

ANNA HOWARD SHAW CENTER NEWSLETTER

Boston University School of Theology Summer 1989 Vol. 5, No. 3



WOMEN AND THE WORD 1989-- Preaching Wholeness

On March 30-31, 230 women and men came to Boston University School of Theology to take part in the Anna Howard Shaw Center's fifth annual preaching event, "Claiming the Future: Preaching Wholeness to our Daughters and Sons." This year's two keynote speakers were Virginia R. Mollenkott, a leading evangelical feminist writer and professor of English at William Patterson College of New Jersey; and Reverend Yolanda Pupo-Ortiz, a Cuban-born pastor of the Southern New England Conference of the United Methodist Church who is currently developing the Hispanic United Methodist Church in Bethesda, Maryland. Also participating in the leadership of the event were nineteen women who preached in small workshops and ten convenors who led the workshop discussions.

The event began with worship in Marsh Chapel, at which Virginia Mollenkott preached a sermon entitled "The Everlasting Commonwealth of the New Humanity." She used Daniel 7 and John 18:33-7 to describe the hope the biblical witness gives to the oppressed, the way it calls oppressors to accountability, and the vision of shared power and authority described by Jesus for the world over which he said he would have dominion.

"Let us remember," she said, "that when God's dominion is established on the earth, it will be established only because of the noncoercive, justice-oriented lives of people like you and me who have actually learned to love their neighbors as themselves. It will be an everlasting commonwealth ruled by a New Humanity."

That afternoon participants split up into small groups of about twenty people each. Every group had an opportunity to hear and discuss sermons preached by two of the nineteen guest preachers from a wide variety of backgrounds and styles.

After dinner Virginia Mollenkott spoke on "Shaping the Future by Preaching Wholeness." Inclusive language and the church's use of

language that exalts males and diminishes females were among the topics she discussed that night. She said women can counteract the failure of the church to implement the feminist vision by modeling "Christ-like use of power in structures and policies. . . (and). . . honor(ing) wholeness in behavior patterns and. . . language."

Friday morning Yolanda preached a sermon entitled, "From Despair to Hope," using the story of Ruth and Naomi. Instead of reading the written story, the Boston Liturgical Dance Ensemble shared a movement piece which beautifully told the story of Ruth, Naomi, and Orpha. Yolanda's sermon was about the strength and hope Ruth had in the midst of her struggle. She compared Ruth to a refugee today, "the Cuban, the illegal alien, the Irish, the Black man. . . so many times she must have asked herself: Who am I? For them I am always a foreigner, a stranger. Can I go back to my own land again? . . . The pain and isolation in Ruth, however, is never absolute despair."

"By claiming her wholeness and by clinging to hope," Yolanda said, "Ruth not only affirmed her presence in her present, but claimed her future, and the future of her children. We are the future of Ruth! Because we are the Church of Jesus the Christ, we are Ruth's future, children of Life and children of Hope."

It is hard to believe that the planning committee for Women and the Word 1990 is having its second meeting next week. As we look ahead to next year's event with excitement and anticipation, we are fueled by the inspirational days at the end of March when so many gathered to affirm the gifts women bring to preaching and our responsibility to claim the future by preaching wholeness to our daughters and sons.

Kristy Klein

(Portions of this article are excerpted from Ann Whittings article in the April 1989 edition of *Zion's Herald*)

Celebrating a Strong Christian Stand

On February 28, one hundred and twenty years to the month after Anna Howard Shaw matriculated, the BUSTh community and friends gathered to dedicate the Anna Howard Shaw Window here at the School. The service began in Oxnam Lounge with a homily by Margaret Wiborg and concluded at the window with an original anthem by Ann MacKenzie (MSM'89), "My Soul Magnifies the Lord," followed by the formal presentation by Grace Imray of the United Methodist Church of the Tarrytowns to Dean Neville.

