

Annual Alumni Issue

SPOTLIGHT:
ANNEKE STASSON



WOMEN IN MISSION
RETROSPECTIVE
AND REUNION



MILESTONE
HONORING THE WORK
OF GRACE MAY



SPRING CALENDAR
UPCOMING CGCM
EVENTS

CCCM NEWS

Center for Global Christianity and Mission



Anneke Stasson Co-Authors ASM’s Book of the Year

Anneke Stasson ('13) is an Associate Professor of Humanities and History at Indiana Wesleyan University, where she teaches in the John Wesley Honors College. Her recent book, *Women in the Mission of the Church: Their Opportunities and Obstacles Throughout Christian History*, co-authored with Leanne Dzubinski, received the American Society of Missiology’s Book of the Year Award. Daryl Ireland, the Associate Director of the CGCM, recently caught up with Professor Stasson, and inquired about the book, her research and teaching, and how she is building on her time at Boston University. Below is an excerpt of that interview.

Ireland: What is *Women in the Mission of the Church* about?

Stasson: We wanted to show that women in ministry is not just a twentieth or twenty-first century phenomenon, but something women have been involved in since day one of the Church. And,

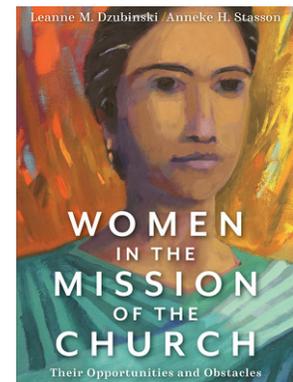
women haven't done ministry in just one way. Depending on the circles you find yourself within, there can be a sense that there is only one way to be a "Christian woman," and it's a very tight box. So we wanted to show that, in fact, there are tons of different ways to be a "Christian woman" and contribute to the mission of God in the world.

In your research did you uncover anything that surprised you?

Yeah! Two things come to mind. One is from the early church. In our research we learned that women probably administered the Eucharist. We have examples of women who were heads of households and hosted the church in their homes. Unless there was a visiting apostle, the host would normally administer the Eucharist. Discovering that was just, "Oh, wow! I hadn't thought of that!" The second example is from the 18th and 19th centuries. I didn't know that between 1740 and 1845 there were so many women preachers: 100 in America and twice that many in England. For women feeling called to ministry today, I hope they'll feel the joy and surprise, "Look at all these women who went before me!"

What gave you the idea for the book?

It wasn't my idea. Leanne [Dzubinski] had been giving talks on women and mission leadership, in which she developed a framework where she talked about three movements in the history of the Church: Early, Medieval, and then Modern. After she presented the things women did, the group would ask, "Where's the book?" To which she could only reply, "Sorry, I've only got a 30-minute presentation." Leanne was my faculty mentor when I was at Biola, and she ultimately pitched the idea: "People keep asking for this book, but I'm not a historian, you are. Would you like to write it with me?" It was the book I always wished existed but hadn't thought to write.



Collaboration on a project like this sounds great, but the process can be difficult and time consuming. What was your experience like?

There was no negative; it was all positive. We worked really well together. The whole process was a joint thing. Leanne would send a chapter my way, and I would send one her way, and then we would edit them. We didn't mind if the other one would say, "Hey, we need to change this," because it was so helpful to have someone else's perspective. Combining her expertise and mine, bringing those two worlds together, helped us write a book that I think is applicable to multiple groups of people. It was such a good experience, I am going to do it again for my next book on *The Christian Home in Global Protestant Christian Thought and Practice*.

What are some of the takeaways from your time connected to the CGCM?

Well, the idea for my next book really came from Dana [Robert] during a conversation in her office one day. I remember asking her if there were other projects she wanted to work on, and she ended up telling me, "You know, I wish I could write a history of the Christian home, but my career is going in different directions now. The time for that has passed." And then, just off the cuff, added: "You should write it." Besides that, my time at Boston University enriched my notion of what it means to be a missionary. I really like the ideas about missionaries as boundary crossers or bridge figures. Those have been helpful to me as I think about who I am now at the intersection of history and the contemporary world, the Academy and the Church.

