



Supermom—Superminister!

by Lynda Weaver-Williams

When Hillary and Chelsea Clinton toured the streets of Williamsburg a few weeks ago, one female fan reached to shake Mrs. Clinton’s hand and gushed, “You’re superwoman!” We believe it too. According to media experts, Hillary Rodham Clinton seems to “have it all.” Kimba Wood and Zoe Baird were also considered “superwomen,” at least to the extent that they had the expertise and experience to be considered for the post of Attorney General while simultaneously balancing marriages, babies and households.

The intense criticism Mrs. Clinton receives and the conflict surrounding Zoe Baird’s nomination (and

indirectly Kimba Wood’s as well) reveals the difficulties our society has in living with a “superwoman.” The subtext in both the Baird and the Wood situation revolved around the issue of child care, not around their qualifications. The indication is that the Clinton administration abandoned the Wood nomination because politically it would have been difficult to focus attention on Judge Wood’s expertise in the legal field while the hot topic centered on how she cared for her child. Before Zoe Baird, do you think confirmation hearings focused on child care? Inasmuch as there actually are women who have phenomenal successes,

society as a whole expressed its discomfort by the absurd questions of the congressional confirmation hearings and by the media-created “category” labeling successful women as “superwomen.”

The superwoman complex is a dangerous one. It is upwardly mobile middle class in its tenor (single mothers on welfare do not consider it optional); it reflects a kind of cultural consumerism, and it is an elitist concept that usually results in guilt and exhaustion.

As women ministers, we have wrestled with the superwoman idol. By listening to our culture, we have assumed that we could make a few

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Ministry and Motherhood

This issue of the newsletter focuses on the problems and joys that go with correlating professional and family responsibilities. “How do you do it all?” a young married woman asked. Her plea for suggestions and role models prompted the theme for several first-person articles in which women ministers reflect on their experiences. The writers, representing different ages and stages, have babies or grown children or in between.

To write about priorities and responsibilities in ministry and family life is not easy because there is no one “right answer.” But we all seem to agree on one thing: children are important; families are important. To relegate children to second place while the Lord’s work is done with one’s best self, leaving only leftovers for one’s own children, is denial and sin—and surely cause for emotional problems, behavioral “acting out” and ultimately rejection of church and spiritual matters.

So check out the reflections and suggestions of the writers. Some readers may have additional ideas to share. We invite you to write with your opinions and suggestions for publication in a future issue.

Editorial:

Setting Priorities

by Barbara Jackson

Mother's Day has come and gone. While the day is a big promotion by florists, card shops and churches, even so it is always a day for warm thoughts and hugs. Our children called to give greeting and to catch up with all our comings and goings. I took the occasion to tell them I was proud of them, the real significance of the day.

Knowing the theme of the newsletter was the notion of balancing family and work responsibilities, I had thought about them and what it must have meant to have parents so involved in church and denominational life. Did we give them enough of our time and our ideas about life? Were we there for them? Whatever they might say, on balance we must have done pretty well by them, for they are embarked on their life paths with their heads straight and are living responsible, moral lives. We are grateful.

My husband and I met at seminary, and with the decision to get married was a parallel decision to share our pilgrimage of faith and ministry. Upon the coming of children, it was clear that they came first, and I settled in to a life of being—that time-honored word!—homemaker. Only later when they were beginning school did I begin part-time work to share the fruits of my seminary education.

The question of “ministry and motherhood” must seem odd for a journal dedicated to women in ministry. It is not—we think it is right on target. For no matter what doors are open to women for careers, the question of who is keeping the kids does not go away. This is a day of day care, single parents who must work, educated women who have contributions to make in the work place, time-saving accessories like clothes

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Family and Career: Basic Assumptions

By Judy Bailey

Our basic assumptions and presuppositions are often so much a part of us that it is difficult to name them. When our first child was born, almost 25 years ago, there was no question that I would stay home with her. In fact, I couldn't imagine leaving her with someone else. For me then, and actually since then, family came first. I have always felt that when we had children we were assuming a responsibility that was ongoing until they reached adulthood. They were to be cared for in the best way we knew.

Parenthood, however, is a shared role. Our two children are *ours*. Their care and relationships include both of us. Though I spent the most time with them during their earliest years, David was as capable of being with them as I, and cared for them easily when I had to be away.

Being in ministry gives one of the best gifts to parenting. Professional ministry has flexibility in scheduling which permits us to “be there” for our children and do our work as well, most of the time. We were able to schedule our work to be with them at special events at school, to be home after school, to take vacations with them, etc.

As I look back over the past years from the vantage point of experience, I realize that “for everything there is a season.” In my life, with my particular style of being, I cannot do everything at once. I have to concentrate on one major focus at a time. My focus early on was being with our children, working part time when they became older. For the past seven years I have worked full time while they have been in high school and college. My focus now is shifting more to my profession as they become independent and move out on their own. The timing is right.

I have felt frustration because my peers are “ahead” of me in their fields. Yet, given my basic assumption, I would not do it any differently. There is immense satisfaction in knowing that we did our best to provide at each stage in their lives the home they needed to develop and grow. We were able to provide the kind of attention and support so they did well in school and are accomplishing their own goals for their lives. They are two wonderful young women, people who like to be with us, friends with whom we look forward to relating the rest of our lives.

