

# Anna Howard Shaw Center Newsletter

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Winter 1997

## Incarnating Justice: Anna's Unfinished Issues "Anna and Me"

**F**rom time to time, I invite historical figures to join me for certain events. I do this in my imagination, of course. I invite these people so that I might learn things that I would have missed ordinarily. For example, although we often disagree, I occasionally invite my contentious friend, Paul (the Apostle), to the movies. I always discover something new with him beside me.

As a matter of fact, just recently, Anna Howard Shaw attended the symposium "Incarnating Justice" with me. When Anna agreed to attend, she said that the issues under discussion were the very issues that were the most troubling in her lifetime; namely, justice for all persons of every race and background; domestic violence, as a human rights issue; and economic power for women to create justice for all.

Anna also said, "Now Marcia Riggs is a woman I could work with side by side if I had the chance. Professor Riggs talks about moral imagination and the necessity of awakening it in every person. Why, that is what I did much of my life; tried to awaken the roughest frontiersman to the sheer unfairness of denying the rights of women to vote, to own property, to be full persons."

In her talk, "Living into the Bonds of Justice," Marcia Y. Riggs spoke of the Black Women's Club Movement. The leadership of the movement comprised educated, middle-class black women who saw that their own lived realities and their faith journeys were in tension. To address this issue (and many others), they formed the Black

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## "Did Not Mary First Preach the Risen Savior?" *United Methodist Historians Meet to Study the History of Women's Ordination in the Methodist Tradition*

**T**his question was first posed in 1809 by Jarena Lee, a black AME woman, as she declared that the Lord had revealed to her that she must preach the gospel. And for the past 188 years the Methodist Church has struggled for an answer, as reflected in the difficulties which women have had in gaining the right to preach and to ordination. Dennis Dickerson, historiographer for the African Methodist Episcopal Church, once again asked the question at the 1997 annual meeting of the Historical Society of the United Methodist Church (HSUMC) at Boston University School of Theology, October 4-6, 1997.

More than seventy-five people attended the three-day gathering to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the birth of Anna Howard Shaw, one of the first women ordained in the Methodist tradition. The conference examined the many struggles that women underwent before the Christian Methodist Episcopal church finally granted them full clergy rights throughout the denomination (that is, United Methodist and Pan-Methodist: AME, AME Zion, and Christian Methodist) in 1966.

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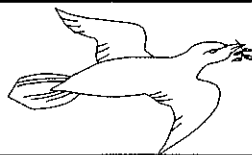
## From the Director... *Margaret Suber Wiborg*

This fall the Shaw Center continues to celebrate Anna Howard Shaw's 150th birthday. In early October we co-hosted the United Methodist Historical Society annual meeting focusing on clergywomen. Lee Carpenter as Anna Howard Shaw preached a shortened version of Shaw's "The Women Who Publish the Tidings are a Great Host" sermon in Marsh Chapel, and we officially ended the celebration with the "Incarnating Justice" symposium. The entire year has been stimulating, celebrative, and energy-consuming. Has it made a difference? We have honored women at the birthday party, addressed the issues of hospitality, reflected on the history of women in ministry, both clergy and laity, and

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## *Incarnating Justice: Anna's Unfinished Issues* *"Anna and Me"*

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Women's Club Movement. In effect, this movement became the political arm of the church; it was independent of denominational leadership and led entirely by women.

Many of these women had some degree of economic and educational privilege. Yet, they were not captive to their privilege. As a group, they modeled methods of how to break out of their complicity in the very social structures that support the myths of race and gender. Among the most notable of these women were Ida B. Wells and Mary Church Terrell.

The Black Women's Club Movement used the traditional language of faith in its quest for justice. For example, they used the concept of renunciation, which enabled leaders to be in solidarity with people who were not like them. The movement leaders were clear that renunciation did not constitute sacrifice, since sacrifice denies embodiment, in the interest of peacemaking. However, under renunciation, women relinquished the benefits of their privilege in contemporary social constructs. This opened boundaries by respecting and affirming every individual. This was not inclusion as homogenization, which would produce a false self; rather, this moral vision allowed mediation among many classes and kinds, both women and men—empowering all to be moral agents.

When she heard this, Anna said, "That is just what the Gospel calls us to do. I was moved that we

read the words of Fannie Barrier Williams, who supported the National Association of Colored Women and spoke at the World's Fair of 1893, juxtaposed with the words of the Biblical Esther who saved her people. Then we heard Sojourner Truth side by side with John 20, and then Fannie Lou Hamer with Matthew 26. I tell you," Anna said, "the Gospel is vital in this conference, alive as a destabilizing force to injustice and as a guide to the moral imagination of ethical leaders."

