

Boston University School of Theology

ANNA HOWARD

SHAW CENTER

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Women & Politics



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On November 1st, 2017, for the second year in a row, the Anna Howard Shaw Center sponsored a successful, vibrant and engaging Multicultural Exposition. The annual Expo offers an opportunity for the BUSTH community to get a taste of diverse cultures, ethnicities and communities represented by our student body. Together with the STH community, The Anna Howard Shaw Center lifted up the beauty, history and resilience of the diaspora of peoples across our world through stories, music, pictures, and dance.

Honoring the Anna Howard Shaw Center’s commitment to promoting and encouraging structures and practices that create and empower diversity, the 2nd Annual Multicultural Expo brought together various domestic and international students to share stories, eat delicious food and build community across cultures. Through outreach and community engagement, the Expo included students and attendees from Boston University School of Theology, Boston University, MIT, Northeastern University, Boston College, Harvard and from within the greater Boston community.

Anna Howard Shaw Center 2nd Annual Multicultural Expo

Dr. Choi Hee An began by welcoming all attendees to a time of authentic sharing and deep listening. She reminded the group that our stories are sacred and we are called to honor them. She welcomed all from across the globe- from Nigeria to Korea, Malaysia to Colombia, from Greece to Italy, from the halls of BUSTH to the “calles” of Puerto Rico. All were welcome in that space. Following an engaging story in the form of musical lyrics by Eche, Dr. Choi invited us to remember the beauty of God’s diversity in us. “Please bring your diversity in us and let us celebrate your diversity,” prayed Dr. Choi. Eche’s performance opened the evening for participants to listen closely to the histories and diversity shared in the room.

Hyebin Hong, PhD student, gave us our first history lesson through the story of her grand-

mother. She encouraged us to remember the stories of our ancestors and never let them be silenced. As attendees listened to the choir of melodic voices from the Korean Student Association, they could feel the weight of Korean history in the words.

As the evening progressed, second year M.Div. student, Godwin Nnanna, invited the group to greet one another in the way of the Igbo people. With each forearm tap leading to a handshake, there was a deepened sense of solidarity- helping participants to understand their connection as “children of the same family.” After sharing an African proverb reminding the group that the “okra tree never grows taller than the person who planted it”, the Nigerian Catholic Community Youth Dance Group brought



“It is difficult to speak against the colonial rendering of history.”

- Hyebin Hong

movement to those words through their engaging performance. Clothed in traditional and beautiful headdress and clothing, emcee, Uchenna Awa, and Boston University College of Arts and Sciences Senior, Chinazo Akpu joined the youth in a traditionally contemporary Nigerian dance. The energy in the room was palpable!

Once the group settled back into their seats, participants journeyed to Malaysia with first year M.Div. student Melanie Yong. After joking about it's "truly Asia" status, Melanie spoke about the pride she has in Malaysia's multi-religious, multicultural commitment. Attendees learned the Malay hand language and a few people even passed a mini quiz to receive a treat.

Traveling almost 12,000 miles across the globe, expo attendees arrived to Colombia, home

to 10% of the planet's wildlife. Nora Dearco, a first year M.Div. student, reframed the world's misperception of a drug and war torn country and shared the beauty of having the greatest diversity of flowers and fruits via the Amazon forest. Nora reminded participants of Colombia's ability to preserve some of the indigenous traditions even after colonization.

Zoe Bonfante brought participants to their last stop of the night- Italy. Though a small country, Italy hosts a diverse range of dialects and climates. Zoe spoke about the pride Italians have in their particular regions but that there was a sense of connectedness to the country's ancestors. "You can feel the power of those who have come before you," she said.

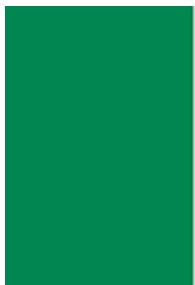


As the event drew to a close, Charlene Zuill, Director of Spiritual Life, invited participants to speak their history and culture into the space by saying “Peace Be with You” in their native language. So in that spirit, May the Peace of God be with you today and always.