American Women in Mission



Back Row (L-R): Morgan Crago, Soojin Chung, Gina Zurlo, Emily Chastain, Dana Robert, Michele Sigg, Anneke Stasson
Front Row (L-): Abhishek John, Jason Bruner, Luke Donner, Kip Mobley, David Scott, Jeremy Hegi, Tyler Lenocker

In January 2023, the American Society of Church History featured a panel on “*American Women in Mission: A Retrospective after 25 Years.*” First published in 1997, Dana Robert’s text was a landmark in women’s history, women in religion, and in mission history. In this retrospective, Anneke Stasson (Indiana Wesleyan University), Jeremy Hegi (Lubbock Christian University), Michele Sigg (Director of the *Dictionary of African Christian Biography*), and Gina Zurlo (Co-Director of the Center for the Study of Global Christianity), reflected on the book’s impact and the ways it continues to create new possibilities at the intersection of women’s studies, gendered pedagogy, mission theory and practice, and World Christianity. Dana Robert responded. Among the many who gathered to hear and participate in the lively conversation were thirteen scholars who were or are connected to the CGCM, an institution that keeps women and gender as a central research focus.

Lifetime Achievement Award

In 2022, Grace Y. May received the Christians for Biblical Equity International’s Lifetime Achievement Award for her work to advance the biblical basis for Christian equality. After graduating from Boston University’s School of Theology in 2000 with a Th.D., she went on to pastor for fourteen years and founded the Women of Wonder, Inc., which seeks to see sisters soar by providing teaching, retreats, prayer, and other formational opportunities. Currently, May is the acting Vice President of Academic Affairs, Associate Professor of Biblical Studies, and the Director of the Women’s Institute at William Carey International University, which specializes in missional M.A. degree programs.



Spring 2023 Events

For more information about any event listed below, please contact the CGCM at cgcm@bu.edu

January 26th

Tracing the Divine Word: The SVD and SSpS in China

Zbigniew Wesolowski, Dirk Kuhlmann, Barbara Hoster, and Anthony Hu

February 7th

Korean Church State Relations in the Early 20th Century

Paul S. Cha, Assistant Professor of Korean Studies, University of Hong Kong

February 14th

Religious Persecution and Global Migration

Feruza Krason, Consultant for SIL and Translator of the Bible into Uzbek

February 27th

Research on Tap: Global China

Daryl Ireland and Eugenio Menegon, Boston University

March 14th

Mustafa Akyol: mustafaakyol.org

Cato Institute

March 18th

China Christianity Studies Group

Annual Meeting of Scholars Connected to the Association for Asian Studies

March 21st

Orlando Costas Consultation: Christianity in China Today

Xiyi Yao (GCTS), Xiaoli Yang (Charles Sturt University), Rob Carbonneau, C.P. (BC)

March 28th

Chinese Documents in the Propaganda Fide Historical Archives

Eugenio Menegon, Boston University

April 4th

Christianity as a Women's Movement?: Hard Data from China

Daryl Ireland and Alex Mayfield, Boston University and Asbury University

April 4th

Kenyan Pentecostalism

Kyama Mugambi, Yale Divinity School

April 11th

The Production and Distribution of Sino-European Books in China

Nicolas Standaert, KU Leuven

April 18th

Orthodoxy, Peace, and War in Eastern Europe

Mirian Simion, Senior Fellow at George Mason University

April 19th

Big Data and the Reconfiguration of Chinese Christian History

Eugenio Menegon and Daryl Ireland, Boston University

April 26th

Visions of Salvation: Chinese Christian Posters in an Age of Revolution

Daryl Ireland, Boston University