

NEW HORIZONS

RESOURCES FOR NAZARENE CLERGYWOMEN

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M7 Conference: Warming the Climate

Rev. Stefanie Hendrickson • Clergy Development

February is a thing of the past. As we look toward the joy of new life through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we look back on a time spent encouraging, supporting, and ministering. The Mid-Quadrennial Conference on Mission and Evangelism (M7) was held February 19-22, 2007 in Kansas City, Missouri. In addition to the workshops, networking, meetings, and worship gatherings, M7 fostered an environment that champions women clergy.

The focus on “warming the climate” in the Church of the Nazarene for women clergy saturated the three-day conference. Stories of positive experiences in ministry from women clergy boosted the hearts of fellow clergy. Strides in working together with students, ministers, district superintendents, educational institutions, and general church leadership were made.

As a witness to the warming climate, a Women Clergy Council was convened by Clergy Development. Under the leadership of Dan Copp, director of Clergy Development, support for women clergy has taken the initiative to connect various organizations and encouragers of female ministers. Workshops exploring resources for women clergy, churches, and district leadership were presented. The “Warming the Climate” luncheon was well-attended—bringing together a variety of people exploring ways to warm the climate in their ministry assignments and churches.

This issue is dedicated the strides made over the past months and years that converged at M7. Whether you were able to attend or not, read over the articles and draw hope as the “chill in the air” subsides and we work together to “warm the climate.”

Women Clergy Council Convened by Clergy Development

Rev. Sarah Coleson Derck

The first meeting of the Nazarene Women Clergy Council was convened February 20th, in the midst of the Mid-Quadrennial Conference on Missions and Evangelism (M7), by Dr. Daniel Copp, director of Clergy Development. The idea for the council emerged from the 2004 PALCON events, when it became evident many different initiatives were occurring on behalf of women clergy across the USA/Canada region. It seemed a central advisory council could be helpful in advancing the promotion, communication, and cooperation of these various enterprises, and in developing a voice of unabashed advocacy for women clergy in the Church of the Nazarene.

This first meeting provided an opportunity for

council members to become acquainted with each other, and to hear about the stirring movements of the Spirit on behalf of women clergy in these exciting days. Participants shared the stories of their call to ministry, and enjoyed a few moments of encouragement and prayer with Dr. Nina Gunter. The next gathering of the council will focus on brainstorming about current and potential resources for supporting the placement and ministry of women clergy.

The Council is comprised of members from a variety of ministry roles and backgrounds, representing all the educational zones in the USA/Canada region. The Council is chaired by Rev. Carla Sunberg, who also serves as the Nazarene representative to Wesleyan/Holiness Women Clergy.

Meet the 2007-2009 Nazarene Women Clergy Council

Vicki Copp, Assistant Professor of Practical Theology and Director of Supervised Ministries, Nazarene Theological Seminary; Kansas City, MO
Representing: At Large Council Member

Nancy Clayton, Associate Pastor; Palo Alto, CA
Representing: PLNU

Sarah Derck, Student; Kansas City, MO
Representing: Clergy Development

Stefanie Hendrickson, Co-Pastor; Drexel, MO
Representing: Clergy Development

Bethany Hull Somers, Registered Evangelist; Seattle, WA
Representing: NNU

Miriam Mouzon, Senior Pastor; Wallingford, CT
Representing: ENC

Mary Paul, Associate Professor of Christian Ministry, Olivet Nazarene University; Bourbonnais, IL
Representing: ONU

Carol Rittenhouse, Administrative Assistant; Kansas City, MO
Representing: Clergy Development

Judith Schwanz, Professor of Pastoral Care and Counseling, Nazarene Theological Seminary; Kansas City, MO
Representing: MNU

Jeanne Serrao, Dean, School of Theology and Philosophy and Professor of Biblical Literature, Mount Vernon Nazarene University; Mount Vernon, OH
Representing: MVNU