Anna sighed. "Yet I know I did not do enough. Mrs. Williams was alive in my lifetime, a powerful speaker, a force of moral courage; yet I was unable to learn from her because I was too busy, and perhaps I was blinkered by social location, as Prof. Riggs might say. I neither forgive myself, nor do I lose hope. I just ask my sisters to continue the work into fields I did not plow."

### **Defending Our Lives**

The next morning, we watched the documentary film "Defending Our Lives" about women who had been battered. The film was searing, stunning, and heartbreaking. We saw women

who were raped, stabbed, set on fire, and who had their teeth hammered out, their children tortured in front of them, their lives threatened and, in some cases, taken. "Defending Our Lives" won an academy award for best documentary several years ago. It was the creative child of our speaker, Stacey Kabat.

Ms. Kabat came to her vocation as a speaker on domestic violence after working with victims of torture in South Africa, Europe, and the Middle East. She saw that domestic violence and political torture were essentially the same. Both are violations of basic human rights. She introduced the Symposium to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The declaration states that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and that no person shall be subject to torture and degrading treatment.

Symposium participants were invited to form small groups to develop an imaginary safety plan for one who needed to escape an abusive relationship. When we got down to planning the details of escape, we were stunned. Few of us had the resources—money, documents, friends whose addresses

were unknown to our imagined batterers—nor did we have the protection for our children that would enable us to escape if we needed to do so.

"You know," Anna said, "In my day, I felt secure about myself. Sure, in my medical practice, I saw a lot of battering. But I always thought, if such a thing were to happen to me, I had the resources to escape. Now I am be-



*Dean Imani-Sheila Newsome, Marcia Gordon, April Evans, and Marcia Riggs during the panel discussion at the Symposium*

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## "Did Not Mary First Preach the Risen Savior?"

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The annual meeting began as members of the society at the Boston University Castle gathered for high tea and were treated to the story of Anna Howard Shaw's ordination, as told by historical impersonator Lee Carpenter. Participants shared laughter and tears as Anna talked about her long road to ordination. In 1880, presiding Bishop Andrews of the Methodist Episcopal church rejected the examination committee's conclusion that both Shaw and Anna Oliver were fit for ordination, citing his belief that the ordination of women was not "compatible" with the *Discipline*.

These women not only were refused ordination, but also had their licenses to preach revoked—rights that were not restored until 1920. Though Anna Oliver continued to press her case with her own denomination without success, Anna Howard Shaw turned to the Methodist Protestant Church for acceptance. At the Annual Conference held in Tarrytown, NY, in October 1880, the deliberation over her "fitness" for ordination, ordinarily a process taking but a few minutes, turned into a two-day debate. Nevertheless, Shaw overcame many obstacles and finally was ordained alone in a special service on Sunday morning. Although Anna Howard Shaw was not the first woman to be ordained in the Methodist tradition—that privilege goes to Helenor M. Davison, ordained by the Indiana Methodist Protestant Conference in 1866—she was certainly one of the most prominent early women to gain that early status.

Despite the success of both Davison and Shaw, however, the road to ordination and full clergy rights for women still remains rocky. The meeting's evening presentation by Reverend Beth Collier, Shaw Scholar, and Margaret Wiborg, Director of the Shaw Center, entitled "The Oppressive Silence of the Promising Bright Voices," revealed the findings of the United Methodist Cler-

gywomen Retention Study conducted by the Shaw Center over the past few years.

Concerned that many of their female colleagues were disappearing from local church ministry, several Southern New England Conference clergywomen approached the Shaw Center in 1991, requesting an investigation. Questionnaires were received by 2,796 women who were probationary and full members in the United

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*"The arguments that have been waged for centuries against women as preachers and ordained ministers seem to be very much alive today."*

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Methodist Church in the United States. A total of 1,388 were returned, and telephone interviews were conducted with 147 participants, 123 of whom were included in the research analysis.

Overall, said Wiborg, women are leaving local church ministry because of systemic issues within the United Methodist Church. Their exodus affects local churches in all jurisdictions in the United States, ranging from 23 percent in the Southeastern Jurisdiction to 36 percent in the South Central Jurisdiction.

