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Spring Meetings Discuss Women's Concerns Further Study Urged on Ordination

The role of women in the Adventist Church has been the subject of much discussion during recent high-level meetings at Church World Headquarters in Washington, D.C.

The Commission on the Ordination of Women met for three days, March 26-28, and made significant progress in communicating concerns not only regarding ordination but also the contribution to the church made by pastors' wives, Bible workers, and female administrators. (See article by Kit Watts for more information.) The recommendations of the Commission were reviewed and adopted without changes by church administrators in session during the Spring Meeting, April 3-5. (See box.)

On April 16, the NAD Women's Commission, chaired by Dr. Thesba Johnston at the request of the General Conference Office of Human Relations, met to discuss other issues, among them the development of a job skills data bank, a survey of conference presidents concerning administrative positions open to women, the need for a woman appointee to the staff of the Office of Human Relations, and the possibility of publishing a book about women in the church. Tentative topics to be incorporated in the proposed book would include women in SDA history, in the New Testament Church, in homemaking and volunteer ministry, as well as such subjects as "How Women Are Serving the World Ad-

ventist Church Today," "Ellen White and the Uniqueness of the Ministry of Women," "Coping with Sexism in Church and Society," and "The Future of Women in the Adventist Church."

During the Human Relations Advisory Board session held April 17, that body discussed producing a videotape to demonstrate the changing role of women in the Christian church. They also supported the recommendation to produce a book and suggested additional topics such as "One-parent Families," "Your Mate Is Not an Adventist," and "Single Women in the Church."

Though not meeting with committees and

commissions, Marie Spangler and Ellen Bresee of the Shepherdess office, working on behalf of women (especially pastors' wives), have put together a full program of women's meetings for the New Orleans General Conference session.

Thus it would appear that women have moved to the center stage of attention in the church.

This issue offers reports on recent developments and actions voted, and a first-hand account of the Commission on the Ordination of Women by one of the 15 women participants.

The Commission on the Ordination of Women: A Report

by Kit Watts

Neal Wilson arrived in the Keystone Room of the Takoma Park Church Center on Tuesday, March 26, carrying a suitcase. It contained, he told us, just a portion of the letters, telexes, documents, tapes, books, and research papers that had been heaped upon him by interested parties. During the past six weeks he estimated that he had spent 100 hours on the topic and had read all that had been sent him.

In reality, perhaps many of the Commission members also arrived with baggage. During the three days and 28 hours we would spend together, we would begin to unpack, examine, pray, reorganize—and then, in a final dash toward our deadline—repack, leaving a few tell-tale sleeves and coattails to flutter from the hastily closed luggage.

In early February, Elder Wilson had written to individuals selected by the General Conference officers on January 10 to represent North America, the General Conference and the scholarly community, asking them to serve on this commission. (Other world divisions chose their own delegates.) Called by various titles, the Commission had been established during the 1984 Annual Council.

Actually, stimulus for establishing the Commission resulted from the Potomac Conference and Columbia Union's request that the three seminary-trained women they had employed be given the same privileges accorded to young men pastors who graduated from the seminary, including the right to baptize. However, the General Conference Officers recommended that a Commission be established to resolve the larger question, ordination of women pastors, and that the world church should make a "definitive decision" when it met in New Orleans in June, 1985.

Kit Watts, a librarian at Andrews University, was a member of the Commission on the Ordination of Women. She also participated in the 1973 Mohaven Conference that studied the role of women in the SDA Church.



Kit Watts

Including the General Conference officers, the Commission representatives from North America totaled 41; 25 came from the other nine divisions. Women comprised 22 percent of the Commission; 10 of the 15 coming from North America. Acknowledging the heavy NAD representation, Wilson reminded the group that the issue had arisen here. Things would be more balanced at the General Conference session where NAD people would account for only about 20 percent of the 2,240 official delegates, he said. Yet, at the outset, he stipulated that the Commission could consider nothing settled if a vote were 51 percent to 49 percent. A clear two-thirds majority must be achieved to claim consensus.

(Continued on page 2)

The following actions, recommended by the Commission on the Ordination of Women, were voted at the General Conference Spring Meeting on April 4, 1985.

ORDINATION OF WOMEN TO THE GOSPEL MINISTRY

In light of a three-day study and discussion of topics such as equality in creation, divine ordering, examples of ordination in Scripture, consequences of the Pauline statements regarding women, the nature of the pastoral call, the priesthood of believers, the implications of cultural conditioning in interpreting the Scriptures, the ordination of women as local church elders, the primacy of the home, and the ordination of women to the gospel ministry it was,

RECOMMENDED, 1. To take no definitive action at this time regarding the ordination of women to the gospel ministry.

2. To maintain the Church's present position on this matter.

3. To prepare further Biblical and other studies on the question of ordaining women by assigning specific topics to scholars and theologians for research.

4. To assign discussion of the documents growing out of such research to a special representative committee which will be scheduled to meet early in 1988, its findings to be presented in a report to the 1988 Spring Meeting of the General Conference Committee and subsequently to the 1989 Annual Council at which time the entire issue will be reviewed.

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN CHURCH WORK

RECOMMENDED, 1. To urge that "affirmative action" for the involvement of women in the work of the Church be a priority plan with church leadership, and to request leaders to use their executive influence to open to women all aspects of ministry in the Church which do not require ordination.

2. To give special emphasis to the work of Bible Instructors, both women and men, and to urge that conference and field administrators restore this ministerial category to importance and accord it proper recognition in the work of the Church.

3. To recognize the desirability of a pastor and his wife working together as a team and the spiritual strength which will result through such combined ministry and to urge that this concept be studied further, together with the development of a financial plan and training program that would support its implementation wherever feasible.

4. To recognize that a great need exists to educate our people regarding the major roles that women may fill in the Lord's work without ordination, and to request that specific plans to meet this need be developed and presented to the 1985 Annual Council.

MINISTERIAL ORDINATION REFORM OF PRACTICES

RECOMMENDED, To institute a reform in the Church's ordination practices for the purpose of limiting ministerial ordination only to those who perform direct pastoral, evangelistic, ecclesiastical, or other clearly ministerial-type duties.

MINISTERIAL WORKER FUNCTIONS IN NAD—CLARIFICATION

In view of the discussion regarding the functions assigned to ministerial workers in the North American Division, it was

RECOMMENDED, To request the North American Division Committee to clarify the functions of ministerial workers who hold ministerial licenses, including how such functions relate to women who serve as pastors, and to request that a complete proposal on roles and procedures be submitted by the North American Division to the 1985 Annual Council for consideration.

Presidential Communique



by Betty Howard,
President, AAW

"They who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." Isaiah 10:31 RSV.

It is not easy to wait, but sometimes it is necessary.

The commission on the ordination of women told the church to wait. It recommended that no definitive action be taken at this time regarding the ordination of women to the gospel ministry.

But the waiting time can be a time for renewing of strength.

