and literature, the black body has been viewed as a sight of contention and an icon for deviant sexuality. Sexual views of black women are those that have been disassociated from whiteness. Toinette Eugene adds that, historically, black women's bodies have been subject to guns and violence and the men who control them.

Dr. Eugene emphasized some of the generative themes of embodiment in womanist literature, including colorism, which reveals to black women their



"outsiderliness" in a society that most often hates both blacks and women. It has taught them to examine shades of skin color and textures of hair, realizing that the more "white skinned" one appears, the greater one's superiority. This emphasizes how value-laden physicality can be when it is the result of embodiment.

In addressing the need for a wholistic justice agenda, Dr. Eugene stressed that we should not deny black women their womanhood. In our society it is often assumed that "all women are white; all blacks are male" while the common designations "women and blacks" or "women and minorities" help separate black women from their womanhood. Dr. Eugene asked participants: "What do we do to one another when we start talking

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**From the
Director:**
Margaret Wiborg

This issue of the newsletter focuses on **Women and The Word 1995, Embodied Selves: Embodied Preaching**. We are indebted to the speakers, preachers, workshop leaders, dancers, and participants who grappled together with personal and community embodiment issues. As Mary Hunt commented on the last morning, "I feel like we're just getting started..." Actually, I hope we are. The conference provided an opportunity for those gathered to take the time to reflect and be challenged with a broader understanding of what issues of embodiment include. If the articles in the newsletter whet your appetite, consider purchasing the conference audiotapes.

Orders can be requested through the Anna Howard Shaw Center, at:

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Women and the Word

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about embodiment and what women have in common?"

She then addressed womanist ethical insights and principles related to black women's embodiment. She defined the ethic of black love as "embodied relationships [that] model the compassion and acceptance of a God who liberates us from all forms of violence, especially misogyny...and homophobia. Black love is an agent of gospel liberation and the strongest asset of a black, loving community. Black love is a testament to our spirituality and sexuality, an awareness of the living God who is in every place. This love has enabled crushed spirits to look beyond to a God who loves them and to believe in the worth of each human life."

Dr. Eugene related black women's embodiment to relationships. It is in the "context of black relationships embodying a common vision of a transformed society, a common vision that runs counter to the culture of domination, where we find the convergence of race, gender, and sexuality that is liberating....It is in the context of black relationships of deep commitment and attachment to one another--that runs counter to a culture of alienation--that the convergence of race, gender, and sexuality that is healing....It is in the context of black relationships--formed and affirmed in the black family, the black community, and the black church--that run counter to the culture of despair, where we can find the convergence of race, gender, and sexuality that guides us with our past and calls us into a future of justice and sustained hope." Toinette Eugene concluded, on embodiment, that only in "relationships of mutuality and respect for one another's bodies and souls will we get to our chosen goal of liberation in this life together."

The second speaker on Thursday morning, Dr. Mary E. Hunt, addressed the topic "What is Written on the Body: Embodied Justice, Emboldened People."

Periodically asking participants to interact with one another, Dr. Hunt discussed embodied justice, including how the landscape of the body has changed in our lifetime, what this means for women and men from a faith tradition that emphasizes love and justice, and how these changes

"Only in relationships of mutuality and respect for one another's bodies and souls will we get to our chosen goal of liberation in this life together."

can embolden people to work for planetary justice.

Dr. Hunt used four major areas--sex and reproduction, new medical and technological advances, HIV/AIDS, and violence and abuse--all of which have changed the landscape of the body in the past forty years, to frame the outline of her presentation.

She stressed how affordable contraception and a sufficient global population have changed the parameters

of sexual expression in our day. Sexual relations, now formed for pleasure as much as for procreation, have altered the way women are perceived so that they have worth beyond simply their reproductive ability. "Women's health, including reproductive health, women's and girls' levels of education, and family size are all factors that help or hinder development around the world." Women's embodiment has become a key issue in seeking justice.

Dr. Hunt illustrated how new reproductive technology and medical advances, including fertility enhancement, having another woman carry one's genetic child, and RU486 as an alternative to surgical abortion, raise questions "regarding our self-understanding as women and promise to complicate the moral landscape." These techniques raise questions and issues about the use and abuse of techno-medicine on marginalized women, our understanding of the family in light of the changing images of motherhood, and what happens to a woman's choice "when the uterus becomes

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Dr. Toinette Eugene and Dr. Mary Hunt at Women and the Word, 1995.

Interview—Professor Dana Robert

For a significant learning experience, Dr. Dana Robert invites guest speakers and students to share with her classes. Many guests come from areas of the world where they have been witness to or experienced oppression and injustice, areas such as Estonia, South Africa, and the Philippines. The experience most imprinted in my memory is of a student from the Sudan who shared with our class the struggles and heartaches of the people in his country under an oppressive government. After this class many students expressed feelings of frustration and sorrow, believing that as Christians we must respond to the suffering of other human beings; we cannot remain untouched or unmoved by the heartaches of others. Dr. Robert clearly realizes through her teaching what she repeatedly shares with me in this interview—that these are the moments that turn us into missionaries, moments that touch us and call us to respond on every level to situations of others throughout our world.

