

*“Women in Ministry
Associated with Indiana Central
and the University of Indianapolis:
Chapters from a Neglected Story of
‘Education for Service’”*

Crossings Project Booklet #2



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We peer at the photograph, trying to discern the features of this almost forgotten exemplar of “education for service.” Convinced that there must be other photographs as well as documentary evidence of the service rendered by this particular “woman called to witness,” we turn the pages of journals and newspapers trying to recover the forgotten details.¹ At this point in time, other details of her life—her domestic roles as spouse, mother, and grandmother—are better known than her public ministry as a “United Brethren in Christ preacher.” Nevertheless, we wonder if it is possible to register the significance of the “life work” of this particular woman called to witness without either overstating or understating the character of her Christian vocation. Knowing that we can err in either direction, we elect to err on the side of attributing too much significance, knowing that we have already paid too little attention to the story that lies behind this photograph.



The Reverend Alva Button Roberts with grandson Phil Stenger, ca. 1940

The question of *how to remember* the women in ministry² associated with Indiana Central University and the University of Indianapolis over the past century probes to the heart of how we tell the story of the University as a whole.³ At a time when this particular church-related comprehensive university has passed the century mark of its existence, we naturally glance back at the past. At a time when faculty, staff, students, and alumni find ourselves living in an environment of almost continual change, we can find inspiration for engaging the challenges of the present by recalling the lives of those women whose “life work” in ministry marked the first hundred years of “education for service.”

I. ORIGINS OF WOMEN IN MINISTRY IN THE HISTORY OF AMERICAN PROTESTANT CHRISTIANITY

The story of the first Christian women in ministry is a saga that began early on that first Easter Sunday morning in a field outside the walls of the city of Jerusalem, when a small group of women proclaimed the “good news” of the empty tomb to a group of disbelieving (male) disciples. That story is recorded in the Gospel According to Luke.

But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they did not find the body. While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood before them. “Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again.” Then they remembered his words, and returning from the tomb they told all this to the eleven and all the rest. Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the apostles. But these words seemed

to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened (Luke 24:1-12).

This was one of the formative evangelical memories that inspired “women called to witness” throughout the first and second Great Awakenings well into the nineteenth century.⁴

The memory of women associated with Jesus and the earliest proclamation of the Gospel also inspired “Woman,” a little poem penned by the American Methodist laywoman Phoebe Palmer: “Not she with traitorous kiss her savior stung / Not she denied them with unholy tongue / But, she, while apostles shrank did dangers brave, / Last at the cross, first at the grave.”⁵ This bit of doggerel, which reminded men as well as women of certain incontrovertible facts of the origins of the Christian witness, was one of the ways that American Protestant women reasoned with those American Protestant male leaders who opposed women exercising leadership in ministries, missions, and Christian education.

The second memory that inspired women was the “promise” that the earliest Christians believed had been fulfilled in their time when the Holy Spirit of God was poured out on “all flesh” on the Day of Pentecost at the birth of the Church. Palmer and others located the justification for “commissioning” women for ministries by appealing to texts of the New Testament such as (Joel 2:28b-32a as quoted in Acts 2:17-21). “In the last days, it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and smoky mist. The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the Lord’s great and glorious day. Then everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.”

The early Methodists associated with John Wesley were prominent among those English-speaking Protestants who remembered the Christian tradition this way. Indeed, from the perspective of the men and women who participated in the Wesleyan revival, the “pentecostal empowerment” of ordinary people required *extraordinary* action—such as permitting lay persons to preach the good news of the gospel—in order to accommodate themselves to the missionally-directed winds of the Holy Spirit. Wesley used this notion of “extraordinary call” as the primary explanation for the very existence of the Methodist movement: from his perspective “the whole work of God termed Methodism” was an *extraordinary dispensation* of God’s providence. It was through this concept of an “extraordinary call” that several prominent early Methodist women such as Sarah Crosby and Mary Bosanquet Fletcher were able to participate in the Methodist movement in England.⁶

Wesley *et al.* struggled with the propriety of women serving in public ministries such as those associated with ordained ministry—preaching and administration of the sacraments. Not wanting to bring scandal in a circumstance in which Wesley was struggling to keep Methodism within the Church of England (as opposed to becoming a “dissenting” sect), Wesley’s counsel to gifted women lay preachers such as Sarah Crosby was twofold: “(1) Pray in public as much as you can. (2) Even in public you may properly enough intermix *short exhortations* with prayer. But keep as far from what is called preaching as you can. Therefore

never take a text; never speak in a continued discourse without some break, about four or five minutes. Tell the people, 'We shall have another *prayer meeting* . . .'" ⁷

In large part it is this particular kind of *evangelical perspective* that accounts for the tension between Wesley and the Church of England regarding his authorization (and later ordination) of the Methodist preachers. However circumscribed their ministries may have been, women lay preachers began to articulate their sense of being "called" to a ministry of preaching. ⁸ For example, Mary Bosanquet Fletcher stated her own vocational self-understanding in these words: "I do not believe every woman is called to speak publicly, no more than every man to be a Methodist preacher, yet some have an extraordinary call, and woe be to them if they obey it not." ⁹

Wesley's attempt to finesse the issue by keeping the role of women at the level of informal leadership could only serve as a temporary measure, yet that kind of argument would be used well into the twentieth century in American precincts to justify the leadership of Protestant women within and beyond congregations. In the early to mid-nineteenth century, this same evangelical justification was used by advocates of women in ministry associated with the rise of the "Holiness Movement." In her book *Promise of the Father* (1857), Phoebe Palmer specifically cites the text from Joel as the basis for her defense of the vocation of "prophecy" for women, which she describes as "a neglected speciality of the last days." ¹⁰

While Palmer's argument sufficed for many associated with the Holiness Movement of the late nineteenth century, those women who were actively involved in expanding the sphere of women's participation in politics and governance found it necessary to offer additional arguments in defense of women's rights to ordination. Accordingly, when Frances Willard, the president of the National Women's Temperance Union, wrote *Woman in the Pulpit* (1888), she directly engaged the biblical exegesis of those who were opposed to the ordination of women. To that end, Frances Willard offered a *text-by-text refutation* of the interpretation of the Pauline writings that were being used to keep women out of the leadership of the Methodist Episcopal Church. From Willard's perspective, those who were opposed to the ordination of women were using scripture in a way that "killed," whereas she and other advocates for "woman in the pulpit" were seeking the "life-giving" energy made possible by the Holy Spirit of God. ¹¹