Rondy Smith, Community Life Pastor; Hermitage, TN
Representing: TNU

Carla Sunberg, Associate Pastor for Evangelism and Discipleship; Fort Wayne, IN
Representing: Women Clergy Council Chairperson

Debbie Tanasiecuk, Associate Pastor and Chaplain; Prince Albert, Canada (Canada)
Representing: CNUC

Althea Taylor, Associate Pastor for Community Outreach; Bronx, NY
Representing: At Large Council Member

Kelly Yates, Pastor of Church Development/Small Groups; Oklahoma City, OK
Representing: SNU

A New Resource for the Church: The Wynkoop Center for Women in Ministry

Rev. Sarah Coleson Derck

Exciting things are happening for women clergy in the Church of the Nazarene! Encouraging statistics reveal scores of young women are entering our schools, preparing themselves for a lifetime of ministry. A surge in the last 20 years has resulted in a 300 percent increase in the number of active women clergy, from 5 percent to 15 percent of total active clergy in the United States and Canada. These women, striving to be faithful to God's call on their lives, need the support and advocacy of their Church, as much as their Church needs them.

During the Mid-Quadrennial Conference on Mission & Evangelism (M7), Dr. Judi Schwanz unveiled a new resource for the support and empowerment of women clergy, "Women in Ministry: Biblical Foundations and Resources." Schwanz, Professor of Pastoral Care and Director of the Wynkoop Center for Women in Ministry at Nazarene Theological Seminary, led workshop participants in an exploration of the Wynkoop Center's newly redesigned website,

www.wynkoopcenter.org. The mission of the Wynkoop Center is to equip, empower, and encourage women called by God to serve in and through the Church of Jesus Christ.

A featured component of the website is the new "Bible Studies on Women in Ministry," a series of 21 lessons designed to educate and raise awareness concerning God's creative and redemptive intention for gender relations. The lessons are divided into



four units: "The Creation Mandate," "Old Testament Women in Leadership," "New Testament Women in Leadership," and "Difficult Passages in the New Testament." These Bible studies were created for use with small groups of teens and adults in local church and campus ministries.

Also available on the Wynkoop Center website are academic papers and essays, worship resources, web links, and literature reviews. All material is available for free download. Visit today to learn more about women in ministry.

Want to incorporate the Wynkoop Center Bible Studies in your ministry?

Review our list below for some creative ways to use this resource. If you find a way to use the Bible Studies we have not listed, E-mail us at pastor@nazarene.org.

Membership class: Introduce new members to Wesleyan theology and the Church of the Nazarene's affirmation of women clergy.

Women in ministry small group: Gather the women clergy in your area and start a small group to support and encourage each other.

Women ministries Bible study group: Sometimes women in the congregation are the most resistant to women clergy. Becoming involved in women ministries gives the women in your church an opportunity to see a woman minister in action.

Youth group, youth camps, and youth retreats: Our youth need to know God calls both men and women to all types of ministry.

Sunday School/Small group material: The Wynkoop Bible Studies provides excellent material for a Sunday school or small group of any size or age group.

Self-affirmation of your call to ministry: Ministry can be hard and draining at times. Remembering your call can make all the difference. Take time to encourage and affirm yourself through these studies.

Sermon studies: Use these studies to help you prepare for a sermon series affirming God's call on all His people.

www.wynkoopcenter.org

The Climate is Warming for Women Clergy

Rev. Sarah Coleson Derck

The mega-seminar luncheon at the Mid-Quadrennial Conference on Mission & Evangelism (M7) for women clergy, hosted by Clergy Development, gathered together over 150 women clergy and their colleagues. Rev. Carla Sunberg, the denomination's new representative to Wesleyan/Holiness Women Clergy, emceed the event, introducing the new Nazarene Women Clergy Council and welcoming all six general superintendents and their spouses. Rev. Sunberg spoke of some of the obstacles women have faced in the Church of the Nazarene, as they have sought ordination, searched for places to serve, and longed to minister the word of God. However, she was happy to report these barriers are breaking down, doors are opening, and a fresh wind of change is blowing, as our local churches become aware of God working for His glory through women clergy.

