

The Woman's Pulpit

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Academy on Gender: Women Needed

Churches should be bolder and elect women as well as men to leadership positions because “we, the women, belong there as their sisters, wives, mothers.” That was one conclusion of a panel discussion by participants of the summer academy on gender at Hermannsburg and Hanover, Germany, organized by the Evangelical Lutheran Mission in Lower Saxony August 20-25.

Ten women from seven countries (Brazil, Central African Republic, India, Malawi, Peru, Russian Federation, South Africa) serving as theologians or lay leaders in their churches, gathered for the event. Based on the encounter of Jesus with the Samaritan woman in John 4, the theme of the conference was “Overcoming Boundaries.” “Her stories” made women’s achievements visible. Women shared experiences from different contexts, looked for common experiences, discussed becoming role models and sought ways to help churches develop new perspectives.

Four women shared experiences in a public panel. Dr. Christi Ponni is General Secretary of the Women’s Fellowship of the Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church in India in addition to being Professor of the Department of Zoology at TBML College, the first woman to hold either position. She stressed the importance of education for women to gain equal rights in church and society. Although her church has ordained women since 2006, “it is difficult for women to study theology compared to other subjects,” she said. Also “men still hold most of the decision-making positions.”

Rev. Sybil Chetty from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa, a pastor for 21 years, was the first woman to serve in the Durban Circuit of the South Eastern Diocese following a mission pastor. “I was well received by the 15 male pastors working in the cir-

cuit, but I had numerous challenges in the congregation,” she said.

Within South Africa changes were taking place after the first free and democratic elections in 1994, one being that people could reside wherever they chose. She expected a community with mainly English-speaking people of Indian descent but found her congregation had many with Zulu language and culture. She found it “a great challenge to

be accepted by these people because I was not a man and I was not a Zulu.” She also found that more women than men spoke against a female pastor.

Dr. Zyanda Mgugudo-Sello of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (Cape Church), lay leader of her congregation’s Women’s Ministry for four years, also had to bring together different languages and cultures.

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ELCA Rejects Patriarchy & Sexism, Supports Refugees, Repents Racism

Meeting in triennial assembly at the Wisconsin Center in Milwaukee early in August, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America adopted a social statement that labels patriarchy and sexism as sins and acknowledges the church’s complicity in them, named itself a sanctuary denomination, called language rejecting immigrants and people of color in the name of Christian nationalism “idolatry,” and set June 9 as a day of repentance for the martyrdom of Virginia’s 9 Emmanuel Church members in 2017.

The social statement, “Faith, Sexism and Justice: A Call to Action,” was called for at its 2009 Assembly, “when women’s issues were not dominant news,” said Bishop Viviane Thomas-Breitfeld of South Central Wisconsin Synod and chair of the study committee. It is a teaching and policy document that provides a framework for members to think about and discuss the issue.

Mary Streufert, director of the ELCA’s Justice for Women program, said, “The thoughtful foresight of the church to precede #MeToo—it’s quite stunning to know there is this proactive work as opposed to reactive work.”

She said the statement offers an alternative way to see Christianity’s view of women, since “the predominant Christian way to talk about gender puts men and women in a hierarchy.”

A specially created task force consulted with experts both inside and outside the church about topics related to justice for women. Task force members

also listened to fellow Lutherans about what they hoped the statement would express, Streufert said. Most feedback was positive.

Task force member Bethany Fayard of the Southeastern Synod said she heard from a number of teens at an ELCA youth gathering about experiences of bullying and sexual assault. Although she identifies herself as a sexual assault victim in another denomination, she said it is not just survivors of gender-based violence who are harmed by patriarchy. “For too long women and girls haven’t been able to see God’s reflection in ourselves,” she said.

Task Force member William Rodriguez from Florida-Bahamas Synod, who teaches ethics, Christian ethics, theories of justice, African philosophy and philosophy of religion at Bethune-Cookman University, said his eyes were opened to some ways men interact with women that he never thought about before. He also saw little ways he treated

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Gender Academy—

(Continued from page 1)

Mgugudo comes from the former Transkei; her husband is a Tswana. Their common language is English. "We could not go to a congregation which held their church services in a language one of us could not understand," she said, "so we decided to go to the formerly white Strand Street congregation in the center of Cape Town," which had English services. There Mgugudo, a medical doctor, discovered her calling to "rally women to take up their place in the congregation." She has built a network of women well connected and supporting each other. "We cannot meet face to face all the time," she says, "but we can stay connected nevertheless." In a WhatsApp group, the women fast once a week and share spiritual encouragement.