Back to basic assumptions. I realize that I am a product of my generation, and younger women are investing in careers for longer periods of time before getting married and before having children. Had I been established in my career, I probably would have been reluctant to do what I did.

I am optimistic about the ability to do both parenting and profession, especially where there is shared responsibility and values, and flexibility in work schedules.

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Synergy, the newsletter of Virginia Baptist Women in Ministry is published in Richmond, Va. Subscription rates are \$20 per year. Manuscript submissions should be mailed to **Synergy** Editor, 9211 Whitemont Dr., Richmond, VA 23294.

Editorial Board: Judy Bailey, Wanda Fennell, Rebecca Glass, Ellen Gwathmey, Holly J. Irvin, Barbara Jackson, editor, Betty Pugh, chair, B.J. Seymour. ©1993

FEATURES

A Juggling Act

by Holly J. Irvin

Recently at a street carnival, I watched an entertainer perform several juggling feats. First, he kept six tennis balls in the air. Then he juggled a tennis ball, a Nerf ball and a bowling ball. His big conclusion was juggling wands of fire while riding on a unicycle.

Many women find the struggle to balance their careers and family life is one big juggling act—like juggling a tennis ball, a Nerf ball and a bowling ball while riding a unicycle *through* fire. Besides trying to be the best at our careers and in our homes, women face the added dimension of stereotypes of women's roles. And for many, guilt is an issue to be reckoned with.

Guilt is a strong force for me. When I spend a lot of time at church, I feel guilty for not being with my husband and 8-year-old stepdaughter. When I am at home, I worry that I have not spent enough time planning or visiting. I want to be a "success" in both worlds. I want to be the best pastor I can be and a great wife and mother as well. I face the constant

Coping With Motherhood

by Wanda Sauley Fennell

"Are you going to send her to me to take care of?" asked a member of my husband's church the first time she saw our newborn daughter, Dara. "I keep children, you know," she continued.

"Heck no!" I replied. "I didn't haul her around inside me for nine months just so someone else could have all the fun now that she's out." Steve and I decided early on that we wanted to do most of the caretaking ourselves rather than rely so heavily on others. I was not teasing when I said we did not want to miss out on all the fun. It hasn't always been fun, and it hasn't been easy, but the fact that we both are ministers has allowed us a certain flexibility that we might not have if we were in other professions.

I returned to my part-time minister of music position at Grace Church in Richmond when Dara was five weeks old.

MINISTRY AND MOTHERHOOD

dilemma of how to spend my time and energy. Even though I know career and home are not mutually exclusive, the two worlds often come into conflict.

I have to work with my preconceived notions of what makes a good pastor and a good wife and mother. I bring with me many of the social mores and traditional ideas about women's place in society.

Like an onion, I am slowly peeling back the layers of tradition one by one to decide if I choose to keep them as part of my identity. For example, cooking. I do not particularly like to cook, but I feel guilty because of this so-called "failing." The traditional woman not only makes fabulous family meals and church potluck dishes but enjoys it! I have rejected this stereotype and its power to induce guilt. I can be a whole woman without being a great cook!

But for each image I confront, I find more I need to challenge. As I peel back each layer of tradition, I find more and more of my own true identity and feel less guilt.

My husband and I think about expanding our family. Yet I am filled with all kinds of questions. How will I fulfill my ministry and provide a good home for a new baby? How do I juggle my career and still be a good mother?

Steve was associate pastor at Westhampton Church only a few miles away. That allowed us to shuttle Dara back and forth. Steve would have Dara when I had rehearsals or meetings. We both had portable cribs in our offices, and we would work around her schedule. If Steve had her when it was time for her to nurse, he would drive her over to Grace.

This arrangement worked well for us. It did not hurt that the associate pastor at Grace also had his infant daughter at work with him. We had some interesting staff meetings in those days. It took us a little longer to get things done, but we did get them done, and the people at Grace thought our bringing the babies to work was wonderful. Steve did hear a little grumbling that he was not being paid to baby-sit, but he got his work done, too, and the grumbling eventually ceased.

Things changed drastically in November 1990 when we moved to Fredericksburg for Steve to become pastor of Massaponax Church. No longer were we just down the road from each other. New arrangements had to be made. First, we moved our staff meeting at Grace from Tuesday to Wednesday so that I would have to make the hour-long drive to Richmond only twice a week. Then Steve rearranged his schedule so that he could have Dara with him on Wednesday

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WOMEN IN THE NEWS

New Positions and Changes

Laura Jane Abernathy has joined the staff of Bethel Church, Dan River Association, as minister of music.

Kathy Berry has been named world missions conference coordinator for the Foreign Mission Board, SBC. She was formerly writer in the FMB news and information office.

Rhonda Nash has joined the staff of Hull's Memorial Church, Fredericksburg, as minister of youth, children and education. She is a graduate of Southern Seminary.

Suzu Hamrick has been named director of church planting strategies for the Peninsula Association. She is a graduate of Southwestern Seminary.

Lucy Minter of Warrenton died on February 21 at age 33. She was the minister of music at Warrenton Church and a graduate of Southern Seminary.

Barbara Hollowell, a native of Mississippi and a graduate of Southwestern Seminary, has become minister of youth and education at Goochland Church, Dover Association.

Gloria Youngblood has resigned as minister to children and youth at Belmont Church, Charlottesville.

