

# The Woman's Pulpit

October-  
December  
2018

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN MINISTERS

## Thailand Lutherans Ordain First Women

(LWI)—The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thailand (ELCT), a member church of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), called its first women into the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament on April 27.

Ordinations of Rev. Jongkolnee Sampachanyanon and Rev. Somporm Kola-chote represent a significant milestone in the 40 year history of ministry of that church. "Women have been involved in church ministry for many years," said LWF Area Secretary for Asia Rev. Dr. Philip Lok Oi Peng. "They have served as evangelists and preachers and practically performed all of the duties of pastors except for the holy sacrament. The church has now recognized their contribution and affirmed their calls."

Both women were ordained at the closing service of the church's 2018 General Assembly. The service was held at the church at the ELCT headquarters.

Both Rev. Jongkolnee and Rev. Somporm are converts to Christianity. They received their initial theological training at the Lutheran Seminary in Thailand. After completing studies, they were assigned to congregations in different parts of the country. Rev. Somporm has worked in church planting since 2000, starting new churches in different places.

Rev. Jongkolnee said her motivation to be ordained was simply driven by her wish to serve her congregation fully as a pastor. "With ordination I will be able to preside at the sacrament, something which was not possible in the past."

Echoing her words, Rev. Somporm said, "I am thankful. The church has now fully affirmed my call as a pastor and I can serve the people through the ministry of Word and Sacrament."

The newly ordained pastors are ready for challenges their new role may bring. "Our Thai culture, like many other Asian cultures, has a gender bias against women. It will be interesting to see how my members will respond to my new

responsibilities. They only know male pastors," said Rev. Somporm. One of her first acts as an ordained minister was to serve the Eucharist to her bishop, the Rt. Rev. Annuay Yodwong.

Rev. Jongkolnee wants to inspire

other women who feel called into the ministry. "I encourage them to get proper training and to boldly seek ordination, as this is a confirmation of their calling from God," she said.

(Lutheran World Information)

## PC(USA) Co-Moderators Celebrate Diversity, Thinking Outside the Box

Elected on June 16, Presbyterian Church (USA) co-moderators Ruling Elder Vilmarie Cintrón-Olivieri and the Rev. Cindy Kohlmann follow women co-moderators Denise Anderson and Jan Edmiston and promise some surprises.

"We'll do things in ways the church hasn't necessarily experienced before," said Kohlmann. "We want to do things that we feel called to, not necessarily what traditional expectations might want to dictate."

Kohlmann served as Resource Presbyter for the presbyteries of Boston and Northern New England before the election. Cintrón-Olivieri, who grew up in Puerto Rico, was an English as Second Language teacher and ruling elder at First Spanish Presbyterian Church in Miami.

"There is a way to do worship that might be simpler than we think," said Cintrón-Olivieri. "Perhaps an interpretation system or presenting music and preaching in a different language. We just need to find the people to do that." She says churches are using their facilities in new ways to connect with communities. "We need to think outside the box and look for ways to make the building the center of community," she said. "We need to determine how it can be a safe space where people gather for worship on Sundays and for other purposes during the week."

Introduced by a mutual friend, they believe their different backgrounds will serve them well as they look to address diversity in a changing church.

(PC[USA] News)

## Assemblies of God Elects First Woman Officer

On April 23 the Rev. Donna L. Barrett was unanimously elected the first woman General Secretary of the U.S. Assemblies of God in the Pentecostal denomination's 100 year history. In her role Barrett will oversee credentialing of ministers, chartering of churches and collecting official statistics. It is the third-ranking position in Assemblies leadership after General Superintendent and Assistant General Superintendent. She took office on June 1.

A paralegal before pursuing ministry and a local pastor of an Independence, Ohio, congregation before taking her new office, Barrett fills the unexpired term of James T. Bradford. He resigned earlier this year to serve as senior pastor at General Assembly, a flagship church of the denomination in Springfield, Missouri.

