



JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2009

FELLOWSHIP

BEING THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST IN THE WORLD



Connecting with other women, through laughter and tears

By Holly Irvin

When I accepted God's call to ministry at the age of 20, the only clergy I had ever had seen were men. It had never occurred to me that God might call a woman to be a minister or pastor, let alone me. Amongst my fellow seminarians at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary were a number of women who had chosen to accept God's call to ministry and were studying to fulfill this calling. It was my first opportunity to commiserate with other women about the unique calling of women in ministry.

The Women of the Church Conference has been another wonderful opportunity for me to meet and connect with other women who are serving churches in North and South Carolina. I have attended for the past two years since I came to serve a church in South Carolina. There are two parts to the conference. The first is for clergy, and the second for all women of the church. Both offer times of personal spiritual growth development, worship, and fellowship.

Carole Johnson, who is also on the Morningside church staff with me, has attended the conference for four years. Carole says she particularly enjoys time to interact with other women ministers and with the speakers/musicians who lead the programs.

I found the conference to be a time to relax but more importantly, to be refreshed and reenergized. Another reason I enjoy this retreat is that we have time to share our experiences in ministry and find camaraderie in our common stories. There is much laughter and some tears. There is time to take a walk on the beach and reflect on God's power and goodness. There is a program with a different emphasis and speaker/musician each year which will rekindle your faith.

I invite you to join us for 2009's Women of the Church conference at the Myrtle Beach Hilton, Feb. 26-March 1, 2009.

Holly Irvin has been associate pastor for music at Morningside Baptist Church in Spartanburg since October 2006. She is a graduate of Western Illinois University in Macomb, IL, with a bachelor's degree in music, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, in Louisville, KY, with a master of divinity in church music. Holly has served churches in Georgia and Virginia. She and her husband Mike have three children: Kelsey, Shelby and Lydia. Besides playing the flute, she enjoys reading and running. She grew up in Illinois as one of seven children (6 girls, 1 boy).



Women of the Church Conference

Myrtle Beach Hilton, Kingston Plantation

Clergy: Feb. 26-27 featuring Franciscan sister Coney Fahey

Laity: Feb. 27-March 1 featuring singer-speaker Kate Campbell

Contact Christy McMillin-Goodwin, cgoodwin@oaklandchurch.com or 803.328.3864

Registration

Register for either conference from our web site, www.cbfofsc.org. There is a link on the home page to the registration area.

Also coming up: 2009 GENERAL ASSEMBLY April 24-25 in GREENWOOD

MARTHA STEARNS MARSHALL MONTH

AN OPPORTUNITY TO WELCOME WOMEN INTO THE PULPIT

Giving women a chance to preach, to live out their calling, and to act as role models for other women and younger girls is a primary reason that Baptist Women in Ministry is sponsoring the Martha Stearns Marshall Month of Preaching during February.

But for many of our Fellowship churches in South Carolina, the special emphasis seems rather out of place as they hear regularly from women in the pulpit.

At least two Fellowship churches have women as pastors: Cheryl Moore Adamson at Palmetto Missionary Baptist Church in Conway and Brenda Kneece at New Hope Christian Fellowship. And Deb Richardson-Moore, an ordained Baptist minister, regularly preaches at Triune Mercy Center, a non-denominational church in Greenville.

Numerous other churches have women on their staffs who lead in worship regularly.

Just hire one

At First Baptist Church in Pendleton, Jennifer McClung will preach her trial sermon Jan. 18 on the road to becoming associate pastor there. "Why have a woman preach in February alone when you can hire one?" asks Pendleton pastor Courtney Krueger.

One of our core beliefs is that God doesn't speak with just one voice. The priesthood of believers says that each of us is/can be a priest, speaking a word for God, speaking a word from God. The Martha Stearns Marshall month of preaching reminds us that often times that voice is female. That is not unusual at Providence. Women have preached here often. As one member said, "Deanna (McBroom, Providence's minister of music) 'preaches' every Sunday—it's just that most of the time she does it with music."

—Don Flowers, Providence Baptist Church, Daniel Island

Marjorie Avent will be preaching at Providence on Feb. 1. Marjorie is a member of that congregation, a graduate of Furman and McAfee School of Theology, currently doing CPE at Roper/St. Francis Hospital in Charleston.