Dr. Robert, associate professor of international mission at the School of Theology, teaches both missiology and church history. She focuses primarily on mission history and teaches additional courses in American Church History.

One of her main interests is the relationship between religion and culture. Dr. Robert points out that Christianity is related to the cultural milieu in many ways. She considers both the similarities and differences of Christianity from one culture to another, asking what basic tenets of the religion are always present and which aspects are more flexible. One aspect of this question would be how popular religion plays a role in Christianity and how "missionary" Christianity, introduced to a society by someone outside of the cultural tradition, weaves with traditional indigenous religious beliefs.

African and African-American religions and their relation to culture and society also interest Dr. Robert. Growing

up near the sugar cane fields of southern Louisiana, Dr. Robert was deeply impressed by the experiences of the black men and women living near her. She found herself interested in the ways traditional African spirituality remained a firm part of their religious experience, even when confronted by and blended with Western Christian practices and theology. This interest led her to take a doctoral

"As the role of women changes...we need to develop new ways to be in mission and to develop new models for mission work."

exam in African Christianity.

Several things led Dr. Robert to study the fields of missiology and history. Right up front, she states that the Holy Spirit calls us in ways we don't always fully understand or recognize. She also cites an interest in people's stories, and particularly stories as a motif in Christian history. Dr. Robert notes that her ancestors were Huguenot ministers, who came to the country fleeing religious

persecution. She hopes to understand why these and other people chose to do what they did for religious freedom. The bringing together of mission, church history and religious freedom has been a point of interest for her.

Dr. Robert mentions that childhood experiences of listening to missionary speakers at her church piqued her interest in mission. She believes children develop an interest in other cultures and in Christianity and culture through hearing others share their experiences. She adds that depending on the presentation and situations, people develop interests in different cultures; where Dr. Robert grew up contributed to her interest in African mission.

Dr. Robert's interest in African mission history led her to the projects on which she is now working. Dr. Robert is a member of a team of researchers and scholars who recently received a \$300,000 grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts to study African agency in the spread of Christianity in southern Africa. The study is concerned with the rapid growth of

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In Appreciation:

Thank you God for everything
For works of art by Nancy King,
For Harry Johnson's graphics, too,
We offer praise and thanks to You!

The director and members of the Advisory Board wish to express our heartfelt appreciation to Nancy L. King and Harry Johnson for devoting their considerable talent in graphic arts to the Anna Howard Shaw Center. In addition to designing the program cover for Anna Howard Shaw Sunday in 1991, Nancy created two beautiful valentines to celebrate Anna's birthday in 1994 and 1995. With computer, scanner, and calligraphy, Harry has crafted covers, flyers, and brochures for the Shaw Center. He designed the bold brochure for the oral history training event in the fall of 1994 and is working on the revised brochure for the Anna Howard Shaw Center this spring.

In joyful thanksgiving, Anna Howard Shaw would have sung, "Praise God from Whom all blessings flow!" May we add, "Bless your hearts, Nancy and Harry!"

Women and the Word

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one among many options." These new questions of embodied ethics, Dr. Hunt stated, must be taken up and addressed by the Church and its educational facilities.

Dr. Hunt spoke on the rapid spread of the HIV/AIDS virus (90 percent of which is occurring in the developing world), which has radically changed the landscape of our bodies and our sense of embodiment. She noted that the key to

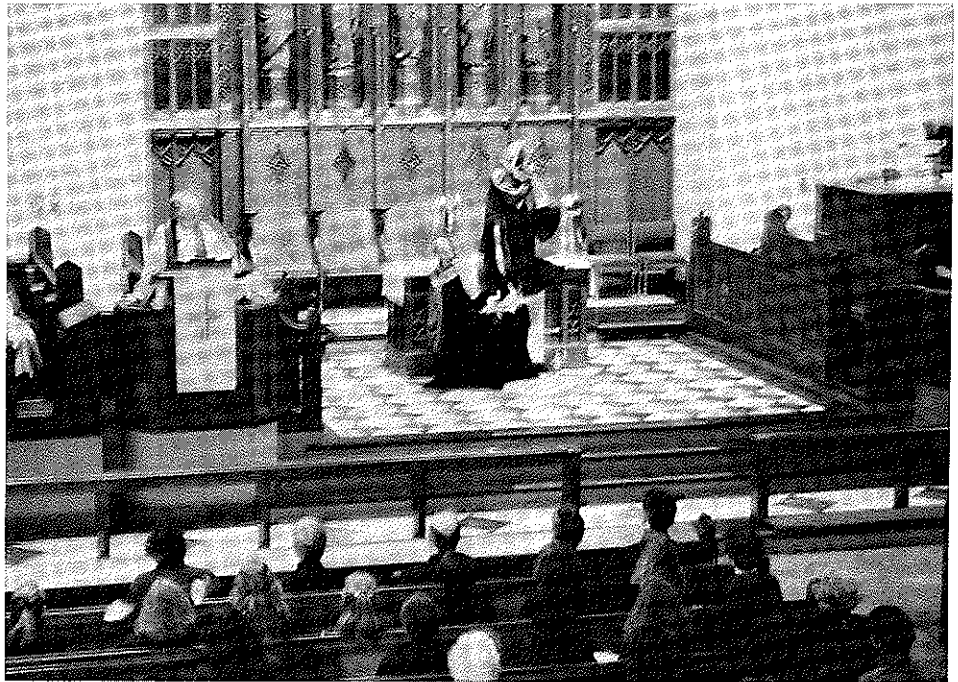
"Noticing others' tears...leads us to embody justice and to embolden people."