In the last part of the luncheon, Dr. Nina Gunter, general superintendent, took the podium, to a standing ovation. She referred the audience to paragraph 903.5 of The Manual, the denomination's statement in support of women in ministry, encouraging them to take strength from their Church's official position. She described her own personal history, of her call to preach at 12, and the preaching she has done, "almost every weekend since then." She spoke of the inclusion of women in ministry since the beginning of the Wesleyan movement, when John Wesley licensed Sarah Crosby to preach in 1761.

Dr. Gunter issued a call to the Church of the Nazarene with five "Declarations for Warming the Climate:"

1. Recognize the overwhelming biblical evidence that God does call women into ministry.
2. Rejoice that God is raising up a generation who recognize and celebrate the call of God to women as crucial to the very definition of the Church.
3. Acknowledge the acceptance for women clergy is a sacred biblical and moral response for all Nazarenes.
4. Join Church leadership in the prophetic act of doing all in their power to clear the way for women in positions of leadership and ministry.
5. Women clergy must respond to the Church in Christian love, realizing there is never a need to defend God's call on one's life. Jesus is the advocate, and God will validate one's ministry.

Dr. Gunter closed with this plea, "Let the Church of the Nazarene, by faith and practice, warm the climate for women clergy and leaders."

"You Are Called"

The **Women in Ministry Network (WIMN)** for the Southeast Region Church of the Nazarene will host its inaugural conference, "You Are Called," on the campus of Trevecca Nazarene University, April 26-28, 2007.

This conference is designed to encourage and equip women called to vocational ministry. Special preacher is Dr. Jossie Owens, District Superintendent of the New England District. Special guests include Dr. Nina Gunter, General Superintendent and Rev. Carla Sunberg, USA/Canada Women Clergy Representative. Worship music will be led by the trio Sequel and the Two Roads Band. For more information or online registration, please visit us at www.trevecca.edu/wimn or contact conveners Dr. Rondy Smith, Community Life Pastor at Hermitage Church of the Nazarene or Rev. Heather Daugherty, Director of Church Services at TNU.

Helping Ourselves

Rev. Vicki Copp • Assistant Professor of Practical Theology and Director of Supervised Ministries

I have heard the stories of women clergy for about fifteen years now; stories of rejection, stories of hurt, stories of desperation. I have seen the plight of women clergy from several vantage points: as a newly called woman, as an associate pastor, as a district assistant, as a spouse of a district superintendent, as a friend to general church leadership, and as mentor and professor of women students. There are many ways in which women clergy are at the mercy of district boards, district superintendents, and pastors. However, I would like to propose there are also some strategies by which we can help ourselves.

When I first announced God had called me to preach, I was immediately given opportunities to do so. My father invited me to preach at a church where he was interim pastor. An associate pastor at my church asked me to preach at the women's shelter. Then my pastor-husband invited me to preach on a Sunday night. It goes on from there; each invitation frightened me, conjuring up visions of abysmal failure and self-doubt. However, the call compelled me to say yes in spite of my misgivings. I have preached in places where I felt I had not yet earned the right. I have preached in small and seemingly insignificant venues. I have preached when it was terribly inconvenient. I have done each knowing God had called and it was my responsibility to respond. If you are called to preach and are offered an invitation to preach, just do it! Women clergy will never be thought of as right and normal if people never see us in the pulpit. Be strong and courageous knowing God has called you. Know you will be helping yourself and us.

Maybe you have not been given opportunities to preach. Are you looking for them? Many nursing homes and compassionate ministries organizations need preachers on a regular basis. I have one friend who started her own radio program so she would have opportunities to preach. How sincerely do you want to preach?

