

## Leaders vote to discuss women's ordination at 1995 GC session

After an earnest appeal by A. C. McClure, president of the North American Division (NAD), on Sunday afternoon, October 9, church leaders voted during Annual Council to adopt a procedural motion regarding women's ordination.

The Annual Council vote now means that delegates to the 1995 General Conference (GC) session will decide whether a division, such as North America, will be vested with the authority to decide to ordain women.

Unlike previous debates, which have often been marked by hostility toward women, the October 9 vote came after a lively but reasoned two-hour debate, chaired by GC Vice President Calvin Rock.

The Annual Council decision means the item will be placed on the GC agenda when the quinquennial business session of Seventh-day Adventists meets early next July in Utrecht, Holland.

### Facing NAD's Dilemma

McClure pleaded with division and union leaders from around the world to consider NAD's dilemma. Women in this division, he said, have been allowed to study at the seminary, obtain needed training, and take jobs as pastors and chaplains.

But full authorization of their work has been withheld. "It's an untenable position," McClure said in his powerful but low-key presentation.

Several NAD union and conference presidents rose to support McClure's request. But church leaders from other divisions were cool to the idea, and some passionately opposed it.

Normally, a request like this would have had to be voted by a division in 1993 at its year-end meetings. But the General Conference president, fearing that such a vote would escalate tension over the next 12 months, asked NAD not to vote on the topic then.

### NAD Holds Unusual Session

Instead, NAD officially voted its request at an unusual session held on Monday, October 3, just hours before the 1994 Annual Council opened. (The rest of the NAD year-end meetings took place after Annual Council).

It is important to realize that women's ordination *itself* will not be voted up or down at GC next year.

But, if GC delegates do approve the Annual Council measure, each division of

the world field could—if it so chose—decide whether to ordain women to gospel ministry within its own territory.

If this procedure is adopted next summer at GC, the North American Division would then discuss and vote on the merits of women's ordination. Most likely this would take place next October at NAD's 1995 year-end meeting.

### Annual Council Procedural Motion

**Voted** "To request the Annual Council to refer the following action to the General Conference session for consideration: The General Conference vests in each division the right to authorize the ordination of individuals within its territory in harmony with established policies. In addition, where circumstances do not render it inadvisable, a division may authorize the ordination of qualified individuals without regard to gender. In divisions where the division executive committees take specific actions approving the ordination of women to the gospel ministry, women may be ordained to serve in those divisions."

The Annual Council's vote this year is a major departure from how women's ordination has been handled during the past 21 years. Since 1973 church leaders have consistently argued that when one is ordained to gospel ministry it is to a "world-wide" or "universal" ordination.

### NAD Presses for Change

In theory, a man who is ordained in South Africa or Russia or Latin America, could serve any Seventh-day Adventist church anywhere. In actual fact, however, his culture, language, personal abilities, and biases limit the places in the world where he would be accepted or hired as a minister.

Since the Camp Mohaven Counsel on the Role of Women in the Church recommended women's ordination in 1973, the proposal has been defeated time and again on the basis that "the world field is not ready for this."

In 1994 it is the North American Division alone that is pressing for women's ordination, despite the fact that dozens of women serve in ministerial roles in many other divisions of the world field. Of course, some leaders and theologians in North America also strongly oppose the issue.

One of these opponents, C. Raymond Holmes, has recently published a book, *The*

*Tip of the Iceberg*, in which he argues that the Adventist Church will disintegrate if women are ordained. Holmes, a member of the faculty at the SDA Theological Seminary, has distributed his self-published book around the world.

Although the procedural vote was approved overwhelmingly in the hand vote by members at the Annual Council, this does not indicate that most leaders favor women's ordination.

On the contrary, many who voted for the procedure (stating that a "division has the right to appeal to the General Conference Session") plan to vote against it in Utrecht.