this issue lies in understanding that "the spread of HIV is strongly determined by an identifiable, societal risk factor in the scope, intensity, and nature of discrimination that exists in each community and country." Cases of discrimination that occur long before the contraction of AIDS--gender discrimination, racism, homophobia, economic entitlement of the rich--lead to the unfair spread of the virus. And scientists are now looking to us, the religious community and leadership, as the real hope for addressing this issue. It is the religious community, with its "emphasis on value and vision," which is able to "construct a humane society."

In violence and abuse the body's landscape is also changing, according to Dr. Hunt, as women refuse to put up with further violence and dare to speak openly about it. We must examine violence within the structure of our society, churches, and theologies, realizing the urgency of "doing justice as a matter of survival."

Proposing a response to these four changes, Dr. Hunt then explained what they mean for people of a faith tradition that emphasizes love and justice, calling us to be "emboldened people" as we strive for "embodied justice" in the context of our faith.

In the area of violence and abuse,



Bishop Sharon Z. Rader preaches at the Women and the Word worship service in Marsh Chapel.

Dr. Hunt noted that "justice incarnate is required to transform the unsafe context in which we live" and that as members within the church, we are called to "disassemble the theology, polity, and church structures that encourage abuse."

Dr. Hunt pointed out again that science has turned to religious leadership in addressing issues related to HIV/AIDS. Through support networks, education programs, and lobbying efforts, the Church must be willing to deal with

"When people remember they are created in the image of God...for that reason they will not be demeaned."

sexuality and recognize the issue of AIDS, which comes with it. Dr. Hunt quoted Kevin Gordon, saying it is "not the churches that will judge AIDS, but AIDS that will judge the churches." The time has arrived for a church-based move toward justice.

Although praising technological and medicinal advancements, Dr. Hunt warned us that this increased quality of life is "unequally available based on privilege." The church must address the issue of unequal disbursement of health benefits in our society, knowing that "health care is a human right because we are embodied."

Dr. Hunt believes that the churches have squandered their moral capital on the areas of sex and reproduction, where the primary emphasis of ethical reflection has fallen. She stressed what she considers to be the overriding issues of embodiment: hunger, war, housing, education, environment, jobs, efforts to eradicate racism and anti-semitism. "These...should form our justice agenda, although most of us who are involved in church circles have spent too much time on sex." These are the real issues of embodiment on which the churches need to fix their ethical gaze.

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Women and the Word

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In asking how these changes can embolden people to struggle for planetary justice, Dr. Hunt said, "We cry. Our tears are a trustworthy, visceral reaction to injustice. Our tears help us to set our priorities." We cry because it is unbearable to us to see others suffer, and "noticing others' tears is a first step toward theological reflection and practice," which leads us to embody justice and to embolden people.

After the morning's plenary sessions, participants worshipped in Marsh Chapel and had the fantastic opportunity to hear Bishop Sharon Z. Rader preach "Getting Out of Line," a sermon on the first chapter of the book of Esther. In this chapter, King Ahasuerus called his wife, Queen Vashti, to present herself before him and the men with whom he was dining. Queen Vashti refused to entertain him. In order to quell the notions of other wives in the kingdom who might also wish to disobey their husbands, the King banished Vashti from the throne.

Bishop Rader began by sharing a personal experience from another conference she had attended. During the announcement time at the conference's evening worship, as people were becoming anxious to move on with the program, ten women came forward and called on the participants and the church to account for not supporting the rights of gays and lesbians who are a part of the Church. Passionately moved by the women's call, participants began singing "We are a strong and gentle people." Bishop Rader exclaimed these ten women "messed up our schedule, and our content and complacent minds. They got out of line as far as the law of the United Methodist Church was concerned. They challenged those of us who were gathered for the evening of celebration to rethink what we were doing, to re-do our commitments, and because in that quiet, strong moment we were being changed, the Church of which we are all a part had yet another possibility of being changed in all its

relationships to all God's people too."

Bishop Rader spoke about the "guardians of right" who stand against new scholarship and thought, against new ideas expressed in books, sermons or gatherings, and who protect the traditions that allow such injustices as sexual misconduct to continue. "Whether individuals or groups stand up and say,

"Queen Vashti's refusal to stay in line opened the way for a new history to begin."

