

the Adventist Woman

Volume 7, No. 3

Publication of the Association of Adventist Women

June-July 1988

NAD calls for end to discriminatory policies affecting Adventist women in gospel ministry

In the midst of a long agenda of routine business, North American Division officers and union presidents signalled strong dissatisfaction with at least one item—discriminatory policies affecting women in ministry.

Meeting in Loma Linda, California, May 10-11, the leaders indicated by a unanimous vote their objection to current discrepancies in how the Seventh-day Adventist Church treats men and women carrying ministerial responsibilities who have the same training and qualifications.

One week later, on May 18, the Potomac Conference (which includes territory in Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia)

echoed the division's stand by taking an action of its own. Potomac's action comes two years after Southeastern California Conference constituents voted to cease discriminating against women in ministry.

Unordained Adventist males ("licensed ministers") are permitted in North America to baptize and marry. But unordained females ("commissioned ministers") are forbidden to do so. Still another discrepancy in the policy permits conferences to pay women ministers less than men.

The intent of the NAD and Potomac Conference actions is to end such practices. The wording of these actions is as follows:

North American Division: Commissioned Minister And Licensed Minister—Discrepancies

There are discrepancies between the responsibilities of and remuneration of licensed ministers and commissioned ministers who are associates in pastoral care. Reportedly the NAD is the only division that permits the unordained minister to perform the essential functions of ministry. However, the same privileges have not been accorded to women.

Voted, To request the General Conference Officers to give study to permitting associates

in pastoral care, who meet the requirements prescribed by policy, to exercise the same privileges that the licensed ministers have in North America.

Potomac Conference

Voted: Whereas we believe it neither right nor expedient for the Seventh-day Adventist Church to continue denying anyone full participation in ministry simply on the basis of gender, it shall henceforth be the practice of this conference to give women and men in ministry the same rights and privileges in regard to officiating at baptisms and weddings.

Now in Far East

Retired nurse bikes 9000 miles on global trek

Biking around the world, Charlotte Hamlin began pedalling 2,200 miles through Malaysia, China, and Japan, on the tail-end of the Asian leg of her tour about June 13.

The spunky 69-year old retired nursing instructor from Berrien Springs, Michigan, expects to end her 9,000 mile global trek with a splash. She will swim across Okanagan Lake near Kelowna, British Columbia, in September.

She began her journey in 1987 with a 65-day, 2500 mile trek across the United States from Oceanside, California, to Folly Beach, South Carolina. In September and October she made the second leg of her trip through Europe in 56 days, wending her way through Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, Switzerland, making her final stop in Otranto in the heel of Italy.

Before starting her Asian adventure in March, 1988, Hamlin told NBC and ABC television reporters in South Bend, Indiana, that "My main purpose is to help people understand that they can stay productive and active in their older years. By living good quality lifestyles many can prevent degenerative diseases." To share her point of view Charlotte developed 16 pamphlets entitled Expressway to Health which she distributes as she travels.

Cartoons solicited

With this issue the Adventist Woman publishes its first cartoon. Share your reactions with the editor. Send your suggestions for future cartoons (in good taste.) If you are a cartoonist yourself, query us with some sample sketches.



A curious group of Moslem onlookers surround Charlotte Hamlin as she stops for a rest on the road to the Adventist Seminary in Sheikhpora, Pakistan, where she addressed a 400-member student body about good health. The temperature was 95° F.

After biking from Patras to Athens, Greece, and making a 200-mile loop through Israel, Hamlin flew to Karachi, Pakistan, for a 294-mile jaunt in Lahore. Flying on to Delhi, India, she biked 120 miles to Agra, and another 350 to Gorakhpur, arriving on April 16. From April 29 to May 13 she worked her way through Nepal and Bangladesh.

A van accompanied her while she traveled through the United States and Europe, but now she is on her own, sleeping in hotels and pedalling her 15-speed bike only on main roads. She carries 35 pounds of gear on her back, and as she told a reporter in Jerusalem, she makes it a point to eat "brown rice, brown bread, and brown spaghetti."

