

Women Called to Ministry

A Six-Session Study for The United Methodist Church

Writers

Ms. Delia Halverson, Christian Educator

The Rev. Kabamba Kiboko, Biblical Scholar

The Rev. Dr. Lacey Warner, Historical Scholar

The Rev. M. Lynn Scott, Facilitator/Editor

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Addendum

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*General Commission on the Status and Role of Women
in The United Methodist Church*



AddendumOne

Historical Timeline

(The timeline is an invitation to understand that our history in The United Methodist Church and its predecessor denominations is longer than 50 years.)

c. 1770

First woman is appointed as a class leader in America

1764

Mary Bosanquet (1739–1815)

Bosanquet risks her family’s support to nurture, preach and lead among the early Methodists in a context with no place for single women.

“From a child I have ever believed, God had appointed me for some work, in which I should be much blest if I was faithful.”

“Often have I panted after an outward, as well as inward, conformity to the will of God, greatly desiring to live as the first Christians did, when all that believed were of one soul, and counted not any of the things they possessed their own.” (A Letter to the Rev. Mr. Wesley by a Gentlewoman, London, 1764).

1817

A woman may exhort and hold prayer meetings but is denied a preaching license.

Early 19th century

Rebecca Jackson (1795–1871)

“In 1835, I was in the West... persecution was raging on every side. The Methodist ministers told the trustees not to let me speak in the church nor any of the houses. And nobody must go to hear me—if they did, they should be turned out of the church. This great persecution threw open doors for me. Even a wicked drunken man, when the members was afraid to let me speak in their houses and the people wanting to hear the word, he opened his house and said, ‘Let her come into my house and preach. I don’t belong to meeting.’ So when the people heard, they came and told me. I went. The house was filled and all around the house and the road each way. And at this time, I had as much upon me as my soul and body and spirit was able to bear. I was all alone, had nobody to tell my troubles to except the Lord. When I got up to speak to the people, and seeing [them] on the fence, on the road, in the grass, my heart seemed to melt within. I throwed myself on the Lord. I saw that night, for the first time, a Mother in the Deity.”

1819

Missionary and Bible Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church is established with auxiliary New York Female Missionary Society.

1841

First Methodist periodical for women begins publication

1847

A United Brethren Conference (White River) grants a woman (**Charity Opheral**) commendation to preach and a Local License to Preach in 1849 in The United Brethren Church.

1851

First woman (**Lydia Sexton, 1799–1894**) is voted as a Pulpit Speaker by the General Conference of The United Brethren Church.

1851

Sojourner Truth (1797–1883)

Active in Methodist and AME Zion churches, Truth is a leader in both suffrage and anti-slavery movements; made her famous “Ain’t I a Woman?” speech in 1851.

1855

Catherine Booth

“Who shall dare thrust women out of the church’s operation or presume to put my candle which God has lighted under a bushel?”

Mid-1800s

Julia Foote (1823–1900) (*See 1894*)

Foote risks her life and dignity to travel itinerantly as an African American woman preaching the gospel, which includes advocating for women’s ecclesiastic rights and racial reconciliation.

1857

United Brethren General Conference passes a resolution that no woman should be allowed to preach.

1866

Helenor M. Davison, is the first woman ordained a deacon by the Methodist Protestant Church (Northern Indiana Conference).

1869

Margaret Newton Van Cott, 1830–1914, is the first woman to be licensed to preach in The Methodist Episcopal Church.

1869

Founders of the Women’s Foreign Mission Society

Lilavati Singh, Isabella Thoburn and **Claira Swain** are among the first U.S.-sent women missionaries and teachers.

Lilavati Singh is an early pupil of missionary Isabella Thoburn and is the first Indian woman professor (and later vice principal) of Isabella Thoburn College for women in Lucknow, India.

Mid-1800s to early 20th century

The mission activity by women coincides with the increasing social activism of the foremothers, from the anti-slavery movement and later Prohibition, to collective bargaining and fair labor movements. The 20th Century feminist movement has its roots in this activity.

Societies for women active in mission are created by several Methodist denominations, including: Methodist Episcopal; United Brethren; Methodist Episcopal, South; Methodist Protestant; African Methodist Episcopal Zion; Evangelical Association; and African Methodist Episcopal Zion. The goal was to take Christianity (and education, child care, health care) to the world.

1870

Amanda Berry Smith (1837–1915)

The oldest of 13 children, Smith is born as a slave and risks the embarrassment and safety to travel through Europe, Asia and Africa preaching and singing the gospel.

