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## At AAW prayer breakfast on January 31

# Wilson acknowledges women gain leadership at dismal pace

by Esther Rosado

Elder Neal C. Wilson, General Conference president, addressed more than 100 women and men at a Metro Chapter AAW prayer breakfast on January 31. His wife, Elinor, accompanied him to the event.

Wilson surprised the gathering by his familiarity with resolutions passed at the AAW's recent annual conference.

"I'd like to respond directly to one of these," he offered. "Your request that women with experience in ministry should have an opportunity to speak directly to the Commission on the Role of Women which will meet in a few weeks seems logical and appropriate." Speaking to AAW president Nancy Marter he added, "If you wish to follow up on this and send me the names of three such women, I will give them each approximately 30 minutes to share their experiences."

Other topics that surfaced during the two-hour dialogue, which followed a season of prayer and Wilson's devotional remarks, were: women's leadership in the decision-making processes of the church, their future in gospel ministry, and additional concerns about the imminent meeting of the commission (March 24-27).

### Women as burden bearers

In his devotional, the president said that "one of the greatest needs of our church is the need for burden bearers." He explained that "burden bearers are the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, loving one another, bringing healing, binding, creating an atmosphere of fellowship, giving strength at the very roots of this church."

He added, "I think that women are especially able to do this kind of thing, in many ways much better than men . . . I find that there is something about women that can bring this kind of benefit that seems difficult for men to stoop to sometimes."

The president went on to say that, "If anyone thinks he is too great to stoop to this, he is fooling himself. If we have to have some office, some designation, some kind of recognition, in order to be fulfilled and cannot



Elder and Mrs. Neal Wilson were guests of the Metro Chapter's prayer breakfast. They are seated here next to Nancy Marter, AAW president.



More than 100 women and men attended the January 31 prayer breakfast in the Sligo Church atrium in Takoma Park, Maryland.

Photos: Beverly Rumble

be satisfied with being a burden bearer, the apostle says that person is fooling himself or herself."

### "Terribly Slow"

On another front, the president remarked that getting Adventist women into leadership beyond their local congregations has moved at a dismal pace. "I keep telling my fellow leaders to do something about initiating some of this at the local conference and union level so that the church will then have a pool of experienced women to draw from for world leadership. And frankly, that is going terribly slow."

Wilson noted that some steps have been taken to give women a voice at the General Conference level. He assured the audience that Betty Holbrook, who was appointed to coordinate the GC Women's Ministries Advisory Committee but has announced her retirement for this spring, will be replaced. One of her duties in that capacity was to sit in on GC officers' meetings. (There are about 25 individuals in the group, all members by virtue of their elected offices.)

However, the normal route to leadership at the General Conference is through the conference and union. In the question-and-answer period one woman took up the point further with Wilson. She pointed out that

conference and union leaders look in their pools of ordained ministers for potential leaders—and promote them. Because women are excluded from ordination, she emphasized, it is almost impossible for them to get the experience they need to be considered viable candidates for these positions.

In a direct appeal the woman asked Wilson to consider how he might use his influence as church president to enfranchise all Adventist women by working toward a positive outcome on the ordination issue.

Asked what his own opinion about women's ordination was, Wilson declined to reveal it. He said, "It's not always wise for a General Conference president to state what his precise position is. If I had a strong negative attitude towards it, I probably would have opposed setting up the commission. At this juncture I have no strong convictions for or against it. We are still studying the matter."

### Audience stunned

Then asked why *additional* papers are being prepared to study ordination when published surveys show that the majority of Adventist theologians around the world are satisfied that women's ordination is appropriate, Wilson stunned the audience with his reply. "If the church decides to ordain women to

the gospel ministry," he said, "I'm convinced that it will be on the basis of something outside Scripture."

He explained that "there is a strong developing position among church leaders that the Scripture neither endorses nor forbids women's ordination."

### "Call" or human ambition?

Wilson also raised a question on one's sense of "call" to ministry. He was cordial to women who spoke of this conviction during the dialogue. But he frankly told the audience that church leaders had to weigh these claims. "The argument of a call can be deceptive and dangerous because it can also be the expression of human ambition, which may not necessarily be compatible with what the church ought to do.

"In addition to the individual's sense of call there must be confirmation by the church—the call must be recognized and endorsed," Wilson said.

### Women on women's commission

As to the composition of the women's commission Wilson noted that 22 percent of the members are women, "which is for General Conference committees a big de-

See GC PRESIDENT SPEAKS, p. 3



Noelene Johnsson

## Johnsson joins elected staff at GC

by Beverly Rumble

Noelene Johnsson has just joined a very select group—women elected to the General Conference Committee. On January 1, 1988 she assumed the position of associate director and coordinator of children's ministries for the North American Division Church Ministries Department. One of only eight women\* among a group of 122 elected GC officers, she will coordinate all activities that involve children from birth to the eighth grade.