Dr. Margot Käsmann, a special guest, in 1999 was elected the first female bishop of the Evangelical Church of Hanover and in 2009 the first chairwoman (presider) of the Evangelical Church in Germany's Council. Discussing boundaries she encountered, she noted that coming from a non-academic background, she had to deal with social prejudice when taking up university studies; also she did not have any female role models. She added that "Until 1977 ordained women in Germany lost their ordained status when they married. In Zambia it was the opposite: women could not be ordained until they married."

In their visions, wishes and dreams for their churches in 20 years, all participants answered with perspectives that included both women and men. Both Mgugudo and Käsmann would like to see their churches embrace impulses coming from outside: Mgugudo wants to welcome the numerous tourists visiting Cape Town and have "the world in my church;" Käsmann encourages migrants coming to Germany, many of whom are Christians, to 'dare to mix' with the established churches rather than founding separate ones. Chetty and Ponni both encourage their churches to elect women as well as men to leadership positions because "we, the women, belong there as their sisters, wives, mothers."

(Lutheran World Information)

Ordinations

Roman Catholic Women Priests

Ontario, Canada

In a private undisclosed setting on May 31 Bishop Jane Kryzanowski ordained a **catacomb priest** (meaning the name is not revealed).

Stony Point, New York, U.S.A.

On September 22 at the Stony Point Retreat Center Bishop Jean Marchant ordained deacons **Jane Audrey Neuhauer, Jeanne Fournier, Karen Murphy and Kathleen Blank Reither.**

Association of Roman Catholic Women Priests

Cleveland, Ohio

Bishop Mary Eileen Collingwood ordained a **catacomb deacon** on July 10.

Palm Coast, Florida

On August 28 Bishop Bridget Mary Meehan ordained deacon **Shelly Gilchrist** in the private home of the Rev. Miriam Piconi and the Rev. Wanda Russell.

Watch for This Film

The Philadelphia Eleven, a feature documentary film, will tell the story of the first Episcopal women priests in the U.S. ordained on July 29, 1974 by three retired bishops and the consequences for the church which until that time had rejected women's ordination. The ordinations were accepted as valid after women's ordinations began officially on January 1, 1977. For more information visit TimeTravel Productions.com.

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'Thursdays in Black' Unite Women For a World without Rape, Violence

In every country gender-based violence is a tragic reality. This violence is frequently hidden, and victims are often silent, fearing stigma and further violence.

The World Council of Churches and its members believe we all have a responsibility to speak out against violence, to ensure that women and men, boys and girls, are safe from rape and violence in homes, schools, work, streets—everywhere. One way women witness against violence is the WCC movement **Thursdays in Black**.

All women everywhere in the world are invited to become part of this justice effort. To join in, **wear black on Thursdays**. Also wear a safety pin to declare you are part of the global movement resisting attitudes and practices that permit rape and violence. Show your respect for women who are resilient in the face of injustice and violence. Encourage others to join you.

Often black has had negative social connotations. In this campaign black is used as a color of resistance and resilience.

How Did This Begin?

Thursdays in Black grew out of the World Council of Churches (WCC) Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women (1988-1998) in which the stories of rape as a weapon of war, gender injustice, abuse, violence and many tragedies that grew outward from such violence became persistently visible. But what also became visible was women's resilience, agency and personal efforts to resist such violence.

The campaign was inspired by:

- The **Mothers of the Disappeared** in Buenos Aires, Argentina, who on Thursdays protested at the Plaza del Mayo against the disappearance of their children during the violent dictatorship.
- **Women in Rwanda and Bosnia** who were protesting against the use of rape as a weapon of war during the genocide.
- **Black Sash** movement in South Africa protesting against apartheid and its use of violence against black people

Join this movement and share your Thursdays in Black campaign photos on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, using hashtags #ThursdaysinBlack and #WCC.

Reflect on the meaning of 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 for you as you mark #ThursdaysinBlack. Share them with

others and with the WCC at media@wcc-coe.org.