As cracks began to increase in the stone wall of American Protestant patriarchy, Methodist women in particular and Protestant women in general began to find ways to break through the walls of procedure and office to embrace the vocations to which God was calling them and to use their God-given gifts and acquired skills in the work of the Kingdom of God. Meanwhile, in the Midwest where United Brethren in Christ congregations gathered, a somewhat different pattern emerged. The conversation appears to have begun to take place in the early 1840s, and the General Conference of the United Brethren in Christ actually discussed a petition brought on behalf of Louisa Clemens in May 1845. ¹² Over the next half century the issue would continue to be discussed intermittently. While the United Brethren disagreed about how to resolve such cases, their discussions were constructive, straightforward, and matter-of-fact. ¹³

II. ALVA BUTTON ROBERTS: AN ORDAINED “UNITED BRETHREN” WOMAN MINISTER ASSOCIATED WITH THE FOUNDING OF INDIANA CENTRAL UNIVERSITY

Although it is not well-known at the beginning of the twenty-first century, the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, especially in the Midwest, was one of the leading American Protestant denominations in ordaining women and granting them near-equal status with men. Ella Niswonger was the first woman ordained in the Central Illinois Conference in 1889. Of the thirteen women whom the United Brethren in Christ Church ordained between 1889 and 1894, twelve were from Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. Six of these women were ordained by Indiana area conferences: the Lower Wabash Conference (Southwestern Indiana and Southeastern Illinois), the White River Conference (central Indiana), and the Indiana Conference (southern part of the state).

One of the two women ordained by the Lower Wabash Conference was Miss Alva Button. After her ordination in 1893, Button was initially assigned to serve the Westfield Circuit in Illinois. Two years later she married The Reverend John T. Roberts of White River Conference, who in 1905 became the first president of Indiana Central University. The story of how President Roberts met The Reverend Button hints at the significance of her leadership in ministry.

A year or two earlier, Dr. Roberts had noticed an article in the *Telescope* written by The Reverend Miss Alva L. Button, of Greenup, Illinois, a member of the Lower Wabash Conference [of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ]. Mr. Roberts wrote Miss Button a letter of congratulation regarding the article and received a note of thanks for the letter of appreciation. From this beginning a correspondence developed that led to friendship and personal visits to Illinois; eventually, the superintendent of the Lower Wabash Conference at the time, at the close of an afternoon church service, united the two ministers in marriage on a Sunday afternoon, August 26, 1894. To this union seven children were born, six of whom survive[d]. . . .¹⁴

After coming to Indiana, Alva (Button) Roberts served one-year appointments at Indianapolis First Church in 1894, Greenfield in 1923, Salem in 1924, and Bargersville in 1925. During the interlude between the Indianapolis and Greenfield appointments, she took time to rear six children as well as to serve God in other ways.¹⁵ Unfortunately, we don't know much about the specific features of The Reverend Alva Button Roberts' pastoral ministry. Neither the University nor her descendants appear to have records that would fill out the picture of her public ministry.

What we do know, however, is that from 1905 to 1908, her life was enmeshed with the extraordinarily demanding effort to found the fledging initiative in higher education known as “Indiana Central University,”¹⁶ the former name of what we now know as the University of Indianapolis. As one chronicler of that period notes: “Dr. Roberts was asked to plunge into this situation as first president; with the responsibility . . . of securing furniture; new students; and funds for operating expenses. Rev. and Mrs. Roberts moved to Indianapolis, took up residence in two rooms of the college building [the southeast corner of the first floor of

Good Hall] until a home could be built, and Mrs. Roberts cooked for faculty and students, and all and sundry who came to look at lots, as well as caring for her own family which then numbered six, with four children. It is no wonder that gray hairs developed during the succeeding three years . . . ”¹⁷

As this perspective suggests, without the service offered by Alva Button Roberts, the challenge of starting Indiana Central University would have proved to be even more daunting than it already was. What we still do not know is what if any inspiration she may have offered to the students who studied at the University that her own extensive labor helped to found. Whether the students who arrived at Indiana Central University shortly before World War I recognized the significance of her ministry in the earliest years of the University or not, as we look back on this early period in the institution’s history we can recognize the witness of this particular “United Brethren” clergywoman.

III. MISSIONARIES AND OTHER “LIFE WORKERS”: THE FIRST GENERATION OF WOMEN STUDENTS AT INDIANA CENTRAL UNIVERSITY

By 1902, when Indiana Central University was officially founded, ninety-seven women had been listed at one or another time in the ministerial directory of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ,¹⁸ and thanks in part to the education available at church-related colleges like Indiana Central, the number of clergywomen would grow, at least for a time. The earliest Christian vocations curriculum at Indiana Central University appears to have had ministers, missionaries, and deaconesses primarily in view. The Bible Department, led by Professor Daniel Robinson, saw itself as providing the kind of “special training” that fostered “the greatest possible efficiency” in training for “the sacred callings [that] demand the greatest possible service. . .” (1917 *Oracle*, 17). The courses of study for these Christian vocations were “selected for their practical value.” The students who enrolled in these courses were being prepared for “immediate Christian activity.”

Those students who enrolled already having “decided on a definite line of Christian activity” formed an organization known as the “Life Workers’ League.” This group conceived of itself as being like the kind of “ministerial association” that had begun to be formed in urban areas of the USA. The purpose of this group was twofold: first, these students envisioned “a larger field, and a great need, for the maintenance and development of Christian ideals.” Secondly, these young men and women formed the “Life Workers” for the purpose of discussing “problems that related to the Christian worker’s life.” Resolving to give and receive “counsel” from one another, they aspired to “wield such an influence as will enable young men and women to decide early on in life upon some definite field of service” (1920 *Oracle*, 57).

Alva Button Roberts was by no means the only woman in ministry associated with Indiana Central in the first two decades of its existence. Indeed, almost from the beginning, the ministry of women student pastors and their special needs appears to have been taken into account in the administration of the University. University records indicate that Celia Austin, who at that time served as the pastor of Brazil United Brethren Church, was *one of three* student pastors granted permission to take their final examinations early in December 1915



*Indiana Central Academy
Students, 1917*

*D.H. Pellett is the fifth
person from the left in the
second row; Cecilia Austin
is the first person from the
left in the third row.*

because the congregations that they served had scheduled revivals during the examination week. (In 1924, the faculty ruled that any absence of a student pastor was to be excused “if necessitated by *his or her* appointment as a pastor.”¹⁹) Celia Austin Pellett (1889-1971) was a student at the Indiana Central “Academy” preparatory school²⁰ in 1917, where she met her future husband, D. H. Pellett, at Indiana Central University. Both of them were part of the Life Workers’ League. Although neither of them completed the baccalaureate degree at Indiana Central, the Pelletts served together in ministry for the greater part of five decades, retiring in June 1969.

