

the Adventist Woman

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Presidential Communique

How has AAW made a difference? Let me count the ways!

Alyce Pudewell



I walked into my local Adventist Book Center recently and noticed large signs hanging from the ceiling over the shelves of books for sale. In tall black letters on white background the signs indicated books for children, or worship, or reference. What caught my attention was the sign, front and center, that said FOR WOMEN.

That sign would not have been there 10 years ago. People of both genders would have been uncomfortable calling attention to the special needs of women, or admitting that most "general" books were not general, but were written mainly by men, and were suffused with assumptions about both men and women that were taken for granted and rarely challenged.

Today's generation of Seventh-day Adventists entering their thirties, forties, and fifties, expect an inquiring church family to be open and comfortable recognizing the needs of various segments of the church's population.

AAW—Catalyst for many changes

The Association of Adventist Women has played a part in making the church family culture more open. How?

■ Women's Ministries Department established.

In the early 1980s AAW called attention to the fact that the church needed a Women's Ministry department at every level of the church structure. With great persistence, AAW and others made this request.

Today, this department is in place, formalized in 1990. And there are paid and volunteer positions at all levels of the church. AAW believes that more of these should be paid positions. Just the same, with the few resources the department has been given, it is growing exponentially every year, with thousands of women attending annual retreats designed specifically for their needs.

■ Support for women in ministry.

AAW recognized a need to support women who were working as pastors, chaplains, religion teachers, and departmental leaders.

It began direct mailings to women in ministry in 1990 and published the first comprehensive list of these women (more than 60 then, and nearly 200 today) at a time when many church leaders doubted that there were more than half a dozen such women in the whole world.

Another result of AAW's concern was that a group of women and men established Time for Equality in Adventist Ministry (T.E.A.M.) This group has fostered many educational projects supporting women in ministry. It has also consistently pointed out

(See PRESIDENT, p.4)



Peg Hempe and Bill Loveless



On August 16, 1997 The University Church ordained Margaret Hempe to gospel ministry.

Peg Hempe recognized for 31 years of ministry

LLU ordains eighth woman to gospel ministry

by Christy K. Robinson

The Loma Linda University Church officially confirmed Pastor Margaret "Peg" Hempe's divine call to ministry as a life commitment, and endorsed her to serve as a minister of the gospel, by ordaining her at the 11 o'clock hour on August 16, 1997. After the ordination prayer, during which the ministerial staff and the ordination committee gently laid their hands on Mrs. Hempe's shoulders and hands, William Loveless, senior pastor of the church, congratulated the new "Elder Hempe."

Since the world church declined to authorize women's ordination in Utrecht in 1995, the University Church at Loma Linda is the fifth local congregation to take this step, and Hempe is the eighth woman to be publicly set apart in this way.

In support of her ordination, and in attendance for the occasion were Drs. Gerald Winslow, Jerry Davis, Marilyn Herrmann, Georgia Hodgkin, and William Loveless, as well as Marilyn Thunquest, R.N. Other special guests included former LLU pastor and colleague Louis Venden, Peg's children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, and innumerable church members who consider themselves part of Peg's extended family. The support for her ordination was unanimous in the huge and closely packed church.

A women's chorus sang "His Strength Is Perfect" and "O Happy Day," directed by Cheryl Smith, and accompanied by Dr. Kimo Smith. The 20-minute ordination ceremony occurred during the University Church's month-long "camp meeting" held in the sanctuary. The sermon of the day was preached by Jennifer Ferrel, one among the large staff of pastors of the 5,000-member congregation.

Various members of the ministerial staff

spoke in warm and sometimes humorous tones about Hempe's ministry at the University Church and elsewhere.

Hempe has been a Christian all her life, and became a Seventh-day Adventist with her husband in the 1940s through the Voice of Prophecy radio broadcast and evangelistic meetings. He studied theology at Columbia Union College, and she began her career as a minister's wife soon afterward.

After their divorce in the 1960s, she moved with her children to Loma Linda and the University Church. First as a Bible worker, and then as a pastor in the 1970s, Hempe plunged into evangelism, leadership training, singles ministry, divorce recovery, youth ministry, and family and marital enrichment.

Counselor and friend

Hempe began a much-needed ministry. She became "God's hands" to the alienated or rejected divorcees, the children of divorce, or to the women who felt more comfortable with a female counselor and pastor after experiencing various forms of abuse.