Although women led congregations in the early days of the U.S. Assemblies of God, which was founded in 1914, through the years they have often found their leadership roles restricted. *(Continued on page 4)*

Official Publication of  
The International Association  
Of Women Ministers  
M. Madeline Southard, Founder  
(1877-1967)

Vol. 96 October-December 2018 No.4

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

PAST PRESIDENT: Beverly Jo Banyay  
PRESIDENT: Marian P. Shearer  
uccrev77@gmail.com  
PAST VICE PRESIDENT: Ofelia Ortega  
VICE PRESIDENT: J. Dorcas Gordon  
RECORDING SEC.: Cynthia Walton-Leavitt  
cynuff@ayayale.edu  
TREASURER: Carol S. Brown  
csbrown550@hotmail.com  
MEMBERSHIP/ASST. TREASURER:  
Ann E. Morris, foxmorris@verizon.net  
CO-INTERNATIONAL DIRECTORS:  
Daylins Ruffin Pardo, abraxas@oar.co.cu  
Roswitha Golder,  
roswitha.golder@bluewin.ch  
ASSEMBLY CHAIR: To be announced  
ARCHIVIST: Jean Henderson  
jhhh21942@aol.com  
NOMINATIONS CHAIR: To be announced

## MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

Doris Campbell Angela Trejo Haager  
Elizabeth Tapia

## TRUSTEES

Mary Jane Saunders Margarethe Galbraith-  
Cordes  
Janice Barker-McLaughlin Catherine Benjamin

STATUTORY AGENT FOR THE STATE OF  
OHIO: Catherine G. Borchert

## REGIONAL CONTACTS

CANADA: J. Dorcas Gordon  
jdgordon@utoronto.ca  
CUBA: Ofelia Ortega Suárez  
intre@enet.cu, ofeliaortega@gmail.com  
GREAT BRITAIN: To be announced  
HUNGARY: Eszter Karsay  
ekarsay@freemail.hu  
PHILIPPINES: Elizabeth Tapia  
eliztapia5@gmail.com  
SWITZERLAND: Roswitha Golder  
roswitha.golder@bluewin.ch  
IOWA: Mary K. Green  
revmary@iowatelecom.net  
WESTERN PA.: Margarethe Galbraith-Cordes  
pastor@elzelienople.org

POSTMASTER: Send form 3579 to The Woman's  
Pulpit, 1921 Palm Street, Reading, PA 19604.  
Published quarterly.

Periodicals postage paid at Reading, PA.

## Australia

**Bishop Sonia Roulston**, ordained on May 10 in Christ Church Cathedral, Newcastle, is the first woman to serve as bishop in the Anglican Church of Australia's Diocese of Newcastle.

## Cuba

By unanimous votes in the Houses of Bishops and Laity of the **U.S. Episcopal Church's 79th General Convention** in Austin, Texas, on July 10, Cuba's Episcopal Church was restored as a member diocese of the U.S. church. The reunification was welcomed with acclamations and great rejoicing in both countries.

## New Zealand

Following a decision in May by the General Synod of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia to permit churches in New Zealand to bless same sex marriages, talks began to try to reach an amicable separation between members of four conservative evangelical congregations and the Diocese of Christchurch. A three-month "resignation or exit process" was agreed upon so "the way forward (could be) respectful, orderly and (one that) should allow people time to make appropriate decisions." Individuals not wishing to leave with their congregations were promised equally thoughtful care.

## Puerto Rico

**The Rev. Idalia Negrón** of San Juan was elected on June 16 as bishop of the Caribbean Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

## United States

**The Rev. Deborah K. Hutterer** was elected on June 16 as bishop of the Grand Canyon Synod of the ELCA.

Three women religious leaders were featured on a CBS Interfaith Special, "Reclaiming History: A Movement for Equality," during the first week of July. United Church of Christ minister **Rev. Traci Blackmon**, who serves as executive minister of justice and local church ministries and senior pastor of Christ the King UCC in Florissant, Missouri; **Rev. Dr. Yolanda Pierce**, dean of Howard University School of Divinity, and

**Tammy Fournier Alsaada**, a founding member of the People's Justice Project in Columbus, Ohio, described the role of faith in the lives of African American women and the way it invigorates the fight for justice in black communities.

**The Rev. Kennetha Bigham-Tsai** is the new Chief Connectional Ministries Officer of the United Methodist Church.

A petition to reinstate former Maryknoll priest **Roy Bourgeois** was released on June 28 by Corpus, an organization begun by resigned Roman Catholic priests and their families. Bourgeois was excommunicated after saying a homily at an August 2008 Mass of ordination for longtime friend Janice Sevre-Duszynska who was ordained into the Association of Roman Catholic Women Priests. Many other Catholic groups have also endorsed the petition, including School of the Americas Watch, Call to Action and the Women's Ordination Conference.

**The United Methodist Church** (UMC) decided on May 25 to allow any of its organizations, clergy members or lay members to submit petitions for consideration by delegates at an upcoming special session on sexuality. The UMC will address the issue of same-sex marriage and ordination of LGBTQ clergy during its General Conference in February 2019.

(From Anglican News Service (2), U.S. Episcopal News Service, ELCA news, UCC News, United Methodist News, Bridget Mary's Blog.)