The last leg of her journey will be a piece of cake. For relaxation she will climb Mt. Fuji in Japan, then bike about 580 miles in Guam, Hawaii, and Canada. After swimming across Lake Okanagan she plans to walk the last half-mile to Kelowna General Hospital on September 27 where she was born 70 years ago to the day.

Discount registration ends August 8

West coast hospital site for AAW conference on health

If AAW's mind is the publication of *The Adventist Woman* then its body is the annual conference. In these meetings buzz words like "networking" take on flesh and blood. Adventist women who otherwise would never meet make lasting friendships and share common concerns.

This year AAW moves to a new region of the country—the Pacific Northwest—for its sixth annual conference, Labor Day Weekend, September 2-5. With the theme, "The Adventist Woman and Health: The Search For Balance," the convention will meet, appropriately, at the Portland Adventist Medical Center in Portland, Oregon. The deadline for early registration (and a nice discount on the fee) is August 8.

Array of workshops

At the heart of the conference are nine workshops. To name a few: "Self-esteem, Dependency, and Guilt," led by Dr. Wilma Hepker of Walla Walla College; "Fighting Back at Fatigue," by Marie Banfe; "Dealing with Child Abuse," with Pastor Larry Combs, panel coordinator; "Special Concerns in Women's Health," by Una Jean Underwood, M.D.

But if this conference is like all the previous ones, music, drama, stories, discussion, and business will be lively and invigorating.

Other special events include the Women of the Year Awards Banquet, a highlight of each conference, on Sunday evening, September 4, and women-led Sabbath worship services. Ruth Jacobson, director of Women's Ministries for the Oregon Conference, will make a presentation in Sabbath school. Dr. Beatrice Neal, a member of the religion faculty at Union College, will speak for church.

To register:

6th Annual Conference, "The Adventist Woman and Health: The Search for Balance," September 2-5, Portland Adventist Medical Center, Portland, Oregon. *Discount registration fee if postmarked by August 8:* AAW members, \$35; nonmembers, \$55. *After August 8:* AAW members, \$45; nonmembers, \$65. Women of the Year Banquet tickets only (for Sunday evening, September 4) \$15. Send to AAW, 7710 Carroll Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912.

AAW can also supply housing information for those coming from out of town.

Reminder:

Woman of the Year nominations are due by July 15. For full information write immediately to Peggy Harris, Woman of the Year, Association of Adventist Women, P.O. Box 3884, Langley Park, MD. 20787.

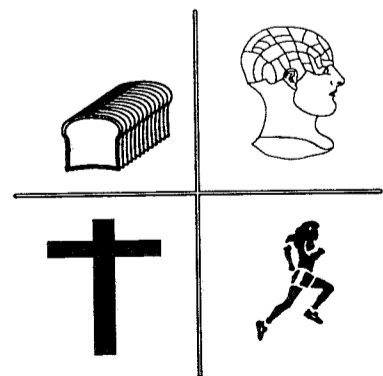
The Adventist Woman and Health: The Search for Balance

Sixth National Conference
Association of Adventist Women
September 2-5, 1988
Portland Adventist Medical Center

Come and Bring a Friend!



Information/Registration:
AAW
7710 Carroll Ave.
Takoma Park, MD 20912





Presidential Communique

Included!

by Nancy Marter

Recently I enjoyed a conversation with one of our North American Division officers who wanted to learn more about the Association of Adventist Women. I shared what I consider to be our three most important priorities:

1. Affirming and building up the God-given talents of women in the church.
2. Developing a communication network among women.
3. Promoting constructive change within the church that will enable women to be full and equal participants in the gospel commission.