Professional men and women in the community, including educators and scholars, healthcare providers and attorneys, also came to depend on Hempe for her calm voice of mediation, her ability to heal strife, and her wise counsel.

Following Elder Hempe's ordination, friends provided a luncheon attended by nearly 200, emceed by fellow pastor, Fred Kasischke. He pointed out that no one in the room had not been hugged by Peg, or had not been blessed by her love of people. Laughter was frequent as her friends told of delightful experiences with her during the past 31 years.

Among those who offered their congratulations were members of a camping

club, the 62+ Club which Hempe founded, and the Association of Adventist Women.

One of the most beautiful testimonies was given by attorney Doug Welebir, mayor of Loma Linda. He quoted Romans 12:6, stopping between phrases to point out Peg's strengths and her fulfillment of spiritual gifts.

What is ordination?

by Douglas F. Welebir

What is ordination? The act or ceremony of ordaining.

And what is ordaining? To invest with ministerial functions; or select for appointment to office.

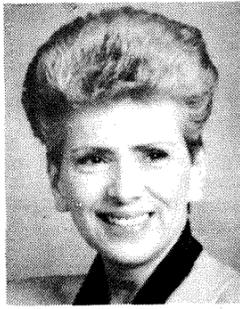
Ordination is a human act to publicly acknowledge that one is called of God. Ordination does not convey on the person ordained a call, or a gift, or the Spirit. Through the Holy Spirit God calls one to service. When that person responds and gives his or her life to God and that wholehearted service, and it is recognized through the fruits of the Spirit, we humans have a ceremony of ordination to recognize publicly God's selection and to formally appoint that person to the office of pastor.

Most people have no problem publicly recognizing excellence by conferring academic degrees upon women. Most people have no problem recognizing administrative ability by inaugurating women as university presidents, or of recognizing their community leadership by electing women to the Senate, the House of Representatives, or City Hall. Most people have no problem recognizing the talents and abilities that life a particular woman above the ordinary or the average.

(See ORDINATION, p. 3)

Profiles in service: Adventist women of The Year

Adly Campos
Church Life Award



Elsie Chan
Youth Leadership Award



Mable Dunbar
Family Life Award



Gertrude Green
Lifetime Achievement Award



Dynamic Lay Evangelist

"As a child I was painfully shy," says Adly Campos, a woman who has come to command the attention of large audiences with her powerful singing and preaching.

Born in Mexico to Jose and Dalia Castrajon, Adly was the second of seven children. She has lived in many places and worked for the church in many ways—as a nurse, a secretary, and a musician. In 1979 she cut an album for Chapel Records entitled *God Speaks*. More recently she earned an M.A. degree in family counseling from Liberty University and also worked as an administrative secretary in the General Conference Ministerial Association.

While attending Montemorelos University, she met and married Jose Campos, an enthusiastic minister. Together they have reared four children.

In January 1992, Campos accidentally became an evangelist. While doing a Week of Prayer for an 80-member church in New York City, she realized that many of the young people had never made a decision for Christ. Before she left, 20 had.

Since then she has held meetings in Hispanic communities from New Jersey to Mexico City, and has preached to audiences in places as diverse as Seattle, Jamaica, Miami, Inter- and South America, and South Africa. Her Bible course and sermons are unique: She presents Adventist doctrines through the lens of family life. Today she is president of her own outreach ministry, Family Well-Being, and since her first effort in 1992, has prepared more than 3,000 persons for baptism.

Campos is the mother of four adult children. Her husband, José, is associate director of The General Conference Publishing Department. They live in Laurel, Maryland.

Twentieth Century "Dorcas"

Her energy and drive for accomplishing good things is seldom surpassed by either men or women, according to Lawrence T. Geraty, president of La Sierra University. He adds, "She is a 20th century Dorcas."

Since 1978 Elsie Chan has been a founder, patron, and participant in the Pathfinder Clubs at Loma Linda's Campus Hill Church and the University Church. She first became a leader of youth when, as a girl in Hong Kong, she earned her Master Guide rank. Today, she is also pianist and organist at the Loma Linda Chinese Church. Because of her involvement in three congregations, there is some confusion as to where her membership resides. Each church claims her as its own.