Amanda Atkin has joined the staff of Walnut Hill Church, Petersburg, as minister to senior adults. She is a student at Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond.

Marilyn Nelson Prickett has been named to the faculty of Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond to direct the seminary's internship program. She was formerly director of Christian social ministries for the District of Columbia convention.

Anne Davis, Virginia native and professor at Southern Seminary, will serve Virginia Woman's Missionary Union during her seven-month sabbatical leave to assist in developing a prototype for women's leadership.

Betty Law has been named associate global mission coordinator for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, based in Atlanta. She was formerly vice-president for the Americas with the Foreign Mission Board, SBC, until her retirement earlier this year.

Anne S. Taylor has retired as Baptist campus minister at Radford University, completing 25 years of service in May.

Betty Tiller has retired from the Virginia Baptist General Board as secretary in the office of stewardship development, after 31 years of service.

Faye Pearson, missionary in Taiwan, was elected FMB area director for East Asia.

Ordinations

Rhonda Biller was ordained to the Christian ministry on December 6 by Westover Church, Richmond, where she is minister of outreach and youth.

Janell A. Johnson was ordained to the Christian ministry by Zoar Church, Mid-Tidewater Association, on March 21. A graduate of Southwestern Seminary, she serves as associate pastor for Christian education.

Appointments

Diana Blackwell of Springfield was appointed missionary by the Home Mission Board to serve in New York, where her husband Bill is Baptist campus minister at the U.S. Military Academy.

Basic Assumptions...from page 2

My caution is that children's needs are specific at specific times and they cannot be put on "hold." Therefore, judgments have to be made about where one is needed the most.

The biggest mistake young ministers make is to assume that the church cannot do without them, and therefore sacrifice time with their children.

I believe that quality in regard to career is most essential. However, quality *and* quantity for children is basic, especially in their early years. Combine that assumption with the question of whether we are loving our children as we would love ourselves, and we can make the best decisions.

The Reverend Judy Bailey is Baptist campus minister, University of Richmond.

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These questions I have considered for quite some time.

Trying to find the answers, I seek out women in ministry with children who have faced these same dilemmas. Their stories help and guide me. They can be a model for me of how to be a minister and a mother at the same time. I see how their ministries and family lives complement each other and allow them to be fulfilled in both areas.

I wish I could say I have found all the answers. Instead I have discovered the answers are different for each of us. We each have a unique calling from God to the ministry and different family circumstances. So too our responses are unique. The way I choose to juggle my career and family life may be different from yours. The important thing is for each of us to stay true to ourselves and to the God whom we serve. Our pilgrimages are similar. As sisters in Christ, we can impart grace and understanding to each other.

The Reverend Holly J. Irvin is associate pastor at Tomahawk Church, Midlothian.

SPOTLIGHT

June Hardy Dorsey minister of education, Ginter Park Baptist Church, Richmond

Interviewed by Ellen Gwathmey

June Hardy Dorsey, minister of education at Ginter Park Baptist Church in Richmond, and her husband David, who is associate chaplain at the University of Richmond, are expecting their first child in June.

I recently visited their home, and we talked about ministry and impending motherhood and what changes will come about by the interweaving of these two calls. June came to Richmond, and to Ginter Park, five years ago because of David's position at U.R. She never dreamed, when she was looking for work, that she would find a place like Ginter Park—one where she can teach out of her expertise and also where she can learn and grow. She describes her position at Ginter Park as "enabling, facilitating, creating and nurturing educational ministries for all facets of the church family." It is the type of job she would move anywhere to have.

June grew up in Japan, the daughter of missionary parents, in a home that ministered. She herself came to enter ministry through teaching. Being a people-oriented person, she majored in education at Berea College and, in order to gain teaching experience, served as a missionary journeyman in the Philippines. After returning home, she lived with her grandparents and taught kindergarten in rural Kentucky for two years before entering Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. While working on her M.Div. there, she met and married David Dorsey.

Her pregnancy has already brought changes in her work style and work relationships. She is doing a lot of work at home during her last month of pregnancy. She says that in some ways her position has been validated. She has

experienced a deepening rapport with mothers in the church. Furthermore, impending motherhood has helped her establish credibility with older men who are uncertain how to relate to a female minister but do know how to relate to a pregnant woman!

June expects motherhood to further strengthen her commitment to family-friendly ministries. Is not one function of the church to build up families? she asks.

From the beginning of her ministry at Ginter Park, June has been an advocate for children. Whenever plans are being made, her question is, "What about the children?" The church now provides a nursery during any church-wide function.

She foresees motherhood increasing her input and interest in programming for children—in that she will find herself more completely informed at each level than she may have been in the past.

Ministry, she says, is a crazy career for a parent, for you are always on call professionally. There is, however, an incredible amount of flexibility. One does not have to be "at the office" all

the time to be working. To that end the Dorseys are installing a home office, and she will be hooked up to the church's computer system so that she will be able to work at home some of the time. This is possible because of the

***"Is not one function of
the church to build up
families?"***

trust that has developed between her and the staff and members of Ginter Park.

The church is excited about the Dorsey baby, and members, particularly the homebound with whom she has a close relationship, are already anxious to meet this new life God is creating.

June says that ministry is the profession to which she is called. Yet she and David are committed first to family and their personal spiritual journey. Ministry comes after.