"The questionnaire and interview data indicate that lack of support from the hierarchical system, being unable to maintain integrity in the system, rejection from congregations/parishioners, and conflicting family and pas-

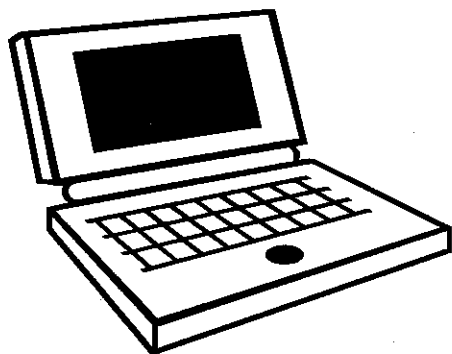
toral responsibilities are the major reasons clergywomen are leaving local church ministry . . . clergywomen do not leave . . . because of one isolated reason . . . Acknowledging the interrelationships is crucial in trying to understand what can be done to retain these women in local church ministry."

As both Collier and Wiborg shared comments made by the participants regarding the experiences of women, it was impossible not to hear the pain of these women who truly feel called to the ministry but whose gifts and graces are still not accepted. The arguments that have been waged for centuries against women as preachers and ordained ministers seem to be very much alive today.

However, the researchers feel that ". . . each issue can be mitigated and ultimately resolved if the entire system is engaged, rather than only one person or agency attempting to promote change. In this challenge to the entire system, the Church has a great opportunity to examine what it truly means to be the Church."

With that background, Saturday's session opened with worship led by Elizabeth Upham Yates (in a historical performance by Patricia Thompson), the first Methodist female to be sent to a foreign country. Yates point out the numbers of women missionaries, evangelists, and other active women in the church who had lived out their calling in various ways for many years, helping to prepare the way for ordination of women in the church. She quoted from an article which she wrote in 1900, shortly after women were given the right to become delegates to Methodist Episcopal General Conference. "This advanced position is significant in prophecy of the time when the church that declined in 1880 to ordain Anna H. Shaw and Anna Oliver will invite its daughters to equal ministerial honors. Yea, verily, the oppo-

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## Director's Notes

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been given the charge to incarnate justice where we are.

At the close of the "Incarnating Justice" symposium, each participant was given a tree to plant. Shaw herself brought back seedlings from many of her travels to plant at her final home in Pennsylvania. So it seemed quite appropriate to be sent out from this event with a tree. When I got home and finally had time to open the box that held my tiny tree, I realized that what I actually had was a little seedling pot and a packet of seeds with instructions. The instructions told me how to plant the seeds and also said if they did not germinate, to send back to the arboretum for more. My initial response was, "This is going to take forever to grow, it will require constant care at first to keep this little container watered so that it will not dry out, and I'll never live long enough to see a fully grown tree."

My second response was, "How totally appropriate and symbolic of real life." Justice work begins with seed, it takes constant attention and care, and, like Anna, we will in all likelihood never live to see its fulfillment. If the Shaw Center can continue to honor those who seek justice, continue to provide support and nourishment, and to attempt to stimulate the moral imagination, we trust that our work will make a difference.



## The Shaw Center welcomes Claire Wolfteich!

Over a cup of cocoa in the Shaw Center, Claire Wolfteich shared her gentle spirit and subtle humor. She also shared her experiences in ministry and her passion for her work. Claire is a Roman Catholic laywoman who earned a doctorate in practical theology with an emphasis on spirituality. She is also the newest addition to the School of Theology faculty. The New York native explains that her work as "looking at the context of everyday life as the locus of spirituality. It is the place where one is called to draw closer to God." This belief springs from her own life experiences and her earnest walk with God. It is a belief she brings into her own daily life.

Claire's mentors have played an important part along the way, as well. Her mother and grandmother had a special impact on her life. Claire says that each, "encouraged a reflective faith, embodying a life-long, constant, protective, freeing, affirming love." This love certainly shows. She also says her mother and grandmother, "were examples of endurance, humor, strength, and kindness"—traits that we all need as we embark on the STH journey!

Vocationally, Claire's mentor was Father Jack Farry, the supervisor of her Field Education site while she was at the University of Chicago Divinity School. During this formative internship, Father Farry took risks, allowing her to preach and enabling her to really engage in ministry. Claire most values the fact that he never once apologized for allowing a laywoman opportunities uncommon to most women in the Catholic Church.

Although Claire embraces her faith tradition, she received all of her degrees in non-Catholic settings. She says that this allows her to engage in a diversity of communities and be in ministry anyplace. This strength will

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## Sharing Wisdom

On Wednesday October 15, a small group of School of Theology women gathered in the faculty lounge to join Reverend Shirley Hoover in the first meeting of "Sharing Wisdom." The Anna Howard Shaw Center sponsored the event to promote fellowship and edification between students and alumnae.