She speaks with conviction about helping "the North American Division realize that each member of the church—from the tiniest—can make a difference, can together be a mission force." She has already begun a number of projects to help realize this goal: a Sabbath school workshop video; children's

ministries newsletter; and a coordinated curricula for all children's ministries, including Sabbath school, Vacation Bible School, and Pathfinders.

Before she became coordinator for children's ministries, Noelene served for seven years as editor of *Mission*, formerly known as the "Mission Quarterly." She says she will miss the traveling and inspiration of meeting people around the world and seeing firsthand the needs and possibilities of the world church. She spoke wistfully of several occasions when she was able to help fill special needs that she had uncovered during her visits.

Looking to the future, Noelene believes that she can help to provide much-needed emphasis to a neglected area of church out-

reach. "Children's ministries need funding, but the purse strings have been held by men, who have had other priorities. We have given only lip service to children's needs. In local churches, elders and other officers get chosen first; by the time we get to the cradle roll leader, no one is left!"

What can leaders of children's divisions accomplish? Noelene says that they can help children become friends with Jesus, and become friends with their church. With her enthusiastic leadership, no longer will children's ministries be taken for granted!

\*The other seven women are Shirley Burton, Helen C. Craig, Karen Flowers, Marion L. Hartlein, Betty Holbrook, Elizabeth Stern-dale, and Iris H. Stober.

# Bacchiocchi responds; Augsburg replies

The June-July 1987 issue of *The Adventist Woman* published a substantive review written by Daniel Augsburg of Samuele Bacchiocchi's new book, *Women in the Church*.

In a letter that appeared in the September-October issue, Bacchiocchi called the review "defamatory" and asked for the opportunity to respond in print. "If the permission is denied, I will have no other option than to respond in my book [a new printing of *Women in the Church*], not only to the review but also to your action," he said.

In response we printed our policy to incorporate material from our readers in the Letters column, if letters were no more than one to three pages double-spaced.

Bacchiocchi has responded. His letter was equivalent to 10 pages double-spaced in length. Although his submission exceeded our page limit, we have chosen to print it along with a reply solicited from Dr. Augsburg.

—The Editors

## Bacchiocchi: clarification

Dear Editor:

Thank you for granting me the opportunity to respond to Dr. Daniel Augsburg's review of my book, *Women in the Church*, which appeared in the June-July 1987 issue of *The Adventist Woman* and in a shorter form in the October 1987 issue of *Ministry*.

Personally I welcome especially the negative reviews of my books, because they alert me to possible deficiencies in my documentation or argumentation. Thus, the fact that Augsburg's review is highly critical, could in itself be a commendable factor, if its arguments were sound and based on scriptural teachings. Unfortunately, this is not the case, as I will endeavor to show in this brief response. It goes against my principles to expose publicly what I perceive to be Augsburg's faulty and unbiblical reasoning. But his decision to challenge publicly the motives and method of my research through *AW* and *Ministry*, leaves me with no other choice.

## Character defamation

An overall deplorable aspect of Augsburg's review is his attempt to invalidate the conclusions of my research by blatantly and repeatedly accusing me of having "permitted [my] own bias toward women to blind [me] to the teaching of Scriptures." To support such a character defamation he goes as far as putting in my mouth words I have never uttered: "In the presence of his charming spouse he said, 'My wife knows her place.'" Upon reading this statement my wife exclaimed, "I never heard you say that! Why should he write such a thing?" The only explanation I could think of was that Augsburg chose to discredit my character because he found it difficult to refute my arguments.

My wife can testify that I look up to her for her dedicated and effective ministry to our family. Besides being a marvelous wife and mother she manages our family finances by taking care of practically all the purchases, school billings and banking operations, something that not all "liberated" American women can freely do. This suggests that the problem is not my "bias toward women" whom I highly respect and greatly enjoy hearing speaking and preaching in church at any time, but rather Augsburg's bias against the clear scriptural teachings on the distinctive and yet complementary roles God assigned to men and women at Creation.

## Greater church roles for women

Contrary to the picture Augsburg portrays of me as an Italian chauvinist, influenced by my "own Catholic cultural background," and committed to keep women in their place at home, I believe and forcefully proclaim in my book and in my "Women's Ministry Seminar" (available also on cassettes) which I present across North America and overseas, that faithfulness to Scripture demands today more than ever before, that women be granted a greater authorized ministry with equal pay in the church.

Our study group, mostly teachers from the religion department and theological seminary of Andrews University, has clearly proposed, in a published document mailed to every member of Pioneer Memorial Church, that "women who perform specific ministries, such as visitation, counseling, Bible studies, seminar outreach coordinators, etc" should be, as Ellen White counsels, "set apart to this work by prayer and laying on of hands" (*Review and Herald*, July 9, 1985).