*The Reverend Ellen Gwathmey
is minister of visitation and outreach,
River Road Church, Richmond*

A LITTLE HUMOR

Parents divide their time between worrying over how their children will turn out and when they will turn in.

Nothing is so upsetting as to have company drop in and the house look as it usually does.

Mother Nature is a remarkable woman, but she still can't jump from summer to winter without a fall, or from winter to summer without a spring.

Jack: "My idea of a good wife is a woman who can make good bread." **Jill:** "My idea of a good husband is a man who can raise the dough in the hour of knead."

An inventor is a crackpot who beomes a genius when his ideas catch on.

In politics, if you want anything said, ask a man; if you want anything done, ask a woman. —Margaret Thatcher.

Clipped ads: "For sale: Mixing bowl set designed to please a cook with round bottom for sufficient beating." "For sale: Four-poster bed, 101 years old. Perfect for antique lover." "For sale: antique desk suitable for lady with thick legs and large drawers."

Father: "Don't you think our son gets his intelligence from me?" **Mother:** "He must have. I still have mine."

The woman at the store complaint desk always smiles and keeps her cool. When asked how she manages, she pointed to her earrings. One said IN, the other said OUT.

A man who boasts he runs things around the house is referring to the lawn mower, the dishwasher and errands.

'SAINTS' AND HEROES'

Saints and Heroes: Anne Hutchinson

In this space we feature women who were forces in their own day, yet are relatively unknown outside of theological or historical circles. Because history has ignored women in favor of the activities of the larger society, men and women working in feminist theology have sought to recover the voice of women in the church, and to bring to light women who made contributions in service, spirituality or intellectual depth.

by **Barbara Jackson**

Anne Hutchinson (1591-1643), religious leader in Puritan New England, was branded as heretic by the authorities there and banished from the colony, joined Roger Williams briefly and was later murdered in an Indian massacre. Why did it happen?

Anne Hutchinson was born in England where she was educated by her father, Francis Marbury, a clergyman highly critical of the Church of England. He educated his daughter because believers were enjoined to read and think about the Bible as a source of salvation. She was the oldest of four girls and the object of her father's special attention. Had the first child been a boy, the young Anne might not have been so carefully schooled. She grew up in a climate of dissent in England. Puritans and Separatists agitated against the established church—and religious conversation, argument and fervor were encouraged. Marbury himself was tried and imprisoned for heresy several times.

After her marriage to a successful merchant and the birth of several children, Anne and her husband followed the eminent preacher John Cotton to the Massachusetts Bay Colony to participate in the founding of a new society based on Puritan religious principles. Anne was 43 years old. Nine years later she was dead.

In New England Anne soon attracted a following. She held meetings for women in her home to study the text of the announced sermon and to discuss spiritual matters. She soon had larger attendance than the church services.

Though first praised as a pious woman, she soon reaped scorn for threatening the peace and well-being of the colony by holding meetings in her home—"a thing not tolerable nor comely in the sight of God nor fitting for your sex," said her chief opponent Governor John Winthrop. She was seen as an agitator, a heretic and a threat to the religious and civil authorities.

Anne Hutchinson was a midwife and nurse. She dispensed herbs and potions for various illnesses and assisted in childbirth. This particular activity led to the accusation of witchcraft. Formally charged with heresy, not witchcraft, she was excommunicated and banished in 1638, and moved with her family to Rhode Island.

It is clear, however, that her troubles stemmed from her religious activities. The intimation of witchcraft, a troubling phenomenon in New England of that era, was a result of the notoriety she achieved and the heretical nature of her ideas. The accusation was made after the still birth of her last child, a malformed fetus that was seen as proof Hutchinson was a witch. Today such a charge might be called a smokescreen and an after-the-fact justification

What exactly did Anne Hutchinson propound that was such a threat? She affirmed that the Holy Spirit dwells in every believer and that salvation comes by the individual intuition of God's grace. Grace is a personal experience between God and the individual, she said, without regard to obedience to the laws of church and state.

Such views were indeed heresy in the theocracy of the Puritan Massachusetts Bay Colony and were branded with the label "Antinomian" (i.e., against the law). This particular heresy was identified in the 16th century as the belief that the dispensation of grace frees the believer from the obligations of the Old Testament moral law—Martin Luther's doctrine of justification by faith was so characterized by his detractors.

Further, Anne Hutchinson questioned the dominant religious-political theory that made Eve, evil and woman synonymous. In Puritanism she saw woman treated as a necessary evil—necessary as the bearer of children to ensure the future, evil because of Eve who was the source of sin. These ideas she repudiated. In other words, she challenged the social order.

Anne Hutchinson was an important figure in the religious and social milieu that we associate with Roger Williams. The same ideas of freedom of the spirit that propelled his actions informed her teachings. She was clearly out of place and not attuned to the theocratic ideas of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Through the years her name has been but a footnote in histories—yet one which deserves to be known. A woman ahead of her day, she is a woman for our own time. The ideas she taught are current today. Her battles are still being fought. Puritanism is reborn in the new guise of fundamentalism, and women are still the targets and still the victims. Witch hunts live on.

Barbara Jackson is the editor of Synergy.

For additional information see: *Divine Rebel* by Selma Williams, Holt, 1981; *Devil in the Shape of a Woman* by Carol F. Karlson, Norton, 1987; *Her Story: Women in Christian Tradition* by Barbara MacHaffie, Fortress, 1986; *Readings in Her Story* by Barbara J. MacHaffie, Fortress, 1992. More extensive bibliographies may be found in these sources.