The original dedication service in December 1926, was held at the Beekman Avenue Methodist Protestant Church in North Tarrytown, New York. At that service there were three addresses, and the congregation rose and faced the window, draped with American flags, as it was unveiled. The window was given to the North Tarrytown Church by Anna's longtime companion, Lucy Anthony, niece of her colleague Susan B. Anthony. It depicts the angel and Mary Magdalene at the empty tomb. How appropriate that the image of a woman, the first person to bear the good news, be pictured in the window celebrating the first woman ordained in the Methodist tradition. The inscription in the window reads, "Commemorating the brave, strong Christian stand of this church in ordaining Anna Howard Shaw, whom other churches persistently refused to ordain. October 12, 1880."

In a called session of the trustees of the North Tarrytown church in 1880, Anna was made a member of this Methodist Protestant congregation, making possible her ordination in that

denomination and in that sanctuary two days later.

When the Methodist churches in Tarrytown merged, Anna's window was boxed up and stored. Years later, in preparation for a church auction, it was rediscovered by church member Grace Imray.

The Shaw Center first heard of the window in a brief article in the New York Conference Newsletter in 1985, but was in no position to respond. Later when Shaw Advisory Board member Lee Carpenter heard about the window, she pursued it. Correspondence with the United Methodist Church of the Tarrytowns led to their offering the window to the Shaw Center on the condition that it be displayed. Lee Carpenter made it financially possible, and, with much cooperation by former Dean Nesmith, Dean Neville, and Colleen McGinty from Building and Grounds, the 12 by 4 feet window was installed on the second floor landing.

The appropriateness of the landing for the window is evident in the plaque installed by the window, which quotes from Anna's autobiography, *The Story of a Pioneer*, "The theological school was on Bloomfield Street, and we students climbed three flights of stairs to reach our classrooms. Through lack of proper food, I had become too weak to ascend these stairs without sitting down once or twice to rest." Present day members of the BUSTh community are inspired by the window's beauty and are inspired to continue to be the church that takes a "strong, brave, Christian stand."

Margaret Wiborg



Early Announcement:

RE-IMAGING REDEMPTION

a symposium on feminist theology

- RITA NAKASHIMA BROCK
- GAIL COBRINGTON
- BARBARA GERLACH
- JACQUELYN GRANT
- CARTER HEYWARD
- DELORES WILLIAMS

Six leading women theologians and artists will each address the issue of re-imaging redemption from the perspective of women's experience. Lectures, panel discussion, art exhibit, poetry reading and concluding worship.

Register Early! Save These Dates!

Friday evening through Saturday afternoon

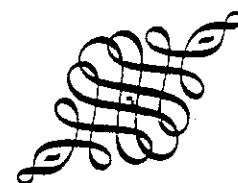
November 3-4, 1989

Boston University School of Theology

Seating limited to 200. Pre-registration required.

FEE: \$40.00 plus lunch Students: \$25.00 plus lunch

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR BROCHURES: Anna Howard Shaw Center
Box 81 - BUSTH
745 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02215
(617) 353-3075



Shall You Betray Me With A Kiss?

The Boston Cambridge Ministry in Higher Education is sponsoring a conference for therapists and clergy on sexual abuse entitled, "Shall You Betray Me With A Kiss?" The conference, which the Shaw Center has supported from its inception, will be held at Boston University on October 5-8, 1989. It will focus on the religious response to incest, child sexual abuse, and sexual abuse by clergy.

Among the speakers are Marie Fortune, who will speak on "Is Nothing Sacred? Clergy Sexual Abuse as Incest," and Mary Pellaur, speaking on "Religion and Incest: An Exploration of the Connections."

Literature describing the conference says that "incest and child sexual abuse are now beyond epidemic proportions in the frequency of their occurrence. We are only beginning

now to uncover the extent of the abuse and the magnitude of the damage both to the individual victims and to society as a whole....Healing and prevention depend on informed compassionate action on the part of clergy, counselors, and the public."

This event is the first national opportunity for counselors, clergy, survivors of abuse, and authorities in the field to discuss the issues and to develop effective strategies for prevention, intervention, and healing.

For more information, contact BCMHE, 735 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02215.