Thus, not only do I believe in larger paid and voluntary ministries of women in the church, but also in their official consecration by the church to such ministries. The issue is not women's ministry

or ordination, but rather faithfulness to the biblical teaching which calls for the head of a congregation to be a man (not a woman) with the tried virtue of fatherhood (not motherhood)—1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9, Num. 3:6-13; 1 Tim. 2:12-13).

## "Prophetic, not representative ministry"

Augsburger's first major criticism is levelled against my understanding of the biblical structure of the church as deriving from the family structure where the representative role of a husband/father serves as a model for the role of the church leader (priest, elder, bishop). He challenges this view by arguing that "the pastoral ministry in the New Testament is [built] on the prophetic model" according to which "the minister speaks for God and invites the people to believe the gospel and be reconciled to God . . . If, in the Old and New Testament periods, God chose to speak through women who had full status as inspired prophets, why can he not today speak through them as pastors?"

The problem with Augsburg's reasoning is twofold. First, he fails to distinguish between the church ministry of all the believers and the church office of elder or leader. Second, he fails to prove that church leadership in the New Testament is based on "the prophetic model."

**Church Ministry.** Ministry in the church is open to and expected by all believers, irrespective of gender, because the gifts of the Spirit, including that of pastoring (shepherding), "are inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he will" (1 Cor. 12:11). Note that the term *pastor* is used only once in the New Testament (Eph. 4:11) to describe, not a church office but the gift of shepherding which is given by the Spirit irrespective of gender "for the equipment of the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ" (Eph 4:12).

**Church Office.** By contrast, the church office of the leader of the congregation, which is called more than 20 times "elder" in the New Testament, contrary to what Augsburg says, is not dependent upon prophetic or charismatic gifts of the Spirit, but upon the tried virtues of fatherhood (Titus 1:6, 1 Tim. 3:1-5). The reason given by Scripture is most explicit: "for if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how can he care for God's church?" (1 Tim. 3:5).

## To lead a congregation one must demonstrate the tried virtues of fatherhood.

**Family Model.** In the New Testament not only is the church perceived as an extended spiritual family, "the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10; Eph 2:19; 1 Tim. 3:15) but also spiritual leadership in the church is assigned according to the family model (not prophetic model) to men capable of functioning as spiritual "elders" or "fathers" (1 Cor. 4:14-15; 1 Thess. 2:11) of the "household of faith." This is a major reason why the term *elder* is used more than 20 times in the New Testament to designate a church leader, namely, because the church is modelled after the extended family or household, where the "elder," usually the older father (Ex. 3:16; 12:21, 27), functioned not only as the physical father/head of the household, but also as the representative of the heavenly Father to his household.

The correlation between father/husband headship in the home and male headship in the church is clearly established in the Scripture and amply supported by Ellen White, by the *SDA Commentary*, and by Adventist history.

**A Challenge.** My challenge to Augsburg and to any pro-ordinationist is to produce at least one biblical text which indicates that headship in the church is open to any male or female who have prophetic or charismatic gifts. Unless such evidence is brought forth, my conscience remains bound to the teaching of Scripture which instructs us to respect the order of Creation (1 Tim. 2:13) by appointing only morally and spiritually qualified men to serve as representative heads of the church (1 Tim. 3:17-7, Titus 1:5-8).

## "No functional subordination"

Augsburger's second major criticism is levelled against my concept that woman was created equal in being to man but subordinate in function. The reason for his criticism of this concept is his conviction that any form of functional subordination in the church or even in the Trinity precludes equality. Thus, he challenges my reference to the example of Christ who is presented in Scripture as both

equal in being to the Father (John 1:1; 10:30; Col. 1:15-20) and subordinate in function (1 Cor. 11:3; John 14:28) saying, "he fails to notice that Paul is speaking of Christ in the Incarnation. Certainly, in His work as a human being Christ was not subordinate in function only, but also in His incarnate being."

The Scripture clearly contradicts Augsburg's reasoning both with regard to the creation of Adam and Eve and the Trinity. Regarding the latter, 1 Corinthians 15:28 unequivocally teaches that the functional subordination of the Son to the Father extends beyond the Incarnation to all eternity; "when all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things under him, that God may be everything to every one."

**Functional Subordination at Creation.** Similarly, the functional subordination of woman to man in the home and in the church, contrary to what Augsburg and pro-ordinationists maintain, derives not from the Fall but from the order and manner of creation. "For Adam was formed first, then Eve" (1 Tim. 2:13), and "For man was not made from woman, but woman from man" (1 Cor. 11:8). The order and manner of creation of Adam and Eve are seen in Scripture not as accidental or arbitrary divine acts, but as reflective of God's design for man to serve in a headship role in the home and in the church.