The Bible speaks of several female prophets, or preachers, including Miriam (Moses' sister), Deborah (who was also a judge), and Anna (who meets Joseph and Mary when they come to the Temple to dedicate Jesus). The four daughters of Philip are evangelists, like their father. When you think about the emergence of female preachers in such a patriarchal culture, the only explanation is that they spoke an authentic word from the God who called them and gifted them to preach.

The same explanation applies to modern women preachers, who still face the influence of patriarchy in the church. Interestingly, while that patriarchy has diminished in mainstream protestantism in the last 30 or 40 years, it has experienced a resurgence in larger Baptist circles. The Martha Stearns Marshall preaching event is important because it represents a group of Baptists who heed the biblical model of women preachers rather than the patriarchal voices who seem threatened by these gifted, God-called women. And if you have any doubt about the authenticity of their calling, just attend one of the churches participating in this event, and you will hear an authentic, relevant word from God.

—Tony Hopkins, pastor, First Baptist Church, Greenwood

SC/CBF associate coordinator Christina Whitehouse-Suggs is preaching at FBC Greenwood on Feb. 1.

It is crystal clear to me that God is no respecter of chromosomes when it comes to calling people into pastoral ministry. The human journey of faith is best articulated by a pulpit that affirms preachers both male and female, for the story is broad and intricate and everyone benefits when the pulpit is open to male and female.

—Kevin Roberts, Kathwood Baptist Church, Columbia

Kelly Belcher, former associate pastor at Fernwood Church in Spartanburg, is preaching at Kathwood on Feb. 1.

Churches observing MSM Month (that we are aware of)

Augusta Road, Greenville: Toni Pate
Boulevard, Anderson: Marcy Mynatt
Clemson FBC: Christina Whitehouse-Suggs
Fernwood, Spartanburg: Ginger Barfield
Greenville FBC: Michelle McClendon
Greenwood FBC: Christina Whitehouse-Suggs
Kathwood, Columbia: Kelly Belcher

Lakeview, Camden: Nell Green
Palmetto Missionary Baptist Church, Conway:
Angel Onley
Pelham Road, Greenville: Anne Hitt
Providence, Daniel Island: Marjorie Avent
Trinity, Seneca: Tiffany Hamilton
York FBC: TBD

Gifts given through CBF of South Carolina

Calendar Year January 1, 2008 through December 31, 2008

These are gifts given through SC/CBF. Some churches may make direct gifts to CBF National, and to other designated causes.