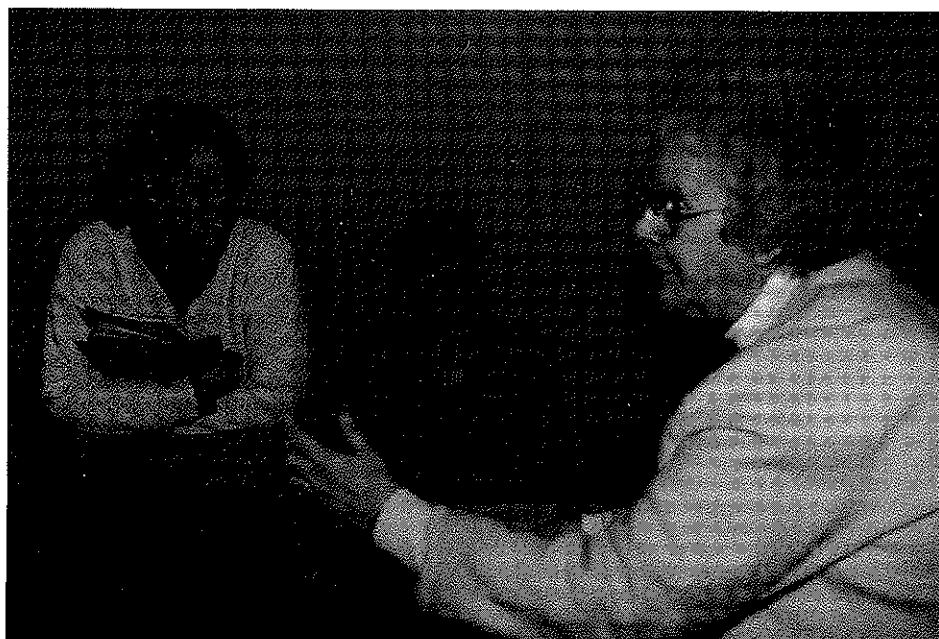
'No more! We will not acquiesce to the status quo! We will not pay homage to the god of "we've always done it this way,"' they stand in the strong tradition of Queen Vashti." When people refuse to stand for hurtful practices, and when they "remember they are created in the image of God and for that reason will not be demeaned," they stand in the tradition of Queen Vashti, who refused to be denigrated, even though the tradition allowed it.

Although we felt sorrow for

Queen Vashti, sorrow that she lost all she had--money, shelter, recognition and admiration--Bishop Rader assured us this was not the case. "Queen Vashti lost her crown but not her head. The king had power to vacate her throne but not the power to make her hate herself or denigrate her beautiful integrity. He could not terminate her majesty." She had not lost what was important.

Queen Vashti did not lead a rebellion or protest the decision against her. She did nothing strong or powerful, she did not criticize the king, and she performed no overt actions. However, as Bishop Rader proclaimed, Queen Vashti stands in the biblical tradition "as a woman who formed her own judgement and acted upon it." It is her self-respect and her courage that touches and transforms us today. Queen Vashti's "refusal to stay in line opened the way for a new history to begin."

Bishop Rader closed the sermon by examining Queen Vashti's disobedience to the king. Did she really disobey? Bishop Rader suggests that perhaps Queen Vashti took stock of the situation at hand



Thursday afternoon workshop, *Women and the Word*, 1995.

Professor Dana Robert

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Christianity and Christian churches since the 1950s in southern Africa, especially as this growth is occurring independently in the hands of Africans. The growth of churches is not related to mission or outside influence; rather, churches are growing rapidly on the wings of indigenous leaders from within the society. The primary responsibility of the team is to record the growth of the church in this area. Little previous documentation has been preserved and scholars fear that years from now, without these records, Christians will have no means by which to reconstruct this important history. The grant covers the recording of and rumination upon the indigenous forms of Christian religion emerging in southern Africa.

The team of scholars includes both black and white men and women from South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Malawi. Their study of African Independent Churches will address the role of women in the growth of Christianity, the relation of the growth of the church to African struggles for liberation, the relation between missiology and independent Christianity, and the role of black choirs in urban churches (the importance of singing in church growth). The study also includes self-reflection by two bishops of the Zionist church in Zimbabwe as to why the churches are

"We need to develop an international conscience within our church communities."

spreading so quickly. Dr. Robert describes her primary responsibility at Boston University acting as the Western contact for the project. She will help to define and edit the information that is being researched and recorded.

With this project Dana Robert hopes to integrate the School of Theology with the African Studies department. While there has long been a connection

between the School of Theology and Africa—including students, professors, and missionaries traveling and corresponding between Boston University and Africa—there has never been a formal connection to the African Studies department. Students in the African Studies department focus primarily on anthropological and social issues while School of Theology students concentrate more on the religious aspect of human life. Dr. Robert hopes that a connection between these departments will bring together religion and social issues in the studies of African history, African-American history and mission/church history. As this connection begins to form, Dr. Robert feels excited by the opportunity to co-teach a course in the upcoming year on African religion and Christianity with a member of the African studies department. This is the first time such a course will be offered involving both departments.

Dr. Robert has also received a grant from the Humanities Foundation to provide an introductory study of religion for the African Studies department. She expects this will take the form of a seminar series designed to integrate the two schools and emphasize the importance of religion in the study of African culture.

