Winter 2003

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New Horizons Contributors:

Janine Metcalf, Coordinator
Diane Miller, Clergy Resources and
Website Coordinator
Carol Blessing, Editor
Vicki Copp, Columnist
Stan Ingersol, Columnist
Rebecca Laird, Columnist
George Blessing, Layout and
Design

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Resources for Nazarene Clergywomen

Dear Friends,

This issue contains your stories—accounts from several of you who are students, pastors, and even a district superintendent. Rebecca Laird also reviews Susie Stanley's book on

autobiographies of women preachers. It is in sharing our stories of spiritual insight and calling, growth, joys, and struggles that we can clarify who we



are in the Lord, and how we can serve, and we can also teach and encourage each other.

We would like to hear from more of you, for you each have a story, an account of your journey. We travel together, for foremost in Christ's teachings was the idea of fellowship, with each other and with God. *New Horizons* is a vehicle for community, so please enter in. Let me know if you are reading, what you would like to see more of, and if you are willing to write. Email me at CarolBlessing@ptloma.edu. God bless you all.

In Christ,

Carol Blessing, Ph.D.
Editor, New Horizons Resources for
Nazarene Women Clergy
Associate Professor of Literature,
Point Loma Nazarene University

Holy Risk Taking

By Rev. M. ReeAnn Hyde

Eight months, that's all! Yes, that's all the time I have been a solo, senior pastor. I'm 41 years old, single and completely aware of how little I know about how to be a pastor, how to love people into the Kingdom and out of their troubles, and how to maintain a sense of self in the ocean of pastoral expectations. As is true of most risks we take in life, we know little of the reality that lies beyond the risk—only that we wish to take the risk or that we need to take the risk. All of this would be utterly impossible without the mighty right of arm of God, the presence of Jesus Christ and the infilling of the Holy spirit every day!

I remember seeing a documentary on the Garmans, now retired missionaries of the Peruvian jungle. Larry Garman was asked what it was like to be a missionary. His reply stuck in my brain with vivid reality. His reply? A missionary was a person who was "completely overwhelmed every day." Isn't that the truth of all risks? I think I know now why that phrase stuck in my head. I do believe that God needed me to remember that complete humility and absolute dependence on Him was what was required to shepherd His flock--to take His kind of risk.

My people (I call them that now because God has given me such love for them) are incredible people! They took a risk in receiving me as their pastor. It was a risk for many of them because they had never walked with a woman

pastor before. They were wonderfully honest in articulating their misgivings. I respect them for that honesty. So, we entered into this covenant together . . . risks and all! Several people left the church because of the choice. My heart is deeply grieved over this, and I wish it were not so. But we who remain believe that the risk has been worth it.

My Sabbath is a calculated risk. I decide to trust God every Thursday that He will take care of "my" people. On this day, I also live with the reality that my people can do just fine without me! As Eugene Peterson wrote in *Under the Unpredictable Plant*, Sabbath is a day that lets every one know Who is in control (loosely paraphrased). That's a risk of personal identity that must be taken by every pastor.

Because of the risks we have taken God has been binding us together through His Word, through crises (three different open-heart surgeries in a month and a half, seven occasions of breaking and entering and theft just for starters), and through the infant steps of trust between a new pastor and her people.

In any occasion of risk-taking we find that we either made the right decision or the wrong decision. We wouldn't ever know unless we took the risk, would we? Now eight months later I think we made the right decision for this season of our lives. My people and I are completely dependent upon Him to make this holy risk taking His miracle of grace and abundance. I'm glad we took the risk together!

Rev. Hyde is the pastor of New Covenant Church of the Nazarene, Sacramento, California.

What's Happening

By Vicki Copp

Women Clergy Active in the Alliance for Ministry Development

In June 2002, I attended my first Alliance Directors' Conference at Nazarene Bible College. According to the published description: "The Alliance for Ministry Development is composed

of participating
District Training
Centers and
Nazarene Bible
College working
together to provide
ministry training to
men and women
who sense a call to



Christian ministry within the Church of the Nazarene. The program allows persons to fulfill the education requirement for ordination. Nazarene Bible College gives curricular support to the District Training Centers who desire to keep the educational training at a college level." There are 54 districts represented by 41 training centers who are a part of the Alliance. Last year, they had a combined total of 1387 students, 516 of whom were multicultural.