During the first two decades, students at Indiana Central displayed their interest in Christian service in a variety of contexts. Some of these students participated in the Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA). Virtually all of them thought of themselves as “Life-Work Recruits.” Some of these young men and women also were members of the Student Volunteers, an international movement that had been organized in 1886 to encourage college students to enlist in “mission work.” In 1920, the editors of the student yearbook boasted that there were “forty-three young people of Indiana Central who are preparing for definite Christian work” (*1920 Oracle*, 92).²¹ The students were proud of the fact that only one other United Brethren College—Otterbein—“supercedes us in this respect.” Of this number, fifteen students were members of the “local Volunteer Band,” part of the international Student Volunteer movement. The photograph for that year (see photo #2) shows that more than one third of the “life work recruits” for that year were women (*1920 Oracle*, 93).

Lota Emery was committed to a “life work” in the context of serving alongside her husband as a foreign missionary. Lota Emery and husband E. W. graduated from Indiana Central in 1915. A year later, they were serving as United Brethren missionaries in Sierra Leone. As the first missionaries to graduate from Indiana Central University (ICU), the ministry of E. W. and Lota Emery appears to have stirred interest among those students who studied at ICU in the years thereafter—particularly the local chapter of Student Volunteers.

The relationship with the Emerys also appears to have made it possible for the first “international student” to come for study at this University. From 1916 to 1919, the Emerys worked with University officials to make it possible for David Manley, the head teacher at Shenge School in Sierra Leone, to attend the University for the purpose of improving the education of the people of his home country.²² Manley would be the first of many “international students” who would come to the University.

Although it is by no means clear that the earliest generation of students at Indiana Central would have thought of this matter in the same way that Phoebe Palmer had articu-

lated it in the previous century, the notion of “prophecy” appears to have had some influence on the lives of the earliest students at ICC. The name given to the college yearbook—*The Oracle*—is but one obvious indication. In the early years, the students of the senior class offered a “Senior Prophecy.” The class of 1920, whose education had been marked by the events and trauma of World War I, heard this “voice of the Oracle”:

“I see a world of unrest. Selfishness, greed, power and strife are the ruling passions in the lives of men. Nations have been at war on the battlefield, and in commerce. Many nations are in ruins, others are being ruled by ignorance and crime. People are running about shouting, ‘What is to become of us?’ I see women and children starving and freezing.

“But do not look surprised. It has ever been thus. I will tell what more I see. I see great institutions of learning from whose doors are pouring a constant stream of youths and they are as oil on the troubled sea. They go about teaching unselfishness to the selfish, charity to the greedy, peace to the tired warriors; teaching the ignorant; feeding the starving, and clothing the cold. As they work I see the world brighten. Upon their broad shoulders rests the salvation of the world in general, and, upon the shoulders of each one rests the task of molding his own little sphere into a harmonious whole.

“I see those who have labored thus for many years; they are old but happy in the knowledge of the good they have done. This is to be the fate of those whom thou hast asked. Age will find them all happy because of their work, and the world happier because of their having labored” (*1920 Oracle*, 28).

Although there is much that we do not know about the earliest women who came to Indiana Central to prepare themselves for service in their church, we do know that there appears to have been a great sense of camaraderie among these “life workers.” Their seriousness of purpose as well as humility about their own place in the context of divine purposes is reflected in the following “Worker’s Prayer,” included in the *1923 Oracle*.

Prepare us Lord for this great work of thine
By thine own process; we know not the way
To fit ourselves; we only grope; the day
Is thine; its light, a ray from the divine
Illumines the path where thou wouldst have it shine,
And in thy Light our own poor struggling ray
Gets new encouragement until we say,
With longing hearts, “Thy will be done, not mine.”
Then we are ready; then thou wilt use our powers
To spread thy Kingdom and build up thy cause
And thou wilt make our consecrated hours
Our sunniest; nor will the world’s applause
Affect our service, for we look to thee
For all we have and all we hope to be. (*1923 Oracle*, 128)

The students of that generation were conscious of intergenerational relationships that sustained intellectual discovery and vocational exploration as imaged in the “torch” of light that was passed from one generation to another. As the 1929 edition of the *Oracle* illustrates: “**Today:** To every student comes the privilege of associating with those who have explored and with those who are exploring the paths of truth. **Tomorrow:** These associations will become such a vital part of the life of the student that the light which has been given to him will be passed undimmed to others.”²³

As the preceding remarks suggest, the earliest generation of students saw themselves and the faculty with whom they studied in the context of the vocation of Christian service. In this respect, they reflected wider patterns that can be seen in American culture. In the nineteenth century, “mission work” was considered a noble profession, and by the turn of the twentieth century missions had become a “vast enterprise that defined the interests of the American elite.”²⁴ Prestigious schools such as Yale and Harvard had programs in missions that thrived during this period. In fact, between 1880 and 1920, American Protestant women led most of the foreign missionary endeavors in the USA. By the beginning of the third decade of the twentieth century, American Protestant men thought the women had become too powerful and began to take action to draw these women into their own organizations.

Over the course of the twentieth century, a shift took place: the majority of people in mission were no longer the mainline American elite, but were Evangelicals or Mormons who existed on the fringes of mainstream American culture. Furthermore, missionaries were no longer trained at highly elite schools. Whether this broader shift in status toward missionary endeavors plays into the gradual disappearance of a focus on missionary careers at Indiana Central is beyond the scope of this essay to address. What we know is that the lives of women such as Lota Emery and Celia Austin Pellett display both the possibilities and the limits of the “women’s sphere”²⁵ in ministry during the early twentieth century. On the one hand, they were encouraged to assert leadership within the sphere of concerns that arose from their roles as mothers and spouses, but the more that their efforts engaged political reform, the more likely they were to be told that their place was in the home.

IV. THE HARDY SISTERS: A STORY OF THREE WOMEN WHO “PLOWED AHEAD” DESPITE THE OBSTACLES THAT THEY ENCOUNTERED

The story of the three Hardy sisters provides a good window onto the challenges that women in ministry faced in the first half of the twentieth century.²⁶ These three women all graduated from Indiana Central University in the 1920s but thereafter faced various kinds of constraints as they offered themselves in Christian service as teachers, pastors, and evangelists. Because none of them ever married, they often found themselves confronting the imposition of limits on what they could do, but this taciturn trio of women persisted in living out their calling as women preachers.