I had no more gotten the words out of my mouth when my host excitedly responded: "That's it! That first one! I certainly agree with that." He shared with me at length his strong belief in the validity of spiritual gifts based on his pastoral experience—both as presented in the New Testament and as he personally encountered them in the lives of his church members. In his view, these gifts equip the followers of Christ, both male and female, in every age, to effectively share the Good News. Since spiritual gifts are bestowed where the Spirit chooses, my host felt this provided biblical support for the church to officially recognize the presence of these gifts without regard to gender.

Mulling over his enthusiastic words later on I suddenly remembered a sermon I heard in the Takoma Park church long ago. I was a teenager. Although I cannot remember the preacher's name I still call up the sense of joyful understanding I felt that day. He read from the Bible and applied it so each person could see that God had given her or him a gift to use. Somehow, before that day, although no one had actually made a differentiation, I had thought that all the gifts were "male" gifts—like pastors and evangelists. A light came on. I was included!

Busy years passed and my understanding broadened. In the early 1980s when we began hearing more discussion of each church member as a minister, the concept fit with the sermon.

Now we reinforce this idea for our children in Vacation Bible School with William and Gloria Gaither's joyous song, "I Am a Promise." The words emphasize, "I can go anywhere that He wants me to go. I can be anything that He wants me to be. I promise to be anything God wants me to be!"

We open wonderful possibilities to children. Shouldn't we expect these possibilities for ourselves? It's not just a select few upon whom God's Spirit bestows gifts—but to each humble child of God who opens his or her heart.

I don't remember in which grade we, both boys and girls, first memorized Matthew 28:19,20: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

This is our directive, without a gender word in sight.



From the Pulpit

Where do I turn now?

by Delcy Kuhlman

"Why? Oh God, where do I turn now?" Like hot rocks from a volcano the questions spew forth, erupting with devastating force from broken hearts, spilling over me, the chaplain. Quietly I tried to bring comfort in the absence of concrete answers.

The grieving ones depart—but I am left wondering. Is there any way to share a quiet, sustaining trust that can begin to mend the brokenness? Then unexpectedly I face a loss of my own. A teacher, mentor, counselor, and friend is dead from a devastating illness.

The loss stuns me. My friend had demonstrated faith in me as a person and as a woman in ministry; now she will never again be there to encourage in a moment of need. I discover the wrenching pain as rocks break loose and spew forth from my own soul. "Why? Oh, God, where do I turn now?" My quiet, sustaining trust has taken leave. Hope, peace, strength are gone.

Asaph, the upright, gentle priest at the temple, faced these questions in his own ministry. In Psalm 73 he shares his struggle, his search for meaning.

He had a quiet trust: "Surely God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart." But he also stumbled in the face of senseless discrepancies. "But as for me... I had nearly lost my foothold. For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. They have no struggles; their bodies are healthy and strong. They are free from the burdens common to man."

His volcano spews forth doubts and accusations. "Surely in vain have I kept my heart pure; in vain have I washed my hands in innocence. All day long I have been plagued; I have been punished every morning... When I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me..."

Hope began to creep into my heart as I realized that Asaph, the upright servant of God, felt the same kind of feelings that were nearly overwhelming me. I plunged further into Psalm 73. "It was oppressive to me till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny" (emphasis added). As Asaph entered the very presence of God, he began to see the happenings around him in the light of eternity. He recognized that the mercy and justice of God will ultimately prevail. Quiet trust once again filled his heart. God restored hope and peace and gently gave Asaph an insight into his own personhood.

He had been consumed with his feelings of pain, rejection, and loss. Now he realized that "When my heart was grieved and my spirit embittered, I was senseless and ignorant; I was a brute beast before you." When he was filled with doubt and unanswerable questions, his mind was benumbed and his ministry impaired. Only as he turned from his distress and took those steps to the sanctuary to meet God did he also begin to know himself.

In that moment he recognized his true need. It was not for logical, rational, concrete answers, but for insights, strength, and the healing that come in the presence of God. He began to realize that "I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand. You guide me with your counsel... Whom have I in heaven but you? And being with you, I desire nothing on earth."