The heaviest opposition to women's ordination comes from South America, Inter-America, and at least two divisions in Africa. Five years ago at the 1990 GC session in Indianapolis many of these delegations voted in blocks, following the example of their union and division officers.

## AAW Conference Focuses on Nurturing

"Nurturing & Nourishing the Spirit" was the theme of the 12th annual conference of the Association of Adventist Women September 29-October 2, 1994. Held at the Doubletree Hotel in Pentagon City, Virginia, the conference drew 111 participants from Australia, Canada, Denmark,

England, Switzerland, and across the U.S.

The four-day program was packed with seminars and sermons, prayer groups and formal presentations, experimental



**SISTERS REMEMBERED:** Mandy Forster and Elaine Haenni attended from Switzerland. Participants came from five foreign countries and across the U.S.

worship and quiet communion. Six Women of the Year were honored at Saturday night's banquet.

The Sunday morning business session covered a wide range of issues, including where members want their association to be in the year 2000. The newsletter, *The Adventist Woman*, was discussed; members suggested ideas for the planned revamping of the publication.

The meeting closed with high hopes for the soon-to-occur discussion of the ordination of women at the Annual Council (see separate story on this page). And participants felt nurtured, refreshed, and ready to return to their regular duties.

Several personal viewpoints on the conference are featured on pages 2-3.



**WELCOME TO THE CONFERENCE:** Participants pause outside convention headquarters. Left to right: Josephine Benton, Sasha Ross, Tara Van Hyning, Elizabeth Wear, Berverly Rumble, and Carol Appleton.

# Personal Perspectives of 1994 Conference



## Nurturing the Future

A summary of the keynote address by Iris Yob

*The hope goes round  
And the strength goes round  
And the pow'r goes round  
And the love goes round:  
And hands are joined  
And our hearts are joined  
And the Spirit is flowing between us.*

The audience sang this new song, "Networking"\* softly in preparation for the conference keynote address.

Iris Yob, keynote speaker for the 1994 AAW Conference, held listeners in rapt attention as she vividly described a dream with three symbolic scenes. In each scene a mummy, tightly bound, each a female friend, lying outside the gates of the church. Only in the third scene did the mummy struggle, free herself from her bandages and walk resolutely away from captivity. A terrifying experience—even in a dream! Could it have a special meaning?

Have women in the church been bound—wrapped tightly as a mummy, not free to move, to run, to stretch, to grow? With mouths and eyes and ears sewn shut are they bandaged so tightly they cannot freely express pain, or joy, or sometimes even vote?

### Unspoken "Gag" Law

Beyond abuse, rape, and harassment, women in the church have a spoken and unspoken "gag" law prohibiting speaking out against discrimination, exclusive language, and preconceptions regarding tasks. Women are encouraged to sing in the choir—but seldom asked to conduct; requested to give financially, but seldom to collect the offering; needed to prepare bread and wine for communion, but seldom to bless or serve it; urged to attend church services—but not to preach, pray or even announce a hymn.

Like the women in her dream, Yob sees women as bandaged, blindfolded, bound tightly, scarred with the mortician's knife. Smothered, suffocated, and overpowered, women of the church must seek the air and light of freedom. But how?

As women in the church we need to discover who we are, what we were meant to be. "Every eye will be opened, every ear unplugged, and every voice unstopped; the

lame will leap like a hart, those in bondage will be released, the dead will be raised." This is a promise, a vision that women must remember. Our attention must no longer be on bindings. We must hear the voice of the Lifegiver—and stand and walk. We must grasp our future in God—fully and authentically. We must be redefined, reclaimed as God's women.

### Move Beyond Permission Seeking

Women in the church must move from the attitude of permission seeking: please ordain us, let us into board rooms, appoint us to positions of responsibility and challenge, don't hurt us, abuse us, or be unjust. Women of the church must live as though these requests have already been granted and take faltering steps into our own authentic, unique womanhood.