A Bishop Advocates

Thursdays in Black has designated a number of women from different communions as their ambassadors in order to highlight women playing a vital role in this effort. Retired United Methodist Bishop Rosemarie Wenner, an ambassador who serves in Geneva as secretary of the World Methodist Church, calls Thursdays in Black "an important sign of solidarity and of reminding ourselves that gender justice is so important. We need to be in solidarity with those who are raped and who suffer violence."

She says when people see her only wearing black on Thursday, they ask her, "Did someone die in your family?"

"Then I can speak of suffering, pain and injustices happening to so many people in the world," she says.

While Methodist churches in West Africa women's divisions participate in Thursdays in Black and international organizations support the effort, she does not yet see many congregations involved. "But I do think that over time if this is a weekly thing people will rethink their approach," she said.

She acknowledged that churches must create safe places for all in our churches and, where abuse is found, provide "mechanisms whereby people who are abused can find open doors to look into these cases and to really work toward justice. I also wish we could look at our theology. The church is still patriarchal. There is not equal representation (of women) and starting there is also important."

Where to begin? "See people. Look at what happens and be ready to interfere if needed, be ready to stand for equality, for justice and do not ignore the pain that is happening in the world," said Bishop Rosemarie.

(WCC, United Methodist Church News)

Pastor Proclaims 'Holy Disunity'

As a bisexual female pastor from a largely conservative southern United States family in South Carolina, the Rev. Layton E. Williams has spent much of her life surrounded by and loving those with whom she will never agree. As a Christian who was taught that unity is always the desired outcome, faithfulness to her convictions meant sacrificing her relationships with loved ones.

That was not a sacrifice Williams was willing to make. She writes in her book, *Holy Disunity: How What Separates Us Can Save Us*, that "it is possible both to hold on to our convictions and love one another"

The Presbyterian Church (USA) pastor argues against unity at all costs and shows that our primary calling as Christians is to seek authentic relationships with God, ourselves, one another and the world around us.

But how can Christians who live in a fractured and polarized world embrace disunity and find a new way forward? Williams offers a way by analyzing conflicts and rifts in both modern culture and Scripture, presenting 12 gifts of disunity such as vulnerability, failure and uncertainty and revealing what each can offer us.

Williams has served as a pastoral resident at Fourth Presbyterian Church in Chicago and as Audience Engagement Editor at Sojourners magazine. She earned her M.Div. degree from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

Now, in Charleston, South Carolina, the pastor and author seeks to minister in ways that offer understanding, justice and relationship in the midst of division.

John Pavlovitz, author of *A Bigger Table* and *Hope and Other Superpowers*, says *Holy Disunity* "is cool, clear water for those of us emotionally and spiritually dehydrated from navigating the discord around us."

By asking us to live within the moments of tension and vulnerability Williams presents a "young, fresh unexpected theological voice," says Diana Butler Ross in the book's Forward.

Holy Disunity was published by Westminster John Knox Press in October 2019. (Presbyterian News Service)

Czech Attorney and Lay Theologian Is LWF Council Representative

Olga Navratilova, a member of the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren (ECCB), teaches philosophy at the Protestant theological faculty of Charles University in Prague. Her church, founded in 1918, traces its roots to the Hussite movement and its founder, Jan Hus, in the 15th century.

When the Habsburg dynasty in Austria forced people to become Catholic under the *cuius regio, eius religio* rule enforced in 1627, some people remained “secret Protestants.”

An Act of Toleration in the 18th century brought limited relaxation of the rule, meaning secret Protestants could decide to join the Lutheran or Reformed Church. Czech speaking people knew the Reformed Church best; German speaking people know the Lutheran Church, and the people chose membership accordingly. In 1918 the two groups unified, forming the ECCB.

Christians are a minority in the Czech Republic but she tries to help their voice to make a difference. Since 1989 diaconal work of the church had strengthened and makes a difference in the impact the church can make. Recently the church tried to make its voice heard in the media, and the Synodical Council made a statement about Christian values in the context of the immigration crisis because “we don’t have many refugees, but there has been a big political campaign against migrants, misusing the idea of the threat they pose to a supposedly Christian Europe.”