Chan is on the board of directors of the Southern California Young Artists Symphony, on the board of trustees at La Sierra University, and is a benefactor of the Loma Linda Academy Band. In 1991 she was named Loma Linda's Citizen of the Year.

Chan is vice president of an audio and video manufacturing and duplicating plant, an import/export corporation, with her husband overseeing the Far East side of the business. She also cares for her invalid mother, enters with gusto into the activities of her adult children, and attends many of her grandchildren's lessons, performances, and programs.

"Always aware of who is sick in the community, or who needs a helping hand, every good cause in town will find Elsie Chan in the middle of it—quietly but efficiently leading, helping, cajoling, organizing and contributing time, effort, ideas, money—whatever it takes to get the job done," Geraty stated.

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Advocate for Battered Women

"Mable Dunbar is one of a few professionals among Seventh-day Adventists who can be considered an expert on issues relating to domestic violence," says Cynthia Prime, former director for Women's Ministries in the Lake Union Conference.

For seven years, Dunbar served as executive director of Safe Shelter in Benton Harbor, Michigan. During that time, she found that she and her staff often provided services to hurting women and their families from the Adventist community.

Because of her honest but balanced way in dealing with family daily crisis issues, Dunbar has become an effective catalyst in educating Adventist church leaders as well as lay people at a time when no one wanted to believe that domestic violence occurred in the homes of dedicated Christians, or not to the extent that it occurred elsewhere in the population.

In the Lake Union, Dunbar was asked to lead a Task Force on Abuse in 1994. The results of her work assisted the Women's Ministries Department in beginning to address domestic violence. Her firsthand experiences gave her the authority to write insightful, powerful articles on the topic for the *Adventist Review* and the *Lake Union Herald*. Most recently, she was recognized for her pioneering efforts by a cover story in *Women of Spirit* (Spring 1996).

Because of her leadership, property valued at a quarter of a million dollars was donated in 1996 to establish Women in Renewal, a Christian, nonprofit organization in Niles, Michigan. The working facility, known as Polly's Place, provides safe shelter, counseling, and support services to women and children in crisis. Dunbar has been named executive director of the new venture.

Dunbar obtained her B.Ed. from West Indies College in Jamaica in 1975 and an M.A. degree in educational and counseling psychology from Andrews University in 1990. In November 1995, she was awarded a Ph.D. in Family Mediation from LaSalle University in Louisiana.

She is married to Dr. Colin Dunbar, a pastor in Michigan; they have three children.

As Cynthia Prime concludes, "Mable is an outstanding and courageous role model for all of us. In her quiet, dignified way, she makes a difference."

Elise Chan, continued

"Her ministry is across cultural and gender lines," Geraty added. "One of the most unselfish Christians this side of heaven, Elsie's quiet smile and quick wit often comes to the aid of someone who is struggling, someone who is lost, or someone who is discouraged or needs a hand. She practices a lavish hospitality. There is no aspect of church life which Elsie Chan does not touch and bless."

She was born in Canton, China, to a pastor and Bible worker. Twice her family fled on foot to Hong Kong; first from the Japanese, and later, from the Communists.

Legendary Midwife and Missionary

Gertrude Green has given 52 years of mission service to the Seventh-day Adventist Church—10 in China and 42 in Thailand. Now retired (some would say a bit reluctantly), she is 90 and lives in Fletcher, North Carolina.

Having obtained nurses training, a master's degree, and additional training in midwifery, Green began working in Yeng Cheng, in north central China, in 1941. She worked in a hospital that became China's second largest.

In a life that some compare to the Ingrid Bergman character in *Inn of the Sixth Happiness*, Green learned the language of the region, taught nursing students, dodged imperial Japanese soldiers and bombs, and eventually escaped to Shanghai with her students. During their exodus from Yeng Cheng, the group of 50 escapees coped with destroyed railroads, with sleep disrupted by nearby gunfire, a long and hungry six-week walk through wintry northern China, riding on a coal car, subsisting on boiled flour and water, and traveling by boat down the Yangtze River.

Even the indomitable Gertrude Green would admit that "it was terrible." Yet she would quickly add, "But we had one miracle after another from God."