## In This Issue

**Centennial IAWM Assembly, p. 3**  
Assembly travel assistance, p. 3  
Book Review: *Woman in the Pulpit*, p. 6  
Canada: Anglican woman archbishop, p. 5  
Mexico: Gov't honors U.S. priest, p. 5  
Obituaries: Opitz, Scott, p. 7  
RCWP, ARCWP ordinations, p. 7  
Switzerland: Faith and liberation, p. 5  
Thailand: Lutherans ordain 2 women, p. 1  
U.S.: Assemblies of God woman officer p. 1  
PC(USA) women co-moderators, p. 1  
U  
PC(USA) ordains Pakistani woman, p. 3  
WOC seeks videos of RC women called p. 3  
Women challenge RC church, p. 5  
Clergywomen as role models for girls, p. 6  
WCC: relaunches Thursdays in black, p. 4  
News: Australia, Cuba, New Zealand,  
Puerto Rico, United States, p. 2  
News: England, France, Malagasy Republic,  
U.S., Vatican City, West Timor, p. 8

## WOC Seeks Videos Of Women Called

On April 22 the Vatican marked the World Day of Prayer for Vocations, asking its members to welcome God's "unique story into their lives." The Roman Catholic Women's Ordination Conference reacted by saying, "We refuse to let the stories of feminist ministries and women's ordination be erased."

Their concern with these stories dates to the circulation of the first of its kind questionnaire at the first Women's Ordination Conference in 1975 which asked those attending, "Do you want to be ordained?" The findings:

"Of the women who responded... 34.5% answered with an unqualified YES. Another 24% responded either, "Yes, if there are structural changes," or "not yet."

Beginning in 2001 with the ordination on a boat on the Danube River of seven women by at least two bishops ordained in the Roman Catholic tradition, a succession of more than 250 women in Europe, North and South America, Asia and Africa, believing they are called to priesthood by God, called to full participation in the leadership of their church, have followed those seven women.

In order to make these calls visible and stand in solidarity with the women who are priests, WOC launched **Catholic Women Called** to lift up the stories and the ministries of women called to priesthood. They are carrying the campaign for equality to Rome this fall during the Vatican's Synod on "Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment" to insure women's vocational stories are heard.

All interested in participating are invited to produce short news videos of women of all ages sharing what they want the world to know about their calls to priesthood. These, may be sent to WOC at P.O. Box 15057, Washington, D.C. 20003 U.S.A. or email the Women's Ordination Conference at [woc@women'sordination.org](mailto:woc@women'sordination.org).

WOC's parallel synod vocational event to the one the Vatican plans for this fall is directing attention to women's priesthood vocations and the call for radical equality for all people in the Roman Catholic Church.

*(From a WOC Announcement)*

Save these dates!

### The Centennial Assembly Of the International Association of Women Ministers

Will Explore  
**"Women's Prophetic Leadership In a Changing Church"**  
July 22-24, 2019  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

Enjoy: Holy Conversation  
International Night Festival  
Networking and Support  
Anniversary Dinner & Celebration of the Future of IAWM

Plan to attend this special Centennial Assembly at the Hilton Garden Inn, Robinson Township, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.  
Monday noon through Wednesday evening  
Optional Dinner Cruise

Email registrar Carol Brown to receive the brochure and details when available: [csbrown550@hotmail.com](mailto:csbrown550@hotmail.com). Or write her at 1921 Palm St., Reading, PA 19604, U.S.A. Members and interested persons welcome.

### U.S. Presbyterians Ordain Pakistani Woman

Nazish Naseem, an elder in New Covenant Presbyterian Church, Albany, New York, and a fulltime interfaith chaplain in Albany Medical Center, was ordained on June 24 at New Covenant. Worshipers at Upper Room Inclusive Catholic Community, which meets there, were invited to join the celebration.

Nazish is a fourth generation Christian. Her great grandparents became Christian and her father serves as a pastor in Pakistan. Her mother is a retired mathematics teacher. She, her sister and two brothers grew up in the Christian faith.

After completing her Bachelor's degree, she asked to pursue theological studies. This is rare for women in Pakistan but her parents supported her with their whole hearts. She was employed by Pakistan's United Bible Training Institute while completing her M.Div. degree at Gujranwala Theological Seminary in her homeland. Fulfilling responsibilities as a course writer, Christian educator and field missionary, she grew in confidence and moved ahead.

Nazish went to Taiwan for further theological studies. She arrived in the United States in 2011 and married Samuel S. Johnson in October 2016.