- Igbo- Udo Diri Gi
- Mandarin- 平安與你同在
- Italian- La Pace Sea Con Te
- Korean- 너에게 평화가 함께하길
- Spanish- La Paz Sea Con Ustedes
- Hebrew- שהשלום יהיה עימך
- Malay- Selamat Tinggal Dengan Anda
- Greek- Η ειρήνη να είναι μαζί σας
- French- Que La Paix Soit Avec Toi



Anna Howard Shaw Center 2nd Annual Multicultural Expo



THANK YOU to our videographers and editors Susi Franco (MTS '19), Christina Richardson (M.Div. '19), and Nora Dearco (M.Div. '20)!



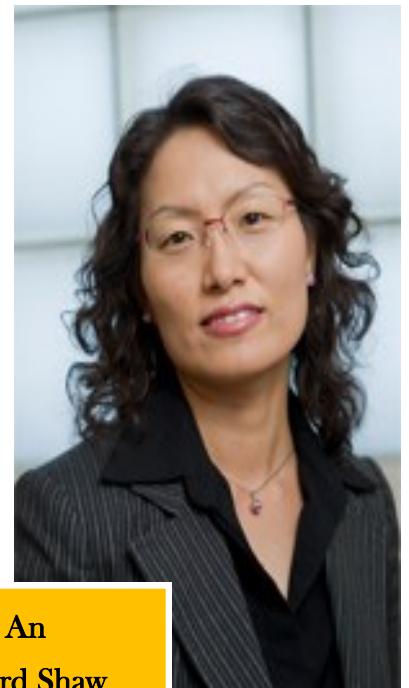
The Meaning of Women's Ordination in Public Leadership

One of the main paradigm shifts of moving women's leadership from private domain to political domain in the Christian history is women's ordination. As the Christian church history and church structure show, leadership in the church was exclusively dominated by male clergy. Many Christian churches saw only male priests as leaders in the public square. As white, heterosexual men dominated leadership positions in secular institutions, white, male, supposedly heterosexual clergy have dominated church leadership positions, even though celibacy does not require heterosexuality. Leadership from the LGBTQ community, women, and ethnic minorities was abhorred in church settings.

Their leadership was not recognized in public domain until the approval of women's ordination. The approval of women's ordination was achieved through the long endless struggle of countless nameless women, ethnic minority and LGBTQ people's suffering and tearful prayers. Many people in different nations struggled to fight against patriarchal church structure and earned women's ordination in various times. This victory gave women a platform to demonstrate and exercise their leadership in the public square. It was one of the most powerful historical moments that women's leadership was recognized and approved. It challenged the images of "who leaders are" in public and changed the meaning of leadership. Many mainline Protestant churches such as the Presbyterian Church (USA), the United Methodist Church, United Church of Christ, several Baptist churches, and others participated in this movement and celebrated women's public leadership. With women's ordination, prejudice against women leadership was exposed and seriously challenged. However, in the case of LGBTQ community, except for the Presbyterian Church (USA) and

the United Church of Christ, most mainline protestant churches and the Catholic Church prohibited LGBTQ members from any leadership roles, especially clergy positions even after women's ordination was approved. Furthermore, there are still many churches such as Catholic Church and several Protestant denominations that do not approve women's ordination even in the present.

In fact, despite women's ordination, a lack of recognition of women's leadership in public domain persists to this day. As many Anna Howard Shaw center researches such as Women's retention study I and II, Salary study, and Immigrant church study demonstrate that even in the mainline Protestant church contexts (that approved women's ordination), when female pastors try to establish leadership in the church, they often experience strong and severe resistance from church members and wait longer to be recognized as clergy in their churches.



Rev. Dr. Choi Hee An
Director of Anna Howard Shaw
Center, Clinical Associate Professor of
Practical Theology

The Meaning of Women's Ordination in Public Leadership

In reality, regardless of denominations, many religious organizations and churches hire white male pastors as their senior pastors, except traditional racial ethnic churches that choose male pastors of their own ethnicities. As Anna Howard Shaw Center research and the research of the Lead Women Pastors Project conducted by HiRhoo Park show, there are quite a serious gap between white female clergy and white male clergy and a bigger gap between white and ethnic clergy in terms of salary, church size, and leadership positions. Female clergy pay less and tend to lead a smaller church in comparison to male clergy.

In the case of female ethnic minority clergy, it is worse. Out of two hundred lead pastors who lead one thousand church members or more, there were only one Asian and one African American lead male pastors and one African American lead woman pastor. (Park and Willhauck, *Breaking Through the Stained Glass Ceiling*, 21).