Where do I turn now? I cannot follow Asaph into the sanctuary filled with the shekinah glory of God. But I can go to a quiet corner or to the stump in the woods. Just as surely as Asaph was held by his right hand, so I find God's arms are outstretched to me. In my loss I can now say with Asaph, "My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever." The volcano is quiet. I have known the healing touch of God. "I have made the Sovereign Lord my refuge."

*All texts are quoted from Psalm 73, New International Version.

Delcy Kuhlman has completed an M.Div degree and Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) training. She lives in Berrien Springs, Michigan.

Letters

It's time for recognition

Dear Editor

I am sending \$5 more for my membership fee. In January I sent \$10 but I notice you have raised the dues. My finances and energy are limited but I want to help all I can. I will be 83 years old in September. However, I feel it is time for the women in the church to have more recognition and, of course, that brings more responsibility—but they are up to that.

May God bless your work. I know many women are back of you.

Mrs. Mildred E. Osgood
Creswell, Oregon

Children's ministries

Dear Editor:

In your May issue Delores Adams raised the question of children's ministries being a low priority in the church.

This has been true in the past, but, believe it or not, things are changing!

I, too, am happy that Noelene Johnson was chosen to head up this ministry at the division level. At the General Conference level we have Helen Craig, who is also doing a superb job. These women were both voted in by—guess who—men.

Many conferences, and one NAD union, now have full-time children's ministries coordinators. I realize that smaller conferences never have budget money to stretch to full-time CM leaders.

I would like to propose a possible solution. We need more full-time CM leaders at the union level, like Barbara Manspeaker of the Columbia Union, who could spend time in several small conferences coordinating a well-rounded program. This would solve the problem of just a "token" title to a man who already has two or three other jobs he would like to be rid of.

From my view, the Church Ministries concept has helped rather than hindered children's ministries.

I would also say that volunteers at the church level are the backbone of Church Ministries. I worked at that level for many years with no pay, taking care of my own expenses because of my interest in working with children. We surely could not operate if it were not for all the women—and a few men—who work so faithfully. By the way, we could use more men.

Marjorie Snyder
Children's Ministries Coordinator
Michigan Conference
Lansing, Michigan

Imagined benefits of ordination

Dear Editor:

Thanks for including me on your mailing list. On reading your May 1988 issue I could not help but observe two things which suggest the possibility that women in our church are probably frustrating their opportunities for greater participation and achievement in the mission and structure of the church by using too much energy on a bottleneck: ordination.

The report on the commission meeting mentions that a survey by Arlene Taylor shows that ordination is No. 8 of women's concerns. Surely there is a broader basis for

change if women would focus on issues that are more meaningful to them and could yield a greater consensus regarding feasibility, practicality, and need (cf. Point II of Nancy Marter's presidential communique.)

Secondly, Marter's Point III is very true and needs to be facilitated and advanced, but women don't need ordination for the involvement of the broad range of their gifts in the church. I recognize that ordination is a rite of passage and as such is an attractive factor; but still, much more could be done to place women in service without it.

Perhaps a review of Taylor's research could lead the women to reorder their own priorities and begin to achieve some movement toward significant greater participation than the imagined benefits of ordination per se.

Victor S. Griffiths, Editor
The Journal of Adventist Education

AAW agrees with you that the church should employ women in leadership roles where ordination is not required. In fact, the 1985 Women's Commission recommended that such affirmative action be undertaken. But as our General Conference president recently acknowledged (see AW, March 1988) progress is dismal. Very few women are now department leaders, treasurers, or secretaries of conferences or unions.

The fact remains that, outside of education and medical institutions, ordained ministers are the group to which church leaders most often turn to find these kinds of leaders.

But ordination is much more than jobs. Ordination is the church's way of recognizing and endorsing spiritual gifts, and empowering individuals to use these gifts in specific ways. When individuals are denied this endorsement on the basis of gender (color, ethnic origin, etc.) there is a problem. Only God can change hearts, but we believe the church will be moving in the right direction when it changes this policy.