At the conference, I met several women who are directing training centers: Elsie Ours, Margaret Dayhoff, Rev. Monique St. Aimie, and Rev. Annette Brown. Elsie is a retired schoolteacher and directs the training center in West Virginia. Margaret Dayhoff is a retired missionary from South Africa. She was the academic dean at Nazarene Theological College in Johannesburg and now directs the District Training Center in Iowa. Rev. Monique St. Aimie directs the Grace District Training Center in Los Angeles. She is children's pastor at Los Angeles Grace Church of the Nazarene and teaches the

fourth grade class at Woodcrest
Nazarene Christian School. Rev.
Annette Brown directs the Pacific Rim
Theological College on the Northern
California District. She co-pastors with
her husband in San Bruno, California.
Many of these district training centers
employ women clergy to teach their
students. This was all new to me, and I
thought you'd like to know *What's Happening*.

Mary Lou's Incredible Journey

I met Mary Lou Riggle at the Global Nazarene Theological Conference in Guatemala in April 2002. I had been told that there was a woman there who was a District Superintendent. Having never met a female district superintendent, I went looking for her. What a delight to meet this humble and gentle woman who has served God so faithfully over these many years. Here is her story:

I grew up as farmer's daughter in central rural Indiana, in WWII period. I remember food rationing and other wartime efforts. We attended regularly Sunday mornings at a rural nondenominational church which provided, through the Sunday School, good Biblical information, but unfortunately without personal application. There was no clear doctrinal teaching, as our pastors came from different theological orientations. At home, my father always prayed at mealtime and we were taught a memorized prayer for bedtime and were good moral and ethical examples.

When I was 13 years of age, we received a new pastor and his wife—for the three months of summer vacation. They were at the time, students at Taylor University. The last Sunday of his pastorate, he preached an evangelistic message and gave the first invitation to the altar that I had ever

experienced. I really don't remember the content of the message.

Another teen, a little older than myself, responded to the invitation, and a third teen whispered to ask me what was happening (an event never seen before in our church). There was a moment of understanding, and I opened my mouth to explain but couldn't speak. Before I hardly knew what was happening, I too was on my way to the altar to pray. I didn't have an intellectual understanding of my need, but knew something had happened that morning.

By the grace of God, another couple from Taylor, David and Becky LeShana (Dave, son of Methodist missionaries in India and Becky, daughter of Evangelical Friends ministers from Northwest Ohio), came to pastor the church. (Later David became a leader in holiness circles in the West, serving as president of Seattle Pacific and George Fox Colleges and at Western Theological Seminary). A few months later, they took a group of teens from the church to a Youth Conference (weekend) at Taylor University. On Saturday night, there was missionary speaker who challenged the youth who were willing to be missionaries, if God should call them, to stand. Without understanding really what a missionary was, I stood, but felt from that date that I had a real call to be a missionary and began to tell everyone--parents, school mates, etc. that I would be missionary, although I really didn't understand what being a missionary meant. I supposed that it would involve some kind of work with children or perhaps nursing. I have tried to emphasize across the years to my students that God's call isn't necessarily a "spectacular" phenomena, but a constant and growing conviction.

About two years later, I began to experience a spiritual hunger for a deeper relation with the Lord. I was reading the Bible and praying, but was not spiritually mature enough to find the message of sanctification. I inquired of my pastor (by this time, a Calvinist), who responded that the frustration I was feeling was the "normal Christian life." His answer didn't help or encourage me. But the LORD IS FAITHFUL WHEN OUR HEARTS ARE OPEN.

When I was 17, I went to the "city" for a summer job, and during that time the Lord brought me into contact with the Church of the Nazarene. I found an active group of young people exited about serving the Lord and began to hear holiness preached. In my heart I knew that it was the answer to my longing, but was not sanctified at that time

When I finished high school, I went to Taylor University to begin to prepare to fulfill my missionary call. I began participating in a new start of the Church of the Nazarene in that community, and a few months later became a member of the church. I enrolled in a five-year program for missionaries, which offered a double major in religion and education. Besides the courses in Bible and theology required of all students, the program I had chosen included additional Biblical and theological courses, as well as Greek, which I would never have chosen otherwise. As I look back, I realize that was the Lord's way of preparing me for an "enlargement" of His call which would come later, when I was ready to handle it. How wonderful it is that the Lord doesn't ask more of us than what we are able to handle at any given moment!