Discovering Christian Faith

Navratilova did not grow up in the church. She was brought up in an atheist but educated family so she had to struggle with the communist prejudice against Christianity. She discovered, however, that Czech history and philosophical traditions were richly influenced by Christianity and that she could unite faith and reason.

When she was 16 she spent a year as an exchange student at a school in the state of Maine in the United States where attitudes were quite different and she could see that Christianity was, as she says, “normal.” At the age when she was starting to think for herself and ask questions, she read books about Christianity or novels and poetry containing Christian themes and her attitude changed. When she was almost

19 years old, she was baptized.

Her family rejected this change at first but in the end they became supportive, including when she decided to attend law school. When she finished her degree she took a part-time job in a church and pursued doctoral studies at the theological faculty. Then she worked for nine years as a lawyer in the church, helping with legal affairs and giving advice to congregations.

Women Pastors Accepted

Navratilova says women have been ordained in the Czech church since 1954, one quarter of the pastors are women, and both men and women study theology. However there are almost no ordained female leaders. “It’s hard to say why, perhaps because we are still taught not to put ourselves forward as this is seen as being selfish, and also because most women still play a traditional role at home and don’t have much spare time.”

Women there have had the right to vote since 1918. The communist support for women was ambiguous because women had to have full time jobs but then had to do everything at home as well. She said traditional roles are changing now “but unfortunately, very slowly, and there is also a great suspicion of feminist ideas in our society.”

Asked whether LWF can help to support women in leadership in the ECCB, Navratilova said, “The problem is that women don’t seem to care much, but I think it’s important to talk about that issue. After each LWF meeting I mention women’s leadership in the report I write to our Synodical Council. I don’t think we should introduce quotas in our church, although I can see the importance of them. But I try to keep raising up the issue of women leaders at all levels and show why it is important to encourage women to take an interest in this matter.”

(Lutheran World Information)

ELCA—

(Continued from page 1)

his son and daughter differently. “I learned so much,” he said.

The statement calls on the ELCA to end gender-based violence, to encourage women and girls to pursue ministry and leadership roles in their congregations, to use “gender-inclusive and expansive” language for God and to address inequities in pay and hiring both inside and outside the church. Chair Thomas-Breitfeld said task force members drew from a biblical understanding that God desires “abundant life for all. From the beginning we wanted to signal that this issue is not only about women. The reason for this work was about all of us,” she said. “We are not able to make the world perfect, but, my siblings, we are called to serve the world in love, including through implementing resolutions that keep us accountable as a church together.”

After adopting the social statement the Assembly rose in a standing ovation and sang “Canticle of the Turning” with the lyrics, “Wipe away all tears,/for the dawn draws near,/and the world is about to turn.”

A resolution calling the denomination a “sanctuary church body” asserted that it is “committed to serving and supporting migrant children and families in communities across the country.” Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton stressed that this does not compel the ELCA’s 9,000-plus congregations to offer shelter to immigrants, but stands with immigrants and supports justice for them.

The same day clergy and staff members, some carrying signs saying, “We put the protest back in Protestant,” marched to the Milwaukee Immigrant and Customs Enforcement building where they taped 9.5 theses expressing concern for immigrants and refugees.

Much in mind among assembly deliberators were scripture’s laws in Leviticus concerning treatment of sojourners and the Matthew story of Jesus as a refugee in Egypt from Herod’s tyranny.

Presiding Bishop Eaton was re-elected for a second term on the first ballot by a 97 percent vote.

With more than 3.3 million baptized members in more than 9,100 congregations the ELCA is among the largest U.S. denominations.

(Religious News Service & LNP)

Women & Men Equal in Number Among Church of Wales Bishops

Reporting on September 26 that one of the first women ordained a priest in the Church of England has been elected as the new bishop of Monmouth for the Anglican Church in Wales, Rachel Farmer added that, as the third woman bishop, her election becomes historic. It is thought that Archdeacon Cherry Vann's installation as Monmouth's 11th bishop will make the Church in Wales the first Anglican province to have equal numbers of men and women in the House of Bishops.

Announcing her election Archbishop of Wales John Davies said, "I look forward to working with Cherry. She has much to contribute to the diocese of Monmouth and the Church in Wales. One area I know is very close to her heart is the church's ministry in post-industrial areas where community life and church life intersect. In Monmouth people have suffered enormously. Having a bishop with great experience in a similar situation will be a huge morale boost to them."