If man was not the head of his house before the Fall why did God call first Adam, and then Eve, to account for their transgression, even though Eve was the first to sin? (Gen. 3:9, 11). Moreover, if there were no role distinctions before the Fall, why does Scripture present Adam and not Eve as the head of fallen humanity ("in Adam all die"—1 Cor. 15:22), when Eve was the first to sin?

**Value and Function.** The problem with Augsburg and pro-ordinationists is their failure to differentiate between value and function. In the Bible, male headship relates to function, not to value. If male headship in the home and in the church meant that man was innately more valuable than woman, then the Bible would be terribly unjust. But male headship in the Bible has nothing to do with men being of greater worth than women, because they are not. Rather it has to do with the different and yet complementary functions God has assigned men and women to fulfill in the home and in the church.

## Culture and hermeneutics

Augsburger's third major criticism is my alleged failure to recognize the cultural conditioning of the Pauline statements about women. He writes: "The author argues that the Bible is free of cultural influence, and that culture plays no role in Paul's utterances about women."

The statement is inaccurate because I have never argued that. The whole Bible is an Oriental book couched in the imagines and customs of the ancient Near East. Instead, what I have argued is the necessity to distinguish between permanent biblical principles and their local cultural application. Applied to the two crucial Pauline passages (1 Tim. 2:11-15; 1 Cor. 14:33-34) a distinction must be made between Paul's appeal to the principle of "submission" and its local cultural application. The following outline might help to illustrate this point:

**Principle:** "Let a woman learn . . . with all submissiveness" (1 Tim. 2:11); Women "should be subordinate, as even the law says" (1 Cor. 14:34). The meaning: Divine revelation requires that women respect the principle of submission while learning and participating in church services.

**Application:** "Let a woman learn in silence with all submissiveness" (1 Tim. 2:11). "Women should keep silence in the churches." The meaning: The cultural application of the principle of submission in Paul's culture required that women during church services refrain from speaking, asking questions of their husband or of church officials or discussing the sermon publicly. (One must not forget that in Paul's time the sermon was not so much preached as discussed among the worshippers.) In 1 Corinthians 11:3-16 the cultural application of the principle of male headship ("the head of every woman is man"—v. 3, NIV) requires that women wear some sort of head covering during church services.

What Augsburg and pro-ordinationists fail to understand is that what is culturally conditioned in the Pauline passages is not the principle of headship/subordination but its application. In Paul's time women and students showed respect for the authority of their husband or of a teacher, by refraining from asking questions in public. It is obvious that in our times the application of the biblical principle of headship/subordination in the church requires not that women button their lips during church services but that they speak respectfully.

## Historical inaccuracies.

To support his view that "it was not until the third



Samuele Bacchiocchi

and fourth centuries that women were excluded from church leadership," Augsburg claims that "written and monumental evidence reveals that women were also given pastoral positions." The literary evidence he adduces to support such a claim is the letter Governor Pliny wrote to Emperor Trajan "about slave girls who were considered ministers" (*Ministry*, October 1987, p. 29).

**Misleading Translation.** Augsburg's use of the term *ministers* to translate the Latin *ministrae* is inaccurate and misleading, because the term generally meant "servant, attendant," and is used in Christian literature to designate "deaconess" (see *Vulgate* on Rom. 16:1). I challenge Augsburg to produce an English edition of the text in question that translates the term as "ministers."

**Patristic Witness.** The earliest Christian literature, namely, the Apostolic Fathers, the Alexandrian Fathers, the African Fathers and the third century church orders, are all consistent in excluding women from the headship role of bishop or elder of the church. The only place where women are functioning as leaders of the congregation is in apocryphal literature such as *Acts of Paul*, where Paul commissions a woman, Thekla, to be a preacher and teacher of God's word (3:41). The author's attempt to transform Paul's prohibition into a commission, represents for Tertullian (c. 160-c. 225) a proof that the document is a forgery (*De Baptismo* 17). If space permitted I could submit ample evidences attesting the exclusion of women from the headship role of churches in the earliest centuries.

The alleged monumental evidence of a catacomb painting portraying women presiding at the Lord's Supper, must be a secret painting in Augsburg's possession, because in my many visits at the catacombs first as a tourist guide and later as a student at the Pontifical Gregorian University, I do not recall ever having seen such a painting. Please let me see it.

**An Appeal.** I wish that the efforts that Augsburg and others have put forth to negate the contemporary applicability of biblical male headship to the church had been spent instead in clarifying what it means to be a head and a helper in the biblical sense. Many rightly find these terms unacceptable because they are associated with abuse of power, dominance and exploitation of women. Biblical headship, however, entails not dominance but leadership of sacrificial love. It is modeled after Christ's caring headship over the church (Eph. 5:25-27). It is the kind of headship which enhances the possibilities for the self-growth and personal fulfillment of others.