Reverend Hoover, a United Methodist pastor and member of the Shaw Board, has been serving the church for the past twenty years. She shared with those present many pearls of wisdom that she felt would have been helpful to have learned before going into the ministry, but were unfortunately not covered in the School's curriculum. The most valuable information she shared was in regard to funerals. She recommends that when appointed or moving to a new parish site pastors should quickly become acquainted with the shut-in parishioners. They will most likely be the first to pass away within the parish, and it will have been beneficial to have developed a relationship with them before planning and officiating their funerals.

All present seemed to enjoy the opportunity to share experiences with women in ministry. Reverend Hoover and the several other alumnae present were a wonderful sounding board for the questions and concerns of current School of Theology students. Many questions were raised involving such issues as finances and the ministry, relationships and the ministry, and being a mother in ministry. "Sharing Wisdom" gives future pastors an opportunity to flesh out their approaches to these and other current ministry issues.

The next meeting of "Sharing Wisdom" will be on Thursday, December 4, with JoAnn Carlotto, a United Methodist lay woman who will share both with students who plan to be in lay ministry and those who plan to be ordained.

*Brooke Rick, MDiv '99*



## *In Anna's Footsteps: Reflections on Preaching from Anna's Pulpit*

I am writing this on All Saint's Day, November 1, 1997. That seems a particularly appropriate time to be reflecting on what it is like to be the first ordained woman since Anna Howard Shaw to serve the Dennis Union Church. Appropriate also since tomorrow I will be installed as associate pastor. Just to keep things clear for all who are non-Church of Christ folks, members of the local United Church of Christ association gather to affirm and support the calling of a pastor in a UCC church. Although I have been serving at Dennis Union Church since June, my formal installation will occur tomorrow. So this is a good time to think about what it means to be following in Anna's footsteps.

I often wonder what Anna would think if she came back for a visit to this little church that she left 113 years ago. While she would not recognize faces, she would certainly recognize some of the names. We still have some Sears and Crowells and Howes families in our church. Our sanctuary now has electricity and central heating, but the original whale oil lamps were simply wired for electricity when power was added. The pulpit and altar chairs are new, but the pews are as straight-backed as ever. The balcony, with its ladder to the belfry, is still reached by steep, curving, life-threatening stairs. However, we no longer hold Sunday School classes up there.

Our community is no longer the rural fishing village that it once was. Our ship captains are more likely to have a 24-foot Boston Whaler that they use on Saturday to catch a few bluefish. We have lots of summer visitors who fill our worship services and keep us in touch with "the world over the bridge." (That's what we call everything beyond Cape Cod!) Many of our church members are retired. They spent vacations here and now have

moved to the Cape full time. . . well, except for spending a month or two or three in Florida for the winter!

Nevertheless, they have the same pastoral needs that they did in Anna's day. They want to hear the Gospel message and hope that someone will visit them when they are ill or dying.

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*I have had the opportunity to serve communion using the service that was given to Anna on the occasion of her ordination. Our congregation regularly remembers and celebrates her ministry in this place. Her imposing portrait adorns the wall of our church lounge. She is still a presence here.*

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So I suspect that Anna would feel at home with much of what I do.

Growing up in the Lutheran church, I had no female role models of ministry. In junior high school when I felt as if I were being called by God, I had no concept of how I might respond. I can remember thinking that if I had been Roman Catholic, I could

have been a nun. However, as a Protestant, a religious vocation seemed out of the question. I had never heard of Anna Howard Shaw or other women pioneers in the church. During the ecclesiastical council when I was approved for ordination, I was asked what I would bring to ministry as a woman. I answered that it was hard to know since I was unsure which of my gifts for ministry came from being a woman, and which were from growing up in my family or reading the books that I had read, or from any of the influences of my life. But I told the man who asked me that question as a woman in the pulpit, I would serve as the role model that I never had as a girl.

I have to say that I have been much more aware of Anna Howard Shaw since coming to Dennis Union Church. There is a real sense of power in following her ministry in this place. I have had the opportunity to serve communion using the service that was given to Anna on the occasion of her ordination. Our congregation regularly remembers and celebrates her ministry in this place. Her imposing portrait adorns the wall of our church lounge. She is still a presence here.

As a woman in ministry, I rejoice that Anna is one of the cloud of witnesses who support and sustain my ministry. Though our manner of expression is very different and my sermons are much shorter, I hope that Anna sometimes peeks in on a Sunday morning when I am in the pulpit and is pleased that once more there is a woman preaching at Dennis Union Church.