Vann, who has served as Archdeacon of Rochdale in England for the past 11 years, said she had a lot to learn but hopes to help connect with ordinary people to show that the church is still relevant to their lives. She said the challenges facing churches in southeast Wales are the same as those in the northeast of England.

"The towns of Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, and Ashton are significantly challenged both economically and in terms of church life," she said. "A very, very small percentage of the population go to our churches. We have been working hard to address that in the Manchester area and I look forward to bringing some of the wisdom and knowledge I've gained to Newport and the Diocese of Monmouth."

Originally from Leicestershire, Vann trained for ministry at Westcott House, Cambridge, and was ordained deacon in 1989 and priest in 1994. Her entire ministry was in the towns of Fixton, Bolton, and Farnworth in the Diocese of Manchester. She is an honorary Canon of Manchester Cathedral and a former chaplain to deaf people.

As Archdeacon she has been prolocutor of the Lower House of the Convocation of York since 2013 and an ex officio member of the Archbishops' Council. A talented pianist, she is an Associate of the Royal College of Music and a graduate of the Royal School of Music and conducts the Bolton Chamber Orchestra. (Anglican News /Service)

Co-Moderators Plan Empowering Parley

The co-moderators of the 223rd General Assembly (2018) of the Presbyterian Church (USA), Ruling Elder Vilmarie Clintron-Olivieri and the Rev. Cindy Kohlmann have announced a new training conference.

The "Empowering Commissioned Pastors' Conference" will be held May 13-16 in Richardson, Texas, and will be sponsored by the Commissioned Pastors' Network of the Synod of the Sun.

Plans are to "take a deep dive and take a hard look to compare the things we value in the preparation process for ordained ministers against the things that are needed in the 21st century for churches that want to be faithful but aren't finding the pastors," said Kohlmann. "Is it time to bring people together from seminaries, mid-councils, and churches to talk about what ministry needs to look like and preparation for ministry? Is it time to talk about preparing people for part-time vocational ministry?"

Kohlmann said part-time pastors face the stress of time and service while holding other jobs, leaving little time to prepare a sermon and to be present to their congregations.

"Is it time or past time for us to unravel tradition and history and begin to create a new vision 2020 for pastoral leadership?" she asked, as she told incidents of commissioning ruling elders and pastors who are growing congregations that "we thought were ready to close."

She hopes the conference will find the same professional and financial support of other national conferences. "Let's empower and equip the people who are empowering and equipping (the small) congregations which are the heart of our denomination," she said.

(Presbyterian Church [USA] News)



Bishop Waitohiariki Quayle

First Maori Woman Bishop in New Zealand

More than 1,000 people joined in the celebrations for the ordination of Bishop Waitohiariki Quayle as bishop of Te Upoko o Te Ika, who became the first Maori woman to be ordained a bishop in the Anglican Church of Aotearoa New Zealand.

The celebration service on September 12 was held in the Anglican Rathkeale College, Masterton, and was a day of excitement and celebration with the voices of women and young people playing a key part through readings, songs and prayers.

(Anglican News Service)

Women of Color Grants Offer Mentoring, Funds

The mentoring and financial aid she received from the Women of Color Scholars Program (WOC) enabled Elyse Ambrose to earn her Ph.D. from Drew University last August. Her thesis, "Integrative Community as Liberating Praxis of Christian Sexual Ethics: a Black Queer Ethic," guides her work helping others build welcoming and understanding community space. Her start-up company, phoenixspark LLC, offers training and educational support for organizations seeking to practice justice through intersectional, expansive and integrative approaches to sexuality and gender. Founded by Womanist scholar Dr. Jacquelyn Grant and administered by the UMC General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, WOC offers mentoring and financial support to women of color studying for Ph.D. or Th.D. degrees in religious studies.

(United Methodist Church News)

Remembering—

Rev. Dr. Chomingwen Pond

(1927-2019)

The Rev. Dr. Chomingwen Pond, 91, of Minoqua, Wisconsin, a former member of the IAWM Executive Board, died on August 8.

She was born on September 1, 1927, and, as a child, traveled with her parents on archeological expeditions to Algeria, which gave her a lifelong love of travel and curiosity about the world.

After earning a bachelor's degree in geology at Beloit College in 1950 she took a post with the U.S. Army in Germany directing recreational programs for soldiers.