Barbara Jackson is the editor of Synergy

Gleanings From the News

Southern Baptist Women in Ministry in February celebrated the decade since its 1983 founding at a special worship service in Florida and at special events at the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship in May, and will hold a similar observance at the Southern Baptist Convention in June. The SBWIM publishes the newsletter *Folio* and gives information, support and fellowship to women in ministry throughout the country. In 1993 SBWIM has over 300 members with a *Folio* circulation of 4000. Over 900 women have been ordained to the ministry by Southern Baptist churches.

The 1992 SBWIM survey of female ministers supports perceptions of a hostile climate for women ministers in the SBC. The return of 356 responses showed 82% with advanced degrees and 55% ordained. 63% said they would not encourage a young woman called to the pastorate to remain in the SBC. Top job frustrations were overwork/overscheduling, lack of acceptance, and clerical work. Top satisfactions were mentoring/teaching, service, fulfillment of calling, relationships, counseling and preaching. The top barriers to ministry revealed in the survey were: Baptist pastors, the Southern Baptist Convention, negative seminary experiences, male models in ministry and local associations. (reported in *Folio*, Spring 1993)

The Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond (BTSR) has adopted a "Statement of Affirmation for Women in Theological Education." The faculty resolution stated: "It is contrary to our Baptist heritage to exclude women from participation in the work of the church or for the denomination to determine whom a church will or will not ordain." Also, the faculty statement blames "the turmoil visited upon our denomination on those who exclude other Baptists from full participation in

From the Chair

New Beginnings

by **Betty Pugh, coordinator, VBWIM**

On a wonderful day in April our church was officially inducted into the American Baptist Churches, USA, during the regional meeting of the American Baptist Churches of the South. The regional group met in Richmond for their annual convention. I cannot describe what it feels like to have an additional identity that brings me pride and challenges me ever more fully to consider what the commonwealth of God's rule looks like. The ABC/USA is 36% minority. Women serve in leadership roles in and throughout the national and international boards. There is even a woman who serves to advise and consult only with professional clergywomen. I find that this is *beyond* exciting.

This event also reminds me that the whole journey of faith is one of constant differentiation and the ability to know and express one's understanding of the Divine both inside and outside the organized structures of faith. Basic concepts of respect, free inquiry and soul competency play very

important roles in the development of faith. And, of course, the thing that really makes us Baptist—freedom!

There is nothing more exciting than being with other people of faith who share your own priorities about community, justice and love. Yet I know that the comfort and support that this new ABC identity offers me is not a place to become complacent and cocky. It is a place to rejuvenate and grow with positive strokes so that I might struggle and grow in other places that constantly confront and attack my sense of being and ministry, as well as my understanding of the Divine.

New beginnings may bring joy and excitement, but they also bring greater responsibility in this world to live and act in the ways of love and justice. I celebrate this new beginning and the hope that it offers to me and to our church: new ways of seeing how the partial disclosure of God's working will is active and visible today. I celebrate this group of Baptists that have seen fit to provide us, a wandering people, another home and a place to feel safe and loved. I celebrate new beginnings.

The Reverend Betty Pugh is minister of church and family life, Grace Church, Richmond

denominational life because of their gender, their particular Biblical interpretation, or because of a difference of opinion on political issues." BTSR will graduate its first class on May 28.

Likewise, **Golden Gate Seminary** trustees adopted a statement affirming women in ministry, but acknowledged that opportunities for service may be limited by prevailing practice. Under the policy students will be counseled to prepare for areas of ministry where they are likely to find employment.

In the wake of the chaos in the seminaries caused by the theological-political controversy of the SBC, **other schools are starting divinity schools.** Mercer University in Georgia is the latest; Samford University in Alabama and Gardner-Webb in N.C. have begun divinity schools; Wake Forest University in N.C. and Baylor in Texas have plans to do so. Two non-Southern Baptist universities, Duke (N.C.) and Emory (Ga.) have started Baptist studies programs as part of their

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afternoons. I kept her in the morning, then left for Richmond when he came home at noon. A few months of this left us exhausted at the end of the day—just when we needed energy for rehearsals and Wednesday night programs. Another adjustment was needed.

Dara was almost two years old and was developmentally at a place to enjoy playing with other children, so we explored opportunities for that. We finally arranged for her to spend Wednesdays with a member of Steve's church, a young woman with a daughter a few months younger than Dara. She also kept a one-year-old boy. Dara enjoyed her time with these two children. She and Steve both enjoyed their regular date on Wednesday afternoon when they would go out for supper.

This arrangement lasted about a year and a half, until the church member was no longer able to keep Dara. By this time I was pregnant again and did not have the energy to interact with Dara for hours and then drive to Richmond for a long day of work. At this point, Steve began to take Dara with him on Wednesdays. He would take her to visit the homebound church members, or she would play at the church while he worked there. As you might expect, it took him longer to get things done, but he managed. When it was impossible for him to have Dara with him in certain situations, he would call on church members to keep Dara for a few hours. We have been especially grateful for these people since the grandparents live in other states.