“If ever the Lord did help me, He helped me that day. And the Spirit of the Lord seemed to fall on all the people. The preachers got happy. They wept and shouted ‘Amen!’ ‘Praise the Lord!’ At the close a number of them came to me and shook hands, and said, ‘God bless you, sister. Where did you come from? I would like to have you come on my charge.’ Another would say, ‘Look here, sister, when are you going home? God bless you. I would like to have you come to my place.’ And so it went. So after that many of my brethren believed in me, especially

as the question of ordination of women never was mooted in the Conference. But how they have advanced since then. Most of them believe in the ordination of women, and I believe some have been ordained. But I am satisfied with the ordination that the Lord has given me.”

1887

Anna Oliver (1840–1892)

“You know, I believe I was called by the Lord to study for the ministry. I told the Lord that no seminary would admit me; if one did, perhaps I would not be successful, and would only bring myself into unpleasant notoriety, and be abused by my enemies and rejected by friends. I was not anxious to make myself a martyr. I brought every argument against it I could find, but the Lord overturned them all and bid me go on.”

Late 1800s

Lucy Rider Meyer (1849–1922)

Becomes a physician when most medical schools bar their doors to women; revives the Deaconess movement and risks the disapproval of her denomination to provide training and ministry opportunities for women

1887

Anna Howard Shaw (1847–1919)

Becomes the second woman to graduate from Boston University School of Theology, behind Anna Oliver

1880

Women (**Anna Howard Shaw** and **Anna Oliver**) are denied ordination by Methodist Episcopal Church. When they approached Bishop Andrews about the next steps, he said there was nothing to do but to get out of the church. Anna Howard Shaw is ordained in the Methodist Protestant Church (New York Conference).

1884

Woman's ordination (**Anna Howard Shaw**) by Methodist Protestant Church is ruled out of order.

1888

Frances Willard (1839–1895)

Willard risks national criticism to advocate not only for woman's suffrage, but also the opportunity for women to receive training and use their talents in ministry to the world; elected by her Conference as a lay delegate to the General Conference in 1888, but is denied seating due to her gender.

1889

In response to the petition of women of the Central Illinois Conference, General Conference of the United Brethren Church, May 1889, approves the licensing and ordination of women. Two women (**Ella Niswonger**, **Maggie Elliott**) are granted license to preach the gospel, and Ella Niswonger is ordained.

Annual conference minutes report that on September 11, 1889, "Miss Ella Niswonger and Mrs. Maggie Elliott were

granted License to preach the gospel." Two days later, upon recommendation of the committee on Ordination, which found her "to be sound and clear in doctrine" and "in harmony with the doctrines of the church," Niswonger "was received into the itinerancy."

Reporting in the *Religious Telescope* (November 20, 1889) on the conference at which he presided, Bishop E. B. Kephart wrote:

Two very intelligent Christian ladies were licensed to preach at this session, and the first woman ordained to elders' orders by order of an annual conference in the history of the denomination. Is the millennium dawning? God grant it.

Woman elder is ordained in Methodist Protestant Church

Late 1800s

Belle Harris Bennett (1852–1922)

Bennett risks the disapproval of her denomination to encourage ministry opportunities for women as well as partnership between races in the South. Her energetic efforts bring about the granting of full lay status to women in the Southern Methodist Church and helps to co-found a school for training young women missionaries (currently Scarritt Bennett Center in Nashville).

1892

Three lay and one clergy women delegates are denied seating at General Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church.

1892

Eugenia St. John

“There is a serious question before you... Dare this conference stand before the omen given by God and frustrate his will for the upbuilding of his church by your prejudices?... The great question of the future is whether you will have power to conquer the forces of sin, and I tell you it will need every woman that can be found to stand side by side with the good-minded men in this work if the church is to be triumphant.”

1892

First women delegates are seated: in 1892, at the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church; in 1893, at the General Conference of the United Brethren in Christ Church; in 1904, at the Methodist Episcopal Church (where women were also granted laity rights); and in 1922, at the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

1894

First woman (**Julia A. J. Foote**) is ordained deacon in the A.M.E. Zion Church (*See mid-1800s*)

Was the millennium indeed dawning? Perhaps, if we recognize that dawn is a lengthy process rather than a particular point in time. Before the turn of the 20th century, the church reached two more milestones. In 1894, Julia A. J. Foote became the first woman to be ordained a deacon in the A.M.E. Zion Church. That same year, on September 7, the Miami Annual Conference (Ohio) of the United Brethren in Christ authorized the ordination of **Sarah Dickey**, although the

ordination did not actually take place until Dickey was able to attend the Conference on September 6, 1986. (*News article for the General Conference, 2000*)

1896

Woman (**Sarah Dickey**) is ordained by the United Brethren in Christ (Miami Annual Conference).

