



United Methodist Clergywomen

@News

## A MESSAGE FROM HIRHO:

America entered into a new era of ‘humility and healing’ according to the President elect Barack Obama on November 4th. He urged “young and old, rich and poor, Democrat and Republican, black, white, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, gay, straight, disabled and not disabled” to come together as one nation. He sounds a lot like our belief as United Methodists. This was expressed in the Constitution Article IV: “The United Methodist Church acknowledges that all persons are of sacred worth ... In the United Methodist Church no conference or other organizational unit of the Church shall be structured so as to exclude any member or any constituent body of the Church because of race, color, national origin, status or economic condition.” (*The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*, Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 2004). However, we all know that the reality is far from our belief in both the society and the Church. What would be the role of Christian leaders in relation to the question of what does it mean to be a united Christian community in the world? What would be the real question for us to come together, especially as a faith community regardless theological, ideological, and cultural difference? Thus, I ask, “Is the Christian community about bringing one voice to issues or is it about empowering different voices under the lordship of Jesus?”



Rev. Dr. HiRho Park, Director of Continuing Formation for Ministry

Some Americans expressed that they were scared about the election of Senator Obama for the United States Presidency. I wonder what this would really mean.

A Korean theologian, Jung Young Lee, in his book *Marginality*, says, “Pseudo-Christianity must die, so that in its ashes true Christianity will rise again.” (Jung Young Lee, *Marginality* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995, 120). For Lee, “pseudo-Christianity” refers to a church that seeks a position of “centrality.” “Today’s church,” says Lee “is caught in a vicious circle of humanistic centralism and in the webs of a dominant ideology.” (Lee, 129). He asserts that “when the church is based on the centralist inclination to dominate and exclude others because of their race, gender, or class, it is not the church of Jesus Christ, but the church of the centralists who crucified him.” (Lee, 129).

May be some people were afraid of the evening of demarcation of exclusivism in American history since they felt the sense of decentralized political, social, and cultural power. When we try to maintain a centrality of voice, oppression happens, and the border between centrality and marginality becomes concretized. Keeping a centrality of voice would resist change and transformation, for it seeks steadiness and security.

In Jesus Christ, God became “the margin of marginality.” As a margin of marginality, Jesus sought to release his claim on centrality in order to empower others. This process of self-emptying (*kenosis*) healed and reconciled people created what Lee calls a “new marginality” in Jesus and those who follow him. In a new marginality, we see ourselves as subjects of liberation. The center becomes the margin. As a new marginal people, Christians are called to a creative potential to transform the world, under girded by humbleness, respect, and service. Lee claims that this marginality is a condition of discipleship. (Lee, 118). The key is recognition of a ‘new marginality’ created within us through Jesus Christ. This recognition forces us to seek solidarity to overcome any forms of oppression. The church becomes a transformative and creative organism that is alive in spite of our centralist inclination that resists theological, ideological, and cultural differences.

Isaiah 40:3-5 comes to my mind as a scriptural encounter: A voice cries out, “In the wilderness prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.” (NRSV) All Christians, especially clergy, are called to fulfill this work of “leveling” the uneven ground of our lives and the lives of others. This is how Christian leaders bring the body of Christ together. May this nation also find a leveling place as it inaugurates ideological and democratic shift.

HiRho Y. Park

## LEAD WOMEN PASTORS PROJECT

The opening event for the 8 month study of Lead Women Pastors took place in Nashville September 14 – 16, 2008. Over 40 lead female pastors, agency staff and observers were present for this awe-inspiring event. The next scheduled gathering of lead women pastors is April 2009. 400 surveys were distributed in October 2008 to research women's leadership style as lead pastors in comparison to male lead pastors. The results will be shared with the Church in April 2009. To read more about this gathering, click here: [LWPP](#)



Lead Women Pastors Project  
September 2008

## THE REVISED WELLSPRINGS: A JOURNAL OF UNITED METHODIST CLERGYWOMEN

The newly revised *WellSprings Journal* is going to be published by April, 2009. The editorial committee consists of Rev. Emily Cheney, editor; Rev. Marion Jackson, Rev. Nan Self, and Rev. Anita Phillips are working diligently with Rev. HiRho Park, Director. The newly revised *WellSprings* will be published annually as hard copy and on the web with a fresh design and new content reflecting on enduring spirit of the journal since 1988.