*Connie Bickford is the former Director of Field Education at Boston University School of Theology and is a member of the Anna Howard Shaw Center Advisory Board.*



## "Did not Mary First Preach the Risen Savior"

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nents had a well-founded apprehension that this step would not be the end, but the beginning of woman's advance in ecclesiastical preferment: that, if admitted, they would yet be bishops. Well for the church their ability is so honored, their devotion so rewarded!"

Although Yates's words were prophetic, women had to undertake a long and circuitous route before finally attaining full clergy rights throughout the connection, as pointed out by the Reverend Barbara Troxell in her presentation, "The Ordination of Women in the United Methodist Tradition," and by Dennis Dickerson in his "Women Preachers Within Wesleyan Black Denominations."

Troxell began her presentation by explaining that the tremendous amount of work performed by women in the church helped pave the way for their eventual right to ordination. Women organized and raised funds for foreign and domestic missionary societies, worked as deaconesses, and traveled to the foreign field as missionaries, while still striving for voting rights at General Conference.

At the same time, women were experiencing the call to preach and trying to find ways to legitimately live out that call within the male-dominated hierarchical systems of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Protestant Church, the United Brethren Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and the Christian Methodist Episcopal church. A woman would be given a license to preach or even be ordained by one body of males or one bishop, only to have that license revoked or to find herself the only ordained woman in her denomination because of the even stronger op-

position by others.

In 1889 the United Brethren General Conference approved the licensing, ordination, and full conference membership for women. That ended in 1947, however, when the Evangelical Church, which did not ordain women, merged with the United Brethren to form the Evangelical United Brethren Church.

Although the Methodist Episcopal consented in 1924 to allow women to be ordained as local deacons and elders, women still did not have full clergy rights, including conference membership and the right to a guaranteed appointment. Thus, when the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church South, and the Methodist Protestant Church merged in 1939 to form the Methodist Church, Methodist Protestant women lost their rights to full conference membership, but the women of the Methodist Episcopal Church South gained for the first time the right to be ordained as local deacons and elders. In 1956 the Methodist Protestant Church finally granted full clergy rights to women, but not until 1968, with the formation of the United Methodist Church (with the merger of Methodists and the Evangelical United Brethren), that all women in the United Methodist tradition would fi-

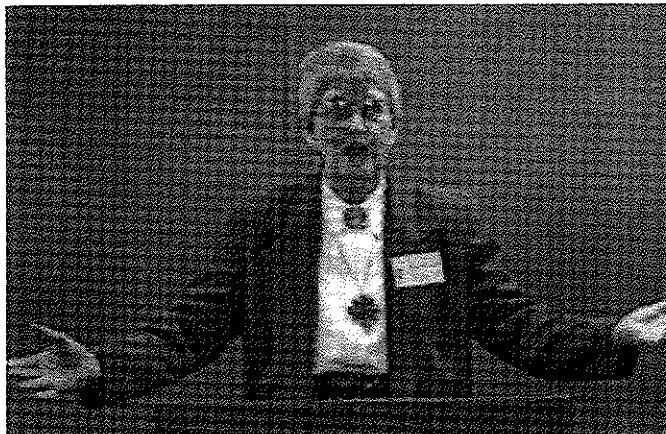
nally have these rights.

Although the route was not quite so circuitous in the black Methodist churches, it would take nearly as long for all women to gain full clergy rights here as well. The first denomination to grant full clergy rights to women was the AME Zion Church in 1900. The AME Church and CME Churches, however, would not follow suit until 1960. Women in these traditions, however, believed that they derived their authority through sanctification, and since they also believed that the authority from the Holy Spirit was superior to denominational doctrines, unordained women still felt empowered to preach.

And what of today? A wonderfully informative, stimulating, thought- and even action-provoking annual meeting was brought to completion on Saturday evening. Bishop Susan Murch Morrison, highlighting the life of the Reverend Anna Howard Shaw, probably the first woman ever to be both a pastor and a medical doctor, described her as "some formidable woman." Bishop Morrison ended her presentation by asking, "What would Anna say to us if she were here today?" Morrison believes that Anna might advise us to be open to the stirrings of the Spirit, to recognize the linkages between the evangelical spirit and the social gospel,

not to go it alone but to find mentors and role models, and finally to ask, "Isn't it time to eliminate the word "incompatible" from our United Methodist *Discipline*?"

*Patricia Thompson is a United Methodist clergywoman in Presque Isle, Maine. She is President of the Northeast Jurisdiction Commission on Archives and History.*



*Reverend Barbara Troxell during her presentation at the Historical Society meeting*

## *Anna's Unfinished Issues*

### *"Anna and Me"*

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Claire Wolfteich  
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gining to see that I am in no way different from the women in the film." None of us are.