The commission did not suggest that the church stand idle. It recognized the need for further study, clarification, and action on the issues of women's role in the church. How can the Association of Adventist Women best participate in such study, clarification, and action?

One recommendation of the commission was that further studies on the question of ordaining women be prepared by scholars and theologians. Should AAW make grant money available for such studies?

The commission urged that "affirmative action" for the involvement of women in the work of the church become a priority. Could AAW members use networking techniques to assure that qualified women are considered for positions of responsibility?

The commission also recognized the need to educate the church regarding the major roles that women may fill without ordination. How can AAW assist in this educational process? Should we form study groups to make recommendations and assist local churches in implementing educational programs?

We want your suggestions. Write to us. Tell us what you are doing and what you think can be done by AAW to aid the church in study, clarification, and action on the issue of full utilization of the gifts of Adventist women.

As we wait together, let us work together. Let us continue to wait on Him who has promised, "They shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint."

The Commission to Ordain Women: A Report

(Continued from page 1)

Tables in the Keystone Room formed a large U, an inner U and an outer one, allowing us to scan the faces of about two-thirds of the group and also look toward the open end of the U where Elder Wilson, chairman, and Dr. George Reid, secretary, sat at a table slightly apart. No seating assignments were made, no name badges issued, no official list of delegates was distributed. (Fortunately, the *Adventist Review* had published the names just a few days earlier.)

Offering a prophetic hint in his opening statement, Wilson asked, "Is it wise to try for a final decision on this now? There has been little time for study and reflection. Perhaps we should look at this."

On the third day the Commission unanimously adopted Wilson's proposal to resolve the dilemma in just this way—to give it more time. Instead of arriving at a "definitive decision" as bidden by Annual Council, the group voted to "maintain the present position of the church" on women's ordination but to initiate further study. These studies are targeted for review by a representative committee three years from now, just before the 1988 Spring Meeting. In theory, this would give time for additional refining before a recommendation might emerge for the 1990 General Conference, though no such statement appears in the language of the commission's formal report.

Tuesday, our shortest day together (seven hours), was marked by curiosity. No agenda had been mailed out, no procedure laid down. What would we do? How would we proceed?

Chairman Wilson first invited the division presidents to personally introduce members of their delegations. This took an hour. Then V. Norkov Olsen, former president of Loma Linda University, delivered a devotional from 10:30 a.m. until 12:10 p.m. Speaking as a church historian, he laid out six "control factors" that he felt should guide our deliberations, such as "the order of creation" and implications of being created in God's image, the way church structure often dictates theology, and ecclesiology. On this first

point he spent nearly half an hour decrying ordination of women in other churches. He empathetically quoted Anglicans, for example, who feel that "the ordination of women has brought ecumenism to the point of acute crisis."

Offering a prophetic hint in his opening statement, Wilson asked, "Is it wise to try for a final decision on this now? There has been little time for study and reflection."

After lunch, Wilson opened the session by giving us a 20-question quiz. (Results were not revealed until Thursday.) He wanted to know our beginning thinking, he said, and discover where we might already have consensus. Next he gave a verbal agenda and invited us to deal with it. The six points were these:

1. What is the meaning of "equality in creation" for male and female as set out in Genesis 1 and 2, and followed by the account of the Fall in Genesis 3?

2. How should we view the Pauline material outside of Galatians 3:28? To what extent are 1 Corinthians 11, 2 Timothy 2, Romans 10:12, etc., affected by cultural considerations?

3. How should we reckon with the 1973 Symposium papers? (Actually, these papers were completed about 1975 by scholars assigned the task by the Biblical Research Institute as a follow-up to the Camp Mohaven papers, in which women's role in the Adventist Church was first explored in 1973.)

Wilson said that while some people had questioned the value of the Symposium papers (which were overall rather favorable to expanded roles for women), "I do not think they were contrived. They were the outgrowth of sincere study. I know the people."

Still, he asked the question, "Were they one-sided?"

4. What is our interpretation of the "priesthood of all believers"? Should this concept be used to justify women's ordination?

5. What of the decisions that our church has taken over the past 12 years? Has the Holy Spirit led us? Was ordaining women as local church elders a mistake? Have we held out false hopes to women who have attended the seminary and become employed as pastors?

6. Finally, what of Biblical hermeneutics? How can the same texts be interpreted so differently? Do our presuppositions lead us to the conclusions we want?

At 3:10 p.m. Wilson opened the floor for our responses to his verbal agenda. The floor remained open for the next two days as more than 60 major speeches were made by at least 52 individuals. (Among those who never asked for the floor were Lance Butler; Robert Carter; Jackson Doggette, Sr.; Betty Holbrook; Rubens Lessa; Alf Lohne; Kenneth Mittleiter; Enoch Oliveira; George Reid; E.A. Roberts; A.C. Segovia; Joao Wolff; and Henry Wright.)

Though the speeches were often direct, all but two or three were delivered with exemplary courtesy.

Though the speeches were often direct, all but two or three were delivered with exemplary courtesy. Some members acknowledged that this topic could never be discussed in their homelands for more than one hour because emotions would have outrun good decorum. I wonder whether the presence of women—including Marsha Frost, a woman pastor from Potomac Conference—contributed to a more reasoned atmosphere. Raoul Dederen later remarked in a report to AAW members in Berrien Springs, "I think the Holy Spirit's leading could be felt among us."

Tuesday's discussion was like a teeter-totter. Fourteen people—five women and eight men—spoke, representing eight of the world fields. Their opinions were equally divided—seven being open to or favoring women's ordination, and seven remaining doubtful or decidedly opposing it.

The Commission put in a ten-hour day on Wednesday by adding an evening session. Marsha Frost's morning devotion included a moving story of her chance meeting with a stranger, a terminally ill patient in the hospital, and the opportunity she had to bring him to Jesus.



Shirani de Alwis, a delegate from the Southern Asia Division, makes a presentation as William Johnsson and Kenneth Wood, present and former editors of the *Adventist Review*, listen.

Wilson obviously had intended to divide the Commission into smaller groups on Wednesday, perhaps to encourage focus. But people kept asking for the floor and 25 major speeches were given. As Dr. Nancy Bassham, originally of Thailand and now a department leader in the Southeast Asia Union, said, "If the Far Eastern Division has sent me halfway around the world to attend this meeting, then I feel I should use the Lord's money wisely, be brave, and say something." In her view the FED would not be offended if a decision was made either to ordain or not ordain women. "We want to spread the gospel," she said simply. She added that she hoped a decision would not be

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imposed. "When we feel the need, we would like to make our own choice. Most believe it will come, and we don't oppose it in principle. Just let it come at the proper time. Let us not make a high-pressure decision now. Let's study further and know where we are going."