Bertha was the oldest of the three sisters from Plainville, a town in southern Indiana. After graduating from Indiana Central in 1925, she attempted to enroll at Bonebrake Seminary (later renamed United Theological Seminary) in Dayton, Ohio. After being there for several weeks, they told her that she would not be permitted to get a degree. She then traveled to New York where she studied for several years at Biblical Seminary (now known as New



Bertha Hardy



Elva Hardy



Treasie Hardy

York Theological Seminary). She finished the coursework but they did not grant her the degree. Apparently the reason that she was refused the degree was because she had stated that she wanted to go into the pastorate.²⁷ Those who knew her well claim that she was not resentful about this refusal. Ultimately, she enrolled in another academic program and ultimately received a degree in education from New York University. Beginning in 1929, Bertha Hardy served ten different pastoral appointments in the southern part of Indiana as a clergywoman in the United Brethren in Christ and later the Evangelical United Brethren Church. Because of ill health she had to retire in 1964 and she died in 1971.

The second oldest of the Hardy sisters was named Treasie. She graduated from Indiana Central in 1925 with the A.B. degree and then completed a religious education degree at Bonebrake. (Apparently, by taking the route expected of a “Christian educator,” she was able to receive a theological education.) Unlike her older sister, Treasie was not always discouraged from her attempts to serve as a pastor. She recalled that a United Brethren elder named Dr. A. D. Smith had encouraged her by inviting her to work in churches during the summers to help them prepare for annual conference. She served as the pastor of churches in Kentucky and Indiana from 1941 until her retirement in 1970. During that time she was appointed to thirteen different pastoral charges.

Elva Hardy, the youngest of the three sisters, graduated from Indiana Central in 1927. For a variety of reasons—including her sister’s experience of rejection at Bonebrake and New York—she did not pursue theological education. After teaching for a couple of years in the University Heights neighborhood school, she lived with her sister Bertha from 1934-39, who at that time was pastor of Burris Chapel Church in Greene County. Over the next decade, Elva would help her sister Bertha, who struggled to continue her ministry in the midst of various health problems. Thereafter she taught at McCurdy School, an educational mission begun by United Brethren in Christ Church, in Vallecitos, New Mexico, from 1939 to 1942. She retired in 1968 after serving as pastor of seven pastoral appointments over the previous three decades.

Although not without examples of other women in ministry, the Hardy sisters often were the first female ministers that the congregations that they served had ever encountered.²⁸ They recalled the obstacles that they faced including the doubts of people in United Brethren in Christ congregations about whether their ministry was duly authorized by Scripture.

Elva Hardy recalled one occasion in which she was challenged by a member of one of the churches that she served with a quotation from the writings of St. Paul about women being silent in the church. (The most likely texts would have been 2 Timothy 2: 11 or 1 Cor. 14: 34-35.) Her response was to cite “the scripture in Joel that in the last days the men will see visions and dream dreams and the women will be prophets. . . . Then I showed them the book of Acts, second chapter. That’s my answer to them . . .”²⁹ When people in the churches that she served challenged her authority, Elva responded by offering the “[Prophet] Joel’s explanation for the last days, I said, ‘Sir we’re living there.’ I said this is the Word and we live by the Word. He didn’t know what to say, because he didn’t know that Scripture.”³⁰ In the world in which they found themselves living, the arguments that Phoebe Palmer and Frances Willard³¹ had offered in the nineteenth century had to be made again and again in order to justify what lay people still regarded as something extraordinary—a woman in the church’s pulpit!

The Hardy sisters lived through both the merger of the Evangelical Church and the United Brethren Church (1946) as well the merger of the Evangelical United Brethren Church with the Methodist Church. Because the Evangelical Church was not very strong in southern Indiana, they did not notice too many changes in the precincts where they ministered. For the Hardy sisters, the merger of the Evangelical United Brethren Church with the Methodist Church in 1968 actually was not a welcome event. They disliked the way they were told to relate to local churches, and found the newly formed United Methodist Church to be largely alien to their way of engaging in ministry. In retirement, they found themselves dealing with new procedures and categorizations, a framework within which they did not comfortably function or fit. Within a few years all three of them had retired from the active ministry.

As Ann Glass concluded in her study of these women pastors, all three of the Hardy sisters had a similar kind of experience in ministry. They “faced lower salaries than their male counterparts, multi-church charges, no chance at leadership on Conference Boards or commissions, and skeptical attitudes of local congregations in the first few months on the charge.”³² Yet, these women also recognized that some of the things that they experienced were common to the experience of their male colleagues in ministry. The two surviving sisters saw “no difference in a man or woman’s service ability if they are called to serve the Kingdom. Any person called by God must plow ahead no matter what obstacles might cross their path.”³³

The courage and determination displayed by Bertha Hardy and her two younger sisters in the face of obstacles put in their paths by educational institutions, unreceptive congregations, and institutional policies of the denomination, is admirable. Thanks to contemporary United Methodist clergywomen such as The Reverend Ann Glass, the story of the Hardy sisters has not been entirely forgotten. Nor were the Hardy sisters forgotten by The Reverend Wilma Harner Allen, one of the few United Brethren women who would be ordained during the period between World War II and the early 1960s.

V. “A LADY MINISTER”: THE STORY OF THE REVEREND WILMA HARNER ALLEN ’ 45

As these examples show, there is a history of women in ministry at this University that extends back to the first three decades of the University’s existence. What is a bit puzzling is how this history should have been forgotten. The answer in part appears to have something to do with the cultural situation in post-World War II America, which reinforced the perspec-



Ida Cunningham

tive that the “women’s sphere” was to be limited to more domestic roles after a period of time in which women had served in some very public roles as part of the militarized social order in the USA during the Second World War. In part, however, this loss of memory can be attributed to the fact that beginning with the merge of the Evangelical Church and the United Brethren in Christ in November 1946, the practice of ordaining women ceased for all practical purposes.³⁴

Ida M. Cunningham’s ministry provides a good illustration of the first aspect. Having been ordained as a United Brethren in Christ minister in 1912, in the years following World War I she stopped serving churches. Following the death of her husband in 1928, Cunningham resumed her pastoral ministry.³⁵ “She served the Bethlehem United Brethren Church faithfully from 1930 to 1939 when she became ‘house mother’ at Indiana Central’s Residence Hall (later Buxton Hall). She remained at Indiana Central until a few weeks before her death in the summer of 1947.”³⁶ According to University Archivist Fred Hill, The Reverend Cunningham appears to have been the first ordained woman to serve as a paid employee of the University staff.