1901

First clergywoman delegate is seated at the General Conference of the United Brethren of Christ Church

1904

Women are granted laity rights and admitted to Methodist Episcopal Church General Conference

Early 1900s

Mary McLeod Bethune (1875–1955)

Dr. Bethune risks impoverishment to start a school initially for young African American girls to educate, encourage and empower them for leadership and ministry in the world (currently the UMC’s Bethune-Cookman College, Daytona Beach, Fla.). She is an advisor to several American presidents and a champion for racial equality.

1910

Women’s laity rights are denied by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church South; women are seated in 1922.

1913

Fanny Jackson Coppin

“I never rose to recite in my classes at Oberlin but I felt that I had the honor of the whole African race upon my shoulders. I felt that, should I fail, it would be ascribed to the fact that I was colored... Slavery made us poor, and its gloomy, malicious shadow tends to keep us so...”

1920

Methodist Episcopal Church officially extends to women the local preacher’s license, the first step to ordained ministry.

The year 1920 marked significant progress for the Methodist Episcopal Church and its recognition of women’s gifts. In that year, not only did the U.S. ratify the 19th Amendment granting woman suffrage, but the M.E. Book of Discipline officially extended to women the local preacher’s license, the first step to ordained ministry. (*News article written for General Conference, 2000*)

Then in 1924, this changes.

1924

Methodist Episcopal Church women are given limited clergy rights as “local” ordination

1927

Florence S. Teed

“A good minister of Jesus Christ, we will all agree is first ordained in Him, and for Him to preach in His gospel to all [people] everywhere. After thirty years of preaching

in nooks, crannies and pulpits of this and other lands, it is my humble observation that ‘the people’s choice’ is not for aesthetics, not intellectual gymnastics but for guidance to secure divine help to meet the trying tangibles NOW.”

1938

Thelma Stevens

Thelma Stevens, European-American native of Mississippi (head of Methodist Women’s societies from 1936–1976), is one of the early white Civil Rights activists in the former Methodist Church. In this year she organizes the first truly interracial conference for Methodist women, at historically black Paine College in Georgia. The main topic of discussion is desegregating the South. At the 1944 General Conference, just five years after the church split rather than desegregate, she tries unsuccessfully to get conference committee meetings moved to places where black delegates, as well as whites, are welcomed.

1939

As the first woman named theological professor at a North American Seminary, **Dr. Georgia Harkness** risks her career to advocate for women’s ecclesiastic rights including ordination. She is a social justice advocate in positions that are bold and prophetic.

1944

Women’s Division of the Board of Missions of Methodist Church forms a Committee on the Status of Women

1946

Women are denied ordination in the newly organized Evangelical United Brethren Church (merger of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ and the Evangelical Church)—a step backward.

Of course, for every few steps forward, it sometimes seems that we take a step back. Indeed, in 1946, when the Church of the United Brethren in Christ and the Evangelical Church merged to become the Evangelical United Brethren Church, women were denied ordination. (*News article written for General Conference, 2000*)

1953

Margaret Henrichsen

“The more families I got to know, the more people came to trust me, the heavier the load and the less time for study, meditation, and creative work... What little time I could get for real study was further trespassed upon by glaring needs in the house; floors that had to be swept or washed, windows that had become so smoky they cried out to be washed, some ironing and mending—although I did as little as I possibly could. Yes, the trouble was that having chosen to be the minister I also had to be ‘her wife.’”

1956

General Conference of the Methodist Church declares that “women are eligible for all orders of the ministry and full conference membership,” thereby granting full clergy rights. **Maud Keister Jensen** is the first one granted such rights on May 18, when the Central Pennsylvania

Conference meets. As other conferences meet that year, a total of 27 women receive full rights.

(See Addendum Four: General Conference 1956)

1967

First woman, Margaret Henrichsen, is appointed as district superintendent

1968

The United Methodist Church is created through union of the former Methodist and Evangelical United Brethren churches; new denomination affirms full clergy rights for women.

“In 1968, full clergy rights for women were affirmed at the union of the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church to form The United Methodist Church.” (*News article written for General Conference 2000*)

1968

Women’s Division (currently works with United Methodist Women) asks the church to create a study commission to document involvement of women in the total life of the church.