The real challenge that our Adventist church is facing today, a challenge that is largely ignored, is to help men become the kind of spiritual heads and priests God has called us to be. Both outside and inside the church more and more men are abdicating their God-given responsibility to be spiritual priests in their home—priests who lead their families into a daily commitment to God. It is not surprising that some women who have had to take over the spiritual leadership of their homes, feel entitled to function also as spiritual leaders in the church. The solution to this problem, however, must be found not in perverting God's functional role distinctions, but in helping our brothers and sisters to live up to God's expectations.

Our Adventist church must choose today between commitment to the scriptural teaching on the role distinctions established by God for harmony of our homes and churches or conformity to humanist/feminist ideologies which promote role interchangeability. If role distinction between men and women is God's command ("as even the law says"—1 Cor. 14:34), then ordination of women to the role of elder is to be excluded. We cannot have it both ways. It is my fervent hope and prayer that the Lord will give us courage to live up to our historical commitment to the authority of Scripture (*sola Scriptura*) instead of giving in to cultural pressures (*sola cultura*). To do otherwise it means to allow "the world to squeeze [us] into its mold" (Rom. 12:2 Phillips).

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Daniel Augsburger

## Augsburger: Core arguments

Dear Editor:

It would be impossible to be brief and answer every word of Dr. Bacchiocchi's letter. I shall deal with a few direct challenges and some considerations on his core arguments.

I must confess that it seems strange that a person who has written a book on women in the church has not come in contact with the evidence for their leadership in the early church.

### Missed sources in history

As a starter, Bacchiocchi should read Dorothy Irvin's article, "The Ministry of Women in the Early Church: The Archaeological Evidence," *Duke Divinity School Review* 45 (Spring 1980), pp. 77-86. He will find documentation of tomb inscriptions in which women are given titles of ecclesiastical leadership. The author describes frescoes in the catacombs in one of which a woman is ordained and in others women are officiating in liturgical vestments. Dorothy Irvin added still more evidence in her lectures at Andrews University in 1984.

Joan Morris is also very enlightening in her book

### By Bacchiocchi's definition, Paul and Jesus could not be elders.

*The Lady Was a Bishop: The Hidden History of Women With Clerical Ordination and the Jurisdiction of Bishops*, New York, 1973.

To complete the picture he should consult B.J. Brooten's *Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue*, Chico, California, 1982. Bacchiocchi must also have missed Ross S. Kraemer's lengthy bibliography and survey of research "Women Leaders in Religious Studies Review," vol. 9, No. 2 (April 1982), pp. 127-139, where much information can be found.

The story of the exclusion of women from the ministry is told by Ida Raming, *Der Ausschluss der Frau vom priesterlichen Amt...*, Cologne, 1971. Thus the neoplatonist philosopher Porphyrius' claim that the Christian churches are ruled by women is substantiated far more than could have been expected. This, of course, took place in

tightly knit Jewish or Christian communities. Customs forbade women from addressing male strangers. Thus it was quite unthinkable to send women as apostles.

### Meaning of *ministra*

To check on the meaning of *ministra* in Pliny's letter, I took time while I was at Collonges this fall quarter to check the translations available in the library of the University of Geneva. Out of the seven translations in French and German that I could obtain, only one gave the translation "deaconess." One used "cult initiate" and all the others rendered the word by "cult minister" or something equivalent.

On my return to Andrews University I also checked the two translations of Pliny's works there. Both used "deaconess." "Deaconess" is derived from Jerome's Vulgate written about three centuries later than the letter of Pliny. For that reason, many translators feel that it is anachronistic to put in the mind of a pagan Roman governor any other meaning than the one which was the common one in his time and culture. That meaning is "cult minister."

### Ordaining women to subordinate roles

Bacchiocchi complains that I do not do justice to his willingness to give women a greater role in the church and even ordain them to offices he feels can be opened to them. If he reads my review carefully he will find that close to the beginning of it I mentioned his readiness for this. In fact, his openness to ordaining women to some roles sets him apart from many others.

Of course, this stand also separates him from those who oppose giving women any greater role in the church because they fear that it would be a serious departure from what they consider the women's *mother-role*, divinely given at Creation. Unfortunately, Bacchiocchi ultimately contradicts himself here. Early in the letter above he advocates *new roles* for females. But he closes it by proclaiming that it is necessary to *maintain* role distinctions set by God in the beginning. As I tried to show in my review, the work of a Bible worker conflicts just as much with the work of a mother as that of a minister. Clearly, restricting women to *subordinate* roles in the church does not take care of that problem.