Church	City	General Budget of SC/CBF	State Missions SC/CBF	General Budget of CBF National	Global Missions CBF National	Other	Total Giving through SC/CBF
Augusta Heights Baptist Church	Greenville	\$469.44	\$890.00	\$269.45	\$255.00	\$0.00	\$1,883.89
Augusta Road Baptist Church	Greenville	\$3,170.44	\$55.00	\$5,887.97	\$375.00	\$0.00	\$9,488.41
Belmont Baptist Church	Columbia	\$1,354.34	\$35.00	\$2,009.55	\$155.00	\$0.00	\$3,553.89
Boulevard Baptist Church	Anderson	\$32,181.64	\$800.00	\$59,765.90	\$12,250.50	\$0.00	\$104,998.04
Brunson Baptist Church	Brunson	\$2,249.85	\$370.00	\$2,673.99	\$2,074.50	\$1,104.00	\$8,472.34
Cedar Spring Baptist Church	Spartanburg	\$397.22	\$0.00	\$737.68	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,134.90
Chesterfield Baptist Church	Chesterfield	\$0.00	\$327.25	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$327.25
Clearview Baptist Church	Anderson	\$598.30	\$0.00	\$1,111.13	\$1,004.00	\$100.00	\$2,813.43
Corinth Baptist Church	Vance	\$2,807.12	\$50.00	\$5,213.18	\$125.000	\$0.00	\$4,195.30
Cornerstone Baptist Church	Hartsville	\$2,262.73	\$0.00	\$929.64	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,192.37
Earle Street Baptist Church	Greenville	\$1,828.85	\$0.00	\$3,396.42	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,225.27
East Park Baptist Church	Greenville	\$46.16	\$0.00	\$85.68	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$131.84
Emmanuel Baptist Fellowship	Lexington	\$1,936.73	\$1,779.00	\$3,596.74	\$1,980.00	\$0.00	\$9,292.47
Fernwood Baptist Church	Spartanburg	\$8,624.49	\$619.17	\$8,623.47	\$3,346.33	\$955.27	\$22,168.73
First Baptist Church	Aiken	\$73,067.38	\$1,625.03	\$0.00	\$85,124.69	\$21,458.72	\$181,275.82
First Baptist Church	Allendale	\$1,063.12	\$195.00	\$1,974.44	\$10.00	\$0.00	\$3,242.56
First Baptist Church	Anderson	\$12,203.49	\$3,109.60	\$22,663.60	\$2,770.00	\$0.00	\$40,746.69
First Baptist Church	Belton	\$3,237.11	\$1,218.00	\$6,011.76	\$3,773.80	\$13,873.27	\$28,113.94
First Baptist Church	Blackville	\$6,776.79	\$0.00	\$2,028.31	\$1,754.19	\$0.00	\$10,559.29
First Baptist Church	Clemson	\$9,305.03	\$2,624.00	\$21,006.97	\$9,907.20	\$938.06	\$43,781.26
First Baptist Church	Clinton	\$2,981.11	\$100.00	\$3,552.54	\$2,134.48	\$0.00	\$8,768.13
First Baptist Church	Conway	\$5,015.11	\$0.00	\$9,313.81	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$14,328.92
First Baptist Church	Denmark	\$65.42	\$2,387.33	\$121.48	\$258.26	\$0.00	\$2,832.49
First Baptist Church	Easley	\$4,337.69	\$0.00	\$8,055.70	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$12,493.39
First Baptist Church	Edgefield	\$1,876.75	\$0.00	\$3,485.25	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,362.00
First Baptist Church	Gaffney	\$1,536.30	\$0.00	\$2,228.38	\$594.24	\$0.00	\$4,358.92
First Baptist Church	Greenville	\$4,140.00	\$4,843.14	\$0.00	\$82,333.42	\$2,196.00	\$93,512.56
First Baptist Church	Greenwood	\$13,230.00	\$11,734.75	\$24,570.00	\$9,148.01	\$300.00	\$58,982.76
First Baptist Church	Holly Hill	\$3,691.32	\$246.50	\$4,745.68	\$1,272.65	\$0.00	\$9,956.15
First Baptist Church	Inman	\$9,689.49	\$0.00	\$17,994.70	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$27,684.19
First Baptist Church	Lake City	\$30,035.00	\$0.00	\$65.00	\$0.00	\$20,000.00	\$50,100.00
First Baptist Church	Lancaster	\$86.25	\$0.00	\$113.75	\$50.00	\$0.00	\$250.00
First Baptist Church	Laurens	\$1,444.63	\$0.00	\$2,682.89	\$300.00	\$0.00	\$4,427.52
First Baptist Church	Loris	\$199.50	\$0.00	\$370.50	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$570.00
First Baptist Church	Mauldin	\$3,574.98	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,574.98
First Baptist Church	Newberry	\$8,042.08	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$8,042.08
First Baptist Church	N. Charleston	\$297.90	\$0.00	\$553.28	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$851.18
First Baptist Church	Orangeburg	\$24,266.84	\$0.00	\$45,066.84	\$16,000.00	\$2,457.54	\$87,791.22