1972

General Conference of The United Methodist Church creates and funds an action-oriented commission to address the discrimination against women at all levels of the denomination.

1976

General Conference continues the work of the 1972 General Conference by establishing the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women as a standing commission.

1976

Ten women clergy are elected delegates to the 1976 General Conference of The United Methodist Church.

1980s

Theresa Hoover, an African-American and head of the Women's Division, criticizes paternal missionary styles, U.S./Western policies and practices in developing countries, and corporate investments in South Africa.

1980

The North Central Jurisdiction elects **the Rev. Marjorie Matthews (1916–1986)** (ordained elder at the age of 49), the first woman bishop in The United Methodist Church. She is assigned to the Wisconsin Conference.

1983

Alice Yun Chai

“I have come to realize that the diversity and complexity of women’s life experiences are firmly grounded in the domination process, and that all systems of inequality are interconnected. It is not so much the differing viewpoints among women, but our refusal to admit

to the privileges and power created and perpetuated in our society based on those differences, which is the chief cause of division among women.”

1983

Thelma Stevens (head of Methodist Women's societies from 1936–1976)

“You have many roots, many colors, many cultures... You are women and men - fully equal and fully responsible - in God’s created Universe. Never count the cost - but remember that God, the Creator, sent [Jesus] to die that you might live and serve - healing the hurts of people - bringing peace with justice to all humankind.”

1984

The Western Jurisdiction elects **the Rev. Leontine T. C. Kelly**, an African American, as the UMC's first woman of color bishop. She is assigned to the California-Nevada Conference.

1993

Carole Cartwright

“The only thing I feel now is an excitement because I don’t think I’ve reached where I’m supposed to be yet. I’m still moving on that journey and I keep coming to crossroads, but I’m still waiting for the revelation of what it is I’m ultimately supposed to contribute. Along the way, I hope I’m doing something... I’m still on the way to where I’m supposed to be spiritually, and I’m enjoying the trip.”

1996

First woman bishop (**Judith Craig**) delivers the Episcopal Address to the General Conference

“Twenty years after the first women clergy were elected delegates to the 1976 General Conference, the first woman bishop was named to deliver the Episcopal Address to the 1996 General Conference. Judith Craig, our second woman bishop, delivered that address on April 16.” (*News article from General Conference 2000*)

The Southeast Jurisdiction of the United States elects their first woman bishop (**Charlene Kammerer**); all five Jurisdictions now have bishops who are women.

2000

General Conference reaffirms the need to pursue full participation of all women in the denomination and outlines a vision for working toward that goal.

2001

Clara Biswas, a missionary from Bangladesh serving in Cambodia, works with poor children in Phnom Penh. She is part of a new wave of missionaries serving through the church.

2004

Western Jurisdiction elects the **Rev. Minerva Carcaño** as the denomination’s first Latina bishop. A total of six women are elected as bishops, the largest number of women ever elected in a single year.

2005

Rosemarie Wenner is elected bishop and assigned to Germany. She is the first woman bishop elected outside the U.S.

2006

There are 16 active and four retired women bishops serving in The United Methodist Church.

AddendumTwo

Website Links

General Commission on the Status and Role of Women

www.gcsr.org

Use this website for resources on women in The United Methodist Church.

GCSRW's mission "is to challenge The United Methodist Church at all levels to work for full and equal participation of women in the total life of the denomination, including ordination of women, equal access to policy-making and recognition that Jesus Christ calls men and women alike to salvation, liberation, discipleship and service in church and society. *(From "About GCSRW" on the website)*

General Commission on Archives and History

www.gcah.org

Use this website to discover the history of The United Methodist Church.

The purpose of GCAH "is to promote and care for the historical interest of The United Methodist Church. We maintain an archives and library in which historical records and materials relating to The United Methodist Church are preserved and are made available for public and scholarly use. *(From "Home" page in the website)*

General Board of Global Ministries

www.gbgm-umc.org

Use this website to find information on ministries with women and children in the world (go to "Our Work" and click on "Women and Children").

Use this website to find resources from the Women's Division, the agency that supports the United Methodist Women's units. *(Go to "Get Connected" and click on "United Methodist Women")*

The General Board of Global Ministries is the global mission agency of The United Methodist Church, its annual conferences missionary conferences and local congregations. The Gospel—the Good News of God's love and gifts of redemption and reconciliation—empowers the work of mission.

Making disciples, building up the church, alleviating suffering, and promoting justice, freedom and peace are Global Ministries' mission goals. *(From the website)*

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry
www.gbhem.org

Use this website for information on clergywomen in The United Methodist Church.