(This article was adapted from an article that appeared in the April 1989 edition of *Zion's Herald*)

Faculty Good News

As the academic year comes to a close, we celebrate with our women faculty who have received good news recently.

Carole Bohn, assistant professor of pastoral psychology, is expecting her book, *Christianity, Patriarchy, and Abuse*, coedited with Joanne Brown, to be in the bookstores this spring.

Linda Clark, assistant professor of sacred music, is in the midst of a three-year long project studying music programs in churches. She received a grant from the Lilly Endowment of Indianapolis to set up a study of the connection between worship and music in twenty-four United Methodist and Episcopal churches in New England.

Kathe Pfisterer Darr, assistant professor of Old Testament, was elected president of the New England Regional Society of Biblical Literature for 1989-90. In addition, she will chair a session of Israelite Prophetic Literature

Section when the Society of Biblical Literature holds its Annual Meeting this November in Anaheim, California. At commencement Kathe received the Metcalf Award, Boston University's honor for excellence in teaching. Her article, "Write or True? A Response to Ellen Francis Davis," recently appeared in *Signs and Wonders*, edited by J. Cheryl Exum and published by Scholars Press this year.

Jennifer Rike, assistant professor of theology, is publishing her Ph.D. dissertation, *Being and Mystery: Karl Rahner and the Essence of Theology*, in Harper and Row's Academic Book Series. She is also coediting a *Festschrift*, published by Fortress Press. It will have eighteen contributors and be entitled *Radical Pluralism: Studies in Honor of David Tracy*.

Dana Robert, assistant professor of missions, received a large grant from the Pew Charitable Trusts to take a sabbatical and research her book, *Women in Mission*. She will be on sabbatical in 1990-91.

Introducing Dean Neville...

At our last faculty meeting of the year, Dr. Merle Jordan led us in an Easter worship service celebrating the resurrection experience in which we have participated this academic year. Appreciation was expressed to our new dean, Bob Neville for his role in bringing us to this place. Because many readers of this newsletter have not had the opportunity to meet Dean Neville in person, we asked him to write a brief article for the Newsletter. Responses and/or questions can be sent directly to him or c/o the Newsletter. The Shaw Center is deeply appreciative of Dean Neville's leadership and support this year. We look forward to continued dialogue.

To the Anna Howard Shaw Center:

Few things have been as gratifying to me in my first year as dean of the School of Theology as discovering and participating in the work of the Anna Howard Shaw Center. You have uniquely combined the recovery and interpretation of the past of your namesake with a focus on the future development of women Christian clerics.

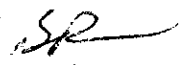
On one level, Christian feminism is a civil rights issue, arguing that women should have similar opportunities and supports to those that men enjoy, and that a society or church that fails to provide them deprives everyone, men as well as women, of the richness of shared experience. This is a perfectly valid argument, I believe, and it applies especially to the concerns to promote the welfare and acceptance of women in ministry.

On another level, women have a different Word to bring to Christianity, a profound experience and perspective that largely was systematically excluded from the ancient cult of Yahweh. Jesus failed to include it in outspoken terms when the opportunity presented itself. We are only beginning to hear the women's Word in the churches today.

Part of women's Word is about the priority of love over morals; this, in fact, is something the church has admitted from the beginning, though without any association with gender. Yet the point stands in some tension with our self-understanding here as the School of the Prophets. Our concern for social justice cannot be allowed to be diminished even though it cannot be allowed first place in the Christian life. By pointing out these things I by no means intended to suggest that the women's movement in the church is incompatible with Christianity or our own heritage here at the School. But it adds a new dimension; Christianity is incomplete without women's Word, which has hardly been heard; so is the community at the School of Theology.

I urge the Anna Howard Shaw Center to press forward with its work, alert to the unique contributions that women can make to Christianity in our time. In particular, there is a theological and homiletical work that cries to be done.

Sincerely,


Robert C. Neville, Dean
School of Theology

NEW RESOURCES 1988-89

The Anna Howard Shaw Center library is receiving many new resources, both from our resource fund and through the contributions of Anna's friends. We thank all of those who have contributed books, tapes, papers, and articles to the Shaw Library, and we encourage everyone to make use of our new resources, and to find good summer reading suggestions from this list.