When she and her charges arrived in Shanghai, the General Conference instructed her to leave China immediately. She was called to Bangkok Adventist Hospital to become the director of the Schools of Nursing and Midwifery, and the nursing service. By 1986, her School of Midwifery had delivered 37,000 babies, not only for the poor, but also for the wealthy who came from as far away as Chiangmai because of her fame and skill. In fact, during her tenure at the School of Midwifery, not one mother died, a testimony to the excellent quality of care. Students came from Borneo, Burma, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Korea, Scotland, Singapore, Taiwan, the United States, and Vietnam to receive instruction under Miss Green.

On July 10, 1997, the Bangkok Midwifery Department Building was renamed the Gertrude Green Building in her honor. She has been named Honored Alumna of Atlantic Union College and Columbia Union College, and is listed in the Hall of Fame for the Adventist Nurses' Association.

Those who have worked with her see Gertrude Green as a selfless nurse, dynamic educator and administrator, an organist and pianist, and a Christian woman of great character. A single woman with no immediate family, her adopted family of students and staff will remember her forever.

After the Communists took over China she never again saw her father.

As a young woman she came to the United States, studied medical technology at what is now Andrews University, and married her childhood sweetheart, John Chan, a biochemist. Together they have five children, four of whom hold doctorates.

Clip 'n' Do

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Profiles in service: Adventist women of the Year

Margaret
"Peg" Hempe



Spiritual
Leadership
Award

Shirley Ann
Munroe



Professional
Life
Award

Helen
Sprengel



Lifetime
Achievement
Award

Laura
Sundin



Community
Life
Award

A Pastor With Staying Power

In 1966 Peg Hempe joined the staff of the University Church in Loma Linda staff as a Bible worker. In 1987 the Southeastern California Conference recommended to the Pacific Union that she be ordained to the gospel ministry. Ten years later, on August 16, 1997, she was ordained as a minister by the congregation which she has served continuously for 31 years. She is a pastor with staying power.

A first-generation American of Irish-German heritage, she was reared from age 4 by her German Lutheran grandmother. "It's from her that I learned the meaning of love as well as instant obedience," Peg says. And from her she "caught" her love of Jesus Christ.

Peg became an Adventist through listening to the Voice of Prophecy and attending tent meetings. Since then, her desire to draw others close to Christ has been the driving principle of her life. For many years she worked side by side with her pastor husband Carl, establishing and operating a welfare center, visiting and encouraging church members.

Her own distinct career of ministry came out of what she calls, "one of life's surprises"—the end of her marriage when she was 43. A risk-taker, Peg packed up her three children and household goods, and moved to Loma Linda. By the early 1970s, her new senior pastor, William Loveless, began recognizing her ministry by calling her "pastor." Among the many ways she has ministered at Loma Linda is through her ongoing divorce recovery group, a camping club, and the 62+ Club.

In 1989 the University Church board authorized her to begin baptizing her candidates as a local elder. She also retired that year. But throughout her career she has led hundreds to Christ. More recently, she has officiated at 30 funerals and 21 weddings.

"Peg has not kicked in doors or waved the flag," says Louis Venden, the third senior pastor under whom she served. "But in a marked way that fits her personality, she has contributed to laying the groundwork for ordination of women. I know she hopes that her work will not have been in vain. Peg has clearly demonstrated the value of God's call to women in ministry."

Nationally Known Healthcare Leader

From La Sierra College and the School of Nursing of Glendale Adventist Hospital, Shirley Ann Munroe rose through the ranks of healthcare leadership and administration—and rose, and rose.

After gaining experience in medical clinic and emergency hospital management, she became administrator of a 43-bed rural hospital in Northern California. While there she became the first woman member of the board of directors of Blue Cross of Northern California.

In 1973 she received the Walker Fellowship, recognizing her outstanding contribution to the healthcare industry. Her project was an overview of healthcare in five developing countries of the South Pacific: Tonga, Fiji, the New Hebrides, Solomon Islands, and Papua New Guinea.

In 1978 Munroe was named vice president of the American Hospital Association (AHA), headquartered in Chicago, a position she held until her retirement in 1988. She was responsible for the office of constituency sections, strategic planning, and marketing.

While in Chicago, Munroe became a member of the board of trustees of the 440-bed Hinsdale Hospital and a member of the board of directors of the Adventist Health System/North Eastern, Middle America, and Great Lakes. She was also an executive committee member for the Illinois Conference.