In September of 1992 we made another adjustment to our routine. Dara, now three and a half, began attending preschool two mornings a week, and I began a five-month maternity leave from my position at Grace. Dara likes school, and I have a few hours at home to work or spend with our baby, Charlotte, who was born in October. Again, Steve has enough flexibility in his schedule that most mornings he

takes Dara to school and picks her up. They have lunch together at least one of the two days at a restaurant of Dara's choosing.

I returned to work in February 1993, necessitating yet another round of accommodations. First, we bought a car phone because I take Charlotte to work with me and do not want to be stranded on the side of the road with her at ten p.m. Next, the college student who baby-sits children at Grace (at the church's expense) during our Wednesday night programs remains during choir practice (at my expense) to keep Charlotte. During handbell rehearsal, Charlotte is in the capable hands of one of our church members, a 78-year-old man who volunteered to

keep her. The staff at Grace regularly earn stars for their crowns by speaking over a sometimes noisy baby during staff meetings. Steve and I could not do what we are doing without the support of our churches and colleagues.

I am grateful that I have been able to combine a fulfilling, challenging ministry role with my primary role of mother. The part-time work allows me to maintain my professional identity, certainly important to me, without causing me to miss so much of the precious few years that our daughters are young.

*The Reverend Wanda Sauley Fennell
is minister of music at
Grace Church, Richmond.*

Strategies for combining motherhood and ministry

by Wanda Sauley Fennell

1. Decide what is important you, then set out to make it work—even if you've never seen it done before. As Martin Luther advised, sin boldly!
2. Think creatively. Don't be afraid to try unusual arrangements between home and work. If something does not work, try something else.
3. If your husband is not in a flexible work situation, you might consider hiring a sitter to keep your baby at your place of work. This would make it easier to nurse the baby longer than if you were separated for long periods of time.
4. Ask for what you want. The worst that can happen is you'll get "no" for an answer. I asked for a nine-month maternity leave, which the church was unwilling to grant, but they did agree to five months, a lot longer than most women get.
5. Keep in mind that none of this is permanent. No matter how difficult it seems, it will only last a few years. Then you will probably be lamenting that your child has grown up so fast.
6. Encourage your personnel committee (or whoever makes these kinds of decisions) to be, as Martin Luther King put it, the headlights rather than the taillights of society. Help them to see that they can send a strong message to the community regarding the worth of children and families.

RESOURCES

The Bookshelf

compiled by Barbara Jackson

The Bridge to Wholeness: A Feminine Alternative to the Hero Myth, Jean Benedict Raffa, LuraMedia. An analysis of the cultural bias in favor of hero-myths and the feminine gift for relationship.

All We're Meant To Be: Biblical Feminism for Today, 3rd ed., by Letha Dawson Scanzoni and Nancy Hardesty, Eerdmans. Originally published in 1974, an important look at the roles of women in society, home and church, updated to reflect the conditions of the 90s.

Women, Religion and Sexuality, Jeanne Becher, ed., Trinity. Collection of essays from various traditions on such topics as women's ordination, sexist language, modernity, abortion, patriarchy, divorce and remarriage.

The Gospel According to Mary, Miriam Therese Winter, Crossroad. An imaginative look at a gospel that might have been written by a woman and how it might differ from the traditional account of Jesus, women, and the early church.

What Language Shall I Borrow? God-Talk in Worship: A Male Response to Feminist Theology, Brian Wren, Crossroads. A theological, linguistic and liturgical examination of the inclusive language issue. Postulates that names for God is a problem for the whole church and is not exclusively a feminist issue.

Weaving The Visions: Patterns in Feminist Spirituality, Judith Plaskow and Carol P. Christ, eds, HarperCollins, 1989. In this sequel to *Womanspirit Rising*, the editors present the central religious categories of theology through a wide range of voices and traditions, including Jewish, Christian, African and Native American.

Her Story: Women In Christian Tradition, Barbara J. MacHaffie, Fortress, 1986 and **Readings in Her Story**, 1992. A critical exploration of church history based on the assumption that dignity, equality and full participation of women in the Christian community are important however ignored in traditional histories. The author consolidates recent scholarship into a useful and readable survey from biblical time to the present. Sequel includes primary sources.

How to Make the World a Better Place for Women in Five Minutes a Day, Donna Jackson, Hyperion, 1992. Brief suggestions and lists of resources for many of the issues all women face: child care and family leave, violence, self-esteem, women's health, sexual harassment, sexism in the media, political power.

Ungodly Women: Gender and the First Wave of American Fundamentalism, Betty A. DeBerg, Fortress, 1990. An analysis of the emergence of fundamentalism in the early 20th century, showing that gender issues were not peripheral to biblical literalism but were at the center of the movement. The historical background presented enables one to better understand the contemporary fundamentalist pro-family and anti-equality stance.

CALENDAR

May 30-June 1

Retreat at Trinity Center, Pine Knoll Shores, N.C. Theme is "Body & Soul" with an emphasis on spirituality. Offered by The Resource Center for Women and Ministry in the South. Cost is \$125. To register send check to RCWMS, Suite 608, 331 W. Main St., Durham, NC 27701 by May 20. Tel. (919) 687-0408.

June 13

Southern Baptist Women in Ministry meeting prior to SBC in Houston, TX. Brunch at 10:45 a.m., Marriott Hotel, \$13. Worship at 12:30 at Methodist Hospital. Deadline for brunch is June 2. Make checks payable to SBWIM, and mail to 2800 Frankfort Ave., Louisville, KY 40206.