Of the 25 Wednesday speeches, twice as many favored ordination as opposed it. Francis Wernick was among the latter group, arguing that because ordination is to a worldwide ministry, no division or union should proceed ahead of others. Quoting from *The*



Joan Baldwin speaks to the Commission members. Left to right: Aulikke Nahkohla, Nancy Bassham, Delores Slikkers, and Joao Wolff.



Rosalee Haffner Lee makes a point. Delegates listening, left to right, front row: Delores Maupin, Charlotte Conway, Torhild Rom, and Betty Holbrook.

Great Controversy, Wernick emphasized that every point of our religious faith should be founded on a "Thus said the Lord." Lacking this, it would be unwise to proceed relying only upon human judgment in this issue, he added.

Rosalee Haffner Lee gave by far the most impassioned plea of the day. Ordination of women, she felt, would detract from the mother's role in the home. She spoke with a great sense of loss on the disheartening decline in support for Bible workers, a career to which she has devoted her life. A moment of relief and laughter came as she candidly made a pitch for Bible workers. "Maybe the name 'Bible worker' doesn't appeal to conference presidents anymore," she said. "Well, call us what you will—but call us!"

On the positive side, stirring speeches were made by Dr. Shirani de Alwis of Spicer Memorial College; Aulikke Nahkohla, who teaches Greek and is women's dean at Newbold College; Dr. Richard Leshar of Andrews University; and Kenneth H. Wood, former editor of the *Adventist Review* and present chairman of the Ellen G. White Estate Board of Trustees.

Speaking forcefully, Leshar urged a proper understanding of ordination. The traditional Adventist view, he said, is that ordination is meant to recognize the call of God in a person doing ministry. He then posed the question, "Which is greater—to minister or to be ordained? The greater is to minister. To be ordained is simply to be recognized for that ministry."

Changing course on Wednesday evening, Wilson called upon division presidents to share reports from their fields, describing whatever surveys, discussion, or studies they had undertaken. These reports continued



Dr. Richard Leshar urged a proper understanding of ordination.

when the group reconvened Thursday morning. Those divisions most opposed were based in Africa and South America. Inter-America and Europe reported some unions open and some closed, netting a cautious response. The Far East felt it would be unwise to proceed. Australia and Southern Asia expressed openness if no decision were imposed now, and they could adopt their own timetable to adequately educate the laity. A poll of leaders in 40 percent of North America's local churches, conducted by the Biblical Research Institute, revealed that 48 percent of the respondents opposed the appointment of women to pastoral responsibilities,

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41 percent favored it, and 11 percent were neutral. On ordaining women, 57 percent opposed, 33 percent favored it while 10 percent remained neutral. (See the accompanying article, which offers greater detail on the results of the survey.)

Wilson also revealed the results of the Tuesday questionnaire. Consensus favored women as local church elders, but the vote split on ordaining women to the gospel ministry. The Tuesday vote had shown the Commission 50 percent opposed, 15 percent somewhat open, and 35 percent favorable. Elder Wilson now called upon Charles Bradford, president of the North American Division, to speak. He did, eloquently, for 30 minutes.

Among his several points, Bradford said that after the Wednesday night session he had restudied every Biblical instance where the English word *ordained* is translated from Greek. He noted that there are very few such usages. "Based on those texts, you can't develop a high church view of ordination. In fact, most of the uses of *ordained* don't refer to ministers but to secular rulers, things, and places."

Bradford also noted that Adventists believe in progressive revelation. "The Bible writers themselves didn't know all they said. Ellen White said that if all the meaning from Scripture came to us at once it would overpower us. There are new truths to come. The ques-

tion before us does not come from the feminist movement but from the Holy Spirit. Will the Spirit call the wrong people? Does the Spirit know more about it than we? I want every child of God empowered. Let us leave the Holy Spirit free to work among us!"

Between 2 and 3 p.m. on Thursday, Wilson unfolded his own feelings. He said he regarded the present situation, in which young women in North America have the same training and experience as young men but are not allowed to exercise the same privileges as licensed ministers (including permission to baptize and marry parishioners in their own local church), to be "immoral and untenable."

He said he also felt a responsibility to the world family. He added that he had been more favorable to women's ordination ten years ago than now. Referring to a statement by Ellen White where she says that "the Bible and the Bible only should be the basis of all reforms," he felt that the scholarship in favor of women's ordination must become much more clear than it is now.

The solution Elder Wilson proposed was more time and study. As for the North American Division situation and how women pastors should be treated, the Commission voted to refer this back to the North American Division committee and ask that body to submit a report at the 1985 Annual Council.

Drawing on the sentiments of dozens of speeches, Wilson also proposed that the Commission recommend improved status and recognition for Bible workers; remuneration for spouses of ministers who serve in team ministry; an affirmative action plan to bring more qualified women into jobs where

Those divisions most opposed were based in Africa and South America.

ordination is not required; reform in overall ordination procedures, which have sometimes given men financial rewards rather than confirming their gifts of ministry; and additional theological studies.

The Commission then had a chance to express itself on the ordination issue once again. The balloting showed a movement from Tuesday's vote when 35 percent favored it and 15 percent were somewhat open. By Thursday, the opinion shifted to 56 percent supporting women's ordination, still short of a two-thirds majority.

Many Commission members responded to Wilson's proposals and the pace quickened. Time was running out. Instead of going out for supper, box-lunch suppers were delivered. After a 45-minute break, the speeches

continued. J.R. Spangler of the Ministerial Department opened our final session with a rousing speech.

Said Spangler, "Let's not obscure the fact that we have already gone backward on using women in our church. Women used to be much more significantly involved in leadership." If ordination is delayed for women, Spangler added, "We must change the wage scale to bring women ministers into equality

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with men." As for Bible workers, he noted that Adventist truck drivers get better wages. "What is the value of a soul won to Jesus? What value do we place on those who enter this work? I support wage parity." He also spoke to the tragedy of seeing minister's wives, who would rather be helping their husbands, but who are forced to find employment elsewhere. "We need to take definite steps to put able, qualified, willing spouses on the payroll. Money is said to be the obstacle, but I say we find money for what we think is important."

As the evening wore on, General Conference officers became nervous as the impending Spring Meeting agenda danced in



Joel Musvosvi of Zimbabwe, Eastern Africa Division representative, gives his views on the ordination of women.

their heads. They warded off the idea of the Commission having a Friday morning session. As a result, the debate, motions, and votes sometimes went at lightning speed. Here the clear advantage went to the male

"... our emotions had not overcome our reason. We had listened to one another and we had learned."

church leaders who know one another, are used to working together, and understand the system for getting things done. The final vote was made only "in principle" and without establishing final language, a task we were asked to entrust to others.

At 9:45 p.m. Thursday, after 12½ hours together, we snapped closed our emotional and theological suitcases. The chairman rightly observed that we were "mentally fatigued." Yet for the most part our emotions had not overcome our reason. We had listened to one another and had learned. Wilson read from Deuteronomy 31 to close our session, noting that Moses had come to the Jordan in hopes of entering the promised land, but was denied. Yet he said to Israel, in faith, "You shall inherit the land." Perhaps the chairman's closing statement, like his opening one, may have prophetic overtones.