“The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry leads and serves The United Methodist Church in the recruitment, preparation, nurture, education, and support of Christian leaders—lay and clergy—for the work of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.” *(From “Mission Statement” on the website)*

Addendum **Three**

General Conference 1956

You may use this material as a Reader's Theatre or as information from the proceedings of the 1956 General Conference concerning the vote on full rights for women in the Church.

Narrator I	<i>(male or female)</i>
Narrator II	<i>(male or female)</i>
Marvin Stuart	<i>(male)</i>
Dewey Muir	<i>(male)</i>
Allen B. Rice	<i>(male)</i>
Henry Lyle Lambdin	<i>(male)</i>
Joe E. Bowers	<i>(male)</i>
Everett W. Palmer	<i>(male)</i>
C. Anderson Davis	<i>(male)</i>
Lynn J. Radcliffe	<i>(male)</i>
Mrs. Henry D. Ebner	<i>(female)</i>
Mrs. Edwin S. Anderson	<i>(female)</i>
James S. Chubb	<i>(male)</i>
Lynn H. Corson	<i>(male)</i>
Dr. Georgia Harkness	<i>(female)</i>

Narrator I:

Women were serving as lay pastors and Local Elders prior to 1956. Being a Local Elder allowed women to serve as pastors yet not have membership in the annual conference. Without this membership, without full clergy rights, women were not guaranteed an appointment and could not vote on clergy matters of the annual conference.

The 1956 General Conference asked the question, "Should The Methodist Church grant full clergy rights to women?"

In every age, the church is challenged to listen deeply to God's vision and to live it fully. In the May 7th session of the 1956 General Conference many questions were raised:

"Would it be possible to appoint women to local churches if full rights are granted?"

“Can we agree to something in principle, yet not live it out in practical ways?”

“Should full rights be given to single women, and not to married women due to household responsibilities?”

“Is the responsibility regarding an appointment of a woman that of the Bishop and Cabinet or of the local church’s acceptance of a woman?”

and

“Does the Gospel speak to us on this matter?”

Narrator II: Listen... listen to some voices of the 1956 General Conference. And let’s ask ourselves, “How do we hear God’s vision today and act on it with courage and trust?”

Male Voice: Marvin Stuart, California-Nevada Conference. “...we were up against two decisions; one, is this right as a matter of principle, the matter of full clergy rights for women. I think that almost, if not all, were persuaded that in principle we could not object to it. The question then... was this, are the difficulties, the practical difficulties in the way of this principle insurmountable?” (p. 520)

Male Voice: Dewey Muir, Illinois Conference. “The ability to preach and to give leadership in the church is not in any sense determined by sex. This is acknowledged. That some women have done excellent and outstanding work and service, is recognized. Ability to preach, to give leadership, have little to do with the real issue of granting full ministerial rights to women.”
“It is the judgment of the ministerial members of the Committee on the Ministry that such request as has come before the General Conference is based upon a general theory that basically no privilege should be granted one sex which is denied to the other. In that noble sentiment we share. However, we are facing the realistic problems of administration of the law of the church.”

“Under our appointive system, every ministerial member of an annual conference must be appointed to a pastoral charge or some special appointment of the Conference, whether there is a charge that wants that minister or not. I am keenly away of the problems involved in appointing some men to churches, yet no church has said, ‘No, we just do not want a man preacher.’ [Laughter] Yet in trying to appoint even good women ministers... it is not uncommon for the answer to be, ‘We just do not want a woman minister.’”

“Practically, until those demanding such legislation are committed not only to legislation but to the receiving of women traveling preachers, not in general but in particular as pastors of their own particular charges, we are of the opinion that our present legislation which does provide for ordination of women... is best for our particular church.” (p. 522)