*(From Bridget Mary's blog)*

### IAWM Travel Grant Can Aid Assembly Participants

Two IAWM grants are available in each Assembly year to assist women who wish to attend the Assembly but need some help with travel costs.

This year the Hilda Frank Seater Award, named in honor of the woman who served as International Director for many years, was awarded before this issue went to press.

The Travel Subsidy Fund assists a member or members living in North America. It covers registration and up to one half of travel cost. Recipients must find the remaining travel cost and pay Assembly room and board.

Criteria for receiving a grant are need, distance and ability to provide partial funding. Applicants are asked to fill out brief application forms telling what it means to them to attend an IAWM Assembly and how they see attendance helping their ministries.

Forms to apply for a grant will be mailed with the president's letter in mid-December. Applications, which are due March 15, should be sent to IAWM Treasurer Carol S. Brown at 1921 Palm Street, Reading, Pennsylvania 19604, U.S.A. If you have questions, write to her at that address or email her at [csbrown550@hotmail.com](mailto:csbrown550@hotmail.com).

# Feminists Can Reveal Religion As Liberation

Feminist faith actors will be critical to visioning how the Substantive Development Goals (SDGs) are implemented, the director of the UN Women liaison office in Geneva told a women's human rights training run by five faith organizations, including the Lutheran World Federation, at a meeting in that city in July.

Christine Low, of UN Women, said faith organizations can contribute to gender equality and the SDGs because they are "uniquely positioned" to take on the challenges of patriarchal structures and gender discrimination. Eighty percent of the world's people identify as religious.

"It is therefore key to identify and amplify feminist faith actors. Their presence can illustrate how religion can be a tool of liberation.

"Identifying the religious barriers to women's rights and bridging civil society and development aims are crucial in the realization of Agenda 2030 [the SDGs] and beyond. Bringing in faith-based organizations will assist with the realization of the SDGs, for which gender equality is an end goal and foundational principle."

However, several steps needed to occur. The work of feminist faith leaders and organizations needed to be strengthened; women needed to be elevated in the interpretation of religious doctrine, and collaboration between faith-based and secular feminist groups needed to be improved, Low said.

## Religion Plays Central Role

To facilitate this the Women's Human Rights Advocacy Training took place in the Ecumenical Center in Geneva in early July. It was organized by the LWF, the World Council of Churches, Church of Sweden, FinnChurchAid and Mission 21. Nearly 50 women and men learned how UN advocacy works and how to use UN bodies to improve the rights of women.

On July 6 the group took part in the UN's Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which ran through most of July, and practiced writing shadow reports.

"By improving the ability of faith organizations to bring local advocacy to the global arena, particularly through CEDAW and the UN periodic review of human rights in member states, we can help faith-based actors engage in civil

society initiatives denouncing harmful and discriminatory practices," said LWF Secretary for Women in Church and Society the Rev. Dr. Elaine Neuenfeldt. "We can build bridges between churches and local faith-based communities to global mechanisms on advocacy."

Amélie Barras, a professor at York University, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, presented her research on how and why faith-based organizations are engaging with the UN and its human rights mechanisms.

"On one side we see the importance of making UN work palatable to groups and organizations on the ground so they understand the importance of working at the international level, and on the other, highlighting how faith-based organizations can make important contributions to UN mechanisms because of their exclusive networks in the field and their ability therefore to represent 'unrepresented' voices at the UN," said Barras. (Lutheran World Information)

## Woman Officer—

*(Continued from page 1)*

Then in 2010 the General Presbytery, a policy making body, determined that "we cannot find convincing evidence that the ministry of women is restricted according to some sacred or immutable principle."

Eight years from that finding the first woman has now been elected to the Assemblies of God Executive Leadership Team, "so Donna Barrett's election is a big deal," said R. Marie Griffith, author of "Moral Combat: How Sex Divided American Christians and Fractured American Politics."

"One could argue, however, that her election fits well with the denomination's earlier history, even if women's leadership was disrupted for decades."

*(From a Religious News Service Report)*

# WCC Relaunches 'Thursdays in Black'

The World Council of Churches has unveiled new designs for its Thursdays in Black campaign against rape and sexual violence. The new logo, available on a range of resources to help people in the fight against gender-based violence, was approved at the WCC's Central Committee meeting in June. The idea behind Thursdays in Black is to encourage people to wear black clothing on Thursdays as a reminder of the need to act against sexual violence in all forms.

"Clothes and clothing feature in Scripture," Anglican Communion Director for Women in Church and Society Canon Terrie Robinson said in response to the renewed campaign. "Job clothed himself in justice like a robe and a turban. We are urged to clothe ourselves with compassion, kindness, humility and gentleness. In our baptisms we 'put on' Jesus Christ.