She earned an M.Div. (then a B.D.) from Garrett Biblical Institute in Chicago in 1969 and a Ph.D. in religion from Claremont Graduate School in 1987. During her seminary years she spent a summer in Montgomery, Alabama, and became heavily involved in the Civil Rights Movement.

In 1962 she became the first Methodist woman ordained a full elder in Wisconsin, serving in inner city and small membership congregations for about 15 years. After teaching at Payne Theological Seminary in Ohio, she became a missionary with the United Methodist Church, serving in Sierra Leone, and in Zimbabwe at African University, where she taught ethics in the Faculty of Theology.

Although retired from ministry in 1998, she remained active in the Wisconsin Conference, serving on its Board

Remembering—

Rev. Margaret S. McKee

(1927-2014)

IAWM member the Rev. Margaret S. McKee, 87, who hosted the 1994 Assembly in Memphis, Tennessee, that celebrated IAWM's 75th anniversary, died on November 6, 2014 in Memphis. She also served IAWM as a trustee from 1994 to 1997.

Born in Knoxville, Tennessee, she was first an English teacher and later a hospital chaplain ordained in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church from which she retired. At Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Germantown, she taught Sunday School and sang in choir.

She is survived by daughters Marga McKee, Lila (Roger) Piercy, son Scott (Wellin) McKee and grandchildren Jordan (Hillary) Colley, Nicole Cabe, Jesse (Rebecca) Colley, Daphne McKee and Angus McKee.

of Global Ministries, where she was Heartland District secretary for nine years. At the United Methodist Church of the Pines in Minoqua she co-chaired the missions committee and served on the ministry council and the United Church Women Annual Conference.

She edited and published her mother's memoirs of three archeological missions to northern Algeria, *If Women Have Courage. . . Among Shepherds, Sheiks and Scientists*, by Dorothy L. Pond.

A gifted writer, storyteller, lifelong learner and teacher, Chomie was also known as an intelligent, funny and compassionate friend. Surviving her are nephew David (Anna) Pond and niece Kristin Pond. A brother, Arthur, as well as her parents predeceased her.

Her memorial service was held at the United Methodist Church of the Pines in Minoqua on August 15. Memorial gifts may be sent there, to Africa University or to the Alonzo and Dorothy Pond Memorial Fund at Beloit College.

Remembering

Rev. Alison Cheek

(1927-2019)

The Rev. Alison Cheek, 92, one of the Philadelphia 11, the first U.S. Episcopal women priests ordained on July 29, 1974 at the Episcopal Church of the Advocate in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, died on September 1 at her North Carolina home where she retired in 2013.

The highly controversial ordinations took place before the General Convention authorized women priests in 1976 but were later termed valid. Cheek was also the first Episcopal woman to publicly celebrate the Eucharist.

Born in Australia in 1927, she grew up a Methodist. In 1957 she and her husband moved to Washington, D.C. where she became a lay minister in several Episcopal churches while raising her children. The rest is history.

Remembering—

Rev. Jean Howard

Morton

(1929-2019)

The Rev. Jean Howard Morton, a past vice president for membership and trustee of IAWM, died in Sugar Hill, Georgia, on May 20, 2019 at age 89.

Born on July 8, 1929 in New Rochelle, New York, she was a graduate of New Rochelle High School and earned a B.S. in 1950 from Wooster College in Ohio and her M.Div from New York Theological Seminary in 1988. IAWM member the Rev. Peggy Howland preached when she was ordained by the Hudson River Presbytery on December 11, 1988. She served the Eastchester Presbyterian Church in New York as Stated Supply until her retirement in 2001.

When she married Richard William Morton, he was already father to a son, William. Together they had three children over 27 years. It was after her husband died that she felt called to ministry and commuted from her Long Island, New York, home to seminary in New York City.

She served on the IAWM Executive board as vice president for membership 1994-97 and as a trustee, 1998-2010. She and a daughter designed IAWM's membership brochure logo.

With Howland and two other IAWM members she assisted at the IAWM booth at the 2006 World Council of Churches Assembly in Porto Alegre, Brazil. Their theme was "God Calls Women Ministers;" they took and displayed hundreds of photos of ordained women attending the assembly from around the world. At the Presbyterian Church (USA) 50th anniversary celebration of ordaining women as pastors in Atlanta, Georgia, in 2006 they staffed a booth promoting IAWM.