Church	City	General Budget of SC/CBF	State Missions SC/CBF	General Budget of CBF National	Global Missions CBF National	Other	Total Giving through SC/CBF
First Baptist Church	Pamplico	\$1,972.32	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$225.00	\$0.00	\$2,197.32
First Baptist Church	Pendleton	\$7,037.50	\$248.00	\$8,872.50	\$5,916.00	\$0.00	\$22,074.00
First Baptist Church	Piedmont	\$2,018.72	\$955.00	\$3,749.02	\$2,012.00	\$150.00	\$8,884.74
First Baptist Church	Simpsonville	\$2,512.16	\$0.00	\$1,658.32	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4,170.48
First Baptist Church	Walterboro	\$6,145.11	\$0.00	\$11,412.35	\$5,001.50	\$0.00	\$22,558.96
First Baptist Church	Woodruff	\$1,092.38	\$0.00	\$1,622.46	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,714.84
First Baptist Church	York	\$5,717.33	\$986.50	\$10,617.87	\$2,554.50	\$0.00	\$19,876.20
Florence Baptist Fellowship	Florence	\$945.00	\$0.00	\$837.00	\$300.00	\$0.00	\$2,082.00
Greenlawn Baptist Church	Columbia	\$1,949.15	\$620.00	\$3,619.86	\$2,051.50	\$0.00	\$8,240.51
Heath Springs Baptist Church	Heath Springs	\$139.79	\$0.00	\$259.61	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$399.40
Kathwood Baptist Church	Columbia	\$10,398.15	\$2,500.00	\$19,310.85	\$2,906.00	\$0.00	\$35,115.00
Lakeview Baptist Church	Camden	\$3,267.65	\$1,058.00	\$6,068.49	\$2,556.42	\$0.00	\$12,950.56
Lawtonville Baptist Church	Estill	\$1,250.00	\$50.00	\$0.00	\$580.00	\$0.00	\$1,880.00
Mountain Bridge Community Church	Greer	\$157.50	\$0.00	\$292.50	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$450.00
New Heights Baptist Church	Gaffney	\$3,144.29	\$0.00	\$5,839.41	\$6,896.18	\$0.00	\$15,879.88
New Hope Christian Fellowship	W. Columbia	\$0.00	\$574.60	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$574.60
Nixonville Chapel	Conway	\$420.00	\$700.00	\$780.00	\$805.00	\$0.00	\$2,705.00
Oakland Baptist Church	Rock Hill	\$36,288.00	\$10,067.77	\$24,192.00	\$15,101.66	\$0.00	\$85,649.43
Overbrook Baptist Church	Greenville	\$1,362.11	\$0.00	\$2,529.62	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,891.73
Palmetto Missionary Baptist Church	Conway	\$162.50	\$190.00	\$97.50	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$450.00
Parisview Baptist Church	Greenville	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$400.00	\$0.00	\$400.00
Pelham Road Baptist Church	Greenville	\$2,427.63	\$0.00	\$4,508.45	\$5,761.00	\$1,070.00	\$13,767.08
Pendleton Street Baptist Church	Greenville	\$362.25	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$21.00	\$0.00	\$383.25
Providence Baptist Church	Daniel Island	\$4,200.00	\$0.00	\$7,800.00	\$0.00	\$1,285.00	\$13,285.00
Rivertown Community Church	Conway	\$900.00	\$1,173.01	\$0.00	\$2,872.00	\$0.00	\$4,945.01
Sans Souci Baptist Church	Greenville	\$2,374.51	\$0.00	\$4,454.74	\$797.00	\$0.00	\$7,626.25
Shaws Fork Baptist Church	Aiken	\$0.00	\$855.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$855.00
St. Andrews Baptist Church	Columbia	\$14,101.96	\$115.00	\$26,189.31	\$5,945.00	\$0.00	\$46,351.27
Swift Creek Baptist Church	Hartsville	\$1,232.80	\$300.00	\$2,289.40	\$400.00	\$0.00	\$4,222.20
The Baptist Church of Beaufort	Beaufort	\$22,003.12	\$681.00	\$10,504.13	\$11,997.97	\$1,913.75	\$47,099.97
The Community Church of the Midlands	Columbia	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$0.00	\$100.00
Tidal Creek Fellowship	Beaufort	\$245.00	\$0.00	\$455.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$700.00
Timberlake Baptist Church	Myrtle Beach	\$3,246.29	\$0.00	\$6,028.80	\$445.00	\$0.00	\$9,720.09
Trinity Baptist Church	Seneca	\$13,303.62	\$3,342.04	\$24,496.49	\$6,640.53	\$333.33	\$48,116.01
CHURCH GIVING 2008		428,492.44	\$57,449.69	\$459,416.36	\$319,306.53	\$68,134.94	\$1,332,799.96
INDIVIDUAL GIVING 2008		\$33,623.25	\$5,059.00	\$14,732.29	\$1,300.00	\$1,642.55	\$40,274.80
TOTAL GIVING 2008		\$462,115.69	\$62,508.69	\$474,148.65	\$320,606.53	\$69,777.49	\$1,373,074.76

If you notice a discrepancy, please contact the SC/CBF office.

Thank you for your support of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship in 2008.

The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of South Carolina operates on a fiscal year that runs from July 1-June 30.