- Male Voice:** Allen B. Rice, Northwest Indiana Conference. “I am a district superintendent... I am against discrimination, any kind of discrimination, and particularly that which throws in the lap of the cabinet the solution of such a ticklish and difficult problem as would be involved in the matter of deciding on their part whether or not a woman in such a position was or was not capable of being appointed. I think that is the kind of difficult spot to put the cabinet of any Conference in without the action of the Conference in particular.” (p. 523)
- Male Voice:** Henry Lyle Lambdin, Newark Conference. “The tendency in the discussion of the question concerning the admission of women into full conference membership tends to drift always to the administrative level. The arguments seem to center around the perplexity of the district superintendent who is trying to promote the Reverend Jane Doe, let us say, from Hardscrabble Circuit to the First Church of Licksillet. ‘Pity the poor district superintendent’ is the sum and substance of most of the arguments that have been presented.”
“... is this conference prepared to say in the year of our Lord 1956 that no woman, however well qualified educationally, whatever demonstration she has given of gifts and grace and loveliness, no woman shall be called to God, to spiritual leadership within that part of the organizational structure of The Methodist Church that we call the Annual Conference?”
“Are we prepared to say that no woman regardless of her qualification is not fit to be a member of an Annual Conference? That is the question before us.” (p. 524)
- Male Voice:** Joe E. Bowers, Oklahoma Conference. “A good deal of talk has been made about the predicament of the district superintendent in this matter. He is not the one who is on the spot at all. Actually it is the local church. I think it should be made perfectly clear here... that if we support this we should support it with the understanding that it means the local church is willing to accept the appointment of a lady as a minister.” (p. 526)
- Male Voice:** Everett W. Palmer, Southern California-Arizona Conference. “We need to do this thing and we will have to do it some day. Why not do it now and do it graciously?” (p. 526)
- Narrator II:** At one point in the session, a proposal was suggested that single women and widows be granted full clergy rights, while married women would not have the same privileges.
- Male Voice:** C. Anderson Davis, East Tennessee Conference. “In our own Annual Conference of the five women who are preachers, four of them are married women. These four married women have no children, or no home responsibility. It seems there are many women who are married who would be more capable of carrying on this ministry than the women who are not married and those who are working.” (p. 525)

- Male Voice:** Lynn J. Radcliffe, Ohio Conference. “The principle, Mr. Chairman, is a great one. Let us not be confused on this issue. Let us not lose our way in the multiplicity of amendment and parliamentary situation. The principle is, does Jesus Christ treat woman as a child of God, entitled to the same privileges and rights as a man?” (p. 526)
- Male Voice:** C. Anderson Davis, East Tennessee Conference. “I do not believe, Bishop and members of the Conference, that we should discriminate against any of the women. It is the same type of thing that prevailed when we men were trying to get suffrage, to vote. If we discriminate against our women in this particular thing it does away with the whole principle of women having equal rights in any field. Women who go into the field of medicine, into the field of law and similar fields do not crowd it and do not create a problem.” “I do not feel they would create a problem in the ministry. I feel that they would bring much dignity and add much to it. The district superintendents and the bishop have great problems at times placing our men who are in the ministry, and I am sure they would not have any more trouble placing the women. [*Laughter*]” (p. 525)
- Narrator II:** It was later in the conversation that the first woman spoke on the issue. Though speaking against the full rights for women, she did raise some important questions.
- Female Voice:** Mrs. Henry D. Ebner, New Jersey Conference. “But before we vote on this question... to change our ‘Discipline’ [we] would have to answer yes to three very important questions, and I submit them in all seriousness. First of all, if I voted yes, I would be able to say to my district superintendent, ‘Yes, send me a woman pastor.’ Secondly, the ministers as well as the laymen would have to say, ‘I am willing to serve under a woman district superintendent,’ for if this goes through, we are not going to discriminate. [*Applause*]” “Furthermore, bishop, my last question... would be this: We are willing to elect a woman bishop. Now, you may think that is rather exaggerated, but, believe me, it is not. You have had reference to the power of womanhood. I leave that to your own thinking.” (p. 528)
- Narrator II:** The second woman to speak was in favor of full rights.
- Female Voice:** Mrs. Edwin S. Anderson, New England Conference. “Women are accepted as candidates for the ministry and are permitted to graduate from seminaries. They are permitted to perform all the services that men ministers perform, and they are required to attend the sessions of annual conference. Each woman minister brings her lay delegate. The lay delegate is permitted to sit within the bower of the church and has the privilege of the floor; but the woman minister has no privileges.” “‘A woman Conference member is guaranteed an appointment’ is another

one of the objections. But why not for women as well as for men, if they have equal opportunities and equal qualifications?” (p. 528)

“The churches which have given full clergy rights to women have been greatly pleased with the results. The Methodist Church has always been able to adapt itself to change and should set an example in granting equal rights and opportunities of service to all its members, regardless of sex.” (pp. 528–529)

Narrator II: The conversation was drawing to a close.