Women Pastors OK — For Somewhere Else A Look at the Biblical Research Institute Survey

In preparation for the meeting of the Commission on the Role of Women in the Church, the General Conference Biblical Research Institute conducted a survey to ascertain the degree of support in North America for ordaining women to the gospel ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

One survey instrument was sent to 1,660 persons, representing approximately 40 percent of the churches in North America. The survey distribution was as follows: In the first church, the form was to be completed by the highest ranking lay male (usually the head elder); in the second church, by the highest ranking female (in most cases, the head deaconess). In the third church, the survey form was sent to the second highest ranking male; in the fourth church, to the second highest ranking female. The cycle was then repeated.

The survey asked three questions:

1. How do you feel about the appointment of a woman to pastoral responsibilities?
2. How do you feel about the ordination of women to the SDA ministry?
3. How would you feel about the appointment of a woman to be pastor of your church?

The choices offered ranged from "strongly opposed" through "strongly favor," and included a preference of "neutral." Results are shown on the chart accompanying this article.

Opinions divided, somewhat predictably, according to age of respondent.

Of the 1,048 responses received, 483, or 48 percent, were male; 527 (52 percent) were female (38 persons did not respond to this question). Only 919 of the respondents stated their employment status. Of these, 85 percent were lay persons, 15 percent were church employees. Under the category of age,

- 2 percent were 16-25
- 14 percent were 26-35
- 42 percent were 36-55
- 43 percent were 56+

Thirty persons did not reveal their ages.

... resistance to women's roles in the ministry increased with age.

Opinions divided, somewhat predictably, according to age of respondent. More than twice the ratio of people 56+ were opposed to women being appointed to pastoral responsibilities (Question 1), as were those in the youngest group (16 to 25 years). Similarly, many more of the 56+ group of respondents opposed the ordination of women (65 percent versus 39 percent), and fewer were neutral on either idea. (On Question 1, fully a third of the youngest group was neutral, while only a tenth of the 56+ group expressed this reaction; on Question 2, 22 percent of the youngest group were neutral, compared to only 8 percent of the oldest respondents.)

Polling the two middle groups produced fairly comparable reactions, although resistance to women's roles in the ministry increased with age. Forty-five percent of the 26-35 year olds were opposed to a woman's serving in pastoral responsibilities, compared to 42 percent of the 36-55 year old group. Twelve percent of each group professed neutrality on the subject. A fairly similar percentage (40 versus 37 percent) of the 26-35s and the 36-55s favored ordination.

However, when the question became more subjective, a shift in opinion was seen. When the matter went from "out there" (What do you think about this concept?) to "right here" (How about in your church?)

1. How do you feel about the appointment of a woman to pastoral responsibilities?
2. How do you feel about the ordination of women to the SDA ministry?
3. How would you feel about the appointment of a woman to be pastor of your church?

	Strongly Oppose	Moderately Oppose	Neutral	Moderately Favor	Strongly Favor
1. How do you feel about the appointment of a woman to pastoral responsibilities?	33% 351	14% 149	11% 120	22% 230	19% 198
2. How do you feel about the ordination of women to the SDA ministry?	42% 435	15% 154	10% 110	18% 193	15% 156
3. How would you feel about the appointment of a woman to be pastor of your church?	47% 495	13% 136	11% 119	15% 154	14% 144

increased resistance became evident. Apparently more people approve in theory of women serving in pastoral jobs than want them up front every week in their home churches! At least 55 percent of each of the groups (with a high of 67 percent of the oldest respondents) opposed having a woman pastor in their church. About 32-34 percent of the respondents (except the 56+ age group) were favorable to the idea. Only 22 percent of the 56+ group approved, although 10 percent were neutral.

Just how did the opinion of men and women compare on these questions? In-

When the matter went from "out there" ... to "right here" ... increased resistance became evident.

terestingly, overall, a greater percentage of men than women approved of women's role in the ministry. Forty-nine percent of women opposed a woman's serving in pastoral responsibilities, while only 46 percent of the men opposed the idea. (About 10-12 percent of each group was neutral.) Fifty-nine percent of women versus 52 percent of men opposed the ordination of women, and only one fourth of the women supported the idea of a woman's pastoring their church (about a third of the men said they would favor having a woman pastor).

What do these statistics tell us? Do they indicate, as some have maintained, that church members in the North American Division strongly oppose the idea of women pastors? Let's examine the survey more closely to see if this is an accurate assessment.

The survey really represents a split report, not a conclusively negative one. Furthermore, analysis of the polling techniques used suggests some serious questions about how representative a sampling it really is.

A look at the age distribution of the survey shows a disproportionate number of older people. This would be expected, since mature people are usually elected to serve as head elders and deaconesses. The negative reactions of the 56+ segment of the survey population could probably have been predicted even without the survey, since older people generally tend to be more conservative and supportive of the status quo than do younger people.

Since all of the people surveyed were local

church officers, another question arises: To what extent do church officers represent the convictions of the laity? As leaders, do they shape (or perhaps follow a safe distance behind) the evolving of public opinion?

Although the survey ostensibly was sent to churches in both rural and urban locations, its policy of one church/one vote obviously

Apparently more people approve in theory of women serving in pastoral jobs than want them up front every week in their home churches!

gives more weight to the opinions of respondents in smaller churches. A church with 2,000 members would receive the same number of votes—one—as a church with 16 members. This may mean that large, cosmopolitan churches, with a more-liberal membership, are underrepresented in the survey,

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since it is based on a percentage of churches, not a cross-section of members.

The above considerations clearly show that the results of the survey should be applied cautiously, if at all, in describing the opinions of the laity of the North American Division regarding the role of women in the gospel ministry.

If some of the recommendations of the Commission—including greater involvement of women in the overall work of the church—are adopted, perhaps a later, more representative sampling of church members will produce a somewhat different response.

Those readers interested in more detailed information concerning the survey should contact Dr. George Reid, Biblical Research Institute, General Conference of SDA, 6840 Eastern Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. 20012.

by Jane Thayer, Berrien Springs, Michigan

(From an address presented at the Association of Adventist Women Conference, Women of Mission, July 12, 1984.)

Who are homemakers?

By far the largest group are those with the responsibilities of young children. At some point in their children's lives, most of these women enter or re-enter the work force.

A second group of women are homemakers because of the special requirements of their husbands' jobs. Many often work side by side with their husbands, without pay or recognition. A third group needs a break from employment. They need to recuperate, or retrain, or for some other reason retire temporarily from the nine-to-five schedule. A fourth group recognizes a comfortable fit between their talents and the tasks of homemaking. They enjoy homemaking. A fifth group of women are homemakers not because they want to be, but because they feel a sense of duty, or they fear their capacity to cope with the work world, or they give over-attention to the desires or opinions of others.