The fact that her service, like that of Alva Button Roberts, was largely confined to the domestic role of “house mother” to University students is not an accident. In addition to the harsh financial realities of the Depression era, women were often told that they should not “take” jobs away from able-bodied workingmen. Following World War II, this trend would intensify. As “Rosie the Riveter” left the factory to return to being a homemaker, women in ministry at Indiana Central found themselves segregated in ways that were more explicit than anything that took place prior to the war. After having ordained women for more than half a century, the United Brethren ended this practice.

During the negotiations that resulted in the “Evangelical-United Brethren” merger that was consummated in 1946, a disagreement arose about the ordination of women. While the articles of merger with the Evangelical Church remained silent on the subject, the United Brethren negotiators agreed that the ordination of women would be discontinued.³⁷ Nevertheless, the United Brethren continued to ordain women at least until the United Brethren and Evangelical churches merged at the conference level, which did not occur until 1951 in Indiana. This situation would cast a shadow on the ministry of Evangelical United Brethren women who were ordained during the next two decades.

Wilma Harner Allen ‘45, who was a clergywoman in the Indiana Conference of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, received her first pastoral appointment in 1939 (while still in high school!). She enrolled at Indiana Central College in September 1941. She recalls her time at the University this way: “Due to the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, most of the boys left school at the end of the first semester to enter the service. The only boys left on campus were ministerial students or those who were classified 4F (physical handicap). My graduating class consisted of 18 girls and 3 boys.”³⁸ She received a “probationer’s license” in 1945, the year she graduated from Indiana Central.

Wilma Harner Allen was ordained in 1950 and has remained an active alumna of this University (her spouse, Birtle, was employed on the maintenance staff of the University for



Wilma Harner Allen

many years). She retired from the South Indiana Annual Conference in 1986. Allen lived on the south side of Indianapolis for most of her ministry, but a few years ago she moved to the Franklin United Methodist Community, where she and her husband still reside.

As recently as the early 1990s, Wilma Harner Allen was serving as an interim pastor in the Indianapolis West District of the United Methodist Church. The Reverend Dr. Charles Ballard, who served as her district superintendent at that time, describes her as “an excellent preacher and always a lady!”³⁹ Despite the fact that Allen’s ministry had to be lived out in circumstances defined by the strictures of sexism, she persevered nonetheless, serving as pastor of Honey Creek United

Methodist Church near Greenwood, Indiana, for almost thirty years. In retirement, she affiliated at University Heights United Methodist Church, where she served as Minister of Visitation for seven years following her official retirement from the South Indiana Conference of the United Methodist Church. Even today, she is often asked to officiate at funerals for members of the same congregation where Alva Button Roberts once worshiped and served.

In 2000, Wilma Harner Allen wrote *The Life Story of A Lady Minister*⁴⁰ so that family and friends could have a record of her experiences in ministry from across the previous sixty-plus years. She included “The Quest for Life,” a sermon that she delivered at the Memorial Service and Celebration of Holy Communion of the South Indiana Conference of the United Methodist Church on June 9, 1981. In that sermon she traces the human quest, which she believes begins with God and leads “to a life of SERVICE prompted by love, love for God, love for our fellow men.”⁴¹ In the final sentence of the sermon, Allen declares “What a high adventure is *this quest for life!*”

The optimistic disposition of Wilma Harner Allen and her steadfast commitment to a life of service is all the more remarkable given the ways that her ministry was circumscribed by sexist practices and attitudes. Her ministry, which spanned the period between 1946 and 1968, coincided with the period of silence about the United Brethren practice of ordaining women. While she was able to be ordained, Evangelical United Brethren officials would not have been eager to have this publicized given the verbal agreement that had been reached in 1946 about no longer ordaining women. This may or may not provide an explanation for why it was that the 1960 edition of the *Oracle* yearbook reports that women were admitted to the Central Ministerial Association “for the first time” that year. In a circumstance in which the parent denomination of Indiana Central College had established policies that no longer encouraged women to be ordained, what pre-ministerial students at Indiana Central University would have experienced as normal during the previous decade was segregation of women from men in ministry. Oddly enough, admiring stories of women ministers were told during this era on the campus of Indiana Central, but not always by Christians!

VI. “THE PILGRIM CIRCUIT RIDER”: THE EXEMPLARY STORY BEHIND THE “LEILA ANDERSON AWARD FOR CHRISTIAN SERVICE”

At first glance, the connection of Leila Anderson to the University of Indianapolis is remote at best. This woman never set foot on campus, much less completed requirements for a degree. But the story of her Christian witness has been remembered through an award that was endowed by University of Indianapolis faculty member Dr. Robert Brooker, who was able to complete college because of the generosity of this itinerant clergywoman who traveled the backroads of rural America to work with congregations to foster Christian education. “The Leila Anderson Award for Christian Service” is given annually to the student whose life displays excellence in Christian service. Recipients of this award are given a copy of Anderson’s autobiography, *Pilgrim Circuit Rider* (1960). In that volume, Anderson recounts her involvement with the brothers Brooker as exemplars of the kinds of students she engaged at Iberia Junior College in the Ozark Mountains of Southern Missouri.



Leila Anderson

“[T]he three brothers whom I somewhat adopted were quite typical of our graduates. I had had the boys in youth group back in Arlington [Congregational] Church in Illinois and felt that they were college material, so I arranged for Francis and Donald to come to Iberia where the following year Robert, the youngest brother joined them.

“From Iberia Francis went to Monmouth College. . . . Donald received a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Missouri then a master’s degree in agricultural engineering from the same university. Today he is an associate professor in that school, doing research in crop processing. The youngest brother is now Dr. Robert Brooker, teacher and chemist in Indianapolis. For any school, the real test of its program is the quality of its graduates and Iberia can be proud of its alumni.”⁴²

Whatever may be the case with Anderson’s opinion about the criteria by which a school is to be judged, it is clear that Dr. Robert Brooker, Professor of Chemistry, found the story of Leila Anderson’s life and witness to be compelling as a moral example for the University community in which he served as a member of the faculty.

This is particularly noteworthy because Robert Brooker was not a member of the United Brethren in Christ Church and did not regard himself as a pious person. In fact, he often made noises that he did not profess any kind of religious faith.⁴³ Nevertheless, during the fifty years that he was associated with the University (1950-2000), he was known to tell stories of various “saints” that he had encountered—people like Hobart and Ella Peters and Leila Anderson.⁴⁴ On more than one occasion, Brooker recounted that he had asked Leila Anderson what he could do to repay her for all that she had done for him and his brothers. She told him, “Robert, you can’t repay a debt of that kind, but what you can do is to help other people

whenever you have an opportunity to do so.” Brooker would then add: “That’s what I try to do—following Leila’s example.”⁴⁵ And so it came to be that this particular clergywoman became the person for whom the University’s award for Christian service was named.