Male Voice: James S. Chubb, Nebraska Conference. “Mr. Chairman and members of the Conference: We are right now to the crucial issue which all of us recognize, as to how you vote. I suppose the issue is this, whether we are taking the daring or brand new opportunity to secure the type of woman who heretofore thought she could not actively enter the ministry.” (p. 529)

Narrator II: The presiding Bishop, Bishop King, called for the vote by a show of hands. The proposed legislation was passed, without a standing vote, without a ballot.

And in a moment of gracious hospitality, the following dialogue was heard.

Male Voice: Lynn H. Corson, New Jersey Conference. “Mr. Chairman, this is a day of particular triumph and significance to one of the members of this group who for many years has been looking forward to this moment when full clergy rights for women would be voted by this General Conference. I refer to Dr. Georgia Harkness. {*Applause*}

“Let us salute Dr. Georgia Harkness. [*The audience arose and applauded.*]” (p. 534)

Female Voice: Dr. Georgia Harkness. “I must have a moment to thank you for this very wonderful expression.

“Some of you wondered why I didn’t speak this afternoon. It says in the Bible there is a time to speak and a time to be silent. I thought we would do better if we let the rest of you speak. Thank you. [*Applause*]” (p. 534)

Reader’s Theatre was written by Rev. Lynn Scott, Wisconsin Conference, 2006. Quotes are taken from the Daily Christian Advocate, General Conference, 1956, The Methodist Church. Page numbers are in parentheses. Copies of this section of the Daily Christian Advocate can be obtained from the General Commission on Archives and History (www.gcqh.org) of The United Methodist Church.

Addendum**Four**

Bibliography *(Annotated)*

Biblical

Anderson, Gary A. *The Genesis of Perfection: Adam and Eve in Jewish and Christian Imagination* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001).

In this book, Anderson demonstrates that Jews understand Adam and Eve in light of the Torah and the Promised Land while Christians understand them in light of Christ and Mary.

Barr, James. "One Man, or All Humanity?" in Athalya Brenner and J. W. van Henten (eds), *Recycling Biblical Figures: Papers Read at a NOSTER Colloquium in Amsterdam*, 12–13 May 1997 (Leiderdorp, The Netherlands, 1999, pp. 3–21).

In this article, Barr argues that the Hebrew term *ʾadam* is mainly a male concept although at times this can include women when they are with men.

Coffey, Kathy. *Hidden Women of the Gospels* (New York: Crossroad, 1997). ISBN 0-8245-1561-7.

In this book, Kathy Coffey names several unnamed women of the Gospels. She brings these women to life in a way that compels the reader to see them in a different light.

Clines, David J. A. "ʾadam, The Hebrew for 'Human, Humanity': Response to James Barr," *Vetus Testamentum* 3(2003): 297–310.

In this article, Clines challenges Barr's argument. He maintains that the term *ʾadam* is not gendered; it refers to humanity or to an individual human regardless of their sex.

Frymer-Kensky, Tikva. "Woman (and Man) in the First Creation Story," in *Women in Scripture*, 175.

In this article, Tikva conducts a close reading of the first creation story and concludes that the Hebrew term *ʾadam* should be understood as a "gender-inclusive word."

Levine, Amy-Jill. "Canaanite Woman," in *Women in Scripture* (ed. Carol Meyers, Toni Craven and Ross S. Kraemer; Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 2000), 413.

In this short comment on the daughter of the Canaanite woman, Levine highlights the centrality of parental intercession.

Meyers, Carol “Eve,” in *Women in Scripture*, 81.

In this brief article, Meyers reexamines Hebrew terms related to childbearing and male domination. She joins feminist biblical scholars who interpret the “male rule over the woman” as a rule related to sexuality.

Rashkow, Ilona N. *Upon the Dark Places: Anti-Semitism and Sexism in English Renaissance Biblical Translation*. (Bible and Literature Series 28; Sheffield: Almond Press, 1990). ISBN 1850752516.

This book is an excellent study concerning how anti-Semitism and sexism affected English Renaissance biblical translation. Rashkow demonstrates that poetic differences between the Hebrew text and the English translations are politically inspired.

Trible, Phyllis. “Eve and Adam: Genesis 2-3 Reread” in *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion* (ed. Judith Plaskow and Carol P. Christ; San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1979).

In this article, Tribble examines the structure of Genesis 1 and 2 and concludes that the creation of male first and female last form a circle composition whereby the two are parallel since in the Hebrew literature, the main concerns of a unit frequently stand at the beginning and the end in an inclusion device.

----- “Not a Jot, Not a Title: Genesis 2-3 after Twenty Years,” in *Eve and Adam: Jewish, Christian and Muslim Readings on Genesis and Gender* (ed. Kristen E. Kvan, Linda Schearing and Valerie H. Zeigler; Bloomington: Indiana University, 1999), 439.

