
ANNA HOWARD SHAW CENTER

NEWSLETTER

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Honoring Faith

"A Faith Event" was more than just an evening in honor of **C. Faith Richardson**. It was a celebration of Faith, hope, and charity that transcended time and place. The poetry recited, the words spoken, and the written words read aloud transported the seventy-five guests to places scattered and times past, present, and future as they expressed our love of Faith and appreciation for her good works

Sponsored by the Anna Howard Shaw Center, "A Faith Event" was held at Boston University Law School on October 11, 1990. Margaret Wiborg, director of the Shaw Center, opened the program by presenting Faith with the first Anna Howard Shaw Award, inscribed with the following words:

The Anna Howard Shaw Award is given in recognition of pioneering women who embody those values expressed in the life of Anna Howard Shaw: courage born out of Christian faith, dedication to increased opportunities for women, devotion to social justice, persistence in difficult circumstances, service for the common good, and a vision of a better world.

Lois Grant Palches read her poem "Speaking of Faith," commissioned for the occasion. Her beautiful words lifted us from the Law School lounge and carried us back to pioneer times, and forth to yet untried lands and assured us that we are not alone as we search for truth:

*God was in Eden, involved, evolving,
And God is here, involved, evolving still;
The God of growth and change, a force, a guide,
North on our compass, gloriously God*

Telegrams and letters of appreciation from Syracuse University Department of Religion; from Asbury United Methodist Church in Tacoma, Washington; from Bishop Susan Morrison; and from Dr. J. Robert Nelson were among the many wonderful letters read by Mary Lou Greenwood Boice and the Reverend Patricia Jewett Thompson.

Bishop F. Herbert Skeete, Boston Area, expressed his personal thanks for the way he has been nurtured by Faith and for her help with *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*. He shared greetings and words of appreciation for Faith's service from the Pan-Methodist Bishops.

"Is She Worthy?" asked Bishop Matthews and the congregation responded, "She is worthy!" As one who knows Faith well, who has worked with Faith for thirteen years in the Boston and Washington areas, and who is working with Faith again in the new Episcopal area of Albany, Bishop Matthews affirmed her as a committed disciple of Jesus Christ and praised her for her knowledge of the church: "She understands the church as few do." He closed his remarks by addressing the words of Dag Hammarskjold to Faith Richardson: "For all that has been, thanks; to all that will be, yes."

In her gracious response, Faith shared the credit for the honors bestowed upon her with her

pioneer forebears, her religious parents, her diverse and multicultural neighbors, her teachers, her late husband and friend Dr. H. Neil Richardson, their three daughters, her sister, Bishop Matthews, and six women who said the right things at the right time. She closed prayerfully, "Most of all, I thank God, my Creator and Sustainer, for gifts and graces that are mine. May I continue to use them for the betterment of humankind."

Following the reception, eighty donors were special guests at the dinner with Faith in Barristers Hall. Throughout the dinner, more letters and statements of appreciation were presented to Faith, as well as an Honorary Life Membership in the Baltimore United Methodist Conference Historical Society.

The evening is over but the blessings endure. Almost \$10,000 has been given to the Anna Howard Shaw Center in Faith's name. As Faith herself wrote, "The 'Faith Event' was just that, an occasion of high hopes for the future of the Anna Howard Shaw Center." Thanks be to God for Faith! — *Lee Carpenter*

"Here We Are . . . What Next?"

The Sixth Annual Shaw Center Women's Retreat once again brought new and returning students, staff, and faculty together for a weekend of relaxation, reflection, and interaction with one another. The rustic setting at the Camp Harrington YMCA Center near Worcester provided a quiet and intimate place for the women to share their experience of "Here We Are...What Next?"

After a delicious turkey dinner, the women shared their stories of coming to the School of Theology, and heard Anna Howard Shaw's story of how she came to the School of Theology and where she went next. Friday evening came to a peaceful close with a guided meditation. Saturday brought leftover turkey and time to explore where women might be going next. The morning discussion culminated in a worship service of prayer-time centered on the song "Here I Am, Lord," and closed with the passing of the Eucharist to one another.

A week later, the women led a Tuesday worship service for School of Theology students in Marsh Chapel. Remembering the connections with the great mothers and fathers of our faith, the women developed a service of prayer and liturgy. The song "Here I Am, Lord," again provided the central element of the service, sung phrase by phrase, with silence between each phrase, to allow for spoken and silent reflection and for prayers prompted by the text being sung.