Leila Anderson’s life story merits wider attention. While studying at Presbyterian-related Monmouth College, Anderson became interested in being a “foreign missionary.” Although initially attracted to becoming part of the Student Volunteer Movement, Anderson chose not to participate in that venture due to financial and family concerns. After teaching for a year in Spring Valley, Illinois, where she began to discover that there were real needs among the rural people of America, she began her “life work” as a “home missionary.” The position she held at Iberia Junior College (1929-1937) was her first opportunity to serve on the staff of a church-related institution ministering to the needs of poor rural Americans.

Subsequent to her work at Iberia Junior College in the Ozarks, Anderson enrolled in seminary at the University of Chicago/Chicago Theological Seminary. Her initial goal was to earn a Ph.D. in biblical studies and get a job teaching Bible in a department of religion on the campus of a small liberal arts college. She was dissuaded from seeking a doctorate after the dean of the Divinity School talked with her about her interests in teaching.⁴⁶ After explaining to her that there were only two kinds of positions available for women to teach (university professors or Eastern girls’ schools), he encouraged her to prepare to teach Christian education in rural precincts. To teach in the rural contexts would not require a doctorate, and, he suggested, a doctoral degree might very well inhibit her effectiveness in such contexts (!).

While facing issues not unlike those that Bertha Hardy had encountered elsewhere a decade before, Leila Anderson supported herself by “supply preaching” while in seminary. In 1941, she earned a Bachelor of Divinity degree and was ordained as a minister in the Congregational Christian Church in 1941. She initially struggled with whether or not to seek ordination. As Anderson put it, she had a “mental block” due to the fact that the idea of “women in the pulpit” was foreign to her Congregationalist tradition as well as to her own experience.⁴⁷ Ultimately, she created her own niche for ministry as an itinerant Christian educator.

From 1953 until her retirement, Anderson served as an itinerant Christian educator, employed as “field representative” by the Christian Education Division of the Congregationalist Christian Churches, traveling the country in a station wagon that she dubbed the “Pilgrim Circuit Rider.” While recalling the saga of the frontier circuit riders, Anderson also self-consciously altered that “tradition” by intentionally taking the time to share in the common life of the people of the land as she visited “open country churches” around the USA.⁴⁸ In doing so, she brought a chastened perspective to her work. While traveling around the world to learn more about the missionary endeavors of the Congregational Church, in the early 1950s Anderson encountered a Japanese Christian leader who had convincingly re-described the role of a “foreign missionary” in a post-colonial era. “Tell the churches back in the United States that the missionary for today and for tomorrow must be a person who can live with the people among whom he works. He must be a person who can share on the basis of equality. He must be able quietly to sow his best seed but willing to see it harvested by others who in their eagerness may forget at times that they did not do the sowing. When you find young people who can qualify for this kind of service then pray that the hand of the Lord will be upon them.”⁴⁹ Renouncing the colonialist dream that too often had been part of missionary endeavors in previous generations, Anderson and other women and men of her

generation took seriously that the new role of the missionary—whether in overseas contexts or in the rural communities of the USA—was that of humble learning and selfless service.

Over the decades, the inspiring story of this “woman missionary whose parish spreads across rural America” evoked sufficient curiosity that it led to articles about her in various newspapers and magazines, and ultimately to a book that described the first seven years of her itinerant ministry in the station wagon that she used instead of an “old nag.” Leila Anderson’s ministry touched the University of Indianapolis only through one faculty member, but her generosity and commitment to Christian service inspired Robert Brooker to give in extraordinary ways. Brooker, who formally retired in 1988 but stayed on to teach classes until shortly before his death in 2000, held patents for several chemical formulas that he had invented. He gave away much of what he earned off the royalties for his inventions.

Brooker had little patience for public accolades, and much of his own philanthropy he tried to keep quiet. By contrast, Brooker went out of the way to talk with his science classes about the importance of being good stewards of the resources that each of them have been given. “For example, he talked about how his aim in developing the chemical formulas was to make life better, and that we students should aim to use our educations in the same way—to make life better and richer for others.”⁵⁰

At the time of his death, Robert Brooker had given the University of Indianapolis more than \$100,000 for endowed scholarships and awards. Beyond the formal gifts that Dr. Brooker gave over the fifty years that he served as a member of the faculty, there are countless gifts that he gave to individual students. The example that Leila Anderson set for the youngest Brooker brother was significant in itself. There is no question, however, that the philanthropy that she inspired on this campus and elsewhere continues to multiply in ways too numerous to count.

And so it is that in time the lessons about living in solidarity with people in need that “The Pilgrim Circuit Rider” learned and practiced during her lifetime came to be taught to students at Indiana Central and University of Indianapolis by a skeptic-chemist who endowed the University’s award for Christian service in the name of Leila Anderson, the woman who once taught Robert Brooker what it means to serve others.

VII. THE STORY OF THE “SINGING SISTERS”: WOMEN OF OUR LADY OF GRACE MONASTERY

Some alumni and friends of the University of Indianapolis may be surprised to learn that there is a *monastic* expression of “education for service” that is displayed in the lives of a particular group of Catholic women in ministry. The story of how the “sisters” of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove, Indiana,⁵¹ came to study at Indiana Central College beginning in the late 1960s, and how that same community of Benedictine⁵² women has contributed to the University of Indianapolis in the years since that time, is rich as well as complex, and it is simply not possible to do the story justice in this context. What we can do, however, is share some of the memories of the “Singing Sisters” as well as their memories of the years that they studied at Indiana Central.

Faculty, staff, and students who attended Indiana Central in the late 1960s and early 1970s would have seen a group of young women dressed in religious “habits” unloading from a red van, each with an armload of books, nearly every morning during the school year. After



*The Singing Sisters of
Indiana Central and
Our Lady of Grace
Monastery*

a day of attending classes and studying, the sisters would all gather for the return trip to Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove. Although the women of Beech Grove were not the first Catholic students to enroll at the University of Indianapolis, they certainly were the most visible Catholics on campus during that time. Sr. Mary Luke Jones '71 recalls that she and the other Benedictine women felt that the campus did a good job of offering hospitality to them.

Our Lady of Grace Monastery was founded in 1955 on land made available to the Monastery of the Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand, Indiana. Initially, the sisters were all trained to serve either as teachers or domestics, given that these were the two roles that were most needed in the Catholic parochial schools of the Indianapolis Archdiocese as well as at the academy that the Benedictine women operated for high-school age girls in the Beech Grove community. Over the next half-century, these Benedictine women would discover new roles within which to engage in ministry even as they also found themselves grappling with shifting standards and new barriers.

