

Testimonials from the 2002 Come to the Water Conference in Colorado Springs

Janet M. Peifer, Editor

Yesterday on my drive to church, I flipped on the radio and strains of "This is the air I breathe," (Rebecca St. James) filled my car. I had a wonderful flashback of a room filled with 500 women's voices and the presence of the Holy Spirit in Colorado Springs. God certainly was with us at the Come to the Water Conference and multiplied what any mere mortals could have done in the preparation process. Two weeks after the conference I preached a sermon titled, "The Great Company of Preachers" from Psalm 68:11 (The Lord gave the word; great was the company of the women who proclaimed it). I shared a testimony of the conference with my congregation, and highlighted women from many centuries who have faithfully preached God's word.

To hear testimonies from others who attended the conference, I randomly selected names from our attendance list. My heart was warmed as I read them. Below are portions of those testimonies. Be blessed as you read them and if you attended the conference be sure to share your testimony with one or two others.

From Donna Murphy: *This is my third time to attend...and once again, I went home spiritually uplifted, refreshed and energized with new ideas. In particular I was motivated by the workshops...all four I attended gave fresh information and motivation for my ministry.*

From Brenda Wahl: *As a student just getting into the process of ordination and never having had much exposure to women pastors, the Come to the Water conference was so helpful and insightful. It was very meaningful to see so many ordained women in one place from several different denominations. Not only was I encouraged in my call, but I was able to gather a wealth of literature, as well as names and titles for future reference as I begin to teach and model what that call means.*

PUT THIS ON YOUR CALENDAR

6th International Wesleyan/Holiness
Women Clergy Conference
April 15-18, 2004
Cincinnati, Ohio

From Kris Shapiro: *This was my first conference. I did not realize there was such a caliber of women in ministry that came together to share their knowledge and minister to other women trying to find their way in ministry. I am working on my degree in Bible college and at times questioned if I was going in the right direction and why? Outside of my husband, I have not received any great encouragement in my pursuit. I came back knowing for sure I am headed in the right direction and was able to meet some women who ministered to me by giving me great motivation. I am not from any of the sponsoring denominations. I heard about the conference through a friend. Thanks for reaching across any boundaries that might exist outside the conference and allowing the Holy Spirit to minister to all. I hope to bring a friend with me to your next conference.*

From Sarah Lowenberg: *As a college senior and heading out into ministry, this was a wonderful encouragement to a "new" woman in ministry. I went just looking to learn more about women in ministry and I came away with so much more. The "down" time I spent with women I met at the conference and the women I traveled with allowed me to learn to know them, and, though shocking to me, God clarified my own call while chatting with a new friend. I thank God for my time in Colorado Springs and look forward to the next time.*

From Janine Metcalf: *As an ordained minister currently seeking a senior pastorate, I personally needed to "come to the water." My spirit was dry and disheartened by a series of positive church interviews with no results. I determined to absorb all the conference had to offer. Thankfully, the speakers and workshop leaders did not allow dialogue to descend into a pity party. They acknowl-*

(continued on page 2)



Testimonials *(continued from page 1)*

edged the sickness of sexism within the church, but at the same time inspired us to pray and embrace our calls with holy boldness. One poignant moment was hearing evangelist Elaine Pettie give her testimony in a workshop. While she spoke, her husband silently prayed for her in the back corner of the room. This blessed example of love and mutuality prompted me to lift a prayer of gratitude for my husband's partnership in the endeavor to heed God's call.

From Rachel Klammer: *I went to the conference alone and found myself talking to women of different denominations. It was comforting to find out that the problems I thought were unique, were not. I had been in a desert of soul for a long time...but while sitting at lunch a woman at my table told me God wanted her to tell me something. The message was, "Don't fix it, faith it!" I remember that phrase now when those problems arise and take a step back rather than charging in with my fix-it mentality. Thank you Carolyn and Valerie for being God's instrument of peace to my soul. I am no longer in the desert and my soul is refreshed!*

From Connie Kinser: *My sincerest thanks to the H. Frances Davidson Scholarship Fund which supplied the money I needed to go to the Come to the Water Conference. It was a time to be refreshed and encouraged through inspiring workshops and to be confirmed and challenged through the anointed worship times. I came home from the conference with a new sense of ministry, hope, power, and freedom because where the Spirit of the Lord is, I will find these treasures.*