Periodically, a group of women from the retreat will continue to meet to explore issues of feminist spirituality and the development of ritual from women's experiences. June Goudey, Anna Howard Shaw Scholar, is leading this monthly feminist spirituality study group. — *Mary Scifres-Petrick*

New Jurisdictional Committee Meets

The Anna Howard Shaw Jurisdictional Committee held its initial meeting at breakfast on July 14 in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, at the time of the called Jurisdictional Meeting. Composed of seventeen women and men from throughout the Northeastern Jurisdiction, the purpose of the committee is to consider how the Shaw Center can best fulfill its role as women's resource center for the Northeastern Jurisdiction. Present at the meeting were Nora Q. Boots, Rebecca W. Dolch, Ruthenia H. Finley, Madge B. Floyd, Shirley S. Hoover, S. Clifton Ives, Phyllis May, Yolanda Pupo-Ortiz, Vicky Woods, Noemi Rivera, and director Margaret Wiborg. Noemi has been appointed temporary chair. Also on the committee but unable to be present are Sarah Carr, Susan M. Eltscher, Joanne M. Link, Susan Murch Morrison, Ann C. Partner, James M. Perry, and Marie Rivera. As we welcome the new academic year at the School of Theology, we also welcome two new Shaw Center Work-Study staff.

Shaw Center Welcomes New Staff

Sandy Conrad comes to the School of Theology from Morristown, New Jersey. She performed and traveled with "Up With People" for a year

before she went to college. After graduating from Dickinson College with a degree in psychology/sociology in 1988, she worked in several environments, including a school for pregnant teenagers and a substance abuse unit. She is in her first year of the Master of Divinity program on a United Methodist Trial Year Scholarship, as she evaluates her options for a career in counselling ministry.

Peggy Lydon grew up in Brookline, Massachusetts, and graduated from Bridgewater State College with a degree in English. She has two children, a ten-year-old daughter, Amanda; and a seven-year old son, Jason. Before she came to the School of Theology she had many jobs,

including drug and alcohol counseling and working with a support network for parents who abuse their children. Peggy plans to graduate in May.

The Shaw Center welcomes the return of **Kristy Klein Barclay** to the position of newsletter editor. Kristy was a Work-Study student in the Shaw Center from 1987 to 1989, while she was working on her Master of Divinity degree. After graduating in May, she was hired as the administrative assistant in the Admissions Office at the School of Theology.

Contributors to the Anna Howard Shaw Center Fund July 1989-June 1990

Patricia Adams	Sharon Freeto	Shelly Matthews	Christine Robinson
Rachel Bales	Mrs. L. Theron French	Sammie Maxwell	Laurie Robinson
Priscilla Barnard	Madelyn Gaston	Emily Jackson Mayers	Shirley Robinson
E. Myrna Bernadel-Huey	Emily Geoghegan	Gailey McIntyre	Renate Rose
Karen Blanchard	Janet Gibson	Rea McDonnell	James Rutan
Joyce Blum	Sharon Goss	Martha McKown	Marnette Saz
Carole R. Bohn	David Gray	Evelyn McLean	School Sisters of Notre Dame
Mary L. Greenwood Boice	Joyce Gray	Sarah Miller	Ellen Schowalter
Katherine A. Bonney	Twila Hammaker	Mary Morefield	Elizabeth Schrader
Harriet C. Boone	Linda L. Hanson	Mary Morris	Joyce Sheehan
Laurie Brearley	Richard Harrell	Susan M. Morrison	Donella Siktberg
Ellen Brenner	V. Mitchell Hay	Emma Moulton	Barbara Silk
Amy Brooks	Sam Hedrick	Martha Muelder	Christine Smith
Christine Brotherson	Mrs. Robert Huston	James and Gene Nelson	Sylvine Smith
Debra Campbell	Sharon Iverson	Beth Neville	Deborah Stippich
Lee Carpenter	Phyllis Izant	Imani-Sheila Newsome	Nola Treacy
Ellen Chahey	Beth Jenkins	Helen Oliver	Phyllis Treese
Dawn Clark	Lois Johnson	Nancy Osgood	Jack Tuell
Ruth Anne Clements	Virginia Jones	Tina Oteka	The United Methodist Church of Newton
Congregational Church of South Glastonbury, CT	Judith Kerr	Charles Parsley	Mary Urban
Harold Cunningham	Deborah Kieseey	Linda Peabody	Mr. and Mrs. Gary Wagner
Mary D'Alessandro	Ann and Jack Klein	Dorothy Peers	Carmen Ward
Carmela D'Elia	Linda Knight	Mr. and Mrs. James Perry	Kathy Watson
Rodney Debs	Judith Kohatsu	Robyn Plocher	Patricia Wentworth
Ann Deibert	Kathleen Kotten	Marian Poindexter	Wesley United Methodist Church of Melrose
Laura Delaplain	Mark Lane	Wendy Poister	Leslie Westbrook
Marguerite DeSpain	Josephine Lavelly	Linda Poteete-Marshall	Joan Anne Westfall
Julia Doutaz	Joanne Link	Jeanne Audrey Powers	Anne G. Whiting
Emily Drake	Ellen Carter Liotta	Yolanda Pupo-Ortiz	Margaret S. Wiborg
Pamela Jean Estes	Charlotte Luscombe	Larry Purvis	Robertta Williams
Dorothy Everhart	Ann MacKenzie	Janis Rand	Vicki Woods
Leslie Fairbank	Sarah Maker	Nancy Reed	David Young
Fran Felhman	Kerry Maloney	Dianne Reistroffer	
Julia Foster	Marguerite Manning	C. Faith Richardson	
Martha Fredette	Leeda Marsh	Mrs. Donald Ricker	
Florence Freeman	Milton Marson	Earl W. Riddle	
	Willia Mathis-Johnson	Viola Robbins	