Munroe continues to be listed in Who's Who of American Women, as she has been for 32 years. Upon her retirement, AHA established the annual Shirley Ann Munroe Leadership Development Award in recognition of her innovation in healthcare delivery. It is a monetary stipend for continuing education to a practicing hospital administrator in a small or rural hospital.

Now living in Roswell, New Mexico, Munroe is a member of the executive committee of the Southwestern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. She also directs the choir for a local Presbyterian church, is president of the board of directors of the Roswell Symphony, and vice president of the

continued below in col. 4

A Missionary in Every Way, Every Day

Helen Tarasenk Sprengel, R.N., M.P.H., Ph.D., served with her physician husband as a missionary in Bangkok, Thailand, for 16 years.

She wore many hats. Among her many appointments, she served as director of nursing at the Bangkok Adventist Hospital; founder and director of Bangkok's School of Practical Nursing; and vice president for development, recruitment, and public relations.

She also briefly served as education superintendent for the 13 Adventist schools in Thailand, ranging from primary grades through adult education. She served on accreditation committees from Korea to the Philippines. She became curriculum developer and educator in language and music for Thailand's Mission College, which achieved accreditation before it graduated its first class.

Sprengel has also raised more than \$3 million for the new Mission College at Muak Lek.

In the California State University system, Sprengel became a lecturer in nursing, then assistant, and associate professor. She is also widely known as a speaker for camp meetings, Sabbath schools, banquets, and commencements. Her musical abilities have been exhibited in choirs she has directed and music she has arranged both in Thailand and in California.

One friend describes Sprengel as "not only the consummate professional but also a vital force in her church and community. Her devotion to mission service and her love for humanity has led her to labor tirelessly for others. She has cared for people medically, has educated them with skills that improve their life in the here and now, and has sought to prepare souls for the kingdom of Heaven."

Another associate lauds Sprengel as "a remarkable woman who has demonstrated the ability to incorporate her profession, her calling, and the work of her Lord into everyday life."

Mother to Asian Refugees

Born the first of eight children in a Worcester, Massachusetts, family, Laura Carlson grew up knowing about sacrifice, commitment to an Adventist education, and how to take responsibility. After completing teacher training from Broadview College in Chicago, Laura taught school until the General Conference decided to send her fiance, Carl Sundin, to study in Sweden.

They married and worked two years in Sweden before returning to work in Minnesota. She became a busy pastor's wife involved with Sabbath schools, establishing Dorcas societies, teaching elementary school, and playing the piano for church and evangelistic meetings in cities such as Brainard, Duluth, and Minneapolis. When she and Carl moved on to St. Louis, Kansas City, Loma Linda, and later to Washington, D.C., her activities broadened. She became a dean of women, and, later, a secretary for the Adventist nurses' association.

Upon her husband's retirement and their return to Loma Linda, Sundin entered a new phase of her life's service. Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees began flooding into California. She and her husband became a de facto clearing house for their new Asian friends—collecting furniture, clothing, and food, looking for work opportunities, orienting refugees to life in the United States, and reaching out to them spiritually.

When her husband of 46 years died in 1980, Sundin did not give up her new mission. Through her direct efforts the Loma Linda Vietnamese Congregation became a reality. Pastor Isaiah Doung, now pastor of this congregation, says simply: "We look upon her as an advisor. When we have problems, we turn to her. Whenever we need her, she is always there."

The story is the same for the Cambodians. Through Sundin's direct effort money was found to hire a woman pastor, Lang Van, to minister to this group. Pastor Van says, "Laura Sundin is always working for us; she is always available; she is patient; she takes time to listen. She is like a second mother to me."

Presently, Sundin helps raise money to sponsor up to 14 Vietnamese and Cambodian youth to attend Adventist academies each year.

Pastor Lang Van concludes: "Although Laura has carefully kept her exact age a secret, she works like someone who is 30! She gives Bible studies and in every way sets a wonderful example of what a Christian woman should be."

AAW MISSION STATEMENT

So God created 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 individuals in our church reflect more fully the image of God in their relationships to others in the home, the church, the work place, and the community.

This association, which focuses on the development, discoveries, interests, and potentials of Adventist women, has these goals.

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 personal development, interpersonal relationships with others, and their relationship to God.

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

ORDINATION

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How then do can as humans refuse to recognize God's call of a woman by the ultimate public act of recognition—ordination? Is it only in God's service that a woman cannot be equally talented, equally blessed, or equally called?