I was sanctified during the spring spiritual emphasis week at Taylor during my first year. In a missionary conference during my second year, I received literature from the Department of World Mission of the Church of the Nazarene. When I made contact with the Department, it was suggested that if

I were going to be a Nazarene missionary, I should go to a Nazarene school. That may or may not have been so, but at the end of that year, I transferred to Olivet Nazarene College. There was no program similar to that at Taylor and so I concentrated on Elementary Education, but also took other Bible and ministerial courses as I could.

Then, when I was just six months from graduation, the Lord called me to preach!. I was very timid and had never seen a woman in the pulpit up to that time. In my childhood context, that was not possible, so I thought I was not understanding what the Lord wanted. Again, the Lord had just the right persons to help me--Dr. and Mrs. George Franklin, retired Nazarene missionaries from India who were pastoring the church I attended. They gently supported, guided and encouraged me during six months until I could say an unconditional "yes" to this "enlargement" of my call.

After college I returned to Richmond, Indiana where I had first known Church of Nazarene, taught school and become active in church. The pastor and lay leaders were very supportive, believing in me and giving me space to teach, preach, and develop experience. It was there I received my first local license to preach and then a district license, and finished a Masters degree in Education at Indiana University.

In 1965, when I was just ready to go seminary, I was appointed as a missionary to Belize (then British Honduras). My ministry was varied during the twelve and a half years I was there, involving primary and secondary education (administration and teaching), evangelism, lay leadership training, pastoral ministry and finally theological education. I was ordained at the end of my first term in 1969. The Lord led me to ask for permission to study Spanish

and to go to seminary on furloughs. In 1977 I was transferred to Guatemala, where I was involved in theological education (teaching and administration) at what is now Seminario Teológico Nazareno for 10 years. In 1987, I was ask to transfer to Costa Rica, and was assigned to Nazarene Seminary of the Américas, where I have served until the present.

Until the year 2000, I was involved in academic administration and teaching at seminary, except for two years when I served as chaplain of the school. During my years in the seminaries, I have always tried to make my teaching and administrative work "pastoral" in nature as well as keeping close to the churches, frequently filling in for absent pastors and even serving as interim pastor in some situations. Then came the surprise of my life iin 1998 (at 60 years of age) when I was elected by the people of the Costa Rica Central District as District Superintendent and then re-elected in 2000.

This is my 38th year on the field and will be my last, as I am due to leave the field in May of 2003 for a year of "home assignment" before final retirement in June of 2004, and then see what new ministry the Lord has for me.

Many times I have stopped and asked: How did I get into this? How did I get to teaching future and present pastors? Who am I to direct seminary academic programs? I have never looked for position or pushed doors. In fact, my nature is to shrink from these responsibilities, and often have resisted, at first thinking I was misunderstanding what the Lord wanted. I rejoice in the fact that the Lord always gives us time to be sure as long as there is no rejection of His will. What a privilege to walk step by step in obedience to His guidance!

Mary Lou Riggle

What's Happening at Nazarene Theological Seminary

At the Come to the Water conference last year, I was introduced to Kelli Westmark, a student at Nazarene Theological Seminary. Kelli provides leadership for the Women in Ministry Council, an organization for aspiring women clergy at NTS. I was impressed with her enthusiasm and passion. She shares some of that with us in the following exciting update on what is happening with women at Nazarene Theological Seminary.

Life at Nazarene Theological Seminary for Women in Ministry is full of new and exciting changes. The face of NTS continues to change as more and more women are enrolled in graduate programs. Currently, 30% of NTS's population is female. When I first came to seminary two years ago, the biggest "new" problem was a line for the women's bathroom, and this summer, the men's and women's bathrooms were switched, giving the women more stalls. While this is a rather comical situation, this is only the beginning of the excitement around NTS.

In a letter posted by NTS President Ron Benefiel, he announced an endowment left by Ralph and Mildred Wynkoop. Dr. Benefiel asked that money be used in developing a new initiative for Women in Ministry. Dr. Judi Schwanz was appointed the Director of the Wynkoop Center for Women in Ministry. The Ralph & Mildred Wynkoop Center will fund research awards, host a resource person, and develop the Wynkoop Center website. The website will feature exposition and Bible study material for the difficult New Testament passages, Old Testament women, New Testament women, and the creation narratives. Another section will feature worship resources, with sermons, readings,

hymns, and service orders. Another portion of this project will feature academic materials, such as book reviews, thesis and dissertations. The Wynkoop Center's inaugural chapel will be on March 12, 2003, with a reception following. The support from the President along with the entire faculty at Nazarene Theological Seminary has been a unanimous stamp of approval and support for all of our women students.