- Blaming Others: Prejudice, Race, & Worldwide AIDS--Renee Sabatier
Where is God Now? Nuclear Terrorism, Feminism, & the Search for God--Juliana Casey
The Christology of Rosemary Radford Ruether--Mary Hembrow Snyder
The African Meeting House in Boston--William Parsons & Margaret Drew
Women in Parish Ministry: Stress & Support--Marian Coger
Sexual Assault & Abuse: A Clergy Handbook--Mary Pellauer et al
Toward a New Psychology of Women--Jean Baker Miller
Lasting Effects of Child Sexual Abuse--Elizabeth Wyatt & Gloria Powell
The Women's Dictionary of Symbols & Sacred Objects--Barbara Walker
Emerging Theology in Third World Perspective--Jung Young Lee
Sacred Dimensions of Women's Experience--Elizabeth Gray Dodson
Hispanic Women: Prophetic Voice in the Church--Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz & Yolanda Tarango
America's Original Sin: A Study Guide on White Racism--Jim Wallis
Horses Make a Landscape More Beautiful--Alice Walker
When Society Becomes an Addict--Ann Wilson Schaeff
The Women Came Early: A History of Women in the West Virginia Conference--Task Force
on Women's History Project of the West Virginia Conference of the U. M. Church.
Good Woman--Lucille Clifton
Our Dead Behind Us--Audre Lorde
Women-Church--Rosemary R. Ruether
Dreaming the Dark--Starhawk
Love's Prism--Alla Renee Bozarth
Cutting the Mustard--Marjorie Heins
Just a Sister Away--Renita Weems
Female Sexual Slavery--Kathleen Barry
Our Stunning Harvest--Ellen Bass
Ourselves, Growing Older--Doress & Siegal
Embodied Love--Paula Cooley et al
The Addictive Organization--Schaeff & Fassel
Black Foremothers--Dorothy Sterling
Weaving the Visions--Plaskow & Christ
Inheriting Our Mothers' Gardens--Russell et al
Song in a Weary Throat--Pauli Murray
When & Where I Enter--Paula Giddings
From a Broken Webb--Catherine Kellar
Journeys by Heart--R. Nakashima Brock
Black Womanist Ethics--Katie Cannon
Witches, Midwives, & Nurses--Ehrenreich & English
And God Loves Each One--A. Thompson Cook
Celebration of Discipline--Richard Foster
The Bible (Korean)
The Heart a Pendulum--L. Grant Palches
Keeping the Faith: Questions & Answers for the Abused Woman--Marie Fortune
Sweet Suffering: Woman as Victim--Natalie Shainess
Competition: A Feminist Taboo?--Miner & Longino
My Story's On: Ordinary Women/Extraordinary Lives--Paula Ross
The Dream of a Common Language--Adrienne Rich
A Daughter's Geography--Ntozake Shange
Sex, Sin, & Grace--Judith Plaskow
The Long Loneliness--Dorothy Day
Like One of the Family--Alice Childress
Las Mujeres--Nan Elasser et al
Those Preachin' Women--Ella Pearson Mitchell
Living in Sin?--John Shelby Spong
Sex & God--Linda Hurcombe
A Humming Under My Feet--Barbara Deming
Vetaher Libenu--Congregation Beth El
Blood, Bread, & Poetry--Adrienne Rich
Brown Girl, Brown Stones--Paule Marshall
Practicing Christianity--Margaret Miles
Is Nothing Sacred?--Marie Fortune
Women & Teaching--Maria Harris
The Courage to Heal--Bass & Davis
A Weave of Women--E. M. Broner
Personal Commitments--Margaret Farley
The Country Between Us--Carolyn Forché
When God was a Woman--Merlin Stone
Suspended in Silence--L. Mercer Rice
Women's Roots--June Stephenson

Iona, Land of Mystery and Promise

(This article also appeared in *United Church News*, a UCC Massachusetts Conference Edition)

"Why do so many Americans come to Iona?" the Scotswoman queried, clearly perplexed at the distance traveled and the regularity with which visitors from the United States populate this tiny Isle on the West Coast of Scotland.