From Sandi Burroughs: *I didn't know what to expect of this conference, but I told Rev. Bonnie Brann that if I came for nothing more than her seminar on Staff/Team Relationships it was all worth it. But I also enjoyed meeting colleagues from all over the nation and appreciated the preachers at each service. I am dedicated to getting on with what God called me to do, no matter what others think! Thanks to all who had a hand in making this conference such a blessing to me!*

From Brenda Bair: *It was a blessing to be able to "Come To The Water" once again, where I renewed friendships, made new friends and embraced sisters in ministry. We shared our victories and our failures, we rejoiced together, we cried together and we laughed together. We encouraged one another and we affirmed each other. But most importantly we covered each other in prayer for the journey that each will travel with God. We left Colorado Springs rejoicing because we did not leave the same as we came. I Came to the Water and I was refreshed.*

Thank you for providing the drink that so many of us needed. I am looking forward to revisiting that Well that never runs dry in Cincinnati!

From Cathy Stonehouse: *Come to the Water, a wonderful place for connecting with former students, women with whom I worked years ago, and with new friends. What a privilege to hear the good things God is doing in their lives, and then be able to pray together about the challenges they face. The mutual encouragement of just being together and enjoying one another was rich. How I enjoyed the excellent preaching, helpful workshops, and joy filled worship. I will not soon forget the beauty of nearly 500 women, lifting their voices, a cappella, in harmony, adoration, and openness. What a joy to blend my voice into that love gift to our Lord.*

From Barbara Blix: *My attendance at "Come to the Water" did things for me that are almost indescribable. The day before we convened, I found my elderly mother (she lives with me) on the floor of her bedroom. She was hospitalized that day and I had nearly decided to cancel the trip. The last few months of caring for her have been very taxing and I was so tired. Both her doctor and my husband encouraged me to go ahead and attend. I did...and God was so close to me in every possible way. The workshops I attended, the worship sessions...everything just seemed to minister directly to my spirit and seemed as if they were planned solely for me. I came home refreshed and renewed and ready to once again embrace the task of caring for my mother besides my other duties. She never came home from the hospital and has since gone to be with the Lord. I was with her as she danced into heaven and felt such peace in my heart. I am confident that my attendance at "Come to the Water" helped to prepare my spirit for this occasion.*

From Deb Wiles: *This was the first I have attended, and I was so wonderfully blessed! Those who presented the workshops I attended as well as the worship services encouraged and strengthened my spirit for the pastorate. Also, in light of the numerous stories I heard from women who do not have or have very little support from their pastors regarding women in ministry, the conference renewed the sense in me of how truly grateful I am for a pastor in my home church who wholeheartedly encourages and supports me in my pursuit of ministry. If at all possible, I will attend the next conference in Cincinnati (and bring some women with me!).*

Please e-mail news articles, scholarly research, and/or stories to the editor:

Rev. Dr. Janet Peifer
revjmp@equalworth.com

Where Do We Go From Here?

That's the question Vickie Becker endeavored to answer as she facilitated a survey process of our WHWC Planning Board members and the WHWC Visioning Committee. We thank Vickie for sharing her excellent research skills to help us move ahead. In the survey, she sought to find out what we believed the impact of WHWC has been, who we want to impact in upcoming years, and what we saw as our short term and long term goals. She compiled the results and wrote a summary report. The results of the survey revealed three areas in which we want to strive in the immediate years ahead. The three goals are:

1. **Mentoring:** Mentoring women students in the Wesleyan/Holiness colleges, universities, and ministry training institutions, as well as women new to Wesleyan/Holiness ministry.
2. **Inform and Promote:** Advance the mission of WHWC by specifically contacting Wesleyan/Holiness denominational leaders to explain how WHWC will assist them in being more purposeful about including and advancing women as pastors/leaders.
3. **Partnerships:** Partner with Wesleyan/Holiness colleges, universities and seminaries as well as other Wesleyan/Holiness organizations and their leadership to promote the mission, goals, and vision of WHWC. WHWC will offer qualified women clergy to speak in chapel services, serve as special lecturers, such as the Staley lectures, and serve as preachers/presenters at other forms of Wesleyan/Holiness meetings, workshops, and seminars.