Call vs. ambition

Dear Editor:

As I read the March issue of *The Adventist Woman* I was saddened that this nightmare continues amongst God's people—the categorizing of people by externals, i.e., sex. In Samuel Bacchiocchi's letter this is so obvious. Every Scripture he used could be shown to refer to females as well as males, but it would take too long to delve into that here. I really appreciated what Daniel Augsburg had to say. Our church should lead the world in fair treatment of people who are often oppressed by more powerful groups.

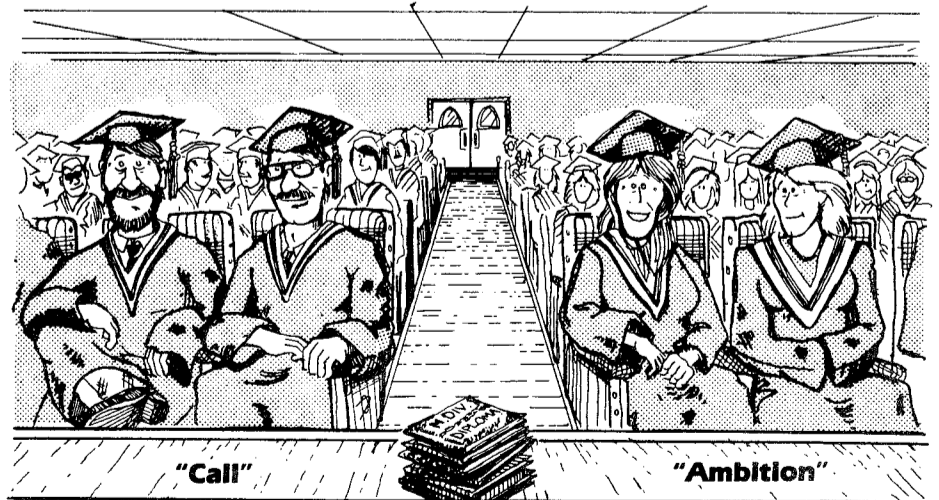
Also, it seemed incongruous for a General Conference president to imply that women who feel God is calling them are expressing "human ambition."

Studies clearly show that males by nature of their upbringing and our culture are far more apt to be victims of "human ambition" than females, so why the reference to this at all?

To state that God never calls unless it is confirmed by the church implies that if it is not confirmed by our church no call from God exists.

Una Jean Underwood, M.D.
Buffalo, New York

1988 Graduation—SDA Theological Seminary



"Call"

"Ambition"

by Andrew Demsky



Kathryn Sieberman has retired from Hinsdale Adventist Hospital in Illinois after 31 years of service.

The story of Kathryn Sieberman

From switchboard operator to vice president

From switchboard operator to vice president. In 31 years Kathryn Sieberman has learned Hinsdale Sanitarium inside out, improved it—and imbued it—with her service. As current administrator Ken Bauer says, Sieberman has been the “spirit of Hinsdale.”

It is no surprise to those on the eleven-to-seven shift to find her walking the halls at 5 o'clock in the morning making sure everything is in order, and looking out for “the little things.” Sieberman explains such vigilance saying, “Many patients are in the hospital for the first time. Some are frightened; others concerned, anxious. They need someone to listen to them and maybe solve a few details of their environment that would make them more comfortable while they're here.

“Health-care knowledge is important,” Sieberman adds, “but not nearly as important as those human qualities that make people know you care about them. Many times

it's impossible to change the outcome for patients, but how you support them during the process is very, very important.”

In 1963, Mardian Blair, Hinsdale Sanitarium and Hospital administrator, named Sieberman an administrative secretary and increased her work load. In 1970 Bill Wilson promoted her to assistant administrator, equivalent of a vice president. Wilson remembers, “Mardian Blair and I always called Kathryn our ‘secret weapon.’ She could get next to people who had problems and make things better somehow. When Kathryn was around you knew everything was going to be all right.”