### For fathers only?

Nonetheless, Bacchiocchi's willingness to ordain women to non-leadership roles proves that I was right in centering my criticisms around his view of ministry itself. His statement that the qualification of the leader of the congregation "is not dependent upon prophetic or charismatic gifts of the Spirit but upon the tried virtues of fatherhood" troubles me deeply.

First, if we used his method of singling out one trait repeated regularly in the qualifications of the elders, we could defend just as well the idea that what qualifies the elder is that he is *not a drunkard*.

Secondly, and more disturbing, by Bacchiocchi's criterion neither Jesus nor Paul were qualified to be elders. Is this not a little too exclusive?

An exegesis that leads to an absurd conclusion cannot be a correct exegesis! Besides, if the capacity to raise a family and manage a household is so

primordial! then a multitude of women are highly qualified!

### Leadership by gender—or gift?

Bacchiocchi attempts to distinguish between "church ministry" open to all irrespective of gender, and "church office" which he restricts to those who possess "the virtues of fatherhood."

As we all know, in Ephesians 5 Paul teaches clearly that *Christ* is the husband of the church. Hence, He is the father of the church family. His *representative* in the church is the Holy Spirit (John 16:12-15) who distributes gifts for the building up of the body of Christ (Eph. 4:12).

These gifts include administration (1 Cor. 12:28), and leadership (Rom. 12:8). The capacity for church administration and leadership is just as much a spiritual gift as preaching, teaching, or evangelism. It is therefore "charismatic" in the proper meaning of the word.

### Groundless distinction

Paul himself provides the proof that this distinction between "church ministry" and "church office" is groundless. He states in 1 Tim. 5:11 that "the elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching." Some elders obviously were preachers and teachers; some preachers and teachers were elders.

Church leadership does not belong to a different *class of office* than preaching or teaching. If preaching or teaching is opened to all, irrespective of gender as Bacchiocchi himself asserts, then the same applies to the position of elder.

### Defamatory review?

I was extremely surprised at Bacchiocchi's accusation that I was defaming his character to try to win the argument and had invented the sentence "My wife knows her place" for that very purpose.

First, let me say that I remember vividly the place (in the opening of his front door), and the time (as I was about to leave after he had graciously given me a copy of his book and he had said he would vote with both hands for the ordination of deaconesses).

What must not be forgotten, however, is that I wrote that casually as an illustration of his conservative attitude. I did not suggest that this made him a bad husband or father. He is the one who gave that interpretation! Likewise, since he is concerned with accuracy, I want him to know that there are only *two* instances, not "repeated" accusations of cultural bias in the review. (The one in the title was supplied by the editors.)

What amazes me is that Bacchiocchi does not seem to have paid any attention to them when they appeared in my critique of his original book manuscript which I submitted at his request about one year ago. He even *thanked* me for my observations in the Preface of his first edition of *Women in the Church*. What shall I believe? That Preface or this letter to the editor?

All this is secondary. What is significant is that he explodes at the thought that he said "My wife knows her place!" He feels that it has an inescap-

## GC President speaks

### Continued from front page

parture from tradition," and by contrast to the usual, a "healthy mix."

Describing how the delegates were appointed Wilson said that division presidents were strongly urged to have at least one woman among their four or five delegates. "And they said, 'If you would give us 18 delegates like you've given North America we could do that, but with only three or four delegates in all, we don't think we could get it through our division committees.'" In spite of that at least five overseas divisions did appoint women.

"I realize," Wilson said, "that it looks very much like a man's world. However, it is changing, and I would have to tell you that there are many men who speak eloquently and persuasively on this subject."

### A question for Mrs. Wilson

The final question of the day was directed to Mrs. Wilson and asked how she might feel if her husband were reelected as GC president in 1990, especially in light of a serious health problem she experienced during the 1986 Annual Council in Rio de Janeiro.

Although Mrs. Wilson clearly had not expected to join in the public discussion, she warmly thanked all those who had prayed for her recovery at Rio. She explained that an unforeseen duplication of medication had actually caused the emergency.

As for her husband's possible reelection, she stressed she could be happy either way. "But as long as a person can fulfill the work that the Lord wants him to do, no matter how old he is, I believe he should carry on."

able connotation of inferiority, perhaps even contempt. Notice that he does not distinguish between essence and function here. He believes that it suggests that he does not recognize her marvelous capacities, and he calls that defamation.

### Objects or Individuals?

Bacchiocchi's reaction has helped me understand my own better. For the same reason I protest loudly when people assert that "Women must know their place" in the church. That women

### He sees women as objects for special functions—not as individuals with potential.

must not aspire to pastoral or leadership positions.

I react violently because I believe that it downgrades women, regardless of whatever may be said of a distinction between essence and function. It suggests that God does not truly recognize their talents and capacities. That in the church He looks at them as objects made for a specific function rather than as individuals, each with a unique potential.