The Women in Ministry Council is hosting an all-school trip to the Sophia Center, a Benedictine monastery in Atchison, Kansas. The retreat is scheduled to take place in the Spring of 2003 with time for prayer and spiritual direction with the sisters. To find out more information about the Sophia Center, visit their website at www.mountosb.org/sophia.html.

The Women in Ministry Council was pleased to host Rev. Nancy Cantrell from Harrisonville, Missouri, and Dr. Estelle Gross from Maryland. Both women were an encouragement to students and preached powerful messages. The council also hosted a forum on co-pastoring with Rev. Mike & Rev. Kaza Fraley, and Rev. Josh & Rev. Amy Foster, all pastoring in Kansas.

The WIM Council sponsored the first ministry fair, called "The Ministry Connection" on September 12, 2002. The fair included several churches and parachurch organizations who hosted booths in the main lounge. Here students had an opportunity to find jobs, set up Supervised Ministry Experiences, or look for a new church home, in anticipation that women could find numerous opportunities to serve. This partnership with the community is also a way for the churches and parachurch organizations to see the make-up of NTS, which includes about one third female students, some married students

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and some single, and several students from other countries.

At Come to the Water 2002, a request was made for women clergy to mentor NTS students. NTS students also wanted to connect with female college students headed for ministry. Twentyfour women clergy mentors and 15 college students signed up. NTS women quickly filled the roles of finding a mentor or being a mentee. The commitment of both of these relationships was a time commitment for two years (until Come to the Water 2004), through making two to four contacts a year, whether by e-mail, letters, or phone calls, being open to share and hear each other's journeys, praying for each other, and holding each other accountable. If you signed up and have not heard from your NTS student, please e-mail me at knwestmark@hotmail.com. I pray these relationships are meaningful as God connects us all from around the world and we follow Him in the journey.

In recent days of the sexual misconduct revealed in pastoral positions throughout several denominations, including ours, the Women in Ministry Council proposed a Community Day of Learning for the Spring Semester, involving the themes of pastoral restoration and developing a policy to protect the pastor and church against accusation. Dr. Roger Hahn, Academic Dean, expressed great interest in pursuing this with the curriculum development committee as there is a need to address these issues.

I have been encouraged by numerous female students telling me of the various preaching opportunities they have had and continue to be a part of. I have enjoyed preaching at Tom Gray's church (our Women in Ministry Treasurer), occasionally teaching Dr. Chic Shaver's Sunday School class, and preaching back home in Oregon. Other

students like Donabel Martin, Olivia Metcalf, Meggan Nugent, Lori Ward and Kadee Smedley have also shared their preaching opportunities, and God is indeed blessing their ministries and churches. Second year council member Julia Roat-Abla also began as Education Pastor at St. Paul's Church of the Nazarene. Many women are involved and serving in pastoral positions in their churches.

My studies of our church's heritage have opened a whole new world for me, as I discovered that my home church in Tillamook, Oregon was planted by Rev. Mabel Holmes Cox. Having grown up in the Northwest, I also spent several days in the Nazarene Archives fascinated by Rev. Elsie Wallace who was unanimously voted to be the pastor in Spokane, Washington which was the first church from Dr. Bresee's western churches to be planted outside of California. Rev. Elsie Wallace also pastored in Seattle, WA and Walla Walla, WA and was one of two female District Superintendents to serve the Nazarene church. Her husband, Rev. DeLance Wallace was also later ordained and served in various church roles and was Elsie's biggest fan. Dr. Keith Schwanz and I put together a chapel last October which highlighted Rev. Elsie Wallace. The service was closed by Dr. Ron Benefiel passing on the torch to the NTS community.