According to Dr. Robert, women have always played a major role in mission, particularly in the history of American mission from as early as about 1810. Historically, women's roles have been in ministries of compassion and actively working toward social justice. Women, previously restricted from ordination, were not restricted to the church building; instead, they interacted with people outside the structure of the church, relating to them on the level of human needs.

Women in mission have affected women's status in other countries in education and literacy, health, and fighting social practices that enslaved women. Women have been active in establishing the place of women in ministry.

Dr. Robert fears that women have

moved away from mission activity in recent years. She attributes a large part of this to the very necessary struggle, which

"We are touched into mission by the people we meet."

has been ongoing in the twentieth century, for women's ordination. While this has empowered women in the church, it has to some degree narrowed women's issues, moving them away from devotion to mission and social justice work throughout the world. As the ordination of women becomes more frequent, Dr. Robert believes this situation will change to focus more attention on mission issues. She also believes we need new models for women in mission. As the role of women changes in the church, at home, and in the world, we need to develop new ways to be in mission and to develop new models for mission work.

There must also be an awareness of cultural differences surrounding the role of women throughout the world. While many people accept the ordination of women, not every culture or tradition looks favorably upon this. When engaged in international mission, we need to balance carefully the increasing rights of women in the church with sensitivity to other cultural beliefs and backgrounds.

Dr. Robert lists many important issues facing mission today including war (she reminds us that a major impact of wars falls on the refugees who are primarily women and children) and related issues of dislocation, poverty, and instability; the dwindling pool of natural resources; urbanization; the environmental crisis; the economic clout of Islam; and the rise of secularism.

To reestablish an interest for mission work today, Dr. Robert says we need to develop an international conscience within our church communities. By staying abreast of the

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Professor Dana Robert

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current news and emphasizing Christianity as an international movement found in all cultures, we can help promote in our parishes a consciousness and deep interest in peoples in other areas of the world. A deep spiritual life and prayer are also important as these develop connections with other groups. Dr. Robert cites Wesley's belief that a cultivation of prayer leads to outreach.

Dr. Robert adds, however, that the greatest factor in bringing people into mission is personal contact. She was deeply impressed by the faith of the people with whom she grew up and by mission experiences shared in her parish. People are often drawn into mission by those whom they encounter. When we know or meet people who are oppressed or suffering injustice, we feel that we must do something to become involved in

alleviating the suffering of others. As Dr. Robert puts it, "we are touched into mission" by those we meet. It may be that many students will be touched into mission by their experiences in Dr. Robert's classes.

Dr. Robert attended Louisiana State University, and had her first personal exposure to cross-cultural mission in 1978 with a Catholic mission in Guatemala. She received her doctorate from Yale University. She has been teaching at Boston University for the past ten years and in 1990 was the first woman tenured at the School of Theology.

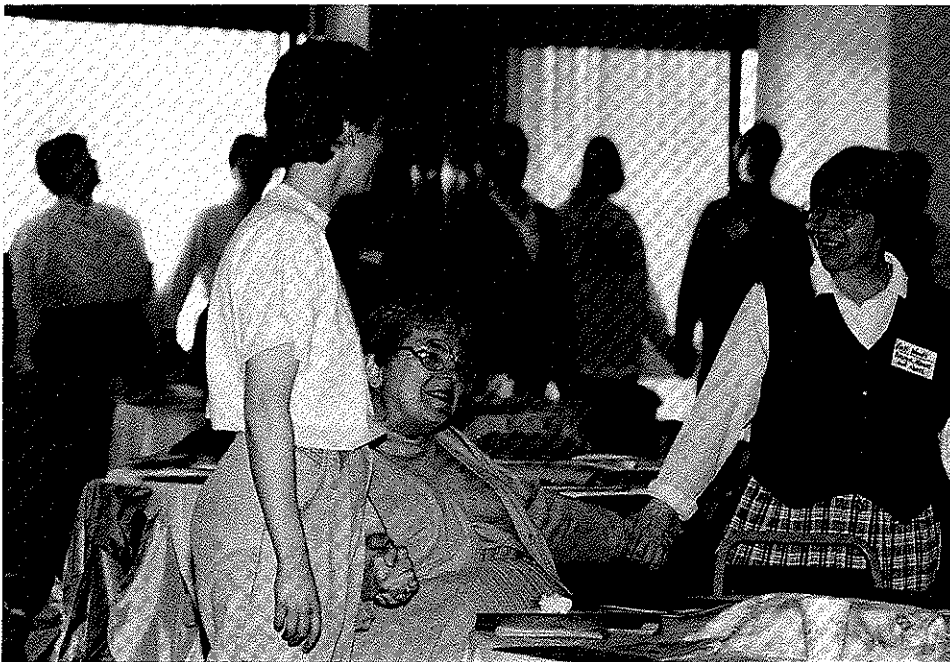
Women and the Word (Con't.)

and did obey; she "obeyed the call within her to act with courage, steadfastness, and integrity." As Bishop Rader added, "May it be so with us!"