What does it mean to be a full-time homemaker today? How do other people view us?

On one official Labor Department ranking of jobs according to complexity of skills required, homemaker got the same ranking as parking-lot attendant.¹

What does it mean to be a full-time homemaker today? How do other people view us?

The most devastating comments about homemakers often come from other women. How many times have you heard a working woman either in person or on TV say, "Wiping runny noses and changing diapers were just not enough for me." I have wiped a few runny noses and changed hundreds of diapers, but that was not what I was really doing. I was providing health care and a pleasant environment for my children. During those years I was also providing emotional security, intellectual stimulation, and personality and character guidance.

Homemaking/mothering is the only career I know of that is described in terms of its most insignificant and unpleasant tasks. Think for a moment of the prestige associated with being a physician. Do you ever hear it described in

On one official Labor Department ranking of skills ... homemakers got the same ranking as parking-lot attendant.

terms of its most unpleasant aspects? Have you ever heard someone say, "Imagine spending your life checking sore throats and collecting urine samples"? No, we think of the physician in terms of what he or she is trying to accomplish. Why can't we think of full-time mothering on the same basis?

If the truth were admitted, it is because full-time homemaking/mothering provides no prestige, no power, no money.

If I were devoting my life to trying to teach a chimpanzee to talk, I would be featured in *National Geographic*, interviewed on the Today Show, and paid by a research grant. But

Jane Thayer is a homemaker from Berrien Springs, Michigan.

making—The Role I Have Chosen

since I am engaged only in trying to teach a human child his native language with all its nuances of meaning and symbolism, to teach him the power of language for good and for evil, to teach him to find God revealed in the Word, and to teach him the potential of his

Contrary to current popular opinion, being a homemaker is by no means all dissatisfaction and depression.

words to praise God, I am ranked with the parking-lot attendant—and not even given a tip.

How do homemakers feel about themselves?

When the women who are now 30 and older were growing up, working women were considered a "deviant" group. Quite suddenly women at home have discovered that conditions in today's society have changed. Today it is the homemakers who often feel alone and misunderstood.

Research studies are finding that having the primary responsibility for the care of children, rather than having a job, is most likely to make a woman feel pulled apart and overloaded. According to the authors of *Lifeprints*, the workplace can sometimes seem like a health spa, compared with life at home.²

At a sister college I have a homemaker friend who is called in to work for two weeks at a time whenever one of the top secretaries on campus goes on vacation. She considers those two weeks of work her personal vacation time. She drops her two children off at a

Full-time homemaking/mothering provides no prestige, no power, no money.

babysitter's house and goes to the office. There, when she sits down to type, no one climbs up into her lap, no one calls from the kitchen wanting a drink, no one drops jelly bread face-down on her finished copy.

When she gets home at night, her house is the same as when she left it—which is a considerable improvement over the way it would have looked if her children had spent the previous ten hours in it.

The authors of *Lifeprints* point out that when a woman takes a job, it is not simply a process of addition. Her life does not consist of everything a homemaker does plus a full-time job. When a woman begins full-time employment, she drops off many of the things she did before. Often a paid job is a great excuse for a woman not to do the things she didn't want to do in the first place.³

Contrary to current popular opinion, being a homemaker/mother is by no means all dis-

Homemakers often feel alone and misunderstood.

satisfaction and depression. In 1982 *Better Homes and Gardens* published a report of 32,500 of their readers, 25 percent of whom were homemakers. To the question "How do you feel about being a homemaker?" the homemakers responded:

Like it very much	72%
It's OK	24%
Don't care for it	3%
Hate it	1%

Significantly, more homemakers in their survey said that they are happy with their job

than did employed respondents. Letters that the homemakers attached to the questionnaire revealed a deep satisfaction in "just being there" to raise children.⁴

Among groups of women, and often within an individual woman, there are conflicts of emotion and conscience over the role or roles that are available to them. A major study on women directed by two sociologists and reported in *Lifeprints* presents a helpful way of looking at the needs of women. The purpose of the study was to determine what contributed to feelings of well-being.

Among groups of women, and often within an individual woman, there are conflicts of emotion and conscience over the roles that are available to them.

The sociologists discovered a two-dimensional picture of well-being. Their study documents the fundamental importance of both love and work to a woman's mental and emotional well-being.⁵

The researchers consider their most important finding to be the positive impact of paid work on women's sense of well-being.⁶

Why does homemaking, as work, have such different consequences? The authors speculate that it is because homemaking:

1. Is a socially devalued job.
2. Does not generate income, a major concern of homemakers.
3. Has no objective ways of measuring performance.⁷

A woman's well-being is enhanced when she takes on multiple roles.⁸ The more sources of support a woman has, the less critical each one becomes to her well-being. Employment seems to help a woman cope with stress, while being responsible for raising children may be today's high-risk job.

About two or three years ago a homemaker friend of mine met the local Association of Adventist Women (AAW) officers. She told

The Adventist Church . . . often speaks boldly of the importance of the role of homemaker/mother, yet its actions sometimes carry a weaker message.

me later, "It would be a cold day in the desert before I would want to associate with those women."

Not many months ago I heard a speaker at an AAW meeting, when trying to explain why so many homemakers opposed the efforts of other women to open up all areas of ministry within the church, say, "It threatens them because then they might have to get out and do something."

My personal theory concerning this conflict of homemakers and some working women versus career women is that women, by making role choices that differ from one another's, inherently cause one another problems.

The career woman wants equal pay and equal opportunities for advancement. For these she will give at least equal work and equal responsibility. If she has children, she will not let them interfere with her career any more than a man would let his children affect his career.

The job-and-family woman wants equal pay for equal work, but often she doesn't want equal work. Because her family takes precedence over her job, she wants part-

time, flex-time, or a shared job. She will work alone in some office or factory from 5:00 to 8:00 a.m. or work the 11:00 p.m.-7:00 a.m. shift at some hospital so she can be home when her children are awake and at home.

The family women would like people to realize that even though she does not get paid for her full-time homemaking, this work has value.

The problems come:

- When the career woman pushes for equal opportunity and willingly accepts equal responsibility to obtain it, while the other women don't want equal responsibility.

- When the career woman says to the homemaker, "I give my child quality rather than quantity time." The implication that so upsets homemakers is that the full-time care they provide is somehow inferior to the part-time provided by working women.

- When the working woman assumes that in order for a woman to be content as a homemaker/mother, she has to put her mind in neutral—or reverse.

- When a homemaker or working woman disassociates herself from other women who are pushing for social and economic change, yet benefits from their gains.

- When the homemaker or working woman says, "I would never want to be ordained." And that honest but irrelevant statement is used as evidence that no woman could ever feel the call of God to serve in pastoral ministry.

Women, by making role choices that differ from one another's, inherently cause one another problems.