One has only to step ashore after sixteen hours of weary travel time from Boston to know the answer. There is a mystery here, ancient and deep. It hangs in the mist, it murmurs in the wind, it rides on the waves. Home to St. Columba, Celtic Christianity, and the present day Iona Community, Iona retains the power of the past even as it nurtures the contemporary struggle for justice and peace in a world aching for wholeness.

Under the auspices of Cornerstone Foundation, a nonprofit organization that runs Duncraig, a house of peace and renewal, I spent five weeks last summer working at Duncraig. Despite the passage of time, my experiences remain vivid.

All of us yearn for a time to catch our breath, a time to take stock of the direction we have set for ourselves; indeed, a time to ask deep questions and linger over the answers. Arriving on Iona, my need for such a time was clear. Yet little did I know the gifts that lay before me.

Every day brought its own reward, and soon, the rhythm of the day itself began to work its magic. I began to appreciate more deeply Brother Lawrence's "practicing the presence of

God," as work and life became a holy mix of wholeness.

Ghandi once said, "It is the little things that catch our breath." And surely this was true for me. Often I found myself stunned into silence by the sight of sheep paused in absolute stillness, as though a holy presence had commanded their own awe-struck attention. Many times the incessant rain drove us indoors, only to reward the careful observer with rainbows so exquisite they took one's breath away. Many times the worship at the Abbey and the presence of new friends, united in community, opened me to the power of God present in each of us. Indeed, many times the diversity of those who came to this sacred Isle nudged me out of my American provincialism toward a deeper understanding of our world as a global village.

Though thousands make their way there each year, Iona is far from being a "scenic" travel stop. To journey there and drink deeply of its gifts require a heart open to mystery, and a willingness to let the Spirit take you where she will. If you too are in need of a time to "catch your breath" as well as a time to be "caught by the Spirit," perhaps Iona will one day bid you welcome. After all, a journey of a thousand miles begins with one step.

June Goudey

Shaw Scholar June Goudey is an Associate Member of the Iona Community, a member of Cornerstone Foundations Advisory Board and a Doctoral Candidate in Theology at BUSTh. For more information on Iona, you may write her at P.O. Box 4802, Framingham, MA 01701

UPCOMING EVENTS...

October 5-7, 1989: Shall You Betray Me With a Kiss? The religious response to incest and child sexual abuse, a collaborative effort of Boston area theological schools and survivor groups. Will be held at BUSTh.

Nov 9-12, 1989: The Shaw Center's first symposium in Feminist Theology, **Re-Imaging Redemption**. Participants include Rita Nakashama Brock, Gail

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745 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02215

Corrington, Carter Heyward, Barbara Gerlach, Jacqueline Grant, and Dolores Williams. More information on page 3.

March 22-23, 1990: WOMEN AND THE WORD 1990: Honoring Difference: Cross-Cultural Realities and Preaching. Dr. Christine Smith, Rev. Joan Martin, and Rev. Hae Sun Kim will be speaking at next year's preaching event, which will deal with the issues of God-language, Christology, and Biblical hermeneutics.

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SHAW CENTER NEWSLETTER Vol. 5, No. 3

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Anna's Birthday

On February 14, about one hundred friends of the Shaw Center gathered at Boston University's Castle to celebrate Anna Howard Shaw's birthday. The evening was a joyous event, complete with music by the Seminary Singers, statements made by Margaret Monjane from South Africa and Young Kim Hong from Korea about the "Anna Howard Shaws" in their lives; and the special guest appearances of Anna Oliver, the first woman admitted to BUSTH (played by Kristy Klein), and Anna Howard Shaw, who told the story of her ordination (played by Pam Estes). Anna would have been happy to see the many people who came out to celebrate her birth and her life, as well as the life of the Shaw Center. We have already reserved the Castle for next February 14!

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