Christy McMillin– Goodwin



Christy McMillin–Goodwin

Associate Minister, Education
and Missions at Oakland
Baptist Church in Rock Hill

cgoodwin@oaklandchurch.com

Christy has worked at Oakland Baptist Church in Rock Hill for 13½ years (her only church since seminary). She was minister to students for nine years and has been responsible for education and missions for the past four.

“I love my job because I get to help people learn to love God and love their neighbors,” she said. “They explore their faith through Bible study, Sunday School, small groups, and retreats. They help with the free medical clinic our church just helped open. They teach English to immigrants each week, house the homeless through Interfaith Hospitality Network, have built six Habitat homes, and are about to sponsor our first refugee family from Iraq.”

“I feel that my calling is to minister to *and* with the folks at Oakland Baptist Church,” she said, “to help our folks find ways to connect with God in their everyday lives and through study, worship and service.”

Christy grew up in Columbia where she attended Greenlawn Baptist Church with her family. “I am very grateful we ended up at Greenlawn because women were always on staff and I had many role models to influence my calling into ministry,” she said.

When Christy was 12, Marion Aldridge was called as pastor of Greenlawn. “Through

the years, he has had a huge impact on my life,” she said. Christy was ordained at Greenlawn in 1994.

About 12 years ago, Christy’s parents moved to Seneca. “I told them they must attend a church that would support women in ministry,” she said. “And they did!” They are active members at Trinity Baptist Church in Seneca, another CBF church supportive of women ministers.

Christy is married to Shane, a principal at the school where their daughter Paige is a fourth grader and son Reid is a first grader.

“I think it is very important for CBF churches to have an ordained woman on staff – we bring a different perspective to ministry. I find ways to connect with women that my male counterparts cannot,” she said. “I also think our churches need to hire more women as senior ministers, because, sadly, many women who feel called to be senior pastors cannot fulfill their calling. Our churches suffer when we do not realize the God-given gifts that women bring to ministry.”

Christy feels it is important that she be a role model for girls and women, to let them know that God does call women to ministry.

Christy is moderator–
elect for SC/CBF.

Cheryl Moore Adamson

It took Cheryl Moore Adamson more than 18 years to respond to her call to ministry. “It was the usual reasons that caused me not to respond — no role model, southern heritage, marriage and family,” she said. “But when the Holy Spirit viscerally dropped the word **DUKE** into my chest, I perceived it as a call to preparation for the preaching ministry. That little word was like the period at the end of a very long sentence. I was totally relieved and felt as if I had been given a new lease on life.”

At Duke, Cheryl quickly became a minister to some of her schoolmates, relationships that continue today.

After Duke, Cheryl worked for three years as a hospice chaplain. “I initially felt this was indeed my permanent place of service and for once in my life, I was not looking beyond where I was for the next thing,” she said.

“However, God had other plans and within the first six months of this ministry I felt the call to a particular place (a Southern Baptist church edifice in my community),” she said. “Then I was led to start a women’s Bible study and out of

that ministry came the call to start a church.”

That church is Palmetto Missionary Baptist Church in Conway, a partner church with CBF of SC.

“I believe that women have to be obedient to the call of God on their lives, no matter what the earthly cost,” she said. “I believe that women bring themselves (personality, spirituality, relational abilities, etc.) and their particular leadership styles to the ministry and that God can and will use them as God sees fit.”

“Women need not copy the career model or mentality of men, but should be open to the Holy Spirit and take more risks for the cause of Jesus Christ,” she said. “We don’t have any time to waste!”

Born in Hartsville, Cheryl grew up in Conway. Before she earned her M.Div. at Duke, she earned a bachelor’s degree in biology from the University of South Carolina and a masters degree in health education from the University of Maryland.

On Dec. 27, she celebrated the 10th anniversary of the first sermon she preached.



Cheryl Moore
Adamson

Pastor, Palmetto
Missionary Baptist
Church, Conway

revcheryl@msn.com

Brittany Riddle, a student at Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond and a May 2008 graduate of Furman University, is preaching at Pelham Road Baptist Church on Feb. 1. "By giving seminarians the opportunity to preach, churches are not only affirming a calling, but also giving newer ministers experiences that will enable us to find our voice in the pulpit and continue forming our own ministerial identity."



