

NEW SOUTH FOCUS #17



NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW SOUTH CONFERENCE OF THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH; FOCUS 17; OCTOBER 31, 2019

WOMEN OF GOD: PREACH!

Thoughts on women preachers: When I attended college in the early 90s at Asbury, in my experience, I had only one friend who 100% supported women in pulpit ministry. And I married him . . . Although certainly, I had several friends who were “on the journey” toward women in preaching ministry and many who have now found themselves there. Now, I am sure that there were others there, but in my experience there was no other students who supported the biblical women in pulpit ministry view. I remember one theology professor who

hinted in class that he believed in women in pulpit ministry. The fact that I can remember that emphasizes what a big deal that was for me. Now, I am sure there were more faculty than that who supported women in preaching ministry--our theological stance is still the same: Wesleyan-Holiness-ism has historically encouraged women in all levels of ministry and leadership from the mid to late 1800s. But at that time, it was either not in fashion to talk about or considered too polarizing or perhaps even a nonissue. Or maybe it was dealt with in other courses that I didn't take. All is very possible.

Now, I am surrounded by faculty and staff who fully support women in pulpit ministry with biblical authority. I talk with students who hear women preachers for the first time regularly from our pulpit. Female students often experience a call to ministry at AU and are encouraged to pursue this call for the sake of the kingdom and the world. Now I call that God at work.

I thank God for a biblical, orthodox tradition that supports, encourages and affirms women in preaching ministry. The first evangelists at the tomb were women. If women preached the Good News of All Time, the Best News Ever then--we will keep preaching now!

-- Facebook entry

Dr. Sarah Thomas Baldwin is a New South Conference ministry candidate. She is also Vice President for Student Development at Asbury University. In this role she frequently presents God's Word to the university community.

MISSIONS THOUGHTS FROM LOIS HUFF

Last month Gerry Coates at the denominational missions headquarters asked me to send out a September Challenge to the NSC asking for \$30 a week from every church to help the global Church Planting and Development Fund. I did so, and with a bit of old-fashioned trepidation said I would challenge four households here in our church at Murphy to give a one-time gift of \$30 for the challenge. I was not nervous about asking my church to do this, but about committing that in October I would report the results to you. I thought, "Well, at least I can get one household, and I don't have to say that it was ours."

This was what I put in our September 9 bulletin: *The Church Planting and Development Fund (CPD) supports national pastors with a small salary and supplies. The denomination has given a September Challenge asking each of the 900 Free Methodist Churches in the US to give \$30 each week during the month of September to meet a need of \$13,000 for national churches in Latin America, Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East. We are excited that church planting is multiplying churches in every one of these areas. I'm hoping 4 households here will be willing to each give \$30 during this month as an extra gift for the international FM Church. If you are willing to be one of these, fill out the enclosed card here in the bulletin, and may God bless you!*

How many cards were filled out? Ten! With our household joining but not filling out a card, our treasurer

sent in \$330 to bless this 'where needed most' ministry. I hope you experienced the same joy from giving as I did. Maybe 'Ask and you shall receive,' can sometimes apply to asking people to give for spreading the gospel to Tribals, Hindus, Unreached or Unconcerned, Muslims and Buddhists, which, of course, is the THUMB prayer. May we pray and give as unto the Lord!

--Lois Huff, Conference Missions' Coordinator

Have you missed *The Focus* this month? I rather hope so! Actually, my wife, Joyce, and I have been on vacation and have been making wonderful memories. (Ask me sometime and I'll fill you in on some of the details.) But we're home now and I'm finding home is pretty great, too! I'm trying to get back into the routine. Please feel free to drop me a line and let me know how we can serve you more effectively.

Regards,
Timothy

*Dr. Timothy L. Thomas
Conference Administrator
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