#### **Money and Work**

April Evans holds degrees in social work, divinity, and business administration. She is a certified public accountant, the vice president of a venture capital company, and a lecturer in business ethics at a graduate school of management.

Ms. Evans reviewed the three cornerstones of ethics: rights, justice, and utility. She showed us how women's ways of working can help to mediate the economic system so that the extremes of rights (getting mine) and of utility (everything for everybody) become justice as a middle way. Women do this because they tend to be relational, needing to relate to people in highly nuanced contexts. To promote economic justice, we need more women in decision-making positions, Ms. Evans explained. Of the Fortune 500 companies, only two have women CEOs. If we want a blended economy with incentives to be creative (free markets) and help for those who need

it (safety nets), then we need women and men who can act ethically in the world of work.

"This is challenging and wonderful stuff," I said.

"It is wonderful indeed," Anna said. "But there is so much work to be done. I am so hopeful. I am so grateful. From this symposium, I know that there are willing workers. I met women who work with refugees in Portland, Maine, and in Chelsea, Massachusetts. At this conference were pastors and active laywomen. We were Asians, white, and black, and probably some of us Native American as well. Yes, now one-hundred-and-fifty years after my life started I feel hopeful. True, I did some of the work toward justice, but these women will carry it on!"

We will carry it on—in our communities, churches, and homes—and always with the help of the Anna Howard Shaw Center at Boston University.

*Marnette Saz is the director of the Doctor of Ministry Program and the associated director of the Office of Professional Education at Boston University School of Theology.*

hold her well at this United Methodist Seminary, especially as she brings pastoral ministry and academics together in the classroom.

As she settles in here, Claire envisions herself continuing in her research on spirituality and bringing her work into the classroom to form and inform students just as her work has informed her own life and ministry.

Wolfteich travels whenever she has the opportunity (Ireland, Israel, and Morocco, so far). She enjoys the musical depth of opera; she cooks vegetarian dishes, plays basketball and softball, and loves the ocean. She also reads Rilke, Eliot, Donne, and Emily Dickinson and values her friendships and family deeply.

Claire invites everyone to drop by her office in Room 301 at the School of Theology so that she might get to know faces and names.

We welcome you, Claire!!

*Elizabeth Brick, MDiv '98*



## *Fall Women's Retreat*

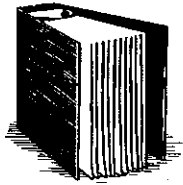
Good attendance can generally be expected at any event that offers free food and good company. This is especially true when hungry, buried-in-the-books graduate students are involved. It was no different on Wednesday, September 24, at the Shaw Center cookout. Approximately twenty women, tired and hungry at the end of a long day at the School of Theology, caravanned out to the home of Lee Carpenter, Shaw Center Advisory Board member, to enjoy food and fellowship. Mrs. Carpenter's home was a wonderful place to enjoy a respite: roomy and comfortable, with

beautiful artwork on the walls and a lovely yard in which to wander. Many first-year students attended, as did a few more seasoned students. This made an interesting mix for exchanging STH experiences and hearing the lowdown on future classes and teachers, as well as for understanding where STH women have come from and where they are going. Margaret Wiborg and Lee Carpenter, Anna Howard Shaw impersonator and historian, kept the entire gathering under control with lively stories about their work with the Shaw Center and the upcoming Shaw

Center symposium. Mrs. Carpenter was a gracious hostess who thoughtfully provided food to suit both the herbivores and carnivores. All in all, it was a wonderful chance to get to know other women at the School of Theology and enjoy a little mid-week relaxation.

*Kim Dulaney, MDiv/MSW '01*

**PLEASE...**  
**READ AND**  
**RECYCLE!**



## Book Review: God is Like a Mother Hen

In a lecture entitled "The Known and the Unknown: An Exploration into Nonfiction," children's writer Jean Fritz related good writing for children to storytelling and said, "As human beings, we thrive on astonishment. Whatever is unknown quickens us, delivers us from ourselves, impels us to investigate, inspires us to imagine. . . ."

Carolyn Stahl Bohler surprises the child in each of us with her picture book, *God Is Like a Mother Hen*. Her lyrical words tell us that we name God with metaphors. "God is like a mother hen, a caring daddy, and smiling teacher, a best friend, a mommy kissing hurts, the air you can't see, a child loving surprises, you, crying or laughing, a teddy bear's love, and much, much more."