- When a young woman just out of training in college or graduate school interviews for a job. Although it is illegal for the employer to ask questions about marital or child-bearing plans, he knows that this young woman's choice in those areas will affect her job. He knows that some women will quit after a few years of working to become full-time homemakers or part-time employees. My choice to be a homemaker statistically affects every young woman looking for employment.

We are threats to each other. We sometimes sabotage each other's efforts. Women who are working for equal opportunity find that their most vehement opponents are other women. Women who have chosen to follow the traditional female role of homemaker/mother find that their lifework is

The sociologists' . . . study documents the fundamental importance of both love and work to a woman's mental and emotional well-being.

being devalued and even despised by other women who have rejected the role. The conflicts are entrenched and complex. We must realize that the roles we have chosen bring with them different needs, and in order to fulfill our own needs, we should not undermine each other.

The Adventist Church strongly affirms the importance of the family. It often speaks boldly of the importance of the role of homemaker/mother, yet its actions sometimes carry a weaker message. I have four suggestions for the church:

1. Working men and women who need to cut back on their outside activities should be encouraged not to trim off church and Sabbath school responsibilities.

2. Persons in authority should not assume that if homemakers lack a string of degrees and professional affiliations after their names, they are unqualified to serve on important committees within the church.

3. In 1975 the General Conference Committee on the Role of Women in the Church passed a resolution that reads: "That we agree that potential leadership roles, on all levels of administration not requiring ordination to the gospel ministry, be open to suitable qualified women whose home and family responsibilities make this possible." (Italics supplied.)

A woman's well-being is enhanced when she takes on multiple roles.

I am willing to accept the content of this resolution. I believe it is important to consider the needs of the husband and children of potential female employees. But I think it is also important to consider the needs of the wives and children of potential male employees. Where is the resolution that will protect them?

When a husband is selected for a job that often will take him away from home, does it not affect more family members than it would if that job were given to a single woman, a married woman without children, or a married woman whose children are grown? I would encourage policymakers to consider carefully just who or what they are protecting when they make resolutions.

4. Persons in authority should treat my working sisters fairly, neither penalizing them for decisions I have made nor denying them the opportunity to serve in various capacities simply because it would be impossible for me to serve in those capacities.

I did not make by default my decisions to marry, to have children, and to remain at home with them during their preschool years. I made them in the face of other options. Unlike the first two, the decision to be a homemaker has been one that I have had to renew often during the past 13 years—and not without struggles.

Employment seems to help a woman cope with stress, while being responsible for raising children may be today's high-risk job.

My resolve to be with my children during these years has held because I believe that as a homemaker—in partnership with my husband—I have been able to provide the best environment for their development.

Perhaps one of the spinoff contributions of homemakers is to serve as a reminder that family and home are still of value. That makes us, too, women of mission.

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³*Ibid.*, p. 144.

⁴Kate Keating, "How Is Work Affecting American Families? A Report From 32,500 Readers," *Better Homes and Gardens*, February, 1982, pp. 31, 32.

⁵Baruch, Barnett, and Rivers, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 103.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 106.

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 247.

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“Aunt Sue” to Speak at AAW Brunch in New Orleans



Betty Ahnberg (Aunt Sue)

Betty Ahnberg will be the featured speaker at the AAW brunch meeting on July 2, 1985, during the General Conference session in New Orleans. This special event will honor three women from among more than 30 nominees as International Women of the Year.

Better known to thousands of radio listeners as Aunt Sue of *Your Story Hour*, Mrs. Ahnberg is also involved in other important ministries. Among other things, she is the Director of the Medina (Ohio) Community Services Center, President of the Ohio Conference Community Services Federation, and a member of the Board of Directors of the Adventist Adoption Agency.

Don't miss this important inspirational event! Because space is limited, attendees should make reservations before reaching New Orleans. See the insert in this issue for reservation information.

Third Annual AAW Conference Set for New England October 24-27

Members of the New England Chapter of AAU are laying plans for the Third Annual AAW Conference to be held at Atlantic Union College October 24-27. *Women's Voices—Women's Lives* has been selected as the theme for the session which will open Thursday evening at 7:30 in the Red Room of Thayer Hall.

Friday activities to be held at “The White House” will include morning workshops and afternoon action labs covering such topics as single-parenting and the future of women in the Adventist Church.

Sabbath fellowship plans include an *agape*

supper Friday evening, church services with Dr. Lourdes Gudmundsson in the pulpit, an afternoon concert featuring sacred music by Adventist composers and performers, and an art exhibit displaying the works of Adventist women. A Sunday morning business session will focus on issues and resolutions relevant to the future of the AAW and its role in the church.

Dr. Otilie Stafford is chairing the conference steering committee and will announce reservation plans in the near future. In the meantime, mark your calendar NOW. October 24-27 should be red-letter days!

Chapter News

Metro Chapter Buffet and Concert Benefits CUC Scholarship Fund



Dr. Bill Loveless listens as Mary Eastman reads presentation statement about CUC's scholarship sponsored by AAW Metro Chapter.

Mary Eastman, AAW Metro Washington Chapter President-elect, presented the first Metro Chapter scholarship check for \$500 to Dr. William Loveless, CUC President, during the CUC Alumni Association banquet on April 13.

The Metro Chapter held a buffet dinner and concert March 25 as a first event to raise funds for an annual scholarship to be presented to a Columbia Union College woman student who demonstrates financial need and professional promise.

The buffet dinner catered by the Swans combined with a miniconcert by Wintley Phipps drew more than sixty attendees. Dr. William Loveless offered the invocation and Pastor Jan Daffern of Sligo Church provided a brief message of encouragement to those in attendance. Members of the Commission on the Ordination of Women were guests of the Metro Chapter.



Dr. Bill Loveless and Bev Habada, Metro Chapter president.



Pastor Jan Daffern presented a brief message.



Torhild Rom and V. Norskov Olsen, members of the Commission on Ordination of Women, at Metro Chapter buffet dinner.

People and Places

Sharon Anderson Wilson was one of nine graduates of SDA colleges to receive a Taft Scholarship to study law. A native of Hinsdale, Illinois, and a 1983 graduate of Atlantic Union College, Ms. Wilson had to meet stiff requirements to qualify for the award, which is conferred by the General Conference.

Mary Stancer, assistant charge nurse, has been named employee of the year by Shawnee Mission Medical Center in Kansas. She has been employed for five years at the medical center and currently works on the post-anesthesia care unit.

She was honored for her special care and professionalism in her work, and was cited by the president of the medical center for the encouragement she has offered to co-workers.

Ms. Stancer was born in Arkansas, and grew up in Wichita, Kansas.

Southwestern Adventist College's oldest alumna, **Willia Lambeth Taylor Grube**, who is 102, was named to "Keene People" by the Alumni Association. Mrs. Gruber graduated from the school in 1901.

Born in Clarksville, Texas, Mrs. Grube is still active and has, over the years, held positions of deaconess and Sabbath school teacher/superintendent and has had several poems published.