Sieberman played an important role in creating the Hinsdale Family Practice Residency. In addition to helping build the residency in 1975, she actively recruited residents. Most of them know her affectionately as “Aunt Kate.” She has encouraged many

of these residents to become overseas missionaries.

At their graduation in 1985, residents purchased an airplane ticket to the Far East for her. She used the ticket to visit many former residents—traveling from Hong Kong, Okinawa, and Guam to Singapore and Hawaii.

Aside from her role at the hospital and her extensive involvement in the community, Sieberman has been active in her local church. In 1977 she became the first woman ordained as an elder in the Lake Union Conference.

Sieberman plans to retire in North Carolina where she will continue in the caring business, looking out for an elderly aunt and uncle.

Andrew Demsky is editor of corporate communication for the Adventist Health System/North, Eastern, and Middle America.

Theological analysis

Why “special ordination” for women a bad idea

by Fritz Guy

Opponents of the full participation of women in Adventism propose that the church should ordain women to a “special” ministry¹—that is, a ministry different from (and less than) the ministry to which men are ordained. This proposal seems to try to do two things at the same time: (1) take seriously Ellen White's recommendation² that women should be ordained, and (2) maintain the traditional male “headship” of the church and domination of its gospel ministry.

But the logic of this proposal uses the common fallacy of non sequitur—the mistake of arguing from an accepted fact to an unwarranted conclusion. Since women are different from men (an obvious fact that no one denies), it is claimed that the ministry and ordination of women should be different from that of men (a conclusion that makes sense only if one is already committed to it on quite different grounds, such as the necessity of male domination.

Logical fallacy

The fallacious logic becomes obvious in the light of a couple of parallel examples. On the one hand, would anyone seriously

argue that because women are different from men, women who graduate from colleges and universities should receive “special” baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral degrees that are different from those conferred on men? Or that women who are physicians should be given a “special” license to practice medicine?

And on the other hand, would anyone seriously argue that because blacks and Hispanics are different from whites and Anglos, they should be ordained to “special” kinds of black and Hispanic ministry?

Is “special” practical?

It doesn't take any great gift of insight to recognize that in such cases “special” would be a euphemism for “second class,” and would be a flagrant denial of the fundamental human equality established at creation and affirmed by the gospel.

And what would be the functional significance of a “special” ordination to a “special” ministry? Would women be authorized to teach women (and perhaps children) but not men? To baptize women and children but not men? To conduct communion services for

all-female congregations? To do premarital counseling for women but not men? (Obviously women could not conduct weddings, which by definition involve men.)

If the ordination and ministry of women are gender-specific (that is, inherently limited by the fact that they are women), then the ordination and ministry of men are similarly gender-specific (and limited). If there should be a “special” ordination for women, there should be an equally “special” ordination for men. (Then who would conduct weddings?)

More than a decade ago Raoul Dederen suggested that the church could, and perhaps should, recognize (by ordination) different kinds of ministry—health care, for example, and education and administration, as well as the more traditional pastoral and evangelistic service. This suggestion is interesting for several reasons, and it deserves consideration on its merits. But a difference in ministry (and hence ordination) would be defined by a difference in the kind of work involved. Gender is neither a qualification nor disqualification.

Bad Idea

The proposal for a “special ordination” to a “special ministry” looks suspiciously like an attempt to establish a second-class ministry for women in order to maintain a male monopoly of ministerial leadership. Whatev-

er the motivation (or rationalization), the idea is a bad one for at least two reasons.

In the first place, it authorizes ministerial service not on the basis of calling or giftedness, but on the basis of gender. As Charles E. Bradford, president of the North American Division of the General Conference, observed in his statement to the NAD members of the recent Commission on Women in Ministry, “it is simply unacceptable to assume that women, because of their sex, are incapable of being empowered for full participation in ministry.”

In the second place, the proposal fails to recognize the urgent need for one complete, gender-inclusive Adventist ministry in which the gifts of women and men combine to do the work that needs to be done.