After another amazing preaching class this summer, I went out with some friends for lunch. Having grown close through small groups and a couple years of classes together, I sat with three guys and another gal. I was shocked and delighted to find my guy friends saying they had never really considered women in ministry seriously, until they heard us preach. They shared how their views had radically changed from somewhat of an ignorant view, having never heard or seen a woman in ministry, to absolute

affirmation saying, the anointing of God was clearly evident. In this preaching class, Dr. Tim Green said it well when he said, "The dams are about to burst as women are pouring out of our schools...." It reminded me of a conversation I had with Dr. Jess Middendorf as he spoke of the uncertain world in which we live. He looked me squarely in the eyes as his eyes moistened when he said, "I believe we are going to need every pastor we can get our hands on in the days ahead. Male or female will not matter as God is raising up pastors crucially needed for the uncertainty that lies in our changing world."

Please pray for NTS, that God will prepare us to minister in this world filled with uncertainty. Please pray that people, millions of people will come to know the Lord through the years we minister. Please pray that we will become a community that seeks the Lord as our number one priority. Please pray for women who are discovering their gifts and wondering what major to declare and where the Lord is leading them. Please pray for our men and women who aren't quite sure where they stand on the issue of having women in ministry. Please pray for our staff and faculty who are clearly devoted to God and firmly united in their support of women in ministry. Please pray that everything we do this year would be done with excellence for the glory of God. May God bless, keep you and give you new strength as you continue to minister to millions and lead the way as the dams break with hundreds behind you.

Kelli Westmark NTS Women in Ministry President knwestmark@hotmail.com.

If you have something or someone that you think we all would benefit from

knowing about, please email me at dvcopp@aol.com

Rev. Vicki Copp was ordained as elder and received her M.A. in Theology from Point Loma Nazarene University in 1997. She preaches and speaks at retreats, women's ministries functions, and has written for *Holiness Today*.

Book Notes

A Review of Holy Boldness: Women Preacher's Autobiographies and the Sanctified Self by Susie C Stanley. Published by University of Tennessee Press, 2003.

By Rebecca Laird

Historian Susie Stanley has long and rightly wondered why the autobiographical writings of nineteenth-century women preachers have gone unplumbed by scholars and others interested in the self-understanding of women who led uncommon lives. Much general and academic interest has been shown in the writings of pioneer women, early feminists, and reformers. Yet this is the first academic book to study this overlooked group that left a large canon of first-person narratives in

a time when women were rarely educated and fewer would have put their "spiritual self" rather than their role as daughter, wife and mother



front and center in their own life stories.

Stanley examines the autobiographies of thirty-four women in the Wesleyan/Holiness theological tradition. Here are some of the common lessons learned:

- The narratives of these women preachers more closely resemble the spiritual autobiographies of the medieval women mystic writers than modern autobiographical writings. The focus was clearly on describing the experiences of conversion and sanctification and detailing the public ministry that followed these empowering spiritual events. The women paid scant attention to relaying the private details of their lives. Biographical details of when or where they were born, whether they were married or single or had other family ties or were often omitted showing that these women wrote out of sense of testifying to God's work rather than for selfaggrandizement. This style of writing can be traced to Augustine and early martyrs, but is most clearly reminiscent of the writings of Madame Guyon (1648-1717) a French Roman Catholic noblewoman who wrote of her experiences of interior prayer and "experiential piety." Guyon was a model for John Wesley and the early Methodists and was well-read by the early holiness adherents in America.
- The doctrine and experience of sanctification- "the religious experience that followed conversion"-impelled these women to redefine themselves in ways that allowed them to step outside of the prescribed boundaries of a woman's sphere of influence and activity. The women individually claimed a "sanctified self empowered by the Holy Spirit to engage in public religious activities." This "prophetic authority" proffered by the Holy Spirit compelled women to speak and act in public ways to glorify and serve God. This experience of

- spiritual power was heightened by the Wesleyan/Holiness commitment to what Stanley calls "egalitarian primitivism." The early Wesleyan/Holiness churches and groups sought to model themselves after the early church (primitivism) and found in scripture evidence that the Holy Spirit called and used people regardless of gender (egalitarianism).
- These women preachers' lives show an understanding of gender that is "socially constructed" rather than "essentialist." Rather that seeing women's roles as rigidly and divinely outlined as an essential or innate part of womanhood, these women came to understand their gender roles as social expectations the Holy Spirit could and did supercede for holy purposes.
- The power to minister in troubled areas and confront social ills comes from the Holy Spirit. Stanley cited numerous examples of women preachers working in terrible urban slums, in hostile communities, or overcoming initial revulsion to work with great empathy with prostitutes and the "outdoor poor." Some agitated against slavery, for woman's suffrage, and Alma White, founder of the Pillar of Fire vocally supported the Equal Rights Amendment. Especially compelling were the words and work of Lela McConnell, an early twentiethcentury Methodist local preacher from the mountains of Kentucky. McConnell, a Canadian, settled in Kentucky and over the course of two decades founded four high schools, twenty-nine churches, supervised 129 workers, and operated a radio station. She accomplished this without the financial support of any denomination. Only Asbury