New Female Faces at the School of Theology

The School of Theology community was fortunate to welcome four new women to the administrative staff this fall.

Myra Vandersall Siegenthaler is our new head librarian in the School of Theology Library. She comes to us from the Wessell Library, Tufts University, where she was the associate librarian and an associate professor of library science.

Constance Bickford in the new Assistant Director of Field Education. Connie received her Master of Divinity degree from Andover Newton Theological School last May, and was ordained in the United Church of Christ on November 18.

Cindy Ibechem joined our staff as the administrative assistant to Associate Dean Berthrong last August. She comes to us from the Boston University School of Law.

Elaine Scarmoutzos is the new administrative secretary to Dean Neville. She comes to us from an administrative position at IBM.

Honors Given to Shaw Alumnae

CONGRATULATIONS to Patricia Jewett Thompson and Shelly Matthews! Pat (STH '88) was awarded the First Women's History Award for her research on the life of Betsy Dow Twombly. In her paper Pat recognizes Betsy Dow Twombly as the first teacher at Newbury Biblical Institute, the predecessor of Boston University. She taught a course in "mental philosophy," now called psychology. This award is given by the United Methodist General Commission on Archives and History. Pat is an active alumnae in the Anna Howard Shaw Center and is a pastor in Limestone, Maine.

Shelly Matthews (STH '87) was one of the keynote speakers at "EXPLORATION '90: Is God Calling You?", a gathering of about twelve hundred United Methodist high school and college students in St. Louis, Missouri. The event was designed to provide an opportunity for young people to explore and consider a calling to the ordained ministry. An ordained elder in the

North Dakota Conference, Shelley is pursuing a Ph.D. in New Testament at Harvard.

"Bread & Roses":

A Paradigm for Women in the Local Church

In these troubled times, when even the very existence of the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women has been threatened, sisters in the United Methodist Church are searching for bold and innovative ways to minister effectively to women in and outside the church. Perhaps one of the newest and most exciting models of ministry to women in the parish is Bread & Roses, a feminist theology group in Stevens Point, Wisconsin. Founded in 1989, Bread & Roses grew from a need for a women's support and study group where, in the words of the group's leader, the Reverend Penny Robbins, "women's issues, women's spirituality, and women's needs would be taken seriously." Penny maintains that grassroots feminist communities like Bread & Roses are essential to United Methodism because "we are not reaching the women of our generation."

Bread & Roses is an offshoot of the Status and Role of Women Work Area of St. Paul's United Methodist Church in Stevens Point. The group of fifteen to twenty members meets twice each month for intensive study of feminist theology and women's worship experiences. Scheduled on Sunday evenings for two hours, the meetings usually run three to five hours. A typical Bread & Roses meeting begins with a half-hour to one hour of worship or devotional time. Next there is a "check-in" period when the women share about themselves and their lives. The rest of the meeting is devoted to theological study. During the past year the Wisconsin Bread & Roses group has read and discussed *Women's Reality* (Anne Schaefer), several articles on Christology written by feminist theologians, *Godding* (Virginia Mollenkott), *Womanspirit Rising* (Christ and Plaskow, eds.) and *Just a Sister Away* (Renita Weems). The group has also watched and discussed movies such as *The Color Purple*, *Steel Magnolias*, and *The Last Temptation of Christ*. These times of study include a directed summary

and information-sharing session facilitated by the group leader.