After the midday worship service, the participants of *Women and the Word* gathered in preaching workshops for lunch and discussed ways of embodying their preaching. The afternoon included embodiment workshops on the topics: Our Bodies, Ourselves • Bringing Embodiment to the Altar • Men and Embodiment • How AIDS Impacts Us All • Old Bones Aren't Dry Bones • Enfleshed Storytelling • and Women and Violence. Participants regrouped in the evening for dinner and a dialogue session among themselves and conference leadership.

Friday morning included a final plenary session presented by Sharon Rader on the topic "Fleshing Out the Sermon," followed by a question and answer session involving the three presenters. The event ended with worship and communion.

Women and the Word, 1995, was a time to explore and reflect upon the positive and negative aspects of embodiment that face women today, the church, and women in the church. We celebrated the beauty and expression of our embodied selves and our embodied ministries, and we questioned ways in which embodiment can be hurtful or demeaning to members of our society. We hope all involved will struggle through their myriad of ministries to bring a sense of beautiful and just embodiment to those whom we meet on the paths of life.



Participants gather for the closing worship service of *Women and the Word, 1995*.

Faculty Notes

Carrie Doehring

On April 22, Carrie Doehring was the plenary speaker for the Boston Christian Counseling Center "Workshop on Family Violence," and on April 27 she participated in a community workshop sponsored by the Hingham Clergy Association on the topic "Taking Care: Monitoring Our Use of Power in Helping Relationships." In May, she will be in Ottawa, Canada, for a workshop for clergy on sexual misconduct with the Presbytery of Ottawa. On June 17, Carrie will be involved with a workshop on the use of self-disclosure in teaching and writing for the Society for Pastoral Theology in Chicago.

Carrie's latest book, Taking Care: Monitoring Power Dynamics and Relational Boundaries in Pastoral Care and Counseling, will be available from Abingdon Press in August 1995.

Sharon Peebles Burch

Sharon lectured on the topic

"Educating for Peace and Justice" at a conference-wide convocation on College Avenue United Parish in March and also preached a sermon, "But We Would Not." Also in March she participated in a workshop of the Lilly Leadership Group in Charlotte, North Carolina.

On April 24, Sharon presented on the theological implications of board education to the Seminary Board Study in Indianapolis.

Linda Clark

Dr. Clark has written a book, Music in Churches, which was published in December 1994.

Dianne Reistroffer

Dianne will be Dean of the Chapel at the United Methodist East Coast Asian American Retreat at Camp Aldersgate in Rhode Island from June 25 to July 1, 1995. Dianne will also present a workshop, "Pastoral and Congregational Care of Victims of Domestic Violence," at

a conference-wide convocation on Sexuality and Violence. This convocation will be sponsored by the Board of Church and Society and will be held in Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin on September 16, 1995.

Dianne was also a corresponding editor to the Winter 1994 edition of Panorama, International Journal of Comparative Religious Education and Values.

Margaret Wiborg

Margaret will be at the United Methodist Clergywomen's Consultation in Atlanta during August 7 to 11. She and Beth Collier, the Anna Howard Shaw Scholar, will lead a workshop based on their research entitled "Where Are the Women Pastors: UM Clergywomen Leaving Parish Ministry."



Good-Bye Dianne!

Echoing through the School of Theology halls are the words: "A gain for Wisconsin, a loss for the School of Theology." With both best wishes and deep sadness, we bid good-bye to Dianne Reistroffer, assistant professor of religious education, who will return to parish ministry in the United Methodist Wisconsin Conference. Dianne's ability to blend the theology of religious education with practical experience, her straightforward style, and her availability and willingness to help students have endeared her to the STH community.

In addition to teaching courses in Religious Education, Dianne works fully with field education students in the placement process, in leading their practical theory classes, and in providing supervision for ministry. Dianne has been instrumental in helping Methodist students through the winding paths of the ordination process, establishing classes for those on the ordination track.

Dianne has been active in the Shaw Center at Boston University, serving on the advisory board, assisting with special events, and generally supporting the center with her presence and wisdom.

Dianne will be missed by all whose lives she has touched. We will miss her in the classroom, in the hallways, and in our hearts—everywhere her presence has reached and moved us.

Upcoming Events

Summer Opportunities:

May 13:

"Liberating Midrash!: Her Story Within the Story." A one-day workshop of retreat and empowerment for women. Yale Divinity School, New Haven, Connecticut, from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. This will include worship, case study analysis, personal reflection, psychodrama development, and presentation. The cost is \$25, including lunch. For information, call (203) 432-5312.

June 5 to June 9:

"Living the Liturgy." A week-long course of study with Miriam Therese Winter exploring liturgy and spirituality, with emphasis placed on the local congregation. The course can be taken for credit (\$660) or audited (\$330) at Hartford Seminary in Connecticut. To register, see details in Shaw Center or contact Karen B. Rollins, registrar, at (203) 232-4451.

June 22 to 25

"Is Nothing Sacred?" A retreat for women survivors of clergy sexual abuse. Led by Marie Fortune for the Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence. For information, contact Kirkridge Retreat Center, Bangor, Pennsylvania (215) 588-1793.

