

# What's It All About?

On May 4, 1956, the General Conference added this sentence to the *Discipline*: “both men and women are included in all provisions of the Discipline which refer to the ministry” [Para. 412.2.]

## 2006 International Clergywomen’s Consultation

The first gathering of United Methodist clergywomen was held in 1975 in Nashville, Tennessee. Since then, clergywomen’s consultations have occurred almost every four years, with attendance starting at a few hundred and growing to 1,300 in 2002. **The 2006 Consultation will be held August 13–17 in Chicago, Illinois.** The theme for the Consultation is “The Spirit of God Is Upon Us: Celebrating Our Courageous Past—Claiming Our Bold Future.”

The clergywomen will gather to worship the God who called, anointed, and empowers them for ministry as clergywomen. They will reflect on the biblical foundation of their call and their work, and celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of The United Methodist Church’s granting full clergy rights to women. Rev. Giona F. Kim and Rev. Martha B. Wagley are co-chairs of the Consultation design team.

According to Rev. HiRho Park, director of Continuing Formation for Ministry at GBHEM and coordinator of the Clergywomen’s Consultation, “Lay people and men are warmly invited to attend the Consultation. The historic and ongoing support of men and laity for the work and witness of United Methodist clergywomen sustains us—and our Church—every day. It would be an honor to have these people present to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of full clergy rights for women.”

For more information or to register for the event, go to [www.gbhem/clergywomen](http://www.gbhem/clergywomen).

## Educate Your Congregation

Would you like to recognize this special anniversary in your church? The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women has produced bulletin inserts to honor the fiftieth anniversary. The series is available now at [www.cosrow.org/tools](http://www.cosrow.org/tools). Resources can be downloaded for free and will be available throughout 2006. Check the link each month to get the latest piece of history to share with your congregation. Also, GBHEM and COSROW have created a special poster offering fifty ways to participate in this historic occasion through service, scholarships, worship, and more. The cost is \$3.00 for each poster. To see and order the poster, go to [www.gbhem.org/clergywomen/50thcelebration](http://www.gbhem.org/clergywomen/50thcelebration).

## By the Numbers

In 2004, GCFA reported that there were 9,483 United Methodist clergywomen out of 45,414 total clergy. Approximately one-fifth of all UM clergy are women. According to the Association of Theological Schools (2004-2005 data), there are 51,320 men and 28,875 women enrolled in seminary. Retention rates among clergywomen remain a concern. See The United Methodist Clergywomen Retention Study done at the Anna Howard Shaw Center, Boston University School of Theology ([www.bu.edu/sth/shaw/retention](http://www.bu.edu/sth/shaw/retention)).

## First Female Bishop Outside U.S.

In February 2005, The United Methodist Church in Germany elected Rosemarie Wenner, then 49, its first woman bishop and the denomination’s first female bishop outside the U.S. The United Methodist Church in Germany has 65,000 members organized into three annual conferences with approximately 500 congregations. Bishop Wenner succeeded Bishop Walter Klaiber who retired March 31, 2005, having held office for 16 years. United Methodist bishops outside the United States are elected for four-year terms, rather than for life as in the USA. They may be reelected. Bishop Wenner will attend the Clergywomen’s Consultation in August. She is working with the other UM women bishops on worship for the event.

## Election of UM Women Bishops in the U.S.

1980	Marjorie Matthews	North Central	Retired 1984. Deceased 1986
1984	Leontine T.C. Kelly	Western	Retired 1988. First woman of color elected bishop.
1984	Judith Craig	North Central	Retired 2000.
1988	Susan Morrison	Northeastern	Retiring September, 2006
1988	Sharon Brown Christopher	North Central	
1992	Ann Brookshire Sherer	South Central	
1992	Sharon Zimmerman Rader	North Central	Retired 2004
1992	Mary Ann Swensen	Western	
1996	Susan Wolfe Hassinger	Northeastern	Retired 2004.
1996	Charlene Kammerer	Southeastern	
1996	Janice Riggle Huie	South Central	
2000	Beverly J. Shamana	Western	
2000	Violet Lucinda Fisher	Northeastern	
2000	Linda Lee	North Central	
2004	Hope Morgan Ward	Southeastern	
2004	Debra Kiesey	North Central	
2004	Jane Allen Middleton	Northeastern	
2004	Sally Dyck	North Central	
2004	Mary Virginia Taylor	Southeastern	
2004	Minerva Carcano	Western	First Latina elected bishop