She is careful in her note to parents and "smiling teachers" to cite biblical references for each metaphor and to explain that "God is not exactly like any of these metaphors; God is much, much more than any one." Her metaphors are well-chosen for her young audience, nonetheless, and the cadence of her words is poetic.

It would be wonderful to write that the whole book was stimulating and that it inspired my imagination, but alas, that would not be honest. I found the illustrations, Dean Nicklas, "with help from daughter Amy," to be strangely disconcerting. They depicted God as a mother hen, a caring rooster, a smiling chicken, a chummy chick, a hen pecking her baby chick, a Visible pocket of air that the chick is not supposed to see, an incredible talking chick, a chick looking at its reflection in a wing-held mirror, and a chick snuggling with a teddy bear in a bed.

The cover of the book and the first page picturing God as a mother hen work well. However, persistently using poultry to illustrate every concept seems ludicrous and confusing to chil-

dren.

In contrast, in Margaret Wise Brown's classic *Goodnight Moon*, the pictures by Clement Hurd offer us one consistent metaphor. The quiet old lady and child are like a maternal rabbit and a little bunny while everything else is real and recognizable. In *God Is Like a Mother Hen*, however, the illustrations by Dean Nicklas layer metaphor upon metaphor in an overly sophisticated artistic style.

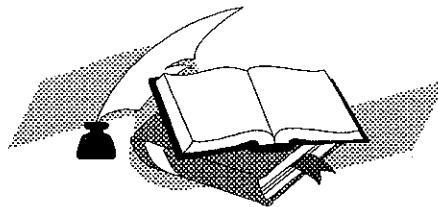
Jean Fritz ended her lecture with these words: "I speak for all of us, I think, when, using Annie Dillard's words I say, our job is to keep children awake. We don't want them to miss the show." Sad to say, Nicklas's illustrations do not dazzle children with delight nor show with wonder how we name God with metaphors, but instead obfuscate the text's message.

It might be more effective to ask children to draw their own illustrations, then to read Carolyn Stahl Bohler's words and show the children's pictures. I have a feeling that we would be delightfully surprised!

For well-written picture books with solid concepts, let us give thanks! From cute but confusing children's book illustrations, Good Lord deliver us!

*Lee Carpenter is a member of the Anna Howard Shaw Center Advisory Board and a children's librarian at the Wellesley Public Library.*

Editor's Note: Be sure to check out the next issue of the Anna Howard Shaw Center Newsletter. It will include a response to this review by Marcel Young-Skaggs, a six-year-old, with help from his mom, Sakena Young Skaggs, a first-year MDiv student.



## Faculty Notes

Congratulations to **Dana Robert**, who was promoted in July to professor of international mission here at the School of Theology. In August, she was in Zimbabwe interviewing women on their roles in the church. In addition, she recently published *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1996). She also served on the International Advisory Board and contributed entries on thirty-five nineteenth- and twentieth-century missionaries for the *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions* (Macmillan Library Reference, 1997).

**Sharon Burch** preached two sermons, "To Preach Christ Crucified" in Marsh Chapel in March, and "Mighty Works and Millstones" at United Parish in September. She ended her service as vice-chair of the United Parish Board of Deacons and successfully resisted being elected chair. Dr. Burch had an article published in *Dialog: A Journal of Theology* (Vol. 36, Spring 1997) entitled "Tillich's Protestant Principle Today." She attended, as an observer, the International Association of Practical Theology in Seoul, Korea, in April and wrote the title article for *Aptitudes*, the journal of the Association of Practical Theology. She also participated in her nephew's wedding and officiated at the wedding of the son of longtime family friends. She continues to chair the American Academy of Religion group, "Issues in the Thought of Paul Tillich." Ron and Marcia MacLennana, scholars who visited Boston University last spring to work with Dr. Burch on the Tillich Critical Electronic Edition, submitted papers to this group, and both were chosen by the peer review panel of the group to present their work. Even nicer, she says, is that our own M. T. Dávila's paper proposal was also accepted and she presented her work on Sunday, November 23.

(Continued on page 9)



*Upcoming Events*

**January, Date TBA**  
1-2 p.m at Marsh Chapel, Boston University. Domestic Violence Vigil.

**February 20-22**  
Bangor, Pennsylvania. Retreat to the Wilderness: Finding Sanctuary. This retreat will evoke the longing of the soul for silence, space, communion, and community. Explorations will help one move into the interior landscape of the soul with movement, yoga, meditation, ceremony, and poetry. Cost is \$225. Contact Kirkridge, 2495 Fox Gap Road, Bangor, PA 18013-6028; 610 588-1793.