In retirement she lived near her son, James, and his family in Ashton, Pennsylvania, until they moved to Georgia, then built a permanent home on Cape Cod. In her final years she joined her son and his family in Georgia.

Jean is survived by daughters Carolyn Morton and Jean Morton Torn (Steven), sons James (Barbara) Morton and William Morton and grandchildren Carolyn and Jessica Morton and Ryan, Sean and Lauren Torn.

Women Pastors in 2 U.S. Churches Deal with Immigration Issues

These days immigrants are national issues in Europe, the United States and elsewhere. At the Centennial Assembly of the International Association of Women Ministers in July two women pastors from Switzerland and Germany told how immigrants have brought new life to congregations they serve.

Here are stories of two U.S. congregations in which women pastors lead their members to work for justice for immigrants.

Pleasant Hill, Tennessee

Members of the Pleasant Hill Community Church United Church of Christ (PHCC) host a vigil, "Witness for the Children," outside the Cumberland County Courthouse each Monday from 12:30 to 1 p.m. Vigils began in August. Armed with signs the group spends 30 minutes on the sidewalk outside the courthouse in Crossville, Tennessee, waving at passers-by.

"What we hope to accomplish is heightened awareness and visibility, press coverage to continue to raise the issue—keeping our community from relegating the issue to silence," said the Rev. Glenna Shepherd, PHCC pastor. "We also aim to be the voice for compassion, civility, non-violence and the value of immigrant populations."

"I hope our action will help others step up and let their elected officials know things need to change and that the present treatment of immigrant children is unacceptable," said Karen Charbonnet, a member of the church's Immigrant Team who said the idea for the vigil came to her in prayer. "We will no longer tolerate for children to be taken from their parents, and we expect them to be given the same treatment we want for our own children."

PHCC members, concerned about the obstacles facing immigrant communities, have reached out to help, holding legal clinics to introduce the idea of and need for parents to put in place powers of attorney for their citizen children. The congregation has also attended Family Literacy Nights in the local schools to meet and speak to undocumented folks and people in the community. PHCC is a sanctuary church, allocating space in the building to house an individual or a family who needs protection. As of this writing, the room remained empty.

"I hope the vigils will open people's hearts to compassion for immigrants," said Charbonnet. (UCC News)

Birmingham, Alabama

A diverse group of religious leaders in Birmingham have forged a commitment to sanctuary for their migrant neighbors, proclaimed their stand publicly, and planned a practical response to possible Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE) action.

Forty-seven clergy and faith leaders representing several theological perspectives and traditions have signed a "Proclamation of Sanctuary" affirming their houses of worship as sanctuaries for those seeking refuge. "We will not allow immigration authorities to enter into our houses of worship without a warrant signed by a judge," the proclamation states.

Five United Church of Christ (UCC) congregations are signatories. The Rev. Jennifer Sanders, pastor of Beloved Community UCC, said the public statement is part of a strategic approach to inspire both action and conversation. "What can you do and what can you commit to? It's important to have those conversations ahead of time so you are prepared, should the need arise in your community."

To prepare to act at any given moment, the Beloved Community congregation hosted a 'Sanctuary in the Streets' training on Monday night, August 19. The exercise was part of an ongoing commitment to immigrant justice aimed to prompt thinking through a crisis response. "It's part of a rapid response process to prepare people to show up in an organized fashion when ICE shows up and create a space that is claimed as sanctuary in that moment," said member Tom Sanders.

Goals of the grassroots faith network include turning people out to be an ethical witness, supporting existing efforts by local immigrant justice organizations, hosting conversations about place-based sanctuary and rapid response, and educating about issues.

(UCC News)

Zimbabwe Pastor in New Study Program

The Rev. Maudy Muchanyereye likes to say that her career in higher education "found her." A clergy member of the United Methodist Church of Zimbabwe Episcopal Area, Muchanyereye stepped into the role of chaplain at Africa University after serving as pastor of a community church, and faith guided her again when she decided to take the first steps toward earning a Ph.D.