At the conference in Colorado Springs, these goals were highlighted and opportunity was given for women to indicate which of the goals they want to help to implement. After the Friday evening worship service, three meeting places were announced for discussion of the goals with some guidelines both for plans to carry out and a time line in which to accomplish the specific implementation. It was late when the Friday evening service was concluded and we wondered if any women would have the strength to attend one more function. Nearly 50 women attended one of the three discussion

groups. From those meetings came pages of notes containing ways to carry out these three goals. The Visioning Committee now becomes the Visioning/Implementation Committee so that they might give guidance and impetus to those who will share their time and talents to implement the goals.

Visioning/Implementation Committee members are Kay Rader, (chair), Anne Findlay-Chamberlain, Sharon Skaggs, Barbara Worden, Bonnie Brann, Judi Schwanz, and Melanie Kierstead.

A few of the ideas from the discussion groups are:

1. **Mentoring:** Write a handbook or manual with a simple framework for mentoring; focus not only on mentoring women going into ministry but women who already are in ministry; survey WHWC members to learn who would like to be a mentor and who wants to be mentored.
2. **Inform and Promote:** Have more WHWC information displays available for various denominational groups for multiple conferences and gatherings; create and distribute a CD of relevant information about WHWC; produce a video of our conferences for use in the sponsoring denominational conferences and local churches; have pastoral placement people present at the Come to the Water conferences to speak to women preparing for pastoral assignment.
3. **Partnerships:** Encourage our college bookstores to carry "Come to the Water" merchandise; explore MA theses and D.Min. projects for those that address women in ministry issues, and promote those which are appropriate; provide the WHWC Speaker's Bureau to all our colleges and seminaries; highlight in the Speaker's Bureau those who are qualified to speak in college and seminary chapel events and as guest lecturers.

If you are interested in participating in helping to thrust WHWC into its next phase of ministry and influence, please contact Kay Rader (kayfrader@aol.com; or 606-224-3112); Susie Stanley (whwc@messiah.edu; or 717-766-2511), or Janet Peifer (revjmp@equalworth.net, or 717-790-8221).

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Please encourage others to join by sending a copy of this form. Thank you.

“The Wesleyan Quadrilateral and Women”

by Susie Stanley, Convener

You may be wondering what the Wesleyan Quadrilateral has to do with women clergy! I've recently begun using the quadrilateral to illustrate that Wesleyan/Holiness theology supports women in all areas of ministry.

The quadrilateral refers to four ways that we understand theology. Scholars use this term to describe John Wesley's approach to theology. The four sources of theology are Bible, experience, tradition and reason. We, along with Wesley, give Bible the highest priority. These sources of theology are not equal. For most of us, experience is second in the ranking and tradition and reason follow. Other religious groups give the sources a different ranking.

Starting with the Bible, I begin with Gen. 1:27-28, move to Gen. 2:14 (using the arguments from the booklet we published by Joseph Coleson) and discuss the women prophets in the Old Testament. Then, I briefly summarize Jesus' treatment of women, the role of women at Pentecost, and women in Romans 16. 1 Cor. 11:5 undermines 1 Cor. 14:34. So, we're left with 1 Tim. 2:11-12 as the only verse that appears to mandate women's silence. Whole books have been written on this verse but I pair it with a discussion of 1 Tim.2:15. If one believes that 1 Tim. 2:11-12 controls the behavior of women in the church for all time in all places then, to be consistent, one must also hold that only women who are mothers will be saved. If the opponent says there are other verses that speak to how people, including women, are really saved, then he or she has lost their case because then they have to look at other verses in the Bible that affirm women leaders in the church.

Moving to the other sources of theology, I illustrate that experience has always been valued in Wesleyan/Holiness theology. A woman's call to ministry illustrates experience. Also, when people are led to Christ by a woman, experience indicates that her call is valid. I also provide numerous examples of women who followed their call in all areas of ministry, from preaching at prisons, camp meetings and revivals to serving as pastors and church planters, founding denominations and engaging in ministries of social holiness. In terms of tradition, I use statements by Wesleyan/Holiness believers to support the scriptural basis for women in ministry. Tradition also incorporates the experience of women over the centuries. Last, I ask several questions to illustrate the role of reason. Here are two: "If the chief task of Christians is evangelism, why would God disqualify half of the human race from any aspect of this activity? If God uses women in the conversion and sanctification of individuals, should humans stop them?"