When Sr. Mary Luke Jones O.S.B. entered the monastery in the mid-1960s, the young women took classes that were offered at Our Lady of Grace Monastery by faculty from St. Benedict College in Ferdinand, Indiana. When that institution closed in 1967, the prioress of the monastery was faced with the conundrum of how to make it possible for the classes of postulants from 1965 and 1966 to complete their college education. For a variety of reasons, they decided to enroll this group of ten to twelve women at Indiana Central College. One of the factors that appears to have contributed to this decision was that a few years before, Sr. Mary Lucien Dippel '66 and Sr. Mary Frederic Turner '66 had studied at the University while preparing to serve as nurses at St. Paul's Hermitage, the nursing center that had recently been built in Beech Grove. Sr. Mary Lucien recalls that there was quite an interesting chapter meeting when the decision was made to send the "young sisters" to Indiana Central. Some felt it was unwise because it was not a Catholic environment. Sr. Mary Lucien recalls saying, "We went and nothing bad happened to us!" She won the day and history was made!⁵³

The fall of 1968 was Sr. Mary Luke's first semester at Indiana Central. That was also the year that she made her "first profession" to live a life of obedience, stability, and conversion of life. In doing so, she provisionally committed herself to live in a relationship with that particular monastic community (the vow of stability) as she sought "conversion of life" in the context of the vows of chastity and poverty. Later, she would make her final profession, thereby vowing to be a monastic for her whole life, living in community with other women who have committed themselves to live according to *The Rule of St. Benedict*.⁵⁴



Alumni from Our Lady of Grace Monastery, Beech Grove, IN

*Top (l-r): Sr. Mary Lucien Dippel, Sr. Mary Luke Jones, Sr. Mary Sue Freiberger, Sr. Rebecca Marie Fitterer, Sr. Sharon Bierman
 Bottom (l-r): Sr. Angela Jarboe, Sr. Anna Marie Megel, Sr. Heidi Marie Krack, Sr. Julian Babcock, Sr. Margaret Ann Dailey*

Beginning in 1968, the Benedictine students formed a singing group in response to an invitation they received at Indiana Central. Sr. Lucy Baurle was approached about whether she and the other Benedictine women would be willing to sing at a campus event. They did so, and soon they were being asked to perform at various campus events as well as to go out as part of a “deputation team” to visit various United Methodist congregations in Indiana. The photograph of the “Singing Sisters” that appears in the 1970 *Oracle* was taken on the occasion of the retirement of President I. Lynd Esch. Over time, they developed a repertoire of songs that they sang on and off campus. On several occasions, President Gene Sease joined the “Singing Sisters” on stage to play the bass when they sang “God Loves a Cheerful Giver.”

As more and more people heard this singing group, they received invitations to sing in other contexts. One of these “gigs” served as the occasion for a humorous exchange that displays the warm relationship that existed between the Benedictine women and other members of the University community. Mary Luke Jones recalls that the week following Easter, she was part of a class being taught by Professor Marvin Henricks. Henricks was beginning to lecture when he saw one of the Benedictine sisters. He stopped and said, “Oh, by the way, what were you all doing on ‘The Popeye and Janey Show’ on Good Friday?” Although the group of Benedictine “junior professed” women did feel a bit sheepish about this matter, rather than let Henricks get away with teasing them, they responded by asking how it was that *Professor Hendricks* came to be watching that show on Good Friday! This is but one of the incidents that displays the way that the Benedictine students were received on the campus of Indiana Central University in the early 1970s. In the years thereafter, the group would continue to sing and perform in various congregations and schools. They would also record four albums of music.⁵⁵

In part because of their visibility, the majority population of Protestant students and faculty found themselves talking more about Catholicism in relation to features of the University requirements such as required attendance at Chapel. At a time when the topics of Chapel events ranged from specifically religious activities and events to lectures on topics such as “The Wonders of the Honey Bee,” the purpose of mandatory chapel attendance was

already shifting toward what we now know as the “lecture/performance” requirement. One day each week, however, was set aside for a Protestant worship service, and this service became the focus of concern by University officials who were helping to arrange for the Benedictine women to take courses. The Chapel Worship Service also became the focus of speculation. Would these Catholic women be required to attend chapel or not?

One of the myths about this era in the University’s history is that Catholics were routinely locked in the library during the Chapel hour. Curiously, this story does not dovetail with the experience of the alumnae from Beech Grove, nor is it true to the facts that are known about this matter.⁵⁶ Apparently, sometime during the summer of 1968, President I. Lynd Esch met with Sr. Mary Philip Seib, the Prioress at Our Lady of Grace Monastery, to discuss the prospect of these young Benedictine women enrolling at Indiana Central that fall. Knowing that the monastic community might be concerned about this matter, President Esch offered to exempt these women from attending the one session each week that would involve a Protestant worship service. In response, the Prioress said that would not be necessary. She did not think that it would hurt these Benedictine-women-in-training to attend one Protestant worship service each week.

At the time, none of these students were aware of the behind-the-scenes conversations that had taken place about the prospect of their enrollment as undergraduate students in what is now known as the School of Education. Mary Luke Jones remembers hearing rumors about Catholic students “not being expected” to attend Chapel Services, but she and the other Benedictine sisters actually did attend many Chapel hours at Indiana Central College in addition to their participation in praying the daily office with the Benedictine Community at Beech Grove.

Between 1965 and 1997, ten Benedictine women including Sr. Mary Luke Jones ‘71 would graduate from this University. Having been trained to teach in elementary schools, they would take positions in various Catholic parochial schools. For example, after teaching elementary school for six years, Sr. Mary Luke served for nine years as the principal of a Catholic grade school. From 1971 to 1986, she would live in the community where she worked. Then Sr. Mary Margaret Funk, the prioress of Our Lady of Grace, contacted Mary Luke to inquire whether she would be willing to serve as the first director of Development for the Benedictine Community at Beech Grove. She received much of her training for this new role through a series of seminars and workshops offered by the Religion Division of Lilly Endowment, Inc.

Like other American Catholics, Our Lady of Grace Monastery has experienced a great deal of change over the past four decades. In the wake of the Second Vatican Council (1963-1965), monastic communities were encouraged to recover their sense of the *charism* or gift that they offer to the world in the context of their life and witness. For the Benedictine communities, this has led to a renewed emphasis on hospitality at the same time that the significance of Benedictine spirituality has been articulated in ways that non-Catholics have found inviting. In 1980, the community of women at Beech Grove renovated their Chapel to emphasize the stronger value on community as well as to give a renewed emphasis to the ministry of the laity as part of the people of God.