The Association of Adventist Women is an organization that seeks to spearhead freeing actions for women in the church. But even the AAW may behave as if constrained.

Yob advised AAW members to give attention to the larger picture—not to focus on what someone recommends or condemns but to give nervous energy to the effort of changing people; not to be distracted by policy changes and church leadership; but to keep hopes and spirits high. With self-esteem, faith, and hope grounded in Christ, refuse to be defined as victims and realize that injustice does not disappear before paradise.

What does this mean in terms of corporate strategies for women of the AAW? Right now many feel burn-out and guilt. Maybe it is time for a new phase. Maybe we need new roles, new objectives, and liberated growth. Maybe we need new community—less joining for common *fight* and more joining for common *growth*. Maybe we need less focus on institutional inclusiveness and more focus on personal inclusiveness.

Personal strategies for growth must include finding our spiritual center. Struggling must rest for growth to begin. Old ideas need to be discarded about high questions. New language needs to be developed: stories, music, art, dance, and poetry that speak to the spiritual hunger of the world. Time must be devoted to exploring the sacred—searching for the Holy One—and for developing meaning and wonder and awe.

### Greater Capacity to Work

But what of our causes? Will new roles and patterns mean that we have abandoned problems of the world? Most surely, no. When free, we have a greater capacity to work for others. We will exert even more sensitivity to injustice to women outside our inner circles, to children, the poor, gay/lesbian people, the physically challenged, and the drug dependent.

And what of the struggles in the church? When we feel free, when we come to see the church as bound and gagged like a mummy by policies, hierarchical expectations, by the constant need to be right—we see how we have even placed God in a box—bandaged Him also as a mummy with our limited faith.

Women are uniquely positioned to work for the liberation of the church. Because we are shut out of power games we are in closer contact with life, growth and

with emotions. When we connect anew with the Holy that transcends all, we can be channeled to transform the dead body of the church into a living, breathing, spiritually live reality.

*Wind circles that will encircle  
The earth, the sky and the deep abyss;  
Find loving entwined in networking,  
Claiming the strength that's our birthright.*

*For God, our God is a hoping God  
And a strength'ning God, and empow'ring God  
And God, our God, is a woven God  
And the warp and the waft of creation.*

*Dance joy in a cosmic circle  
A toughened strand in the cloth of God  
Weave shapes of a true integrity;  
This is the stuff of creation.*

The audience sang softly, thinking of the words of the speaker.

\*The words to "Networking," written by June Boyce-Tillman for the 10th Anniversary of the Catholic Women's Network, is sung to the tune of "Greensleeves." It was first performed in Durham Cathedral on July 23, 1994.

## Women's Hunger Fed at Agape Feast

by Selma Chaij

Friday night...Sabbath eve...a time to gather together to worship and to nurture one another. This was the experience shared at the agape supper by some 150 women and men. The physical nurture of bread, cheese, and fruit was described by one participant as, "So simple, yet so satisfying, so good." Women sharing food is a primordial image of love. Very fitting for an AAW Conference.

Laurie Preston and Dawn Reynolds nurtured the group with music. Laurie's moving rendition of the hymn, "At the Cross," and Dawn's piano accompaniment raised hearts pensively towards Jesus. Laurie then focused on the feast at hand by singing, "Let Us Break Bread Together." After such a stirring musical introduction, everyone was ready for the spoken word.

### God's Strategy

Helen Pearson, a writer, radio speaker, and public relations consultant from England, gave the evening's devotional. She was introduced by Kirsten Oster, from Denmark. Pearson illustrated the story in Exodus 16, about Israel's hunger in the wilderness and God's strategy to feed the people with manna.

She asked participants at each table to write, during supper, their "hungers" and their "feeding strategies." The lively and thought-provoking brainstorming dispelled barriers. Each table brought a large poster to the front and read their "hungers" and "feeding strategies" amidst much affirmation, support, and occasional shared laughter.