While Bread & Roses is composed primarily of United Methodists, the group also includes women of Lutheran, United Church of Christ, and Catholic heritage. Together these women have addressed issues important to them as individual Christians and as a sisterhood: career and family, the roles of husband and wife, class issues, child rearing, homophobia, and patriarchy in the church. As their experience unfolded, Penny witnessed a remarkable growth within each group member. "It was exciting to see women have a sense of themselves and to grow in a sense of their own value." She also observes, "As the women were able to articulate their theology, they were also better prepared to claim their own power and place in the church."

Bread & Roses is committed not only to the enrichment of members' spiritual lives, but also to the betterment of the church and the community. As the women begin to explore how they visualize themselves, other women, and God, they also evaluate their own perspectives on social concerns that involve them directly and indirectly. Last March, Bread & Roses sponsored National Women's History Month events, including a presentation on women's studies and a special celebration of women in worship at St. Paul's. In April, the group participated in the Stevens Point "Take Back the Night Rally," a town assembly and march protesting violence against women.

Women in the group speak enthusiastically about the impact of Bread & Roses on their lives. Michelle Tollefson praises the group as "empowering and supportive." Another group member, Paula Hughes, captures the significance of the group experience in these words: "Because of its supportive nature, all of us felt free to explore our faith. Feminist theology makes faith come alive!"

Without question, the human spark behind Bread & Roses has been a young, energetic, and Spirit-filled pastor, Penny Robbins. She declares: "Feminist theology is vital to United Methodism, and unless we speak to women, and validate their experience, we will never grow. It is curious that some of our church leaders want

numerical growth and resort to corporate management systems for their models of church life. Feminists are drawn more to a small-group mentality; and in Bread & Roses, when our group grew numerically, the women were concerned about getting too big. There is something beautiful about the Wesley model of the small group, where persons experience intimacy, community, and support.

When asked how groups like Bread & Roses differ from the United Methodist Women, Penny stated:

First of all, I want to affirm the United Methodist Women as a good group in the church. I would also like to say that women have a need to be filled. So often participation in UMW is almost exclusively a matter of doing the work and business of the church, but never being filled up. Bread & Roses is an experience for the women themselves, of being filled up, of being nurtured. It is something just for them.

She also admits that Bread & Roses raised a few eyebrows in the congregation. For example, one of the predictable outcomes of a feminist study group is a shift in perspective among the participants. Indeed, Bread & Roses group members began to view with new eyes church school curriculum, church polity and committee procedures, and the Sunday morning worship experience.

According to Penny, "The women began to raise some of the right questions, especially those calling for a more inclusive image of God and a more inclusive faith community."

This creative pastor believes feminist theology is "God's instrument of liberation for oppressed women in our congregations" and "the real key to church growth." In her opinion, feminist groups like Bread & Roses challenge the church to be relevant, theological, and open to change.

For those who wish more information about Bread & Roses, please contact: The Reverend Penny Robbins, 19 Cedar Court, No. 12, Vernon Hills, IL 60061. — *Dianne Reistroffer ('89)*

The Reverend Dianne Reistroffer is the pastor of Sherman Avenue United Methodist Church, Madison, Wisconsin. She is also a member of the

Board of Visitors of the School of Theology. She has shared this article with us as a model of women's participation in the church.

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the General Commission of the Status and Role of Women for information on Bread & Roses, as provided in The Flyer, Vol. 2, No. 2 (Summer 1990), p. 2.

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Upcoming Events

FEBRUARY 12, 1991

Anna Howard Shaw's Birthday Party will be held at the Castle at Boston University from 5 to 7 p.m. Refreshments will be served until the program begins at 6. This year we will be fortunate to have the Reverend Elaine Buker from Albion, Michigan, who will present a dramatic reading of one of Anna's sermons.

MARCH 14-15, 1991

WOMEN AND THE WORD 1991, "The Living Word: Scriptural Context and Mutual Ministry." Leadership includes the Reverend Renita Weems, author of *Just a Sister Away*; and the Reverend Dr. Lynn Rhodes, author of *Co-Creating: A Feminist Vision of Ministry*. For more information, contact the Shaw Center at 617/353-3075.