June 25 to 28

"Trainers' Workshop on Clergy Misconduct." A workshop to prepare people to deal with clergy misconduct and to educate others about this problem. Contact Scarritt-Bennett Center, Nashville, Tennessee (615) 340-7472.

June 26 to 30

"Women's and Men's Spiritualities: Seeking Common Ground." Led by Christie Cozad Neuger and James Nelson. Contact Auburn Theological Seminary 1-800-818-2911.

July 8 & 9:

"Can a Woman Survive in the Catholic Church?" A national conference held at LaSalette Center in Attleboro, Massachusetts. Presenters will be Dr. Greer Gordon, Dr. Virginia Hoffman, and Dr. Doris Donnelly. The cost of the event is \$100 (tuition only) or \$156 (includes tuition, room, and meals). For information, call (508) 222-8530 or 1-800-937-6364.

August 7 to 11:

1995 International United Methodist Clergywomen's Consultation: "Women of Spirit: Transformed & Transforming." Week-long experiences include spirituality groups, worship, workshops, mission projects, clergywomen's choir, recreation, dialogue, reflection, seminary luncheons, and more. Speakers will include Dr. Miriam Therese Winter, Rev. Minerv Carcaño, and Dr. Marjorie Suchocki. For information, contact the Division of Ordained Ministry (615) 340-7409. Brochures also available in the Shaw Center.

August 13 to 19:

"Women's Big 'R'." Relax, renew, reflect at Camp Aldersgate, North Scituate, Rhode Island. For information contact Camp Aldersgate at (401) 568-4350 or fax (401) 568-1840.

Fall Opportunities:

September 15 - 16:

"Fall Women's Retreat" at YMCA Camp Harrington. Please contact the Shaw Center for information.

October 23:

"Honoring Jeanne Audrey." The Shaw Center will honor Jeanne Audrey Powers with the third Pioneer Woman award Monday, October 23. The day will include a worship service with Elaine

Stanovsky preaching and Beryl Ingram Ward planning the liturgy. Presentations by Virginia Mollenkott and Melainie May will be followed by a reception and dinner. Contact the Shaw Center for more information.

October 30:

"Claiming the Power to Name: Creating a Jewish Feminist Theology." Dr. Judith Plaskow will present this lecture at Boston College.

March 14 & 15, 1996:

"Women and the Word, 1996." Information regarding this conference will be available in the summer/fall. Please contact the Shaw Center for information.

June 27 to 30, 1996:

The Third National Gathering of UCC Women to be held in Boston, Massachusetts.

*Please check with the Anna Howard Shaw Center (617) 353-3075 throughout the summer and the fall for news of additional events, groups, and study series that may be available.

Poetry

These Hands

Are these hands
hands to bless and heal;
are these hands
to hold the still dead into shallow
dirt
and the squirming infant into
deep water?
Hands that sew to mend
bake to transform bread--
journey to beyond the beginning
and back to the present in
holiness?
Hands that healed a tree
and gesture in fury and caress in
love,
to be set toward acts of
reconciliation,
to make matter more--to touch
and in belief
altar substance?
Hands to balance when words
set self and community between
the worlds,
where space and time
are expanded, holy?
Hands upraised in hallowed acts,
not hollow actions?
Today these hands are seen
differently--
hands that cramp in the intensity
of writing story
and burn from the wrist at
kneading bread,
and have never satisfied.
Now these hands are understood
as meant to serve and speak
in the language of sacred, ancient
deeds.

*On the Day of My Call
20 November 1985
Aurora Joan Selenian
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SHE

She twirls, She spins, She dances
Creation runs before her, runs
behind her, twinkling in the
moons of a newborn
universe, caught up and
whirling in the starlight
She twirls, She spins, She dances
Creation whispers forth as a wind,
a breeze, as rain sprinkling
upon a yet dry earth
She creates, She dances, She sings
Creation sings her song--her
beautiful melody--in its bird
chirps and crickets' legs,
hatching eggs, sighing
breaths and falling stars
In the cosmos She dances, She sings,
She plays and creates,
She loves.
Creation, her love, dances and
twirls.
Creation responds to her song and
her dance,
responds to her hands,
responds to her mouth, to
her heart, to her breast
And She loves.
She dances, She twirls, She spins
Creation, her love, sings her
beautiful song.

*April 1995
Kristin Leigh White
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by Kristin Leigh White*

Correspondence:

I am happy to inform you that I have been appointed to serve as the pastor of University United Methodist Church and Executive Director of the Wesley Foundation at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. (For the non-Methodists among us, the Wesley Foundation is an educational ministry of the United Methodist Church on the campus of a state or independent college or university.) This appointment takes effect August 1, 1995. I am deeply grateful to Bishop Rader and the Cabinet for this grace-filled opportunity to pastor and teach in a higher education context.