### Five Lessons From Manna

Pearson noted that "there comes a time when all our strategies fail us and we must turn to God for food," as the Israelites in the wilderness. She described five lessons for our times found in the miracle of the manna.

First, the Israelites' hunger had become distorted by slavery. They wanted spicy, stimulating, and exciting food. This was different from what they really needed. We also need to have our hungers healed.

Second, they believed that God was leading them, but that did not mean that they would never be hungry. We need to acknowledge the pangs of our hunger for what they really are.

Third, when the manna came it looked familiar, like frost; but was unlike anything else. When we look closer at the familiar ways that God feeds us, we recognize the mystery and wonder.

Fourth, manna was gathered in different quantities by different persons, yet all were satisfied. We also must gather and know that the Lord will feed us and satisfy us individually.

Fifth, there were differences in God's feeding time. On Friday He sent more; on Sabbath He did not send any. On Friday the manna lasted over the Sabbath; on weekdays it would not keep. We need to recognize that God is a God of surprises. God feeds us in unexpected places and times.

The Friday evening agape supper was a time for the participants to experience a familiar God in unexpected ways. Helen Pearson closed the service with a "bidding prayer." She bid all those attending to consider their hungers. Then she thanked God for those hunger pangs "that guide us to You."

## Seasons Change but Spirit Remains

by Ella M. Rydzewski

The Sabbath school period, coordinated by Helen Thompson, began with praise songs to the One we had come to worship. The program focused on reaching out to women, empowering them to spread Christ's good news. Five women shared their vision for reaching out. One especially interesting presentation was by a college student.

### Student Petition Drive

Last year's AAW meeting in Seattle, Washington, inspired Walla Walla College theology student Tiffany Wishart. After those meetings she began educating other students about problems facing women in ministry. As a result she and others presented to the Adventist InterCollegiate Association in Lincoln, Nebraska, a 5,000-name petition supporting women's ordination. The next step in her quest occurred Friday, September 30, when she and three other students talked with NAD president Al McClure. She reported a cordial visit. "He told us he would let others know where college students stand when the topic is presented at a special NAD meeting." This has been "one incredible weekend," she said.

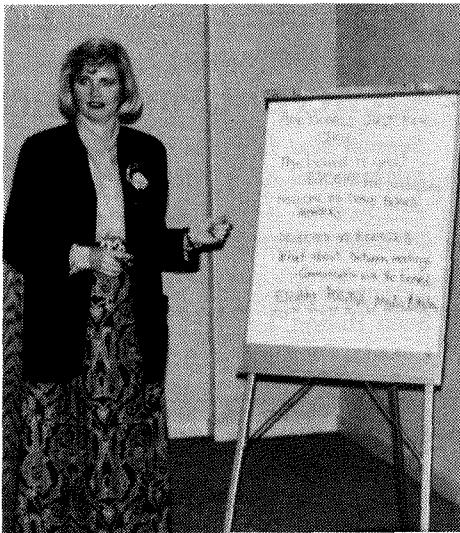
### Church Features Seasons of Life

In a symbol of humility, more than a hundred women and several men bowed as they entered the worship room under a low, leafy arch. Church began with songs of reverent praise. The sound of a flute floated through the room, making this hotel meeting room into a sanctuary.



**SEASONS OF THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY:** The Sabbath worship service featured reading, music, and symbolism showcased against special seasonal backdrops prepared especially for the conference.

The service was the creative production of Viviane Haenni of Walla Walla College, Sally Andriamiarisoa of Andrews University, Ginger Hanks Harwood of Southern California, Eileen Greenwalt of Walla Walla, Washington, and Dawn Reynolds of Washington, D.C. Long-time AAW supporters Pat and Paul Habada had spent long hours building the beautiful seasonal backdrops.



**STIMULATING SEMINAR:** Sheree Paris Nudd, Vice President at Shady Grove Adventist Hospital, presents, "Making the Most of the Media."