June 22-25

UR Pastors School. "Re•thinking/Re•mapping." Program includes Nancy Ammerman, Will Campbell, Joanne B.

Ciulla, Keith Parks, and David Schuller. University of Richmond Chaplain's Office, 289-4500.

June 28-July 2 & July 5-9

Conference: "Interpreting the Faith." Union Theological Seminary, Richmond. Preachers include Cynthia Campbell, Jouette Massler and Ellen Skidmore. (804) 355-0671.

September 23-25

"Contemplative Lifestyle." Weekend retreat featuring Glenn Hinson, at Richmond Hill retreat center. \$100 donation. Contact Richmond Hill, 2209 East Grace St, Richmond 23223. (804) 783-7903.

Nov. 9

Virginia Baptist Women in Ministry meeting in Richmond for dinner and program. Details later.

(Supermom...from page 1)

adjustments on the model of middle management and emerge with a model of ministry that had it all (just like all those Type-A heart attack-prone men we know). We have believed that we could simply crowd in one more thing to our schedules and learn to live with less sleep.

We have been tempted to be SUPERMINISTER! (She leaps tall senior ministers with a single bound; she can stop a speeding dysfunctional church member with a monosyllable; she nurses the baby in her office during a conference call and while making notes for her next meeting. She is: SUPERMOM, SUPERMINISTER, SUPERWOMAN!

Yet the Voice we know is the one who speaks to broken women, not superwomen. And broken is where we end up, sooner or later. Our Christian vocation has historically been a task of discernment and focus. The emphasis is on intuiting (and I use that word with purpose) the Sacred as it is presented to us, and then living in the place where our holy intuiting converges with the world. This necessarily means we will reject some options because we are not called to belong to them.

In short, we cannot be superwomen; we cannot have it all. Our faith requires some choices. Only children believe they can have it all.

Now to the hard part: the children. According to recent statistics, 66% of all mothers with children under 18 now work outside the home. It would be appropriate to quote statistics concerning working fathers with children under 18, but they weren't available. And isn't that part of the problem?

Much of our society believes that the infusion of women into the work force presents the "problems" of children and how to care for them since

moms aren't home to do so. But the concern of how to give children the best care possible is foundationally a joint concern, to be borne equally by the two people who have chosen to be parents. We as individuals and as a society have yet a few things to learn about working moms, working dads and our children.

We still can't have it all. But just learning to view the situation as one to be borne equally by both parents is an indication that we are moving in the right direction.

As women ministers we will make many different kinds of decisions concerning our families. Some of us will forego child care centers for staying at home. Some of us will find the best caregivers we can and entrust our children to them. Some of us will attempt to be at home part time and continue to be professionally active on a limited basis. Some of us will not have children. And all of us will learn to "juggle"—and it will be exceedingly difficult to do.

Society doesn't quite yet know what to do with women who have calls and careers and children. We should not be required to juggle and balance, but our choices are few, and whatever we choose, it will be scrutinized (see Zoe Baird) in ways that men do not experience.

We live in a transitional historical moment where roles and policies and people are changing. Here are some of the things which I hold on to during this transitional time:

- I support policies such as the Family Leave Act recently passed by Congress. Although it is not much by comparison with advanced European countries, it is a start. I realize that the act does not affect women in church positions, but it does reflect that society at

some level is trying to learn to think in new ways when it come to families.

- I think the Church should provide support to families, not simply overschedule them.
- Congregational structures should provide ways that children can see men in roles traditionally associated with women (such as working in the nursery) and that they should see women in roles usually reserved for men.
- The more we can teach children that they are important to their fathers and their mothers, spend time playing with them, and allow them to understand the choices we have made and why we have made them—the more we communicate to them and to the rest of society that children are indeed a gift from God.

The more we do these things the closer we will get to the day when this kind of discussion won't even be considered necessary.

In the meantime, sisters, courage—and humor, and creativity!

The Reverend Dr. Lynda Weaver-Williams is instructor in religious studies at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Setting Priorities...from page 2

dryers and microwave ovens and ready-made clothes. It is also a day of two-income mortgages and two-income lifestyles! The upshot is that for the woman a career is possible and is often necessary. What is important to recognize is that the traditional role of woman as caregiver has not changed. Even though nowadays fathers share the work of parenting, woman's biology has not changed—nor has society's expectations of her.

For women in ministry, there is a double bind. A woman's calling has led her to invest in advanced education and to fight for the opportunity to exercise her calling in appropriate and meaningful ministries. And that calling to ministry does not necessarily include spinsterhood, asceticism, celibacy or life-denying workaholicism, though some make such choices. The double bind exists in the conflicting claims the woman experiences in trying to balance professional goals and responsibilities against the real demands of family. Today's woman expects to somehow cope with the conflicting claims and get it all done. The fact is that you cannot be and do all that clamors for attention.

So the word from this quarter is: do your best within the time and life space allotted; don't give or accept guilt for things you can't control; know that there is no one right way; remember that children are with you for only a fraction of your life span; don't let the spotlight turn kids into brats; set your priorities and don't put children at the bottom of the list. Though I do not claim special expertise, I could go on and on with such "words of wisdom."

Our ministry, our legacy and our assurance of life everlasting consists in part in the values my husband and I have passed on to our children. Along the way perhaps we have touched some other lives. No regrets!