"A commitment to wearing black one day every week means getting into a rhythm of constantly 'showing up' as a visual, challenging and urgent reminder that rape happens and must stop. It's also a commitment to being activist—in prayer and deed—against the abuse of power.

"Thursdays in Black is a movement that is here to stay until everyone is aware of the historic and present reality of rape and sexual harassment—and until everyone has got the message and knows what must change in order to end and prevent it."

"Thursdays in Black was born in the 1980s during the WCC Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women as a recognition of women's resistance movements worldwide," WCC Director of Communications Marianne Ejdersten said. "It has since grown into a people's movement within and beyond the churches. With the new design and many options for its application, we hope that everyone can find a way to express solidarity with women and against violence."

Each week women and men from around the world post expressions of commitment to the campaign on social media hashtagged #ThursdaysinBlack.

Resources for Thursdays in Black can be downloaded from the WCC website. (Anglican News Service)

# Priest Honored for Work With Victims of Violence

The Mexican government last May honored an Anglican priest for her work helping female victims of violence in the United States. The Rev. Maria Elena Daniel Cristerna received the Ohtli Award at the Mexican Consulate at Eagle Pass, Texas, in May. Ohtli is a *Nahuatl* word meaning pathway or *camino* (Spanish). The award is a medal, a silver rosette, and a diploma.

The awards are given by the Mexican foreign ministry's Institute of Mexicans Abroad to recognize and honor Mexican, Mexican-American or Latino leaders who have dedicated their lives and careers to "blazing a trail" abroad for younger generations of Mexicans and Mexican-Americans as they strive to achieve their dreams. It is one of the highest distinctions given, rarely, by the Government of Mexico.

Born in Nueva Rosita in Coahuila state, Cristerna emigrated to the U.S. in 1970, becoming a citizen in 1984. She worked in farms, making jeans and selling in stores while studying at Sul Ross University in Alpine, Texas. As an administrative assistant, teacher, TV anchor, radio host and pastor she encouraged others of all ages to study.

Ordained in 2006 she began working as associate pastor with her husband, the Rev. Miguel Cristerna, as assistant rector of *El Buen Pastor* and The Resurrection parishes in Piedras Negras, Coahuila, in the Diocese of Northern Mexico.

From 2006 to 2008 she was called as Counselor of the Institute of Mexicans Abroad, where she represented the Mexican community of Eagle Pass.

In 2014 Christerna established a Women's Shelter to provide a refuge and haven for women, sometimes with children, who need to escape from pain and fear in their domestic environment. The multi-purpose shelter provides a place to sleep, eat and recuperate from physical and emotional wounds. It also hosts prayer groups for older and younger women, religious retreats, and conferences where women can learn about their right to stand up against domestic violence. The shelter also provides a loving environment for children and helps to build up their confidence.

Cristerna is exceptionally passionate about the empowerment of women and represented the Anglican Church of Mexico as part of the Anglican Communion's delegation to the 2018 session

of the United Nation's Commission on the Status of Women meeting in New York City.

"She specializes in working with women who have been victims of any type of violence, helping them get psychological support," Mexico's Ministry of Foreign Affairs told ANS. "She is a big supporter of gender equality and women's empowerment. One of her main goals is to empower women through education and she has been a very good speaker in that matter at conferences and rallies."

(Anglican News Service)

## Women Theologians Challenge RC Church

Eight females identifying Catholic in their 20s and 30s, all students or recent graduates of programs in theology or divinity, gathered June 17-30 at Mount St. Benedict Monastery in Erie, Pennsylvania, for the inaugural Joan Chittister Institute for Contemporary Spirituality: A Feminist Benedictine Option.

The institute was a two-week intensive course on the work of author and lecturer Benedictine Sr. Joan Chittister, especially her writings on monasticism and women in the Catholic Church. The program was offered by Benetvision, a ministry of Sr. Joan and the Benedictine Sisters of Erie that offers spirituality resources as part of an ongoing effort to support young female Catholic theologians who are often shut out of the church and struggle to find ways to use their gifts and education.

"My truth is that I and all women are made in the image of God and that we cannot accept oppression by the masculine hierarchical church, as doing so devalues both ourselves and God," said Chittister. "I believe that until all voices are heard and honored, the church and the world suffer."

(National Catholic Reporter)

## Canada Anglicans Elect Woman Archbishop

Bishop of New Westminster Melissa Skelton was elected Archbishop and Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of British Columbia and Yukon on May 15. She continues as bishop of New Westminster while adding responsibility for the province. First woman archbishop of the Anglican Church of Canada (ACC), she is also the second female archbishop in the world. The first was Archbishop Kay Goldsworthy in the Anglican Church of Australia.