It is time for Seventh-Day Adventists to “put women in their place” once and for all—that is, put them right alongside their male colleagues in fully ordained gospel ministry in, to, and for the church. In the long run, nothing else will work, because nothing else is theologically valid or morally right.

¹ See “GC Commission Puts Women's Ordination on Hold Again,” *The Adventist Woman*, May 1988, p. 3.

² Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, February 9, 1895.

³ See Raoul Dederen, “A Theology of Ordination,” *Ministry*, February 1978, supplement, p. 24M.

Dr. Fritz Guy is an associate pastor at the Loma Linda University Church, and a lecturer in theology at Loma Linda University.

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Copy deadline for the next issue of *The Adventist Woman* is July 21.

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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Pastor's wife gains team-ministry skills at AUC

by Ruth Brand

Brenda Johnson used to wonder how she could serve the Lord, earn some money through a career of her own, and continue her responsibilities as a minister's wife and the mother of two children. She found the answer to those questions when she entered the Adult Degree Program at Atlantic Union College (AUC) in January 1984.

Brenda became a born-again Christian in 1970 through Campus Crusades for Christ. They taught her how to share her faith. One of the first people she led to Christ was Phil Johnson, a man destined to become her husband. Together they struggled with doctrine for three years. In 1974 they met Jack Baker, a literature evangelist in Maine. Jack clarified many things for them and almost immediately they joined the Adventist Church. Phil felt called to become a minister. Brenda wondered how she could effectively blend her talents and interests into a team ministry with her husband.

Unique program

She investigated the Personal Ministries program at AUC, which trains men and women to become professional Bible instructors. Under the direction of Elder M. E. Kidder since 1975, the program currently stands as the only four-year training program for Bible workers in the denomination.*

The emphasis, says Brenda, is on professional. Studying with theologians and pastors in AUC's religion department, Brenda wrote papers and delivered sermons. She explored the mysteries of homiletics, met the demands of clinical pastoral training, and acquainted herself with the fine art of personal evangelism.

"I loved my tasks as a mother and minister's wife. But I didn't want to be the church's greatest volunteer for the rest of my life. I wanted to be a professional."

"At first I was worried that I wouldn't be able to do the work," Brenda says. But as she studied, worked, and prayed, her abilities and self-confidence expanded. The program proved both stimulating and flexible.

She admits that her schedule at times was grueling. "During my practicum, I drove two-and-a-half hours from my home in New Hampshire, spent three hours a day as a chaplain at New England Memorial Hospital, gave two hours of Bible studies, and then drove two-and-a-half hours back home."

Paid employee

The rewards are worth it for Brenda. "I am doing what the Lord has called me to do. I and of professionally trained Bible instructors whether men or women."

The AUC personal ministries degree main-

minister to our congregation now as a conference-paid employee, not simply a minister's wife who gives what time she can apart from other employment. I give Bible studies. I counsel and study with many women in a way that would be awkward for my husband to do. I train lay people. During this past year I have seen two persons baptized and three others begin attending church regularly as a result of my ministry and God's blessing."

Escape to McDonald's

Not all of Brenda's ministry is people-centered. She spends many hours in study. "I have to know what I'm talking about," she explains. "I am constantly meeting people of different faiths, some of them clergy; I must be clear about my own beliefs."

With all the distractions in the parsonage Brenda has had to look hard for a place to study. She laughs, "So far the best way to get away from the telephone and interruptions is at McDonald's!"

Brenda graduated in July 1986 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Personal Ministries. "This degree says that I am professional in what I do. It puts me at the top of the list when a conference is looking for women who can minister along with their husbands. I commend the Northern New England Conference for pioneering in this area. I think more and more conferences will see the value of this kind of team ministry,

tains an enrollment of 10 to 15 students. Although men outnumber women, more and more women are discovering this avenue to rewarding service.

For information:

*For more information about the program write to Elder Marion E. Kidder, Atlantic Union College, South Lancaster, MA 01561, or call toll free 1-800-AUC-2030; In Massachusetts, 1-800-325-0099.