Peg Hempe has and continues to demonstrate that God has called her and that she is filled with and motivated by the Spirit. We can do no other than publicly acknowledge and accept this gift and this call by ordaining her to gospel ministry. God does not just call men, for in Christ there is no male or female. God called Peg Hempe; we were honored to recognize God's call by ordaining her.

Shirley Ann Munroe, continued

board of directors for the Symphony Guild Publications.

On Sabbath, according to Jeanne Jordan, Shirley Ann Munroe is at the local Adventist church. She may be playing the organ, serving as an elder, leading a children's division or a choir, or organizing the church's monthly potluck dinner. Those who know and work with her have been invigorated by her vision and by her management skills that make this vision come to reality.

*The Leona G. Running Collection***Andrews University houses unique women's resource**

by Kit Watts

Thanks to Leona G. Running, the Heritage Center at Andrews University houses a unique collection of materials focusing on women's issues in society and in the Seventh-day Adventist Church for the past 26 years.

Running began denominational service in 1937 and has taught at the SDA Theological Seminary since 1955. Now retired, the gifted language teacher continues to teach such classes as Syriac, Egyptian hieroglyphics, and Akkadian. (She retired from Greek and Hebrew several years ago.)

Running admits that she didn't begin to think about women's issues until about 1970. About that time, one of her colleagues at the seminary asked her to review a paper on women's ordination. Things began to click.

Out of the closet

At first Running stashed away material in a couple of boxes in her closet at the office. Later, she thought the material might be interesting to others. It would be more accessible to others in James White Library,

she reasoned, where students doing research could use it.

Today, she goes to the library once each quarter, lugging sacks full of things to add to her boxes.

The collection is not uniform in depth but it is rich in its diversity. Newspaper clippings, xeroxed articles, books, cartoons, research papers, cassette tapes—anything that caught Running's attention during the past quarter century might well be in one of the more than 29 boxes tucked away in the archives.

Topics vary just as widely. From the popular press she has collected material on abortion, equality, the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), divorce, singles, rape, and domestic violence as associated with the O.J. Simpson trial.

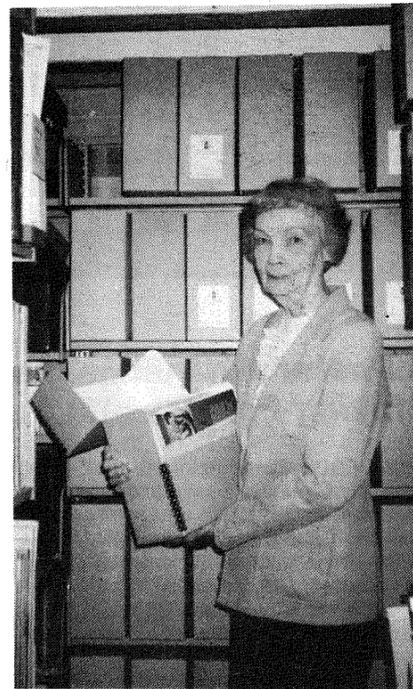
Adventist history also figures in Running's collection. Notably, she has included papers from the 1973 Camp Mohaven Council on the Role of Women in the [SDA] Church. She was one of about 15 women who were members of the Mohaven Council, a group which concluded that there was no theological barrier to ordaining Adventist women.

Equally fascinating are the papers documenting the Merikay case from the 1970s (*Silver vs. Pacific Press*). The lawsuit became a wake-up call for the church. By the late 1970s, many women employed by the church began to receive equal pay for equal work in the United States. (Many Adventist church entities outside the U.S., however, still do not pay women equally with men.)

Running also has collected articles about or research by a few Adventist women such as Ellen White, Miriam Wood, Margit Suring, Arlene Taylor, Debbie Vance, Iris Yob, and Carole Rayburn as well as "SDA seminary women."

Most of the 100 or more books Running has donated are now included in the library's general collection. Fortunately, among the more than 100 cassette tapes are a few workshops and presentations that Running herself has made.

Running's work as an outstanding scholar and teacher of Adventist pastors is a worthy heritage. But the fact that she has augmented this with a personal women's collection means that her vision and her voice can be heard among us for generations to come.



Leona G. Running displays one of 29 boxes in her collection.