Religious organizations exhibit much more restrictive attitudes toward women, LGBTQ, and ethnic minority leadership. Confronted with strict religious discipline and rules, these groups face masculinized environments of hierarchal power structure. They experience both visible and hidden resistance from members in the church. At the same time, they also experience subtle and palpable institutional punishment. However, despite discrimination and prejudice, their presence has powerfully challenged the perception of a conventional patriarchal leadership. Women's ordination and leadership in the church has infused leadership with new qualities of leaders. Many female LGBTQ, and ethnic minority pastors and leaders demonstrate leadership differently from male pastors, opening a deeper discussion of the meaning of leadership. Instead

of emphasizing leadership as something higher than others, these pastors and leaders introduced new concepts of leadership such as co-leader, facilitator, and mediator. While rejecting a concept of hierarchal leadership and creating various models of leadership, they embrace more lay leadership and work with lay leaders in a collegial manner. They want to nurture egalitarian structure and shared leadership. These pastors and leaders take a serious responsibility to lead church and society in horizontal way and demonstrate more humble, co-sharing, and intentional collaborative leadership.

Women's ordination was the most important historical, political, and religious event that opened the door to show women's leadership to the world in public. It changes the landscape of not only leadership in church but also leadership in society. We as the Anna Howard Shaw Center sincerely want to thank all women, ethnic minority and LGBTQ people who walked in the past to make this happen and want to celebrate all people who will walk in the present and future to make the world better through their own leadership in public.



Women in Politics: Servant Leadership

Last April, I was surprised by an email stating I was nominated to serve on the School of Theology Student Association (STHSA). I had anticipated breezing through my time at STH; solely focusing on my studies. As fate and God would have it, my peers would see something in me that would encourage them to nominate me as the president of the Student Association. When I first read the email, I shared with my partner that I was reluctant to accept. I knew it required a great deal of time, energy and responsibility, and I didn't want to affect my time as a student, a friend and as a partner. But after speaking with friends and family, they convinced me to live into this call I've always had: servant leadership. This is how I lead. This is how I live.

At 12 years old, I became my middle school's first student president. I insisted that there needed to be a student voice on the faculty board and they responded by creating my position. My time in middle school was wonderful, as I got to explore the dimensions of my own leadership. Throughout those years, I was able to push to restore our school's library and lift up other students within their own leadership. This is when I knew that servant leadership would be my method. High school was no different. I was the president for four years and began thinking about how my leadership enabled others to live into who they are meant to be. In running as the STHSA president, I stated "leadership is allowing others to achieve purpose". This is how I lead. This is how I live.

That is the style of politics I wish to see in all of our world. As a woman, and particularly, as a woman of color, I have been conditioned by society and culture to be a servant leader. Now, those two words might not always be used in certain contexts, but I believe that it is embedded in our cultures. Often, women of color help

support their siblings and others in the family, whether that be financially, emotionally, spiritually or physically. That is servant leadership. That is Christ. While I don't believe all political people's must be Christian or embody Christ, I do believe that upholding the values of peace, love, and service would get us much further in our political sphere. When I say Political, I don't just mean governmental positions. I am referring to the politics that permeate our world and society. That includes our school. In my position, I am learning to navigate a system and culture that is outcome oriented. Most people's understanding of what it means to be a leader usually includes being at the forefront, having the answer, being the face, but I want to remind people about servant leadership- leadership that has the other first. My experience as STHSA President continues to shape my understanding of the beauty of women's leadership in political positions. Although it may not be universal, there is a push towards leadership that enables others to become more fully themselves and this is how I lead. This is how I live.



**Hazel M. Johnson,
MDiv.**



Women & Politics in the Church

Women and politics have been part of the dynamic and experience in the Christian faith community since the early beginnings. The Gospel of Mary, likely written somewhere between 80 and 180 CE focuses on a “Mary,” presumably Mary Magdalene. As a close associate of Jesus, Mary had authority in the early Jesus movement, and she received teaching from and about Jesus that the male apostles had not. In this early document, Peter tells Mary that he knows that “the Savior loved you more than the rest of the women.” (6.1) Mary then tells about a vision from “the Lord” and her dialogue with the resurrected Savior.(7:1-7) After Mary shared her message, the followers argued about her teaching. Andrew and Peter each questioned whether Jesus could have spoken in this way with a woman without their knowing about it. (10:1-4) This doubt brought Mary to tears, telling Peter that she is not telling lies. Levi defended Mary against Peter’s accusation: “...if the Savior made her worthy, who are you, then to reject her?”(10:9). (A New New Testament, Hal Taussig editor & compiler; Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2013)

This debate about the inclusion or exclusion of women in leadership in the early Christian community, and the doubting of their authority or capability of being trusted with Jesus’ message, provides hints of the political realities which wane and rise across the centuries. Sometimes the women, like Mary in this non-canonical gospel, have wept. At other times they have banded together for courageous action.