This brief overview demonstrates the use of the Wesleyan quadrilateral to discuss the role of women in the church. It illustrates a way of doing theology as well as applying it to one issue. The other sources of theology augment the Biblical basis for women's service in all aspects of ministry.

WHWC Speaker's Bureau

To submit your name for consideration in the Wesleyan/Holiness Women Clergy Speaker's Bureau, please send the following information to Kay F. Rader, 3953 Rock Ledge Lane, Lexington, KY 40513 or via email to kayfrader@aol.com.

Name _____ Denomination/Church Group _____

Address _____ Education _____

Phone # _____ Current ministry/employment _____

Email address _____

Issues/Topics on which you speak or have done research _____

Name, address, email or phone number of **2** persons who can give a reference of your speaking/preaching.

WESLEYAN/HOLINESS WOMEN CLERGY BOOKLETS

- _____ ***Wesleyan/Holiness Women Clergy: A Preliminary Bibliography***, compiled by Susie Stanley
Incorporates current and archival materials, published and unpublished. Headings include autobiographies, biographies, sermons, scriptural defenses of women clergy and general articles.

- _____ ***'Ezer Cenegdo: A Power like Him, Facing Him as Equal***, by Joseph E. Coleson
Dr. Coleson, a professor of Hebrew Bible, examines the phrase from Gen. 2 and concludes that God's intention at creation was for men and women to relate as equals. Subordination was the consequence of the Fall. The Order of Redemption "calls us to equality in every area of life."

- _____ ***Inclusive Language Handbook***, by Don Thorsen and Vickie Becker
The authors define inclusive language and provide a theological rationale for its use. This user-friendly guide provides numerous examples.

- _____ ***Satisfied: Women Hymn Writers of the 19th-Century Wesleyan/Holiness Movement***, by Keith Schwanz
Fascinating vignettes of nine women. Several hymns are included.

- _____ ***Reclaiming the Wesleyan/Holiness Heritage of Women Clergy: Sermons, A Case Study and Resources***, by Randy Huber and John E. Stanley
Eleven sermons preached by Rev. Huber focus on women of faith in the Bible. They strongly endorse recognizing women's gifts in all areas of ministry. A brief section "New Testament Arguments for the Equality of Men and Women in Ministry" as well as a short bibliography are included.

- _____ ***Cloud of Witnesses: Portraits of Women Ministers in the Wesleyan/Holiness Movement***, edited by Gloria J. Bell
Illustrated chapters on women ministers, representing each of our supporting denominations.

- _____ ***God's Call: From Infilling to Outpouring (Sermons by Wesleyan/Holiness Women Clergy)***, edited by Margaret Dunn
Four sermons preached at the second international Wesleyan/Holiness Women Clergy Conference in Indianapolis in 1996. Commissioner Kay Rader, Rev. Janine Metcalf, Rev. Kits Monencillo and Rev. Dr. Diana Swoope addressed the conference theme.

Price:	\$3.00 each
Price for Members:	\$2.50 each
Postage:	1 booklet = \$1.00
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Mission Statement

“The mission of Wesleyan/Holiness Women Clergy is to equip and encourage divinely-called women in vocational ministry and professional leadership positions.”

WHWC Web Site

Don't miss www.messiah.edu/WHWC for information and resources. Please check for continuing updates (ordering tapes from past conferences, articles, sermons, listing of booklets that have been published and can be ordered, photo gallery of Wesleyan/Holiness women of the past with interesting bio-sketches, and much more!

A Special Thanks

Sharon Barley has been affiliated with this newsletter since its inception. She was one of those who shared the dream of a newsletter when we first began to talk about publishing one. Initially, she served as editor and handled design and layout. Recently, she turned over the editing duties to Rev. Dr. Janet Peifer but continued to do the design and layout. Our “professional” look has been due to her meticulous attention to detail and her gifts in this area which she so graciously volunteered to the conference. Sharon has to relinquish this responsibility due to health problems. Thanks, Sharon, for all your work and commitment! We'll be praying for you.



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