Mary Meade, coordinator of cooperative education at Atlantic Union College in Massachusetts, has been given the Young Career Woman Award for 1985 by the Worcester Business and Profession Women (BPW).

The BPW is a national nonprofit club. The 160 women from the greater Worcester area annually confer an award on a young woman for her business and professional achievements, or contributions to the community.

Mrs. Viola Reid Davis, of East St. Louis, Illinois, who is 90 years old, is currently reading her Bible through for the third time in a year. She has read the Bible through 18 times, and has read many other Adventist publications and Spirit of Prophecy writings several times.

In addition to serving as a Sabbath school teacher, Mrs. Davis has given numerous talks at various churches and colleges. She distributes numerous books and pamphlets in her outreach attempts. She formerly served as a very successful literature evangelist.

Born in Wahalak, Mississippi, she attended Tuskegee Institute, and is the mother of eight children.

Dr. Susan Willoughby, chairman of the Social Work Department at Atlantic Union College, in Massachusetts, received word recently that the Pacific Press Publishing Association will publish a book she has authored. The motivational-type book entitled *The Go-Getter*, outlines ways people can maximize all their talents and abilities. Reviewers applaud the book's applicability for use by young people and all those who work with them.

Alice Mae Perkins Kimber, a member of the Sanford, Florida, church, was named to the 1984 edition of *The World's Who's Who of Women*. She has been a Bible worker, teacher, missionary in Zimbabwe, and a social worker.

A number of husband and wife pastoral teams in the Mid-America Union have recently been attending Soul Winning Workshops for Pastoral Couples to polish their skills in bringing people to Christ. The wives have participated in a number of activities associated with soul winning, including planning, visitation, giving health talks, and conducting training sessions for laypersons. The workshops are conducted by Jim and **Sharon Cross**. Jim is the union ministerial secretary, and Sharon is a credentialed Bible instructor.

Mitzi Jane Smith, graduate student at Ohio State University and 1984 theology graduate of Columbia Union College, has been elected an Outstanding Young Woman of America for 1984.

Loma Linda School of Medicine's Women's Auxiliary recently named **Lila Thompson**, of Richmond, Texas, as Honored Woman of the Year. Mrs. Thompson was chosen for her contributions to community service for retarded individuals.

Lisa Bissel has been named acting principal of Portland Adventist Academy in Oregon due to the principal's being called to assist in the crisis situation in Ethiopia. Miss Bissel has served since 1981 at the academy, and has taught English and held the post of vice-principal.

Kris Meyer, an eighth-grade student at Cyprus SDA School, in Washington state, was elected to be on a panel of students for the *Afternoon Northwest* television show. The topic discussed on the show was relationships to parents concerning dating, openness, alcohol, drugs, etc.

Kris, who was the only one of the program from a Christian school, felt that it was beneficial for her to be able to interact with her peers who are not from a religious background. She felt that she was quite well prepared to meet these young people and speak out for what she believes. She attributes this ability to her home training and the religious environment of her school.

The Mid-America Union recently honored **Jackie Peterson**, a literature evangelist from the Rocky Mountain Conference, for bringing 21 persons to Christ in 1984.

Marla Zenner was honored recently as the top-selling literature evangelist of the Central California Conference for 1984. Ms. Zenner, who lives in Redwood Center, delivered more than \$70,000 in books and other literature during the year.

Dr. Sandra Price presented the keynote address at the annual meeting of the Southwest Administrative Services Association in New Orleans, Louisiana. The presentation was based on a unique information systems program curriculum she developed and implemented at Oakwood College as the result of her research. Dr. Price is the program director of the information systems management curriculum and is the coordinator for all campus programs requiring microcomputer instruction at Oakwood College.

Letters to the Editor

The following are excerpts from letters received by the editors in response to the "Your Opinion Please" poll published in the January issue of *The Adventist Woman*.

Dear Friends,

I see nothing in the Bible or Spirit of Prophecy that supports Women's Lib attitudes . . . especially among His people. Sorry we're mimicking the world in this.

What's wrong with remaining in the "help meet" role that God planned. Who can say it's an inferior place? How do you get around the fact women are not be over men? Tell me how a woman can meet the qualifications of an elder? When God wants to exalt women, He has many ways of doing it.

All the women pastors and elders I have known are fiascos.

I'd appreciate your biblical and Spirit of Prophecy support.
In Christian love,
J. Rinehart
California

Dear Adventist Woman:

This morning I met a fine Christian woman scholar who feels rejected by her church because of a very negative reply she got when she wrote top one of the General Conference officers to give her views on ordination. Both the scholar and the administrator need our prayers.

Connie Tiffany
Michigan

Dear Adventist Woman,

If women are to be ordained, I'd praise the Lord that the church had finally realized the potential it had within the ranks, but it wouldn't cause me to change what I do within the church.

My sister was voted an Elder (in her church) . . . The pastor and conference president are behind her 100% (but) a small local group . . . claim women elders are causing all kinds of punishments to come on the church. You can see what would happen if there were women pastors. . . .

We need that welcoming attitude to the Spirit's gifts. Our pastor's wife works as a Bible worker and does a lot of his work. It really shows you how much women are needed in the ministry. She can go places and talk to women that he can't, either because he doesn't really understand the problem, or because he doesn't dare go for the sake of his reputation and the women's reputations. Since over 50% of the church is female we need to have women pastors. . . .

I'm female, never been married, partner in a construction business, very active in my church and between 41 and 65.
Dolores J. Adams
Arkansas

Dear Adventist Woman:

I notice that my subscription renewal is long past. I had not intended renewing so please cancel. Am enclosing opinions as you request. You are putting a lot of time and work in this effort and you have my best wishes.

Virginia Rees
Maryland

Dear Adventist Woman:

Greetings! And thank you the *The Adventist Woman* for November, 1984 (Annual Council News).

How typical it is . . . that pages one and three were dominated by pictures of men—no women anywhere—belying the logo and our purpose for being.

I have almost been brought to the conclusion that we can do some things through our women's efforts within the church, but not much. It's a case of us mice trying to bell the cat. We can do it only if someone else holds the cat. And in this case it is through the efforts of others—mostly women—a few men—that women in the church have made the progress that has been brought about so far.

It is through the unflagging efforts of people in civil rights groups, by individuals . . . willing to stand for the right, that all denominational employees are treated more fairly.

Therefore, women's position in the church is never going to be improved by appealing to the Church. It will only be through the activity of civil courts. So that's where our activity will have to be.

Martha Nelson
California

Dear Martha, Why did we show pictures of men participating in Annual Council? Because no women spoke to the issue—maybe that's because there were so few of them in attendance. At the same time, we believe that progress is being made within the church structure and certainly hope that civil action will never be necessary.—Eds.

Dear Adventist Woman,

Since there are more women in our congregations than men . . . our women members could use a woman as leader for other members to follow.

God bless your organization for showing what types of positions our female members are holding in our church.