She is one of 13 students in the inaugural class of the new Africa University Wesley House joint doctoral program that is designed to expand the teaching and research capacity for United Methodist institutions in Africa by increasing the number of educators with doctoral degrees and a deep knowledge of local needs and contexts.

"This program will help me realize my dream to become an effective researcher," she said. "The challenges and uncertainties faced by the 21st century Church calls for dynamic persons who can market the church and make it competitive to draw souls to Christ."

Like her fellow students she works in a career where faith and higher education intersect. As Africa University chaplain she wants to be better prepared to grapple with that intersection and shape it into the future.

It is particularly important to her that female students see her serving in this pastoral role and earning her doctorate. "Few women in my church have attained this level of education. This could pave the way for women clergy to further their studies," she said.

Muchanyereye also believes this unique program will create a forum for African theologians to share their insights and build a strong pipeline for disseminating their knowledge in schools and communities.

Students from all over Africa, Christians, Muslims and those from African traditional religions, attend Africa University forming a multicultural community into which she will dive with her research, using competitive analysis to show how people of different faiths can coexist, share ideas and collaborate.

"Here the dialogue and interactions are invaluable in making a better theologian or student in Christian religion," she said. (United Methodist News)

In the News

Canada

Prior to Canada's federal elections last October 21, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada National Bishop **Susan Johnson**, National Indigenous Anglican Bishop **Mark MacDonald** and Anglican Church of Canada Primate **Linda Nichols** sent a joint letter to members preparing to vote, asking them to discuss "What kind of Canada do you desire?" and "How is that desire rooted in your spiritual convictions as a follower of the way of Jesus Christ."

Germany

On August 21 delegates to the 10th World Assembly of Religions for Peace, assembled in Lindau, elected their first woman Secretary General. She is **Azza Karan**, an expert who works at the United Nations on issues of social and cultural development and a Muslim professor of Religion and Development at the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam.

India

At a "Women in the Church" consultation in Pune, India, in early October **95 Roman Catholic nuns** representing more than 30 religious congregations protested the fact that women are excluded from all decision-making bodies in the Roman Catholic Church, leaving them without voice and at the mercy of male leaders. "This practice should change; women should be given their due place in the Catholic Church or risk losing women and youth," they said.

Ireland

Former president of Ireland **Mary McAleese**, who is currently Professor of Children, Law and Religion at the University of Glasgow, was winner of the prestigious Alfons Auer prize for 2019, an award to honor international theologians. A canon lawyer, she received the award in a ceremony at the University of Tübingen on October 30.

Kenya

Laywoman Sarah Ewoi, who speaks 11 languages, works with the Lutheran World Federation—World Service at Nadapal Transit Centre in Kenya. There she conducts psychosocial assessments of newly arrived refugees from South Sudan, explains what is expected of refugees and asylum seekers during their stay, educates them on their rights and entitlements, conducts psychosocial first aid for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence and compiles the necessary daily reports. She gets Rest and Recuperation leave every eight weeks to ensure she gets adequate time to unwind.

United States

Roman Catholic laywoman and United Auto Worker member **Sarah Bookstadt** has served for two years as one of nine chaplains of her union at the General Motors plant southwest of Fort Wayne, Indiana. The mother of two has

been employed there since 2008.

The first Katie Cannon Scholarship sponsored by the Women's Ministry Fund of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was awarded in 2019 to **the Rev. Zaida Rodriguez**, a Hispanic clergywoman currently serving as a chaplain in Raleigh, North Carolina, and **Dana Purdom**, a bi-vocational African American leader of the church who is passionate about social justice. Rodriguez used her scholarship for a Chaplaincy Research Summer Institute. Purdom's grant covers a portion of her tuition at Union Theological Seminary in New York City.

The Rev. Megan M. Trenquien was named eighth bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Northern California on July 28.

The Rev. Susan B. Haynes has become the 11th bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia.

A California congregation named for one of the Episcopal Church's newest saints, St. Anna Alexander, celebrated her at a Sunday worship service last October that included a visit from **Dwala Nobles, 59, and Zora Nobles, 65**, from the church that Alexander, the only African American Episcopal deaconess, helped to establish in Pennick, Georgia, more than a century ago.

(Sources: Anglican Church of Canada News, National Catholic Reporter (3), Bridget Mary's Blog, Lutheran World Information, The Presbyterian Outlook, and Episcopal News Service)