## AFRICA ELECTS FIRST FEMALE BISHOP

The Rev. Joaquina Nhanala of Mozambique is the first woman elected as a United Methodist bishop in Africa. For the complete story, click here: [Nhanala](#)



Bishop Joaquina Nhanala

## JUDICIAL COUNCIL ELECTS FIRST WOMAN PRESIDENT

The Rev. Susan Henry-Crowe is the new president of the Judicial Council of The United Methodist Church. She is the first woman to lead the denomination's "supreme court." To read the complete story, click here: [Judicial Council](#)



Judicial Council

## SCHOLARSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE FOR WOMEN

### GEORGIA HARKNESS SCHOLARSHIP

To encourage women over 35 to prepare for ordained ministry as an elder in The United Methodist Church as a second career, these scholarship opportunities are given in memory of the life and service of Georgia Harkness (1891-1974), outstanding teacher and theologian. The scholarship monies may be applied toward tuition, fees, room and board for the basic seminary degree leading to elder's ordination. The award is not available for undergraduate, D.Min. or Ph.D. work. The deadline for application is March 1, 2009.

For more information, click here: [Georgia Harkness](#)



2007 Georgia Harkness trip to Honduras

## WOMEN OF COLOR

The Women of Color Scholars recently held their fall mentoring session in Chicago in conjunction with the annual American Academy of Religion meeting. 13 Scholars presented updates on their work as Ph.D. or Th.D. students. The deadline for application is February 1, 2009. For more information on the Women of Color Scholarship, click here: [WOC](#)



## EVENT: DISCERNING GOD'S WILL FOR LIFE

Is there someone in your congregation that is feeling God's call to ministry but is overwhelmed by all the possibilities? Have them explore the possibilities: deaconess, Home Missioner, ordained deacon, ordained elder, including local church pastor, chaplain, or pastoral counselor. Through conversation, study, reflection, prayer you can begin to discern the direction of God's guidance at a January 2009 gathering. For more information on the January 22-25, 2009 event, click here: [discernment event](#) To register click here: [discernment registration](#)

## GBHEM ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY IS A POPULAR AUTHOR

Is it time to laugh yet? Dr. Cynthia Bond Hopson, the Assistant General Secretary for the Black College Fund, dedicates a chapter to this question in her uplifting new book, *Too Many Irons in the Fire*. The author of *Bad Hair Days*, *Rainy Days*, and *Mondays* provides words of wisdom and encouragement, as well as a month's worth of life-lessons in the form of thirty-one brief daily meditations. Each meditation includes a quotation, Scripture reading, and closing prayer – as well as a healthy dose of humor and inspiration for anyone who feels that they too have “too many irons in the fire.”

For more information or to arrange an author interview, please contact Ashley Miller at [acmiller@abingdonpress.com](mailto:acmiller@abingdonpress.com)  
Ask for the books at Cokesbury stores, your local bookstore or from Cokesbury.com



## CLERGYWOMEN NEW CHURCH PLANTERS SEEK LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT BY NETWORKING

Clergywomen who are new church start pastors are seeking a support system. If you are a new church starter, please contact Rev. Jacqui T. King at [nuwalk1@yahoo.com](mailto:nuwalk1@yahoo.com). Share your leadership style by discussing issues related to gender, theology, and community dynamics.

## CHANGE IS CONSTANT, KEEP GBHEM INFORMED

Change is a constant factor that we as individuals experience every day. GBHEM keeps a database with your information so we can communicate important information to you. This information is important as we do not want you to miss out on exciting opportunities that GBHEM offers. We want to share with you scholarship opportunities, continuing education opportunities, as well as news within the United Methodist Church.

We are in the process of updating the clergywomen database. Please e-mail Elizabeth O'Neal at [coneal@gbhem.org](mailto:coneal@gbhem.org) with the following information.

Name :  
Home Address:  
Home Phone Number:  
Name of Church you serve:  
Church Address:  
Church Phone Number:  
Church fax Number:  
Conference:  
E-Mail Address:

To remove your name from our mailing list, please [click here](#).

To join our mailing list or invite someone to our mailing list [click here](#)

Questions or comments? E-mail us at [cw@gbhem.org](mailto:cw@gbhem.org) or call us at 615-340-7409.



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