**February 23-25**  
Bangor, Pennsylvania. Journey into the Upward Years Through the Works of May Sarton. This event will look into the spirituality of aging centered around May Sarton's many literary works but time to explore one's own journey of the upward years. Cost is \$225. Contact Kirkridge, 2495 Fox Gap Road, Bangor, PA, 18013-6028, 610 588-1793.

**March 6-8**  
Bangor, Pennsylvania. Singing of Our Sacred Emerging. As sap rises on the mountain, women gather to sing, coming in the seasons of our lives to experience a deeper communion with self, others, and the wondrous creation. Cost is \$210. Contact Kirkridge, 2495 Fox Gap

Road, Bangor, PA 18013-6028; 610 588-1793.

**March 19-20**  
Women and the Word. "Preaching to Privilege." Leadership includes Bishop Judith Craig, Reverend Minerva Carcaño, and Ms. Dody Matthias.

**April 16-19**  
Radison Hotel in St. Paul, Minnesota. Re-Imagining Revival. "Ecumenical Decade: Churches in Solidarity with Women." Presenters include Rita Nakashima Brock, Delores Williams, Carter Heyward, and Rebecca Chopp. \$275 per person includes registration, material, one meal per day, and three nights lodging. For more information contact The Re-Imagining Community, 122 W. Franklin Avenue, Room 7, Minneapolis, MN 55404-2470.

**April 26**  
3 p.m. at the Victoria House, Willimantic, Connecticut. Women in Ministry presentation relating Shaw Center Clergywomen's Retention Study.

**October 29**  
Boston University School of Theology. Pioneer Woman Award honoring Margaret Wiborg, Shaw Center director. For more information, contact the Shaw Center at 617 353-3075.

**Faculty Notes**

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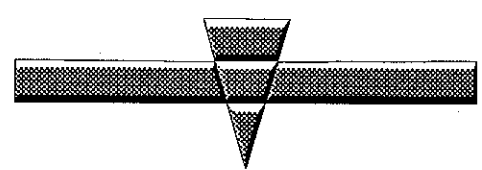
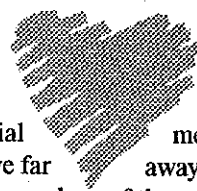
This spring, **Kristin White** was named one of 1997's Valiant Young Women by Massachusetts/Rhode Island Church Women United. She and other Valiant Young Women were honored at the state meeting and they participated in a panel discussion on contemporary issues facing young women in the church and the community. Kristin also participated in a retreat for high school-aged women on Cape Cod. On September 14, she was invited to preach by Centenary United Methodist Church in Attleboro, Massachusetts, as part of the church's weekend celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of United Methodist Women. Her sermon was entitled "A Model of Ministry." Additionally, she attended the Church Women United, Northeast Jurisdiction Regional Assembly in Holyoke, Massachusetts, to further her work with youth and young women from the Northeast Jurisdiction, and to encourage young women to become involved in the work of Church Women United. The assembly also invited her to speak on the topic of racism in America.

**Margaret Wiborg** and Shaw Scholar Beth Collier have completed their research on the United Methodist Clergywomen Retention Study and made a presentation of their findings to the Board of Ordained Ministry in Nashville on October 10. The report was received by the BOM and the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. Copies of the report are being printed and will be available from the Board in early December. (Contact Lynn Scott at P.O. Box 187, Nashville, TN 37202-0871, phone 615 340-7391). Margaret and Beth also made a presentation to the United Methodist Historical Society in Boston on October 3.

**Think Valentines!**

Valentines were a significant part of Anna Howard Shaw's life. She was born February 14, 1847. Valentine's Day was a time for celebrating her life and remembering with valentines those she loved. For many years, she and Susan B. Anthony, whose birthday was February 15th, celebrated this day together and in honor of women.

Once again the Anna Howard Shaw Center will provide specially designed valentines for someone you love; to say thank you for a friendship you cherish; to acknowledge a special mentor, pastor or teacher; or to keep in touch with a friend or relative far away. The valentine will indicate that a donation has been made to the work of the center in the recipient's honor. For each ten dollar donation to the Anna Howard Shaw Center you may honor someone in this way. Please send a check along with names and addresses to the Shaw Center at 745 Commonwealth Ave., Boston, MA 02215, no later than February 1, 1998.



The Shaw Center congratulates Danna Drum, Shaw Center staff member, on her engagement to Greg Hastings, a fellow School of Theology student. They will be married in Marsh Chapel on May 10, 1997.



*Lee Carpenter as Anna Howard Shaw at the Incarnating Justice Symposium*

**Anna Howard Shaw  
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