I call that defamation. It is defamation of God! I do not think that Paul is uttering a divine No to women acceding to positions of leadership. God Himself called them at times to leadership in political and religious realms.

Our pioneers did not feel that faithfulness to the written Word obligated them to tolerate slavery, although many Christians of their time did, and split their churches over the issue. Our founders believed that the letter of Scripture must always be read *in the light of God's purpose at Creation and the thrust of the Gospel*. Following this principle they faced questions on slavery, the state of the dead, and the perpetuity of the Law.

### Genesis misinterpreted

It is impossible to read the Bible without presuppositions. What is important is to have the right presuppositions! Bacchiocchi's error comes from the fact that he does not take seriously Genesis 3 where the Word teaches clearly that female subordination came not at creation but *after* sin.

I sincerely respect his desire to be faithful to Scripture, but until he revises that presupposition he will be unable to distinguish between what is cultural and what is God's will as far as the Bible's view on women in concerned.

Daniel Augsburger  
Professor of Historical Theology  
SDA Theological Seminary  
Berrien Springs, Michigan

## AAW dues now \$15

Annual dues for membership in the national organization of the Association of Adventist Women have gone up to \$15, according to Nancy Marter, AAW president.

"Our organization is stretching in many directions—and the extra \$5 per member will help us meet these challenges," Marter stated.

Membership dues cover the cost of six issues of the *Adventist Woman* and help fund such national projects as the Women of the Year Awards.

Local dues are set by individual chapters.

### HOW TO SUBSCRIBE

The Association of Adventist Women is a national organization that sponsors local chapters. Its newsletter, *The Adventist Woman*, is published six times per year.

I am enclosing \$15 to subscribe to *The Adventist Woman*.

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## Presidential Communique

# March 18-27: A call to prayer

by Nancy Marter

Hopefully you are aware that the Association of Adventist Women strongly encourages building up and affirming Adventist women—all of them. Everywhere. We believe that when we develop a deeper sense of self-worth as God's children we also receive empowerment to utilize the gifts we have been given to God's glory.

Frequently we hear of concern regarding the positive attitude AAW takes toward ordaining women to ministry, especially since ordination affects a relatively small number of women. Or does it?

It seems clear to us that policies and attitudes that prevent one group of Adventist women from following the call they feel God has given them actually displays a restricting mind-set toward all Adventist women, even if most of us have no desire to become ordained ministers. The point is that what *helps* one helps us all. And what *hurts* or prevents one of us from realizing the potential placed in her by God, harms us all.

Change is hard for human beings to embrace graciously—even when we acknowledge that long-range benefits far outweigh potential pitfalls. Even when there is an obvious *need* for new approaches to address changed circumstances. By nature we tend to dig in our heels to retain the familiar.

This is not new. Accepting Gentiles into the church body was unthinkable to the Christian Jews of Paul's time. But the obvious outpouring of God's Spirit upon Jew and Gentile alike, and the persistent, inspired leadership of Peter and Paul eventually won the day.

Over the centuries other barriers mentioned by Paul have fallen. One by one estranged groups on the other side of the "dividing wall" have taken their place within the church, growing into the oneness provided by Christ's death on the cross. The only hold-out remaining in Paul's statement of needed unity in Galatians 3 is equal footing for male and female.

We often mourn the delay in our Lord's return. But, as others have already suggested, He may be waiting for hostility, prejudice, stereotyping, male dominance, female subordination, and the resulting limitation of function and talents to vanish in Christ.

As long as we remain "superior" to any person or group—whether it is in status or function—the self-forgetting love of Christ has not truly found a place in our hearts.

From March 24-27 the Commission on the Role of Women in the Church, which has been charged with studying ordination for Adventist women, will meet in Washington, D.C.

Following the leadership of the Michiana AAW Chapter we invite each of you to make an intensive prayer commitment for Friday morning, March 18, from 7 to 8 a.m. (EST). Then, can the following days through March 27 become our special Week of Prayer? Will you join me daily, even hourly, to pray that God's unifying Spirit may work in a powerful way within the commission?

May the Spirit also find all of us so open to His leading that the fullness of His will for us personally and collectively may become a reality.



## From the Pulpit

# Power and intimacy

by Juanita Mayer

Violence and abuse. They're not pretty words in anyone's language. yet these are facts of everyday life that surround us all and can create misunderstanding, mistrust, deception, and repression, distorting our needs for intimacy.

Victims of violence and abuse develop behavior patterns characterized by questions about submission and the fear of giving up. These folks are often filled with deep anger, terrible confusion, and anxieties fed by questions like "Where was God when I was being hurt?"

I have seen a look of panic in their eyes when someone comes close to touch them. I have witnessed tears of self-judgement shed by a victim who struggles with a decision not to honor abusive parents. Sometimes our church family dismisses the cry for help from older people, from those who are crippled or disabled, and from the spouse whose love is thrown against the wall and who is raped into total submission. The majority of these incidents are not reported to authorities or to pastors for fear of retributive abuse and/or rejection from family and friends.