Barbara Jackson is editor of Synergy

(Gleanings...from page 7)

divinity schools. These moves result from the change in direction of the SBC seminaries, brought about by the fundamentalist faction who seem to substitute indoctrination for education.

The Baptist Women's Center of Richmond announced its formation at BTSR. The purpose is to support women in Baptist life, worship and mission by establishing a career support and networking center, by providing opportunity for women's theological research and scholarship, and by educating both clergy and lay about the role of women in ministry. The center has identified a number of goals, including the establishment of a women's studies program at BTSR, scholarships, a comprehensive women's theological library, and the development of awareness materials.

For a capsule summary of the latest developments at **Southern Seminary**, where the election of a new president is only the latest in a long string of tumultuous events, we recommend the April 29 editorial by *Religious Herald* editor Michael Clingenpeel. The outrages are too numerous to recount in this space. It is enough to say that the

new convention leadership is not content to destroy Southeastern Seminary. It is now bent on destroying another institution. Clingenpeel says, "If you agree with the new direction at Southern, you will want to send your money, and sons, there. Your daughters need not apply."

The Foreign Mission Board is another institution in danger of destruction. A \$1.5 million financial shortfall is expected. The FMB recently announced that 37 jobs in the home office will be cut, as well as additional cuts overseas. The resignation of Harlan Spurgeon because of philosophical disagreement with the direction of the mission board prompted other administrators there to defend their own integrity in staying while trying to function in the midst of difficult times.

The attack on **Woman's Missionary Union** continues to be unresolved. WMU has been rebuked for announcing plans to produce missions materials for all evangelical groups, and has been characterized as "adulterous" by the SBC controlling faction. In a special report, WMU defended its plans to work with all Southern Baptist groups and to produce generic missions literature.

Did You Know?

Two thirds of mothers with young children are in the work force.

51% of moms with newborns return to work before the baby's first birthday.

87% of the nations' 50 million working women are likely to become pregnant during their careers.

127 countries, including Japan and all European countries, have maternal or parental leave for employees. The United States held out until this year. George Bush vetoed previous plans.

The costs of allowing parental leave for most workers is less than letting them quit and hiring replacements.

Nearly 5 million children in the U.S. are in day care.

Child care workers' wages have declined since the 1970s and are now under \$10,000 year, beneath the federal poverty line.

The lower the wages, the higher the turnover, and thus the lower the quality of care for the child.

From *How to Make the World a Better Place for Women*, by Donna Jackosn.

BOOK REVIEW

What Language Shall I Borrow? God-Talk in Worship: A Male Response to Feminist Theology, by Brian Wren

Brian Wren is a hymn writer, poet, liturgist, worship consultant, theologian and minister in the United Reformed Church (UK). He has published collections of inclusive-language hymns used throughout the English-speaking world.

In *What Language Shall I Borrow?*, Brian Wren postulates the idea that male dominance and male imaging of God are issues of faith, justice and personal identity, and are theological problems for all of us, of whatever gender.

He sets forth the notion that every naming of God is a borrowing from human experience, and that language shapes and slants thinking and behavior. If this is so, and if the naming of God is distorted, our knowledge of God will be also.

Male dominance is a theological problem because God creates us in two coequal genders. A civilization built on male domination and female subordination is a profound distortion and sin. And the use of male God-language gives a distorted vision of God and supports male dominance in church and society.

With his main thesis set out, Brian Wren devotes the book to a theological examination of the naming of God in male imagery and the consequences for church and society.

He describes patriarchy as “flawed maleness.” It is a sex role stereotype that 1) reflects the need to control both self and others (i.e., Mr. Tough, repression of tenderness, emotional self-control, pursuit, and possession; and 2) a scorn and flight from the female (i.e., male is normal, female is deviance) and an assumption of superiority over the female.

Patriarchy was formed by men and women in history over a period of over 2500 years. The conclusion is that it was not a given in nature; it was created by humans. It is reproduced and maintained by a social conditioning that defines what is masculine and what is feminine.

Wren treats important sub-themes. For instance, the high cost of control as expressed in sexual violence to women. He describes a marketplace model that overvalues the primary sectors (agriculture, manufacturing, transport, etc.) but devalues the care and nurture of human beings. His discussion of this point described the deadly and dangerous global consequences of patriarchal economics expressed in the denuding of the land.

Another chapter deals with language and metaphors in referring to God. One metaphor he calls KINGAFAP (King-God-Almighty-Father-Protector). It is the dominant metaphor system of Christian worship, one which permeates the Bible and the Christian creeds.

What to do? He suggests several guidelines for the process of creating or revising hymnody while remaining in the Biblical tradition, at the same time exploring alternatives in inclusive language or at least explaining to congregations the nature of God-talk.

It is important not to impose alternative metaphors (i.e., feminist or gender-neutral) from the top, patriarchal fashion, or to dump radically new God-language on a congregation. Yet it is important to face controversy. He goes on to demonstrate how that might be done in a congregation.

Brian Wren’s book is an important study of a crucial issue for our day, a work that deserves wide reading. Congregations, clergy and insightful lay persons would profit from church-wide exploration of the issues. He encourages experiments with inclusive language: both new hymns and old hymns with helpful not hurtful words.

Reviewed by Barbara Jackson

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