Archbishops Melissa and Kay are responsible for internal provinces and so are not primates.

The worldwide Anglican Communion has had a woman primate: bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori became the first, and so far only, female primate when she was elected Presiding Bishop of the U.S.-based Episcopal Church in 2006, a role she held until her term expired in 2015. She declined to run for a second term.

A diocesan bishop since 2014, Archbishop Melissa has responsibility for six dioceses in addition to her own diocese of New Westminster. The Ecclesiastical Province of British Columbia and Yukon is one of four provinces that comprise the Anglican Church of Canada and includes those six dioceses.

She was elected on the first ballot by a telephone conference and electronic vote. "This vote was historic not only because the first woman was elected archbishop; it was also the first election held entirely by electronic means," a diocesan spokesperson said.

The new archbishop took office immediately and was installed in September. "I'm thrilled and deeply grateful for the support of so many in this process," she said. "My hope and conviction is that we are now embarking on a time of increasing cooperation and purpose in the life of our Province that will build on Archbishop (John) Privett's good work over the past nine years."

"About being the first woman Metropolitan in the Anglican Church of Canada, all I can say is thanks be to God for the privilege."

(Anglican News Service)

## There's a Woman in the Pulpit: Christian Clergywomen Share Their Hard Days, Holy Moments & the Healing Power of Humor

Reviewed By Marian Shearer

Edited by the Rev. Martha Spong. Skylight Paths Publishing, Woodstock, VT,  
2015. ISBN 978-1-59473-588-2

Martha Spong, a United Church of Christ minister, found herself at the center of a network of women clergy she found online—women who blogged. It turned into an on-line Facebook community called RevGalBlogPals where some 3,000 (it is now

5000) women ministers from all over the world regularly post about their work, joys and sorrows. And along the way more than 50 of these women from 14 denominations collaborated to create *There's a Woman in the Pulpit*.

These are short essays in six categories: Fierce and Fabulous for Jesus; God's Calling and Our Identity; A Taste of Heaven and a Splash of Glory, Sharing the Sacraments; Ashes to Angels, Ministry and Death; They Don't Teach That in Seminary: What We Learned Through Experience; It's Complicated Being Pastor/Partner/Parent/Person and Outside Over There, Moving in the World Beyond Our Churches.

They are touching, funny, sometimes profound, sometimes downright devotional and poetic. They explore the issues we newly minted women preachers of 35 years ago recognized about ourselves—that more than our men colleagues, we struggled to balance family and personal life with work life, we strained to raise our children in the midst of demanding ministry, we blazed trails by embodying that women, too, were called to ordained ministry. These essays get real and immediate about bread and cup, about administering ashes and attending death, about claiming identity and finding ease in our roles, about the holiness of preaching and presence.

Many of the essays do indeed recount incidents unique to women in ministry, but many describe encounters that any minister might have. I enjoyed them all and I commend this book to all of you, especially for the moments of humor that carried these women through valleys or past obstacles. I expect that in contrast to the many “here are stories from my storied ministry” books that our men predecessors have written, it is a feminist value that this is a collaboration of many voices. It is also feminist in that each essay is personal and concrete,

peculiar to that woman's ministry and life. None of these authors generalize their experience into universal values or theology, at least not in these essays. Perhaps this IS the approach to theology of this generation of pastors—not to generalize.

I would have welcomed some reflection on how these stories reflect women's ministry as distinct from men's, if there is a distinction. I would have welcomed the authors' naming what they were doing as feminist pastoral theology. I would have welcomed, in the section about moving in the world beyond our churches, more essays about moments of ministry in justice work and public witness (there are one or two in the collection). Perhaps that's another book!

I was reminded throughout the book of an ecumenical group of women preachers who met weekly in Rochester, New York, in the late 1970s and 80s for lectionary scripture studies who became each other's spiritual support group. After a few years, we dreamed about publishing a book of our sermons and of accompanying essays about how we organized our sermon-making. I still yearn a bit to have published our reflections on women preaching and how we organized the task. Perhaps it would not be news today. But perhaps it might have helped some of the women in this book as they were starting out, with insights on organizing one's preaching and ministry as a woman.

A little descriptive paragraph for each woman writer names where she is in ministry and offers a lighthearted glimpse of her life. They have published books and put essays on line. Amazing!