British Adventists authorize first woman pastor to baptize candidates

Drene Somasundram

Saturday, June 7, 1997, marked a turning point in the history of the Adventist Church in the British Isles, when Drene Somasundram baptized Samantha Roberts. The report of the event was published in a mid-August news release from the Adventist News Network.

Two weeks later Somasundram took part in Samatha's wedding to Mr. Neil Blest, but she was not allowed to officiate.

Somasundram first came into the spotlight of the world church during the General Conference session in Utrecht. She was interviewed extensively by the Adventist broadcast press when the NAD initiative to ordain women as gospel ministers failed.

Somasundram is the first woman pastor in Britain who has been authorized to baptize. However, the option to recognize women's ministry in this way was made available to any division that wished it by an official vote of the General Conference at its 1990 session in Indianapolis. The GC vote also stated that women could

officiate at marriages—if the local division authorized it, which in Somasundram's case did not happen.

Women in the U.S., who are ordained as local elders and hired as local church pastors, first baptized their candidates in 1984 in the Potomac Conference. Their action was halted within weeks. Thenn GC president Neal C. Wilson vowed that the issue of women's ordination would be resolved "once and for all" by special commissions that met in 1985, 1988, and 1989. Pastor Peg Hempe resumed the baptizing initiative in 1989 when the board of the University Church at Loma Linda voted its support for her action. Elsewhere, church leaders have allowed a few isolated women in Germany, China (and perhaps elsewhere), to baptize their own candidates—mainly because these women have been so extremely successful in their ministry that it seemed impossible to deny them. Somasundram, 33, from Surrey, England, has carried pastoral responsibilities near London for several years, but,

according to the news release, "was given her first parish of Cambridge and Peterborough earlier this year." The report added that "Although in many respects she functions as a full pastor, she is in fact an 'associate in pastoral care.'"

When interviewed, Somasundram commented, "The gospel is pretty much the same whoever preaches it. I see my role as trying to relate to a God who is both male and female."

She added, however, that many female parishioners prefer, at times, to talk with a woman pastor. "Domestic violence is a problem, even in Christian homes. Many women I know appear to have perfect marriages but are actually under a lot of pressure. They know they can talk to me."

Although Somasundram is said to be the first woman assigned as a sole pastor of a district in the British Union, women in other European countries such as Finland, Denmark, and Sweden, have carried large pastoral and evangelistic responsibilities for many years, but often without a title.

AAW has begun a good work, but new needs must be met**PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNIQUE,** continued from front page

that women need to be recognized by the church through ordination as befitting the service these women give to church members.

Today, through the combined efforts of caring people, eight women have now been recognized by five local churches through ordination.

■ Advocacy for fair church policies.

At its annual conferences, AAW has consistently prepared resolutions calling on the church to develop non-discriminating policies in employment and personnel relations. The Office of Human Relations has been receptive to recommendations from AAW and other groups in North America and has been very instrumental in

eliminating discrimination by gender and race. (AAW has not given up hope for the General Conference and world divisions to do likewise.)

Women and men, inspired by principles of fairness and equality—principles that are the very foundation of AAW's existence—have fought for fair wages, titles, and working conditions. The most progress toward equal wages for equal work has been made in the field of Adventist education, but other church employees have also been helped.

■ Founding of the first women's resource center.

AAW and its supporters were among the very first to come forward with major financial donations to establish the Women's Resource Center at La Sierra

University. This center will grow and become a major research and educational force for the church at large.

Next steps?

The Association of Adventist Women is now convening its 15th annual conference. It needs to examine carefully the current needs of women in the church.

Though the implementation of past gains is inconsistent and in need of improvement, that is the general condition of society when it is changing and trying to make progress. This should not keep us from pursuing other needs.

I suggest that women students in Adventist colleges need mentoring. They are full of ideals, dreams, and hopes. They are brilliant, creative, and the "cream of the

crop" in our church's future. They have not yet experienced the disillusionment of rejection, failure, broken promise, and loss.

They need our caring mentoring and friendship to learn how to become survivors, joyous overcomers, and caring members of the church. A group effort in mentoring that AAW can make is to give some of these women the experience each year of the wonderful fellowship of the annual AAW conference.

What do you think?

What do you see as the most pressing needs for women in the church? We would like to hear from you. We will print your ideas and concerns in this newsletter and begin a dialogue, not only with our readers but at our annual conferences. Your views matter to us. Write soon!