From my pastoral experience I've come to recognize that the religious community is affected as much, if not more, with this struggle of power over intimacy. Unfortunately, the church has neglected this problem by imitating an ostrich. It seems ignorant of the fact that thousands of adults are attempting to live with deep pain, built-up bitterness, shame, guilt, and issues of trusting significant others. It refuses to see the children in our midst who are currently being abused and will grow up with similar emotional and physical scars.

The time has come for religious leaders and laity alike to equip themselves with the understanding and the skills needed to minister to these wounded ones. My fear is that if we do not address the needs of both the abused and the abuser, we will miss ministering to the deeper spiritual pain caused by violence, and therefore miss the fullest expression of our ministerial calling—the proclamation of the healing power of our Great Protector, God Himself.

We are called to hear the silent, raging screams of those who need to be loved in a healing, intimate way. We must learn to perceive their confused anger as a reaching out after God, trying to experience Him as "Protector" rather than "Abuser."

I challenge us all to move away from the ostrich approach and to live with our eyes wide open. We need to put our own comfort on the line and walk with others—meeting the violence, shame, guilt, and bitterness with them. Only then do we gain the right to invite those in pain to move into God's open protective strength and affirmation.

Power within intimacy. A definite possibility! It begins in an open recognition that abuse is occurring on a daily basis. We must combine that recognition with the knowledge that all of us, and certainly we who are pastoral caregivers, have a moral responsibility to bring healing to the abused. Together let us journey on the pathways of support and growth so generously provided by our Great Protector.

Juanita Mayer is associate chaplain at Shady Grove Adventist Hospital, Rockville, Maryland.

## People and Places



Modupe Folasade Adeogun

### Nigerian official

A Seventh-day Adventist woman has been appointed Commissioner for Information of Lagos State, Nigeria. The appointment gives her a seat on the highest policy-making body of the premier state of Africa's most populous country. Mrs. Modupe Folasade Adeogun will direct Social Development and Youth and Sports.

Known to her associates as "Sade," Mrs. Adeogun is still in her early forties and has had a distinguished career in journalism. During the sixties she worked as the London correspondent for Nigeria's top national newspaper, the *Daily Times*. In other overseas appointments she has worked in Albany, New York; and Winnipeg, Canada. Back home in Lagos she became widely known as executive editor of the paper. She also introduced its "Consumer Affairs" page.

"Sade Adeogun maintains and upholds Adventist Christian principles in her public and private life," says Jack Mahon, communication director for the Africa-Indian Ocean Division. "Shining for the Lord and serving her constituency are the priorities of this distinguished and dynamic woman."



Opal Lebo

### Trendsetter Award

In Berks County, Pennsylvania, the YWCA "Trendsetter Program" named Opal Lebo as one of the outstanding women in the county. Mrs. Lebo, R.N., M.S., is vice president of patient services for the Reading Rehabilitation Hospital.

"Opal has been a positive role model by her progressiveness in her field and her leadership in implementing change. More importantly, she implements by leading the way and not by pushing others from a distance," states Hospital President Landon Kite, who nominated Mrs. Lebo for the honor.

In addition to being responsible for 210 staff in seven departments and service areas, Mrs. Lebo is a member of the hospital's executive council. She participates in overall hospital planning and is responsible for development, administration, and compliance with budgets, performance standards, quality assurance, education and training, and personnel management.

Mrs. Lebo is active in her community as a member of the Reading Area Community College Advisory Board, and president of the Reading Junior Academy Home and School Association.



Doris Pierce

### R&H promotion

In October, Doris Pierce was named to the newly created position of assistant to the president of the Review and Herald Publishing Association. Since 1983 she had worked with the president, Harold Otis, Jr., as an administrative assistant.

Mrs. Pierce joined the publishing house staff after 30 years in management at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. As chief of the Employee Relations Office there she directed and promoted programs and seminars to establish good employee-supervisor relationships. She was also responsible for the library's successful Incentive Awards program which boosted work productivity and employee morale.

### Next AAW Conference

Portland, Oregon will be the site for the sixth annual conference of the Association of Adventist Women.

The conference will meet over labor Day weekend, September 2-5, 1988.

"The Adventist Woman and Health: The Search for Balance," has been set as the conference theme.

Watch for further details in the next issues of the *Adventist Woman*.

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Copy deadline for the next issue of *The Adventist Woman* is April 13.

Mail copy at least 5 days in advance of the deadline. The editor schedules the Friday and Sunday afterward to put material together.

Send to Beverly K. Habada, Editor, *The Adventist Woman*, Box 3884, Langley Park, MD 20787.

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