In the Gospel of Mary passage quoted, Mary speaks positively from her truth, from the wisdom she has received. It is received in a negative way. The men who culturally expect to be in authority could not comprehend that a woman could receive that wisdom or be capable of such leadership.

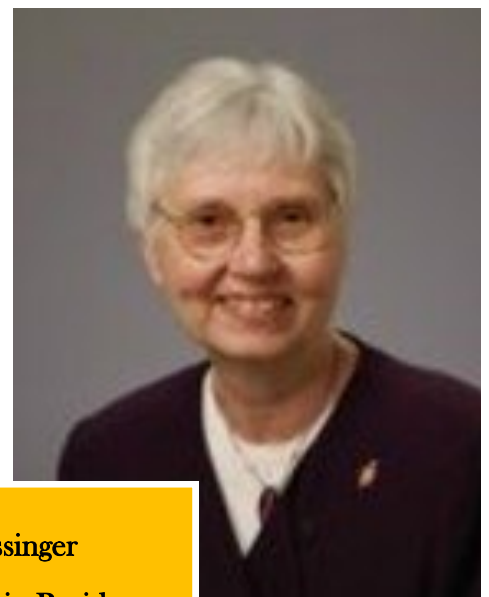
What does this have to do with our understanding now of “women and politics in the church”? Several stories come to mind of women in the United Methodist Church, in the 20th and

21st centuries.

About the time I received the invitation to write this article I heard the news about the death of an STH grad, Rev. Dr. Jeanne Audrey Powers, at age 85. Ordained in 1961, she was among the early women fully ordained in the UMC. Her obituary described Jeanne Audrey as a “pioneer ecumenist.” Long-time a staff person on the UMC General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns, she also was a leader in both the National Council of Churches in the United States and the World Council of Churches.

Jeanne Audrey supported early clergy-women in their efforts to hear their call to ministry, and to have their ministry recognized and honored. I was one who found encouragement and strength through her positive witness. When Jeanne Audrey was the first woman nominated as bishop, she declined. Later, she was very encouraging and supportive of Marjorie Matthews, first woman elected to the episcopacy in the UMC in 1980, who came from her home annual conference, Minnesota.

Jeanne Audrey also spoke out on such diverse issues as use of inclusive language in liturgies and LGBTQ inclusion. In 1995, she came out as a lesbian. It was in that year that the Anna Howard Shaw Center gave her an award.



Susan Hassinger
Lecturer, Bishop in Residence

Women & Politics in the Church

Like Mary Magdalene, she was questioned by some and deeply appreciated by many. Some would have seen her as “political” in a negative sense. I see her as one who was artful and clear in her desire to see the church be more faithful to God’s call to justice and wholeness for all.

Leontine T.C. Kelly was another woman who has been inspirational for me. Leontine was the second woman elected bishop in the United Methodist Church, and the first African-American woman. She entered pastoral ordained ministry after raising several children and being a pastor’s wife, and after a career in public education.

Recognized for her faithful listening to God’s call, for her many gifts in preaching and administration, friends and colleagues encouraged her to allow herself to be nominated as bishop. Leontine found barriers to doing so in her home Virginia Conference, but women from across the United States bound together in 1984, first through a national clergywomen’s conference and then through additional actions especially in the Western Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church.

During the Jurisdictional Conference of July 1984, Leontine was asked by the Western Jurisdiction to present herself for possible election there. She was elected there, and was assigned to the California-Nevada Area, where she led for four years until she had to retire because of age.

During those four years, Leontine Kelly was a powerful force both in her area and in the Council of Bishops. I was told that it had been understood that bishops do not speak on the floor of Council meetings during their first quadrennium of election. Bishop Kelly realized that she had only four years, and so she began to speak out on matters of justice. She broke the pattern of being silenced, and opened the way for men and women, whites and persons of color, to speak to “the body politic” which was the Council of Bishops. That helped to change the culture of the Council.