Waiting for the glass ceiling to break



Ginger Barfield, a native of Kershaw, started the Baptist Studies program at Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary four years ago and now is also associate professor of New Testament. In July, she becomes the academic dean for the seminary.

While the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has a long history of ordained women ministers and has female leadership at all levels of its ecclesial organization, until now Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia had not had a woman as dean.

That will change soon as Ginger Barfield, director of the Baptist Studies program and associate dean, has been appointed as the new academic dean.

In making the appointment, president Marcus Miller said that Ginger was both the right leader for the institution and a role model for the student body, especially female students.

"It is important to realize, and is perhaps a sad commentary, that women who are called to ministry need role models with whom they can identify in gender-specific ways," Ginger said. "I can remember those conversations among female students when I was in seminary more than 25 years ago. We had no concept of what it might look like to be women in ministry because we had not seen any women in those roles."

While there *are* positive models of women in ministry to look at and learn from now, Ginger said, she believes there are too few who are pastors and institutional leaders. "The glass ceiling, in many ways, has not been broken," she said.

Ginger sees her appointment as dean

as part of God's continuing call upon and shaping of her life. "In many ways, being dean seems a natural progression from seminary to graduate school, to teaching at Southeastern Seminary, to ministerial staff at St. John's in Charlotte and Kathwood in Columbia. In other ways, I could never have dreamed of being in this position at this time in this place. It

can be nothing other than Spirit-led," she said.

"It is an exciting and challenging time to be in theological education," Ginger said. "The expectations and needs of the churches are changing; the diversity and entry-level preparedness of seminary students has broadened; the global financial market is constraining resources."

How will LTSS respond in terms of how it teaches, forms, and nurtures women and men for public

Ginger Barfield, her female students and other women in ministry are waiting for the day the glass ceiling will be broken and women will have an equal chance at being senior pastors and institutional leaders.

ministry and Christian leadership? "This will be the question that energizes me as I begin my work in partnership with the president, the faculty, staff, and other administrators here," Ginger said.



In Her Own Rite

By Marjorie Procter-Smith

Abingdon Press, copyright 1990, 191 pages

The hallmarks of feminist preaching, according to Procter-Smith, are that it is "dialogical, communal, and participatory." It sounds to me as if, way back in 1990, Procter-Smith was a prophet for the "emergent church," and for the church of the 21st century, which, if in its right mind, will attempt to be all three. Read Marion's full review at <http://cbfscbookbytes.wordpress.com> or link to it from the home page of our web site.

FEMALE STUDENTS AND THEIR CALLS TO MINISTRY

By Ginger
Barfield,
Incoming dean
Lutheran
Theological
Southern
Seminary,
Columbia

In the Baptist world, gifted preachers who happen to be women often cannot find calls to preach because they are the wrong gender, while average preachers who are men are called consistently to congregations. Women who possess leadership, administrative, and pastoral care gifts from God labor away in positions where those gifts are underutilized simply because congregations are still battling with the *Women's Question*. When we say *Preacher* in Baptist-life, with a few exceptions, we picture a male.

In our ecumenical world at Lutheran Seminary, we see a wider perspective. Most of the female students on campus are Lutheran or Methodist. With a more hierarchical system and a longer tradition of women in ministry positions, Methodist and Lutheran women have more opportunities to move into pastoral positions directly from seminary. They rarely struggle with the issues such as "What if no church will call me as pastor when I graduate?"

That is not to say that every woman who comes to seminary should aspire to be a "preacher" or the pastor of a congregation. But, every person who is called and gifted by God to service should be freed by the church to serve regardless

of being male or female.

It is 2009. Baptist bodies should not remove churches that call women as pastors from their membership. Baptist students should not pay thousands of dollars and put years of study into seminary studies and have search committees repeatedly say those who help place pastors, *"I don't think this congregation is ready for an ordained woman yet."*

Baptists should look forward to a day when we do not need a Martha Stearns Marshall event in order to provide opportunities for women to preach in pulpits across the states. Those opportunities should be available all the time and not just on special-emphasis Sundays.

God has been calling, is calling, and will continue to call faithful, obedient, gifted women and men to service. Baptists are blessed to have numerous partnership schools where our students can receive quality education and spiritual formation to prepare them for service in our congregations. Our congregations need to prepare themselves to receive all the gifted ministers whom God is preparing—gifts of God for the sake of God's church. Men and women alike—I am not sure that we should deign to refuse any of God's gifts to us.