In this article, Tribble argues that *háadam* indicates a sexually undifferentiated creature: neither male (nor female) nor a combination of the two.

History

Current, Angella. *Breaking Barriers: An African-American Family and the Methodist Story*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001. ISBN: 0687070368

Just as *Roots* told the story of the African-American experience in the United States, *Breaking the Barriers* illustrates the experience of African-Americans within United Methodism, and the important roles that faith, the church and family played in molding the character and work of numerous individuals throughout the denomination.

On July 19, 1984, Leontine Current Kelly was elected bishop of The United Methodist Church, making her the first African-American woman to become a bishop within a major American religious denomination. *Breaking the Barriers* recounts the story of her journey and that historic achievement. (Cokesbury.com)

Cracknell, Kenneth and White, Susan J. *An Introduction to World Methodism*. Cambridge University Press, 2005. ISBN: 052152170X

With over 75 million currently practicing Methodists worldwide, this book treats Methodism as a global religious tradition, examining its rich diversity as well as

the core beliefs and attitudes that all Methodists share. It serves as an introduction to the patterns of Methodist life, demonstrating how the religion has developed from British and American roots in different cultural contexts. In addition to the lasting traditions of John and Charles Wesley, *An Introduction to Methodism* reflects the on-going contribution of Methodism to the ecumenical movement and inter-religious relations. Its analysis includes abundant resources encouraging further study. (*Cokesbury.com*)

Schmidt, Jean Miller. *Grace Sufficient: A History of Women in American Methodism 1760-1968*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999. ISBN: 0687156750

Histories of women and American religion have tended to focus on women's religious activities rather than on women's religious lives. Studies of early American religion and spirituality have usually depended on the journals and sermons of male preachers. In order to understand the religious lives of ordinary Methodist women, Jean Miller Schmidt has looked at their diaries, letters, spiritual autobiographies, and the accounts of their pious lives and holy deaths that appeared as obituaries in publications like the *Methodist Magazine*. These powerful stories of faith are part of the shared history of Methodist people. (*Cokesbury.com*)

Warner, Lacey. *Saving Women: Retrieving Evangelistic Theology and Practice*. Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2007.

Saving Women is a much-needed study of women's contributions to the theology of evangelism. Through a careful consideration of the primary sources of six Protestant women ministering in America from 1800–1950, this historical and theological study demonstrates that these women combined verbal proclamation with other historic Christian practices in their roles as preacher, visitor, missionary, educator, activist, and reformer. (*Amazon.com*)

Contemporary (our life since 1956)

Craig, Judith. *The Leading Women: Stories of the First Women Bishops of The United Methodist Church*. Nashville, Abingdon, 2004. ISBN: 0687088380

Bishop Judith Craig interviews all of the living United Methodist women bishops and weaves their reflections together to tell the Church, especially young women and those interested in ministry, the stories of these pioneers at the episcopal level. Each bishop has been asked to reflect on her early life, her education, her call to ministry, how she emerged as a leader, and what she identifies in looking back that helped shape how she carries out her role today. (*Cokesbury.com*)

Hawkins, Pamela, Marion Jackson, Susan W.N. Ruach, eds., *Courageous Spirit: Voices from Women in Ministry*. Nashville: The Upper Room, 2005.

This collection of worship resources and personal reflections from clergywomen across The United Methodist Church offers a unique glimpse into the calling, commitment and courage of women in leadership.

Thompson, Patricia. *Courageous Past—Bold Future: The Journey Toward Full Clergy Rights for Women in The United Methodist Church*. Nashville: General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of The United Methodist Church, 2006.

The year 2006 marks the 50th anniversary of the historic decision in 1956 to accord full clergy rights to women clergy in The Methodist Church. [This book] chronicles this historic journey of passion, struggle, courage and hope. Thompson begins by recounting the stories of the 27 women from 19 annual conferences who were received on probation at the 1956 General Conference, as well as three women elders from The Methodist Protestant Church still serving that year. She also tells the story of women elders in the Evangelical United Brethren Church leading up to the 1968 merger with The Methodist Church to form The United Methodist Church. Subsequent chapters relate first-person accounts of more than 280 women who were the first in their annual conferences or central conferences to receive full clergy rights. In the United States, these are the stories of the first woman in every annual conference in every ethnic group represented in that conference to receive full clergy rights. *Courageous Past—Bold Future* is a historic book. *(back cover copy)*