This unique contemplative service was based on the four seasons of life. For each season messages were presented in prose and Bible readings. Spring celebrated the newness of life's beginnings. The reader spoke words of wisdom to those in the springtime of life.

Our summer days fill with passionate activity. Life becomes busy, often chaotic. All over the world summer women prepare the bread. *At this time plates of bread were passed around.* The story of Abigail was told. We were called to be quiet in the midst of activity, for "no woman is required to build the world by destroying herself."

Autumn comes slowly, merging into a long Indian summer. Autumn is the gathering time; a time for thanksgiving; a celebration of wholeness; a casting aside. Autumn means washing away disappointment, grief, abuse. *At this point we acted out this cleansing by the washing of hands.* This symbol, though I felt no emotion at the time, seemed to bring with it a calmness; a feel of freedom. Next someone read the story of Bathsheba as she must have been in her autumn. "Allow the water to renew and make us ready for what is to come," said the reader.

Winter is a time to let go, acknowledging the day that has past. Winter brings

rest for the body and soul. It is the season for acceptance for all that has been and is. It is a time for grace. *At this time the grape juice was passed around.* Someone read the story of Naomi. "Take the cup, taste and remember, find the memories, savor the memories of the present, rest, and wait to dream again."

"To all of us come those winter times when what you love is torn away from you. Winter comes when least expected." A young woman sitting in front of me cried and another hugged her. Later I learned the young woman had recently lost her mother. "Rest and listen in that great silence—you may hear the heartbeat of God. Weep for the Spirit to come, rest, sleep, and wait for the Lord to come," said the reader.

We sang together and the minister came forward—a young woman wearing an elegant purple *selwar/kameez* (Indian pant suit). Her exotic dress reminded us of the bond among women that overcomes national, cultural, and racial differences. Sally Andriamiarisoa, a theology student at Andrews University, comes from Mauritius. Andriamiarisoa gave us much to contemplate. I mention what meant most to me.

"I have questions," she said. "I wish more freedom for our questions." "The unfaithful do not ask questions. I want to liberate the questions." She talked of love. People ask, "How come there are so many Christians around me, and I don't feel loved?... My wounds keep me from reaching out."



**1994 WOMEN OF THE YEAR:** Left to right, back: Karen Scott Hutton, Madelynn Haldeman, Gayle Clark. Front: Penny Shell and Penny Miller. Carol Porter was unable to attend.

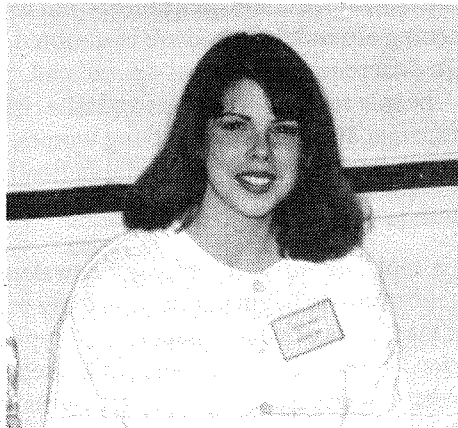
She talked of the Spirit. "The Spirit is too fluid, it does not always appear as you thought it would—packaged like you thought it should be." And on authority: "Authority in the Bible was never expressed outside of a bond of love. I want authority in my church but never without love and care."

I will long remember the feeling, the passion in her voice, the honesty, and willingness to be vulnerable. We find such qualities missing from most sermons these days. I believe Sally Andriamiarisoa will one day be a great preacher and an astute church leader. What hope she gives us!

#### Mohaven Revisited

Unless they have researched the topic of women's ordination, most Seventh-day Adventists have never heard of the meeting that took place at a junior camp in the Ohio Conference September 16-19, 1973.