Yours sincerely,
Vivian Harrison
New York

SDA Women,

Why do you want to praise and honor yourselves? You shouldn't feel the need for this self-exaltation.

Our women are following the Satanic feminist movement, when from the beginning God has never awarded women such positions. I am enclosing citations from E.G. White's writings that show it is a mistake for "modern Eves" to be aspiring to a higher position than that assigned by the heavenly Father. Let's not be foolish Eves and make the mistake of Israel in "asking for a king" like the nations around them.

Mary K. McLaughlin
California

(For those readers who are interested, Mary encourages reading *Patriarchs and Prophets* pages 58, 59, and 717.)

(Continued on page 8)

Mission Statement

“So God made man in His own image, in the image of God created He him, male and female created He them.” Genesis 1:27

In God's sight each individual has the potential to make a valuable contribution to our world. It is the purpose of this group of Adventist women to help the individuals in our church reflect more fully the image of God in their relationships to each other in the home, the church, the work setting and in the community.

Through the means of this publication which focuses on the development, discoveries, interests and potential of Christian woman, our goals are:

1) To encourage communication, support and wider understanding among Adventist women in diverse situations.

2) To acquaint the church community at large with Adventist women's potential and achievements.

3) To assist Adventist women in achieving fulfillment in their interpersonal relationships, personal development and relationships to God.

4) To help Adventist women to maximize their options, whatever their age and situation, that they may reflect more fully the image of God.

Women of the Year Nominees

Here is a partial list of the more-than-60 nominees whose names were submitted for 1984 AAW Woman of the Year. Each is an outstanding person in her own right.

Doreen Vaughn Holbrook, Arizona

Doreen received a teacher's certificate from Andrews University and has since taught school for several years. Currently, she is working for the Holbrook Indian Mission School as Vice President, teacher, and house mother. Her circle of love includes an adopted Indian daughter.

Mrs. Ernest Von Pohle Winkelman, Arizona

Mrs. Von Pohle has always seen her immediate neighborhood as her mission field—whether that neighborhood be South America or Arizona. Children have always been an object of her missionary endeavors, and she has enjoyed seeing her own children and many foster children become successful physicians, teachers, and church workers. In 1983, she was voted “Woman of the Year” by Loma Linda University.

Barbara Westphal Calistoga, California

As a retiree, Barbara remains active in the church. As a bride at 20 years of age, she traveled to the upper Amazon where she and her husband served as missionaries. A few years ago, before her husband's death, they traveled in their motor home throughout Mexico and Central America, giving evangelistic meetings as they went along. During these meetings, Barbara gave black-light drawings, inspirational talks, and meetings for children and women on home improvement subjects.

Ruth Wheeler Angwin, California

1984 P.U.C. “Alumni of the Year” along with her husband Tom, Ruth Wheeler has accomplished much in addition to a teaching career, she has written or co-authored 24 books. Since retiring she remains active in church work.

Francis Wiegand Beltsville, Maryland

An associate pastor of the Beltsville church, Francis is described as being vivacious and

positive. Her talents include playing musical instruments, singing, producing plays, and organizing programs. Her 12-16 hour days include ministering to youth as well as visiting older people in their homes and nursing facilities. As a soul winner, Francis conducts many Bible studies as well as just loves people into God's family.

Frances Wilson Madison, Wisconsin

A model pastor's wife, Frances Louise Wilson has supported her husband through 23 years of service. She is nominated because she is “an example of Christian love and support.”

Ruth Wilson Umatilla, Oregon

A church representative in community outreach, charter member of the church school board, and church communications secretary familiar to the local media, Ruth Wilson is an active force in her Oregon community.

Clarice Woodward Loma Linda, California

From India to Loma Linda University, Clarice Woodward has contributed much to the Adventist church. She has served as a missionary nurse, as well as positions ranging from instructor of nursing to associate dean of the graduate division of the Loma Linda University School of Nursing. Her greatest contribution, however, has been in the lives of her students, changed through her teaching.

Kathleen Zolber, Ph.D. Loma Linda, California

Currently Kathleen is the Director of the Loma Linda University Dietetics Program, the Director of the Loma Linda University Medical Center Dietary Department, and Professor in the Loma Linda University Graduate School. From 1982-1983, she served as president of The American Dietetic Association on this capacity. Publications by Kathleen include Interdisciplinary Relationships: The Politics of Health Care; The Vegetarian Diet; Food for Us All; Nutrition and You; and How Nutrition Affects Your Physical Well-being.

Letters to the Editor

(Continued from page 7)

Dear *Adventist Woman*,

What makes the Commission on the Ordination of Women different from most General Conference activities? First of all, the subject under discussion. A highly emotional issue, the topic seems to have a polarizing effect on people—church officials and laymembers alike. One is either very much for it or very much against it.

My observations have brought me to acknowledge:

1. It is not the very young who are excited about the issue. Many of the most vocal are well into their fifties or beyond.

2. Many women are firmly opposed.

3. Women pastors have been bystanders, waiting for others to decide their future.

4. This is not truly a “woman's issue.” Those most involved in the decision-making process, either for or against, are men.

Some significant facts emerge when one studies the make-up of the Commission.

1. Membership on the Commission was not “stacked” in favor of any position. From the beginning the members were divided on the subject of ordination.

2. The majority of those on the Commission are elected church officials from North America.

3. All of the men are ordained.

4. More women (15) were appointed than the usual one or two asked to serve on GC committees. (May their tribe increase!)

5. Elected women were not selected to serve on the commission. (Yes, there are some, including eight at Church World Headquarters.)

6. Most of the women appointed to the Commission are laymembers.

7. The women on the Commission are for the most part unknown to those outside their local sphere.

I am convinced of the sincerity and genuine concern of church leaders. A door has been opened. May it never close!

Name withheld by request

Dear Sisters,

Thank you for the information in the *Adventist Woman* and for your work in behalf of Adventist women.

I am praying for our church and its leaders at this important time in our history.

The most surprising thing for me is the opposition of North American women to the ordination of women. If a woman is happy in a secondary submission position, fine! But why stifle the development of those women with other talents and callings. My mother and father served in the mission field for 15 years. Mom carried a full load - medically - teaching - raising a family - all without com-

penation or recognition. At home base Mom “preached” at camp meetings, academics, etc., and was much more effective than my father who was ordained.

Mom advised me against attempting professional fields considered male domain because of her frustrations. (Mother is) dead now for forty years and I still feel frustrated for our lack of progress in recognizing the many gifts of women. Now the grandmother of two preadolescent granddaughters, I wonder if their career choices will be limited by further foot-dragging by our all male leadership.

Sometimes I feel that the only way to break the log jam of male resistance to sharing the power is legal. . .

Keep up the good work.

Bettie Rich
California

Letters for publication in this column should be addressed to the Editor, *The Adventist Woman*, Box 3884, Langley Park, MD 20789.

Tapes of two recent meetings of the Michiana Chapter of AAW are now available for distribution.

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