Often when women have the blessing of

placement, they throw themselves into the lives of the people in their new settings in a "nesting" sort of way. It becomes a safe place for them. Their people may come to believe having a woman for a pastor is a good thing. However, these blessed congregations are very rare. Do we not have a responsibility to help other congregations be open to women leaders? Women clergy need to take the responsibility to become involved in district functions so they can become visible as women leaders and open the eyes of others to the possibility of women clergy. Many districts have become more sensitive to the need for diversity on district boards, especially those who interview ministerial candidates. They are beginning to see the need for the female perspective on boards of trustees and advisory boards. They are looking for qualified female leaders who can represent this diversity and perspective. When you are asked to be nominated for one of these boards, say yes! You will be helping all of us.

Maybe you have not been asked to give leadership on your district. Do they know who you are? Do you attend district meetings and retreats? When you attend, do you huddle in a corner with your friends, or do you put yourself out there meeting people and learning what is going on? Do you dress so you won't be noticed, or do people look at you and wonder who you are? Now, I know this gets a bit sticky and a lot of baggage comes with it. However, in the North American culture, for women to be taken seriously, we have to dress to be taken seriously. This, unfortunately, is not as true with men. Now, we can fuss about all that and talk about how unfair it is, or we can accept it as part of our cultural context and dress to help ourselves.

There are significant numbers of called young women in our churches looking for mentors. An important reason we should "put ourselves out there" preaching and becoming involved at the district level

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is the need these young women have for female mentors. When we are in positions of authority and influence, they look to us and we can help them. Instead of enjoying and defending our exclusive positions as the token female on many staffs, boards, and committees, we can make it easier for young women to move into leadership beside us. When we have an invitation to preach or speak and cannot accept it, we can offer the name of one of those young women as alternates. This is helping ourselves.

We are told some of the biggest resisters of women clergy are women themselves. There are lots of reasons for this and it is not going to be a “quick fix,” but I would like to propose a strategy that will move us a long way toward acceptance of women clergy by women. We, as women clergy, have often emphasized that we are not “women’s ministries,” but “women clergy,” something very different. I am

suggesting instead of emphasizing our differences, we understand our similarities and link arms. This has been modeled for us by the General Women’s Ministries and the Come to the Fire Conferences. They are giving leadership and voice to women clergy within our women’s ministries groups. These opportunities help Nazarene women understand God’s call on our lives and will encourage them to be more open to our leadership.

Something I have noticed in several settings is women clergy do not know each other. Even the women clergy on the same district often do not know each other. Something is wrong with this picture. We need each other for support and understanding. When we know each other, we can help each other. Each of us has networks that can assist us in helping each other. Maybe we know a pastor who needs an associate. Maybe we are on the district nominating committee

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Join us for the

Eighth International Come to the Water Conference

sponsored by Wesleyan/Holiness Women Clergy, Inc.

sponsored by :

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- Church of God, Anderson
- Church of the Nazarene
- Evangelical Friends, International
- Free Methodist Church
- The Salvation Army
- The Wesleyan Church

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cometothewater.org

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and can offer the names of some women candidates. Maybe we know of an open position in one of our educational institutions and can offer the suggestion of a name. We can help each other, but not if we do not know each other.

Getting to know each other is not difficult. We tend to stick out in district pastors’ meetings. So what if you introduce yourself to someone you think is a clergy woman and then find out she’s a pastor’s spouse? Now she knows there is a clergy woman on the district. Maybe she has a call herself! Find ways to meet together as clergy women. Plan to attend the Wesleyan Holiness Women Clergy Conference in Nashville next April. Set a lunch time once a month or meet for lunch during pastors’ retreat. It doesn’t take much effort and the benefits are enormous.

Now, believe me, I understand we have to be discerning about our involvement levels and to be certain of the leading of the Holy Spirit in regard to these strategies. But, I also know how women are taught to work and think. We have been taught to hold back and let the men take charge in most areas of the Church. We have been taught to be supporters and encouragers and not leaders. The Church needs women leaders and God has gifted women for leadership, so let’s help ourselves. NH

The Mount Vernon Nazarene University region will be holding their **3rd Bi-Annual Women In Ministry Network (WIMN) Day** Thursday, April 19, 2007.