Ruth Brand is a freelance writer living in Lancaster, Massachusetts.

Virginia member wins poetry award

The World of Poetry organization, based in Sacramento, California, presented Ruby Law Price with one of its 1987 Golden Poet Awards.

Price is a member of the Shiloh Seventh-day Adventist Church in Petersburg, Virginia, and is also an AAW member.

After Ruby became an Adventist in 1947 she took up Bible work for the Allegheny Conference. She has also been active in her local church, filling most of its offices including Sabbath school superintendent, community services leader, director of the youth department, and coordinator for senior citizens.

She attended Virginia State College and St. Leo College at Fort Lee, Virginia, where she has retired after 31 years of service as a secretary.

In addition to poetry and music her hobbies include traveling and being active in Elderhostel International.



Ruby Price is an AAW member from Virginia



Brenda Johnson (center) conducted Bible studies with Mark and Silvia Sharkey and their children, residents of Enfield, New Hampshire.

I found the ideal profession

by Brenda Johnson

Feeling a mixture of both sadness and relief, I kissed my younger son, Caleb, goodbye as he left for his first day of school. At last I would have time for myself!

Within two days the reality of my situation hit me. The boys had 12 years of school ahead of them. Phil had his profession as a minister to pursue. But what about me?

True, there was plenty to fill my time. I wanted to bake bread, clean the basement, and straighten my desk drawers. The community-service ladies wanted me to help sort clothes. The flowers for the communion table needed arranging, the school fundraiser cried for attention, and we expected ten people for Sabbath dinner. I loved all these tasks as a mother and a minister's wife but in my moments of honesty I wanted to be a professional, too.

But a professional what? A nurse, teacher, business woman? These careers held no appeal for me. I liked sharing my faith, counseling, teaching Sabbath school, organizing banquets and weddings.

Forever a volunteer?

I did not want to be the church's greatest volunteer for the rest of my life. I wanted to be a professional, a specialist in ministry, a person-trained and paid for my contribution. It seemed an almost sinful thought—a hopeless, impossible ambition for a woman in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the 80's whose husband was a pastor. But Phil was as convinced as I that my gifts lay in ministry. To pursue some other course would be to step outside God's plans for my life.

Fearfully, but prompted by the still, small voice of God, I applied to the Adult Degree Program at Atlantic Union College to finish my bachelor's degree.

But what would I take? In casual conversation with friends I considered majoring in religion, but strictly for personal enrichment. In my own mind, however, I knew I was searching for my place as a professional in God's work.

New breed

In January 1984 I left for my first two-week session at AUC. I was very excited and very scared. But one of my professors was Elder Marion Kidder of the Personal Ministries program. He impressed me when he said, "We're looking for men and women who want to be professionals in ministry. We're looking for people who want to be personal evangelists. We're looking for a new breed of Bible worker—a person trained in biblical studies, theology, counseling, and personal evangelism. Think about it."

Think about it? I didn't need to! This was it. I knew God had led me to this program.

Over the course of the next two-and-one-half years, my custom-designed curriculum included writing ten major papers on biblical and theological topics, a study trip to Israel, three months of Clinical Pastoral Training (CPT), and homiletics. There was a lot of hands-on field work at home, too. I preached five sermons in our district and participated in several on-going Bible studies.

When I graduated in July 1986, I had already been on the job for five months as a Bible instructor in our New Hampshire district. A highlight of my experience came that August when my husband baptized two women with whom I had been studying.

God does call women into this ministry. I encourage other pastors' wives to dare to believe that God might be calling them, too.

MISSION STATEMENT

"So God made 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 the individuals in our church reflect more fully the image of God in their relationships to each other in the home, the church, the work setting and in the community.

Through the means of this publication which focuses on the development, discoveries, interests and potential of Christian women, our goals are:

- 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 interpersonal relationships, personal development and relationships to God.

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