I vividly recall during my first quadrennium on the Council her speaking prophetically and powerfully. I also recall how I came to one Council meeting weighed down by some personal crises and dilemmas. Leontine observed my face, and invited me into a “holy conversation.” Those moments provided me with new possibilities for how to deal with those matters and how to find God’s presence in the midst of struggle. Shortly after the Council meeting, Leontine sent me a note. Inside was a magnet that said, “A sister is one who listens with the heart.” She was sister to me, and helped me to gain courage and confidence, to find my own voice. Is that “politics in the church?”

From sisters-in-faith Mary, Jeanne Audrey and Leontine, I have gained wisdom and courage to add my own voice to matters of justice. Especially important to me has been the work of dismantling white privilege. In my time with the New England Conference, cabinet and staff were trained; then the Board of Ordained Ministry, followed by financial groups and trustees. Eventually, local churches were encouraged to examine their contexts and mission in relation to and the importance of dismantling racism. The work was begun, but far from completed.

And in another arena, I recall a May Sunday night in 2004, where I joined a group from an open and inclusive UMC congregation on the sidewalk outside the Cambridge City Hall. It was the night when the first marriage licenses were available to lesbian and gay couples. Our group and others made a quiet witness with signs and songs and presence. On the sidewalk in front of us were protestors with signs (in the name of Christ) rejecting this extension of voice and affirmation. To be able to stand in support of that “political” yet spiritual cause was part of the heritage I have received, and hope to carry on. I pray that it was in the spirit of Mary Magdalene, of Jeanne Audrey and Leontine.



Meet New STH Female Staff



Hazel Johnson , *Graduate Assistant , Anna Howard Shaw Center*

Hazel M. Johnson is a Nevada native in her 2nd Year as an MDiv student . Her areas of focus include supporting marginalized groups within society and in higher education institutions. Hazel has a passion for the intersection of theology and trauma and ways political leaders and church communities can come together to create policies and programs that benefit urban communities. Outside of her school duties, Hazel offers her gifts as a leadership development consultant to universities, churches and non-profits. She currently serves as president of the STH Student Association.

Karen Zenteno , *Senior Program Coordinator, Office of Contextual Education*

Karen was born in Mexico, grew up in Phoenix, Arizona and moved out to Boston in 2014 after graduating from Grand Canyon University. She completed the Master of Divinity program at BU STH in May 2017. While at STH, Karen focused on biblical studies and found an interest in Latin American hermeneutics.



Rebecca Copeland, *Assistant Professor of Theology*

Ms. Copeland works in theology, ethics, and the intersection of religion and ecology, focusing primarily on Christian traditions. Her research and teaching interests revolve around the ways that classical Christian doctrines can be reconstructed in response to what we learn about the world through environmental studies. She is in the ordination process of the United Methodist Church, and a member of the Global Methodist Ecological Ethics Initiative.

Nina Levine, *Admissions Coordinator , Office of Admissions*

Nina is a recent graduate of the Boston University School of Social Work where she focused her studies on Macro practice. She is continuing her studies at the School of Public Health. Nina is interested in using her graduate degrees to decrease stigmas and educate the public on topics relating to mental illness and substance abuse in marginalized communities. In her free time, she enjoys food blogging and spending time with her family, friends, and dog Blake.



Kathryn O'Neill, *Administrative Coordinator for Finance and Administration*

Katy studied human physiology at Boston University Sargent College and graduated in 2016. After graduation, she worked for BU Dental School in the pre-doctoral clinic and began working on her Master's in Public Health at BU School of Public Health. Katy plans on utilizing her degrees to address upstream policies and institutional practices that affect global health inequities. Outside of the office, Katy enjoys cooking, reading and kayaking.



Save the Date!

Women in the World Conference

Wednesday, April 11, 2018

“Am I the Earth’s Keeper?”:

Climate Change and Faith Community

Key Note Speaker: Professor Rebecca Copeland

Community Center, Boston University School of Theology,
745 Commonwealth Ave. Boston, MA 02215

Since 1985, the Shaw Center has hosted an annual spring conference to explore experiences of women’s ministries in the church and society. The conference provides opportunities for women to hear women preach, share testimonies in ministerial and multicultural leadership, and develop networks of support with one another.

ANNA HOWARD SHAW CENTER NEWSLETTER

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Rev. Dr. Choi Hee An

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Uchenna Joan Awa & Hazel Monae Johnson

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