The theme this year is “Becoming Missional Takes Unity.” Our day of inspiration, education, and encouragement begins at 9 A.M. in the chapel of the Lakeholm Church of the Nazarene with our key-note speaker, Dr. Jossie Owens, District Superintendent of the New England District. Dr. Geri Rosser, Assistant to the MVNU Chaplain for Worship Teams, will lead us in wonderful music. Following this are workshops by experts in the field, a networking luncheon with clergy in similar ministry assignments, a closing chapel service, and group prayer by ministry areas.

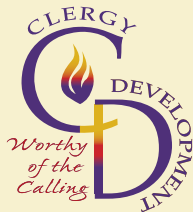
Ministry students from MVNU and around the region are encouraged to come, learn, and get acquainted with women clergy on their region. The cost is only \$45 (\$20 for students) for the conference, lunch, snacks, and materials. Participants can earn 0.5 Continuing Education Unit (CEU). This leadership development day is sponsored by the Church Relations division of the University and is led by the founder and convener, Dr. C. Jeanne Serrão, Dean School of Theology and Philosophy. For more information on our speaker, workshops options, and registration (online option), please go to <http://mvnu.edu/churchrelations/jowens.asp> or email Trinia Huddleston (thuddles@mvnu.edu) for more information. Bring a clergy woman friend—this is not just for Nazarenes. We hope to see all the MVNU region women clergy!

Visit www.NazarenePastor.org

to find more resoures, including archived copies of

The screenshot shows the homepage of NazarenePastor.org. At the top, it says "AN OFFICIAL SITE OF THE CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE" with navigation links: Home, About Us, Clergy Education, Events, Resources, Chastity, Video. A search bar is present. Below are sections for "FEATURED EVENT" (Regional Prayer Summits 2007-2008) and "FEATURED RESOURCE" (Bible Studies on Women in Ministry). A sidebar lists "Site Features" including Chaplaincy, Clergy Education, Leadership Training, Preacher's Messianic, Soul Care, and Staffing. The main content area has "Clergy Resources" with links for Clergy Retreat Information, Sermon Resources, and Parish Wellness.

New Horizons, Soul Care, links to women clergy information and other helps for clergy.



Regional Prayer Summits

As a part of the Board of General Superintendents' Centennial Prayer Initiative, leaders in Clergy Development, World Mission, and Stewardship Ministries will facilitate a series of regional Prayer Summits through the summers of 2007 and 2008. Most of the Prayer Summits will be held on the regional college/university campuses, enjoying each campus setting, their lodging and dining services. Plans are underway to incorporate a maximum of 200 participants on each region in a guided time of praying together.

A prayer summit is a three-day, life-transforming worship experience that gathers Christians from a geographic area. Prayer summits seek God and His holiness, Jesus Christ and His kingdom. The Holy Spirit will guide us through a humbling, healing process, lead us to unity of heart and mission, and qualify us for fresh anointing and service.

Prayer summits will gather Nazarene leaders: pastors, associates, evangelists, missionaries, professors, chaplains, and superintendents. Each summit will begin at noon on the first day and conclude on noon the third day--48 hours in the presence of God.

Prayer summits promise to offer a rich time of spiritual formation in the heart and soul of each participant. We anticipate a time of focused prayer for pastors and communities served by the Nazarene family. There will be no materials to purchase, no workshops to attend, no notebooks to shelve, and no tapes to buy. Plan to invest 48 hours in a rich and rewarding time of prayer!

Regional Prayer Summit Dates:

Olivet: June 11-13, 2007

MidAmerica: July 16-18, 2007

Northwest: July 30-August 1, 2007

Eastern (Schroon Lake, NY):
April 28-30, 2008

Trevecca: May 28-30, 2008

Mount Vernon: June 2-4, 2008

Southern: June 25-27, 2008

Point Loma: July 14-16, 2008

Visit the Clergy Development website,
www.nazarenepastor.org,
for more information about the Summits
and to register.