*United Church of Christ Minister the Rev. Marian P. Shearer is president of LAWM.*

## Clergywomen As Role Models Benefit Girls

“Role models matter” is the well-documented conclusion of a new book of research, *She Preached the Word: Women's Ordination in Modern America*, by Benjamin R. Kroll and Cammie Jo Bolin. Kroll, the John Marshall Harlan Associate Professor of Politics at Centre College in Danville, Kentucky, and Bolin, a Ph.D. student in the Department of Government at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., found that:

- Women who had female congregational leaders in their youth enjoyed higher levels of self-esteem as adults.
- Women in the survey whose most influential leader was a woman had gained, on average, a full additional year of education compared to those whose most influential leader was a man.
- Women whose most influential leader growing up was a woman are equally likely to be employed full-time as men.

The writers found that women who said they never had a female religious leader growing up are 10% less likely to agree they have “high self-esteem” and 30% less likely to “strongly agree” compared with women who had clergywomen at least some of the time. Men had no difference in self-esteem whether clergy were male or female.

In their survey, say the authors, the gender gap in psychological and economic empowerment is present only among those whose religious congregational leaders growing up were exclusively men.

“To us,” they conclude, “this strongly suggests that the rarity of female clergy in America's places of worship is at least partially to blame for the contemporary gender gap in American society. Increasingly the proportion of women in America's pulpits would not only improve women's psychological well-being but would also likely help close the gender gap in the workplace and other positions of societal leadership”

*(Excerpted from an RNS interview by Jana K. Reiss)*

## Remembering—

# The Rev. Dr. Anneliese Opitz

(1929-2018)

IAWM member the Rev. Dr. Anneliese Opitz died in Rochester, Minnesota, on June 6, 2008 at her residence in Charter House. Born in Berlin, Germany, on May 20, 1929, she was the daughter of Walter and Hilde (Saran) Kriege and spent most of her childhood in Berlin's Dahlem neighborhood. Evacuated to Silesia in 1943 and again in 1944 to escape intense bombing raids during World War II, the family fled that city for good during the Berlin Blockade in 1948.

After study at Heidelberg University in 1949, Anneliese earned a Doctor of Theology degree from the University of Bonn in 1959. Fluent in German and English, she also learned Latin, Hebrew, Greek and French. Studies included coursework in Oxford, Lausanne and Paris.

Her first visit to the United States was to attend the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Evanston, Illinois, in 1954.

On June 15, 1961 Dr. Anneliese Kriege married Dr. Joachim L. Opitz in Bonn, Germany, and joined him in Rochester, Minnesota, U.S.A. where he worked at the Mayo Clinic.

Study at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary earned her an STM in 1967. She was ordained at St. Andrew Presbyterian Church in Rochester by the Presbytery of Sheldon Jackson in 1966, one of the first women in that denomination. She served as chaplain at

the former Rochester State Hospital and, following its closure, served for 17 years as a pastoral counselor at Rochester Area Pastoral Counseling Center. From 1988 to 2000 she served as Coordinator of Pastoral Care and Chaplain at Charter House.

In retirement she was Pastoral Associate at First Presbyterian Church, preaching occasionally and helping with pastoral care of the congregation.

A loving and generous mother and grandmother, Anneliese enjoyed gardening and flower arranging, reading, playing cards and board games, visiting with friends and traveling.

She is survived by a son, Peter Opitz, a daughter, Susan Opitz, and grandchildren Ellen and Peter Opitz. Her husband, Joachim, preceded her in death.

A memorial service for her took place at First Presbyterian Church in Rochester on July 21.

## Remembering—

# Rev. Elizabeth M. Scott

(1928-2018)

African American Episcopal pastor the Rev. Elizabeth M. Scott, who died at age 89 on July 20, 2018, served congregations in western Pennsylvania.

IAWM member Rev. Dr. Jeane B. Williams reports that she became the first AME clergywoman to be nominated as a candidate for bishop. Although she was not elected, she paved the way for the three bishops the denomination did elect in the last decades of the twentieth century.

She is survived by her children, Edward Alan (Andrea), Horace Ricardo (Betty Gail), Pamela Elizabeth, Duane Christopher (Victoria), Kalala Kalid (Faitha) and Julia V. Scott, siblings; Harold (Arlene), Eugene (Missy) and Madeline Miller; nine grandchildren, 28 great grandchildren and a host of other relatives.

Her Celebration of Life took place at St. James African Methodist Episcopal Church in Pittsburgh on July 27.