College, her alma mater, took up an annual offering. All ministries were operated on the "faith line." Stanley writes, quoting McConnell, "...the Holy Spirit cannot operate alone but 'works through human agency.' Women were willing coworkers assisted by the Holy Spirit." In case after case, many times the God's "agent" in the forgotten places were holiness women.

"There was nothing fragile about these women." In all the book this is my favorite sentence. Stanley writes, "The sanctified self was not inferior. Self-confidence exuded from the narratives of sanctified women. They rejected the societal construction of a weak female self and posited, in its place, a strong sanctified self." This self, these

women believed was "divinely constructed," and this experience of the Holy Spirit allowed the "ethic of empowerment [to displace] the ethic of domesticity."

Stanley's book is a helpful and careful look at how the Holiness/Wesleyan women preachers saw themselves in light of their spiritual experiences and ensuing public ministries.

Holy Boldness should also serve to engage other scholars of gender or autobiographical studies in recognizing this under-researched group of America's religious pioneers. What I hope, as a reader, is that Susie will follow this important study with a compilation that lets these women's words reverberate anew. I missed hearing more directly from them. The power of their own words was necessarily overshadowed by the

analysis. I wished that the book had sidebars or annotated quoted material directly from the autobiographies. Any woman called to preach—in the nineteenth century or now—can never have enough direct encouragement from sisters in the spirit to follow faithfully in a world still unused to hearing our voices.

Let me know what you are reading. Send email comments or short reviews to rlairdme@aol.com.

Rebecca Laird is the editor of *Sacred Journey*, an ordained minister in the Church of the Nazarene, and regularly conducts retreats on prayer and spiritual practice.

ANSR 2003 Conference

Date: March 13 - 15, 2003

Place: King Conference Center – Kansas City, Missouri

Speaker: Janine T. Metcalf

Cost: The Conference itself is free. Housing and meal costs are held to a minimum*

Theme: Women In Ministry: What We Say, What We Do

(The conference will focus primarily on the education, placement, and support of women in pastoral ministry)

Janine T. Metcalf currently serves as the first woman senior pastor of the El Cajon Church of the Nazarene in El Cajon, California. She taught for many years in the Philosophy and Religion Department of Point Loma Nazarene University and as an adjunct professor at Nazarene Theological Seminary. She is also an ordained elder who has preached in camp meetings, churches and retreats throughout the USA. She has been a registered evangelist, and has ministered as a staff pastor for nine years at Pasadena First Church of the Nazarene.

Janine's testimony is a profound story about God's relentless grace. She used to be a television reporter and anchor. She spent ten years reporting on everything from raging fires to floods, earthquakes to bathtub races. She interviewed three presidents, was shot at in a street riot, and flew with the Navy's aerobats "The Blue Angels."

She became a born again Christian while covering the Iranian hostage crisis of 1979-81. For ten months she interviewed Reverend Earl Lee, whose son was one of 52 American hostages held in Iran. The Lee family's faith throughout the ordeal made an incredible impact on Janine's life. Before the Americans were released, Janine attended the Lee's church in Pasadena and committed her life to Christ. Her journalism experience was not wasted. She recently produced an hour long documentary about women in leadership ministry in the Church of the Nazarene. The video, *Ablaze with Love*, is part of her doctorate dissertation for Asbury Theological Seminary. It not only profiles the lives of Nazarene matriarchs, but provides biblical and historical evidence to support our century old polity of gender mutuality in ministry.

*There is no registration cost for the conference. Housing at King Conference Center is \$30 for a room per night. Meals for the entire conference will total about \$15 to \$20. Shuttle service between Kansas City International Airport and the conference is available for \$20 round trip.

Participation is open to those interested in sociology and other research related to the Church of the Nazarene. For more information contact the Research Center at (800) 306-9928 or research@nazarene.org

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