GOD GIVES GIFTS TO ALL CHRISTIANS

Deanna McBroom



Deanna McBroom

Minister of Music at
Providence Baptist
Church in Charleston

mcbroomd@yahoo.com

Deanna McBroom, the minister of music at Providence Baptist Church in Charleston, was in a wrestling bout in 2002. "Aware of a distinct 'calling-out' by Providence to ministry, I wrestled with the call to ordination for months," she said. "Finally, at peace with the Lord's leading and affirmed by the church and its ordination council, I was ordained on Sept. 7, 2003." She was the first person ordained by Providence, founded in 1995.

Describing herself as a lifelong Christian, Deanna grew up in a Lutheran church in Wisconsin. She became a Baptist in 1976 and participated as a layperson at Broadway Baptist Church in Louisville, KY, then at First Baptist Church in Charleston. She also assisted her husband Scott in his duties as a campus minister.

From Providence's beginning, Deanna has been its part-time minister of music. She directs the adult choir and the youth ensemble, supervises the bell choir and two children's choirs, and is part of the worship team.

Her Lutheran heritage and musical training have brought a unique perspective to her ministry as a Baptist, she said. "We strive for deeply meaningful and creative worship, starting with scripture, and using a variety of music to en-

hance the worship experience for all," she said.

Deanna believes that women in ministry have a unique and special voice to bring to the Christian community. "God gives gifts to all Christians to use in ministry, and the church is a place for cultivation of gifts and spiritual callings, including the call to ministry and ordination," she said. "Both men and women are called out for the various tasks and leadership of the church, and it is the responsibility of the church to nurture and help women to develop their spiritual gifts and callings."

Deanna is also professor of music and director of the voice program at the College of Charleston; and is a singing voice specialist at the Evelyn Trammell Institute for Voice and Swallowing at the Medical University of South Carolina. She is a professional soprano.

Deanna was born and reared in Eau Claire, WI; earned a degree in music education from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a master of music in vocal performance from the University of Louisville. Husband Scott, a former campus minister, is now a counselor in private practice and a CBF pastoral counselor. They are parents to Bill and Beth.



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Have you ever wrestled with God? I'm talking about the all-night, blood, sweat, and tears, match-that-won't-end-until-you-get-a-blessing kind of wrestling. The kind that leaves you limping away with a new name and fresh purpose. Have you been there?

That's the kind of wrestling I did with my call to ministry. There are multiple reasons why:

- ▶ Resentment toward the church which I'd cultivated as a preacher's kid.

- ▶ Comfort with my "DINK" lifestyle (Double Income No Kids)

- ▶ Fear of rejection.

But the one that gave me most pause was...

- ▶ I'd never seen a woman in the pulpit.

Sure, I'd met missionaries and I had even served as a youth minister but a preacher? Me? No thanks, God.

I continued to wrestle with the idea of preaching even through seminary. Though my gifts for proclamation were affirmed by my peers and my professor of homiletics, Roy DeBrand, I was still hesitant. Sure, I COULD preach (a background in theatre and speech helped) but was I CALLED to preach?

And then Molly Marshall was invited to be a guest preacher for three days at Campbell.

Like Julie Pennington-Russell says, "The plates shifted under my feet," and nothing could be the same again. I was electrified by Dr. Marshall's confidence and comfort standing behind the pulpit as if she was born to be there. After those three days, I could finally envision myself as a preacher. I could finally stop wrestling. I could finally receive the blessing God had been trying to give me all along.

There are some things we cannot do until we are given permission. There are some things we cannot do until we are taught. There are some things we cannot do until we have been shown. I did not believe I could preach until I had been taught, shown, and given permission in the person of Molly Marshall!

Maybe there's a young woman in your church who's wrestling with a call to ministry. Maybe she needs to hear a woman preach from your pulpit. Maybe she needs your affirmation. Maybe she needs to be taught or shown or given permission.

Do what you can to make sure a woman preaches in your church sometime soon, maybe in the month of February. You never know who in your congregation is involved in a wrestling match!



Christina Whitehouse-Suggs, preaching at her alma mater, Campbell Divinity School in Buies Creek, NC.