What happened at Camp Mohaven? The question was asked of a panel composed of Kit Watts, assistant editor, *Adventist Review*; Josephine Benton, former pastor, now a chaplain; Leona Running, retired professor of biblical languages, SDA Theological Seminary; Jan Daffern, former SDA *continued on page 4*



**YOUNG WOMEN REPRESENTED:** Sasha Ross, one of two students from Highland View Academy.

## Witnessing Feminism and Mentorship

by Sasha Ross

The 1994 Women's Conference marked a starting point in the lives of two members on the greener end of "young women," Tara Van Hyning and me, students at Highland View Academy in Maryland. Never again will we respond to social and church-related issues without regard to our responsibility as women.

The AAW Conference opened our eyes. Upon arriving at the Doubletree Hotel, we realized that it was an honor to be the only high schoolers to represent others in our age group at the conference. Here were 100 professional women who valued the opinion and viewpoint of our generation sufficiently to sponsor us as participants in the discussions. Wow!

#### Learning New Terms

You put us to good work. We thought, wrote, discussed, contemplated, and examined our role as women. Workshops covered such topics as women supporting women, beauty, gender issues, and intimacy with God. Tara and I attended as many lectures as possible, sometimes splitting our time between two sessions. You presented to us new ideas and concepts.

Two terms I heard repeated over and over were *feminism* and *mentorship*. Webster defines feminism as "The theory that women should have political, economic, and social rights equal to those of men." Tara and I must admit that in our young world feminism was a new concept. But even we see the value and truth in Webster's definition. Did God not take a rib from Adam's body signifying, at Creation, man and woman's equality? No longer is feminism a mere word to us; because of lectures we heard and participated in, we've discovered that it should guide our actions and involvements.

My favorite seminar took the form of a group discussion. Led by Iris Yob, an Australian professor presently at Indiana University, the group of 20 to 25 sat in a bulging circle to evaluate women's beauty. Dr. Yob presented startling statistics, such as the fact that U.S. women spend more than \$20 billion per year on cosmetics. Another alarming fact: of all the things American women wish for, their number one goal is to lose 15 pounds! Such startling information prodded many women to voice new opinions on the traditional viewpoint of Adventist women. Some mentioned the "dowdy" appearance that many women have under the pretenses of not being vain, and the unfortunate stereotype of Adventists that results.

#### Teach By Example

As a woman still finding my identity, I believe that we should use the products our world provides to maintain in the best way possible what God has given us. My generation is getting to know the nature of society, and we pick up on things that adults often miss. I live in a dormitory with 48 other girls, and a great deal of our time is spent reading fashion magazines and listening to our favorite station on the radio.

If you want to show us that vanity is wrong, going about it by looking unkempt and paying no attention to yourself is the wrong approach. Demonstrating through your personality the fact that you can look and feel good, and still not have a vain attitude, would be much more effective.

My friends and I are influenced by the "world" (I'm referring to everything outside the Adventist Church) in many ways, and it's the job of mature and experienced Adventist women to balance that fact. We look to such people for guidance, approval, and respect. When we hear that "The Bible said that you shouldn't..." or "Ellen White said not to..." we tune out. We are hearing "Thou shalt not!" which isn't what we need from our role models and mentors. We want support, advice, instruction, and love.

#### Be Our Friend

This brings me to the second term used frequently, *mentorship*. Returning to Webster, I discover *mentor* means, "A trusted counselor or guide, a tutor or a coach." Simply put, it's a *friendship*. Being a mentor is just a fancy way of saying, "Be a friend to someone younger and less experienced than you."

AAW's conference emphasized this as a means of reaching younger women needing support. The friendships and resulting influence may be the very thing that keeps this church together, moving in the same direction the founders—including a very prominent woman—envisioned.

Tara and I are proud to be called women and highly regard those who have gone before us. Respectable Adventist women have paved the rocky road for our generation and for those following ours.