As many of you know, University Church is my home church and the United Methodist congregation for the University of Wisconsin, the school where I have done my Ph.D. work in adult and continuing professional education. In a very real sense, I am coming home. As a lecturer in United Methodist history and doctrine, I cannot resist sharing with you the historical significance of this appointment. The Wesley Foundation at the University of Wisconsin was founded in 1915 and is the second oldest program of its kind in United Methodism. I shall be the first woman to pastor University UMC and direct the Wesley Foundation at Wisconsin. (I'll be cheering for Badger hockey now!)

Please pray for me and the people at University Church as I shall continue to pray for you and the School of Theology. Please also stay in touch. My addresses and phone numbers will be:

Home:

The Rev. Dianne Reistroffer
5702 Bartlett Avenue
Madison, WI 53711
(608) 274-0413

Work:

The Rev. Dianne Reistroffer, Pastor
University United Methodist Church
1127 University Avenue
Madison, WI 53715
(608) 256-2354

With every best wish and prayer for you and the community, I remain,
Sincerely yours in Christ,
Dianne Reistroffer

Thank You

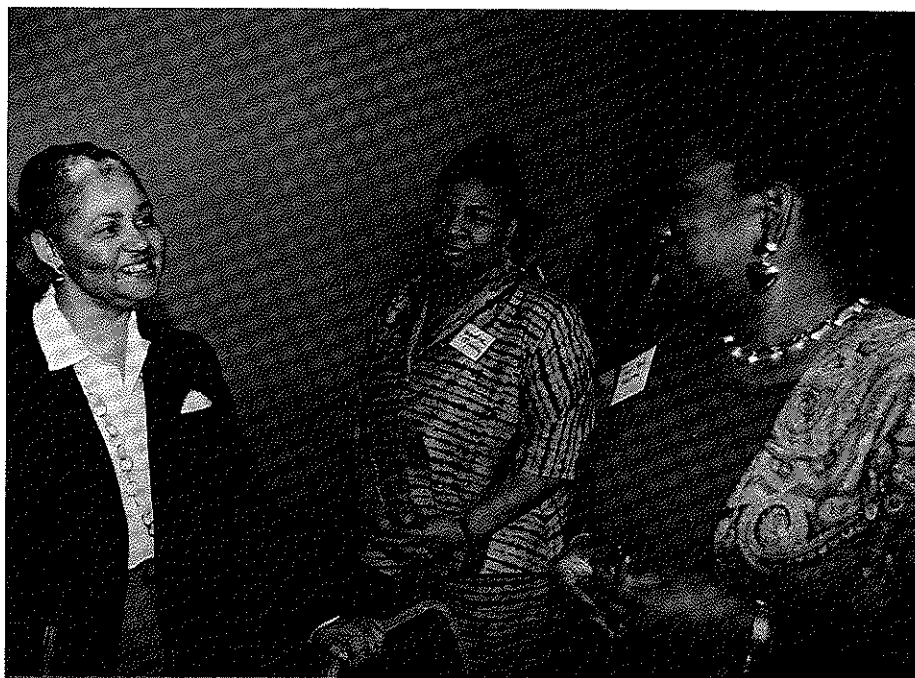
"Thank you for assisting me to attend the recent 'Women and the Word' Conference. I found the time stimulating, useful in both a personal and professional way. I deeply appreciate your assistance and that offered by all who contributed to the scholarship fund."

Thank yous:

To all who donated to the **Women and the Word** scholarship fund:

Judith Blanchard
Alta L. Chase
Patricia P. Felletter
Virginia Fryer
Mary Weber Hall
Nancy Hayes
Susan B. Hoffman
Dianne Reistroffer
Patricia J. Thompson
Roberta L. Williams

(Your assistance is greatly appreciated in helping all who wished to attend this event.)

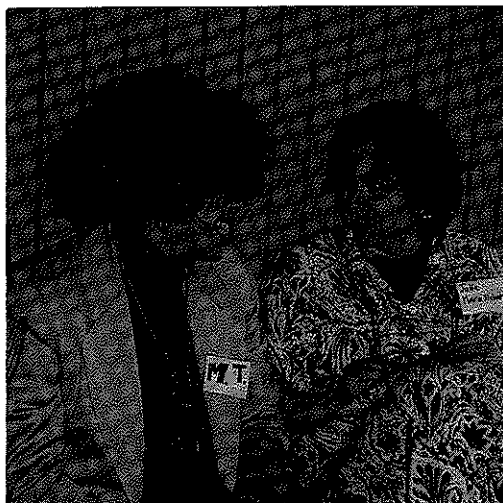


Participants at Women and the Word, 1995.

Editor's Note:

We welcome Meredith Manning this semester as a Work Study student in the Anna Howard Shaw Center, and thank her for an incredible job of organizing **Women and the Word**. We also offer congratulations to Meredith on her marriage and look forward to seeing her back next year.

Kristin White will be leaving the Shaw Center upon graduation in May. We welcome Fred Graham and Bonnie Stagg to the Shaw Center this summer.



Women and the Word, 1995.

**ANNA HOWARD SHAW
CENTER
NEWSLETTER**
Volume 11, Number 2

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*Boston University's policies provide for
equal opportunity and affirmative
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Anna Howard Shaw Center

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