Rev. Elizabeth M Scott

## Ordinations

### Roman Catholic Women Priests

#### Calgary, Alberta, Canada

On July 20, the eve of the Feast of Mary of Magdala, Bishop **Jane Kryzanowski** was ordained the RCWP bishop of Canada at a service in the EEEL Building of the University of Calgary. Officiating bishops included former Canadian Bishop Marie Bouclin, together with Bishops Joan Houk, Christine Mayr-Lumetzberger, Nancy Meyer and Jane Via.

#### Middleton, Wisconsin

Bishop Nancy Meyer ordained **Amy L. Bruner** of Des Moines, Iowa, a deacon on August 4 at Holy Wisdom Monastery.

### Association of Roman Catholic Women Priests

#### Sarasota, Florida, U.S.A.

On March 25, the Feast of the Annunciation, Bishop Bridget Mary Meehan ordained **Elena Garcia** a deacon at St. Andrew United Church of Christ, Sarasota, Florida, in a ceremony of the Mary Mother of Jesus Inclusive Catholic Community.

#### Durham, North Carolina

In a service held at Jubilee Christian Church International—Chapel of Victory on April 30, Bishop Meehan ordained **Abigail Eitzroth** to the priesthood.

#### Piedescuesta, Colombia

On June 2 Bishop Olga Lucia Alvarez ordained **Blanca Azucenan and Maria Teresa Martinez** to the priesthood in a ceremony in the hall of the ETO Meeting House.

#### Cleveland, Ohio, U.S.A.

At a service on June 30 at Brecksville United Church of Christ Bishop Mary Ellen Collingwood ordained **Susan Marie Guzik** of East Lake to the priesthood and **Toni Kay Attanasio, Geraldine Lacoco and Kathleen O'Connell Sauline** to the diaconate.

## In the News

### England

**Bishop of London Sarah Mullally** was introduced on May 24 as a member of the House of Lords, the upper house of Britain's Parliament, where she is now the most senior female bishop. She heads one of the five bishoprics whose leaders are always members of this chamber and as such is also a member of the Privy Council that advises the monarch.

**Bishop of Gloucester Rachel Treweek** is also a member of the House of Lords.

### France

At its meeting in May the Union of Protestant Churches of Alsace and Lorraine's Consistory Assembly adopted a gender and youth quota goal. It is a commitment to reach as much as possible the quota of at least 40 percent women and 40 percent men as well as a representation of at least 20 percent youth and young adults who are 30 years old or younger.

### Malagasy Republic

At the 150th anniversary celebration of the witness and ministry of the Malagasy Lutheran Church at the end of May **the Rev. Dr. Jeanette Ada Epe Maina**, Africa vice president of the Lutheran World Federation, told members their 150 years of proclamation of the gospel inside and outside their country had been a blessing both for others and for

their church. "Today Christianity in Africa grows and thrives because of the commitment of everyone, men, women and children," she said. About 25,000 participants, including members, gathered for the celebration in the capital, Antananariva.

### United States

At Spring Synod Assemblies the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America saw the election of its first two African American women bishops. On May 5 **Bishop Patricia A. Davenport** was elected to head Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod and on May 6 **Bishop Viviane E. Thomas-Breitfeld** was chosen to lead South Central Wisconsin Synod.

**Bishop Susan J. Briner** was elected to lead Southwestern Texas Synod. Two women re-elected by their synods are **Bishop Ann Svenningsen** of Minneapolis Area Synod and **Bishop Shelley Wickstrom** of Alaska Synod.

The U.S. Episcopal Church's Seminary of the Southwest and the Black Religious Scholars Group have established a Scholar-in-Residence program at the seminary and named **the Rev. Melanie Jones** the first scholar-in-residence. Created in response to Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's call to focus on evangelism and racial reconciliation and to address needs expressed by

Southwest students and graduates, it is known as the Crump Visiting Professor and Black Religious Scholars Group Scholar in Residence program. The scholar teaches required courses and electives and contributes to community life and worship to form leaders to facilitate conversations across boundaries of race and ethnicity.

### Vatican City

On April 1 Pope Francis appointed three women to the Congregation for the Defense of the Faith: Italians **Linda Ghisoni** and **Michelina Tenace** and Belgian **Laetitia Calmeyn Agencias**, the first women ever to serve with this group, once known as the Inquisition.

### West Timor

**Mery Kolimon**, president of the Protestant Evangelical Church of Timor, received the fifth Sylvia Michel award on March 4 at a service in Brangarten, Switzerland. She has been president of Indonesia's second largest Protestant church of two million members since 2012. The prize is awarded annually for promoting the leadership functions of women in the church.

*(From reports of Episcopal News Service, Lutheran World Information, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America News, the National Catholic Reporter and the World Communion of Reformed Churches.)*