# Moving in the Right Direction

by Nancy Marter



As someone returning to this position after an interval of four years, I felt compelled to re-evaluate the directions of the Association of Adventist Women and see if our areas of emphasis were currently relevant. With this intent in mind, a simple questionnaire was distributed, asking a variety of Adventist women for their opinions.

As you would expect, the returns made fascinating reading. The trends garnered from these returns were brought to the AAW Conference and made the subject of general discussion. Several points of strong agreement emerged; I'd like to share these with you.

### AAW Is an Umbrella

With the healthy growth of numerous church-related women's organizations in recent years, AAW desires to provide an "umbrella" of sorts, where all Adventist women can feel appreciated and valued. In trying to analyze the sort of women who find their ties to AAW most rewarding, the closest we could come turned out to be women who are *involved* in what is happening around them and are committed, in one form or another, to making a positive difference. This is not age-related, but seems, instead, to be an attitude of mind—people ready to try things and take risks. Not surprisingly then, the desire to give special attention to the young women of the church and to cast a wider, more international circle, surfaced emphatically.

### Newsletter Is Best Tool

In order to address these areas, as a tool *The Adventist Woman* newsletter wins, hands down. The new magazine for women—to begin publication early next year—should fill a special niche, but not the "news of what's happening" typical of *The Adventist Woman*. (Note invitation to send in names and addresses of perspective new subscribers, found elsewhere in this issue. A subscription makes a great gift!)

### Awards/Conference to Continue

The Women of the Year Awards program has proved to be broadly beneficial both in terms of individual affirmation and in providing positive awareness of the contributions of women members. It is inspiring and will continue.

The annual AAW Conference—in spite of the cost in both effort and dollars—was found to provide widespread sustenance and refreshment of spirit. With minor variations from time to time, it too, will continue to be an AAW mainstay. In fact, there is even the possibility of an *overseas* meeting in 1996. Now is not too soon to start saving!

Much is happening for Adventist women. So keep your courage and creativity in good working order. We are moving ahead!

## Osgood Memorial Helps Women's Resource Center

A love gift of nearly \$4,000 was presented at the AAW Conference in Pentagon City, Virginia, to honor Wildred E. Osgood, who passed away on July 12, 1994. The money was donated by family and friends as an outpouring of love for a woman who demonstrated love throughout her life.

Together with additional funds, these gifts enable AAW to become the first contributor to the Women's Resource Center at La Sierra University. This is especially appropriate for Wildred's family because all five of her daughters attended La Sierra, and two of them were graduates of that institution.

Nearing 90, Wildred was a woman of the 1990s. Two words describe her responses to life—choice and change. She considered

the freedom of choice to be the greatest gift God gave to us. Only after choice has been made can change take place. She chose to serve God. She believed that a change could be made in the church, and added her support to women who had been struggling for the better part of this century to be treated with respect, and to be valued and recognized as equals.

Contributors to the memorial fund include: Franklyn Conde Annino, Mary & Joseph Annino, June Bullock, Terri Bullock, Marilyn Clark, Virginia Clark, Ardyce Earhart, Ruth & Ferris Gifford, Joyce C. Haynes, Brent Johnson, Constance Johnson, Janet L. Johnson-Danowski, Lois Kellar, Nellie Kimbrough, Jim & Lois Lasry, May Lee, Alberta Martin, Eugenia Martino, Victoria Martino, Carol & Tony Mihulka, John A. Mihulka, Charles Osgood, George Paap, G. Frederick Paap, Jr., Gerald Palmer, Ellen & James Phelan, Carol Rentschler, Karen Shea, Emmett Tetz, and Charlotte Tillman.

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pastor, now ordained by the United Church of Christ; Madelynn Haldeman, chair of the Department of New Testament Studies in the La Sierra University Department of Religion; and Bert Haloviak, assistant director, Archives of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. William G. Johnsson, editor, *Adventist Review*, moderated the proceedings. Four of the panelists—Watts, Running, Benton, and Haldeman—had been present at the Mohaven meetings.

Willis Hackett chaired the committee that met at Mohaven. Fourteen women and 13 men attended. Through the papers presented at Mohaven, facts important to women's ordination came to light: 1. The subject of ordination came before the General Conference session of 1881. A move for ordination did not pass due to several distractions: the death of James White, the closing of Battle Creek College, and divided opinions on ordination. According to Haloviak, the issue was referred back to the General Conference Committee and no further records on the topic can be found. 2. SDA scholars who reviewed the biblical material found no theological obstacle to ordaining women.

While doing some research on the subject, Josephine Benton later discovered that women ministers had been active in the Millerite movement and the church's early history. At least 20 had ministerial licenses.

After World War II, due to the lack of men, women in Finland became ministers and requested ordination. Thus the recent history of women's ordination began, not with "women's lib," as some have asserted, but because of practical needs. In the early 1970s women in North America began entering the ministry. Though few in number, they have made an impact.

### Participants Support Ordination

Only one or two of the approximately 29 papers reviewed at Mohaven opposed ordination. Twenty-four of the 27 persons present at the meeting supported women's ordination. Finding no barriers to ordination, the participants left feeling elated, believing they had only to share their information and women's ordination would occur by 1975.

But it did not happen. In the subsequent years, committee after committee—made up almost entirely of men—opposed the move. Top leadership felt ordination was going too far. Church leaders wanted to take more of a "middle-ground" stand and decided to poll leaders of the world church.

Mohaven led to a resolution from the General Conference allowing conferences and unions to ordain women as local elders (Spring Meeting, 1974). But news of the resolution spread slowly.

In retrospect, how did the panel feel about Camp Mohaven? They answered with words like "unfulfilled hopes," "hope," "optimism," and "encouraging." Johnsson expressed optimism. "It's right, and it will

happen. I expect to see it—I don't know when."

He was followed by a prayer request by Walla Walla College student, Rubyna Ilapogu, for the upcoming NAD and Annual Council meetings. "It will happen, because it is right," she said. "Call us—we will pray for you in our 10 p.m. prayer group back at Walla Walla," she concluded.

I was warmed by the thought of young women gathered to pray each night for their church, friends, and even me. They give me hope for a renewed church like the one that began with mostly young people 150 years ago.

### Women of the Year Banquet

On Saturday night attendances swelled as additional guests came for the highlight of the conference. In cooperation with the North American Division Office of Women's Ministries and Office of Human Relations, six women had been chosen as 1994's Women of the Year. The Metropolitan Church Steel Symphony Orchestra from Washington, D.C., provided lively entertainment.

The five award winners present were introduced: Gayle Clark, Salem, West Virginia, Family Life Award for her work with troubled youth; Madelynn Jones Haldeman, Riverside, California, Church Life Award for her contribution to the church as a New

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## Are you already planning to attend the General Conference

Session next July? Be sure to meet your international AAW friends for supper on July 6, 1995. Details later!

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Testament theologian and teacher; Karen Scott Hutton, Langley, British Columbia, Canada, Outstanding Achievement Award as the lawyer who presented an important religious liberty case before the Canadian Supreme Court and won.

Others honored were Penny Miller, Colton, California, Professional Life Award for her work in nursing education and on professional committees where she has made an impact in important areas to women; Penny Shell, Silver Spring, Maryland, Pastor/Chaplain Award for her contribution as a chaplain at Shady Grove Adventist Hospital and for her outreach to women pastors and chaplains in NAD. Carol Porter, Houston, Texas, Community Life Award winner, was not able to attend because of a health problem. Porter received her award for her nationally known and Presidentially acclaimed work with children called Kid Care.

These women represent only a small percentage of the heroines in the church. And as this 12th annual awards banquet ended with a benediction by Betty Howard, we left with a feeling of pride in what Adventist women—by God's grace—can and do accomplish within their spheres of influence.

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