As changes occurred in American society, the Benedictine women of Beech Grove have adapted their ministries while retaining a sense of their own distinctive mission. When the Academy for girls closed in the late 1970s, the Monastery established Benedict Inn

Conference and Retreat Center for the purpose of ministering to the needs of families. Over time a ministry to women has also developed in the context of the broader ministry. Since the early 1990s more members of the community have taken positions in congregations, serving as pastoral associates. In some contexts, they were even permitted to preach sermons, but at other times these kinds of encouragements were taken away. Like their “separated sisters” in Protestant communities, they found themselves receiving conflicted signals. On the one hand, they and the laity were encouraged to participate more fully in the life of the church; on the other hand, they found themselves facing restrictions and prohibitions, many of which appeared arbitrary.

In June 2001, Sr. Mary Luke Jones took on a new role. After having served for almost fifteen years as director of Development for the Monastery, she assumed the role of director of Benedict Inn Conference and Retreat Center. A little more than a year later, Benedict Inn was awarded a grant through the “Sustaining Pastoral Excellence Initiative” of the Religion Division of Lilly Endowment, Inc. The story of how this grant was written says much about the determination of the women of Our Lady of Grace Monastery as well as their faith in God. When they initially heard about the request for proposals, the leaders of the Benedict Inn Conference and Retreat Center were frustrated that the initiative was limited to ordained persons, which meant that monastic women and other Catholic laypeople could not be the focus of any initiative that they might undertake. Upon further reflection, however, Sr. Mary Luke Jones and company began to think about the fact that a significant number of Protestant clergywomen came to the monastery for retreats and spiritual direction as well as to participate in the daily prayers of the Benedictine community.

As they continued to think about the needs of Protestant clergywomen, an idea was born that they might propose a ministry that would draw on Benedictine practices of hospitality, common prayer, *lectio divina*, and silence to offer these “separated sisters” a respite from the rigors of pastoral ministry in their Protestant congregations. The proposal—entitled “Women Touched By Grace”—was written by Sr. Mary Luke Jones in consultation with a trio of Protestant clergywomen, each of whom made sacrifices to help work on the proposal. After ten days of intensive work, Sr. Mary Luke found herself holding the proposal in her lap as she sat in the Monastery Chapel, where she offered her work to God seeking blessing for this endeavor. In September 2003, the Benedict Inn received news that Lilly Endowment had awarded them one of 47 grants (out of a pool of more than 750 proposals) for \$458,000.

The design of this unique spiritual renewal program for women pastors serving congregations is to gather a group of thirty women for a series of six ten-day retreats over a period of three years beginning in the fall of 2003. Each of the Protestant clergywomen will be linked to one of the members of Our Lady of Grace Monastery who will serve as her prayer partner during the three-year period. The Benedictine Community will also benefit from these relationships. The Protestant clergywomen participants in this spiritual renewal program will be invited to address the monastic community in the context of opportunities for reflection on scripture in the context of prayer.

The “Women Touched by Grace” program will culminate with a ten-day pilgrimage to Rome. The leaders of the program will lead the thirty participants in November 2006 as they visit places such as Subiaco and Monte Cassino, associated with the lives and ministries of St. Benedict and St. Scholastica. While in Italy, the Protestant clergywomen will enjoy the hospi-

tality of the Missionary Benedictine community in Rome, and no doubt they will have the occasion to learn about the occasion when Scholastica (Benedict's sister) insisted that Benedict extend his visit with her; when it appeared that he would not do so, she prayed that God would keep him there. That evening a storm suddenly sprang up, thereby giving Benedict no choice but to extend his visit, on the occasion that would be the last time that these "holy twins" would be together. This story, which is fondly remembered by the women at Our Lady of Grace, fits well with the persistence of this community of women who bear witness in the context of a life of monastic spirituality.

Just as visitors to the University of Indianapolis at the beginning of the twenty-first century see much that is different from the way the campus appeared thirty years ago, persons who visit Our Lady of Grace Monastery today would notice differences. Although some monastic women affiliated with the Beech Grove Community choose to wear habits, most of the women of Mary Luke Jones's generation have chosen to wear clothes that would look much like the dress of Catholic laywomen who live and work in the secular arena. Instead of a red van, the community leases a small fleet of vehicles that the sisters use to go to and from their jobs and ministries.

In the midst of change, there is continuity. For example, the women of Beech Grove still have a group of a dozen singing sisters, five of whom were part of the original group. Today they are called the "Beech Grove Benedictines." Following the death of Sr. Marian Yohe in 1993, the group found it difficult to perform for a time in the wake of the loss of one of the original members. But more recently they have resumed singing together. Later this year, they will be recording a compact disc of music—all of which has been written by Sr. Mary Sue Freiberger—about "the Blessed Mother" (Mary, the Mother of Jesus). This will be the group's fifth recording since they first formed during the years when several of them were students at Indiana Central University.

Today, most of the Benedictine women who were trained to teach are serving in administrative roles in various institutions, and some are serving as "parish life coordinators" in Catholic parishes throughout the state of Indiana. In a time when the Catholic Church faces a declining number of priests, women are more involved in ministry than ever before, doing almost everything in the church. The priests who celebrate the Eucharist are now regarded as the Sacramental Ministers. Still, women religious in the Roman Catholic Church face some of the same kinds of attitudes that Protestant women found themselves dealing with at the end of the nineteenth century.

Another notable change is that today some of the leaders and programs at the University of Indianapolis are now looking to the Benedictine tradition for wisdom about how to "give and receive hospitality" with students on this campus. When Michael Cartwright and Greg Clapper founded the Lantz Center for Christian Vocations in the late 1990s, one of the Christian traditions that they drew from in developing the Christian Vocations curriculum was the Benedictine tradition of spiritual formation. Some CVOC students have received spiritual direction through programs sponsored by the Benedict Inn, and one student served her Christian Vocations internship at Benedict Inn. In addition, two recent campus ministers have received training in spiritual direction from the Spiritual Direction Internship Program at Benedict Inn. During his sabbatical in the spring of 2002, Michael Cartwright had an office at Benedict Inn where he engaged in scholarly pursuits in the context of *ora et labora*—the Benedictine pattern of prayer and work.

In recent years, more connections have been made. For several years, Sr. Jennifer Horner has spoken to Christian Vocations classes about her life as a monastic woman. During the spring of 2003, a group of nursing faculty studied a book on hospitality written by a pair of Benedictines (clergyman and laywoman) as they consider how they want to restructure their curriculum. At the February 12, 2003, installation of the new dean for ecumenical and inter-faith programs, Michael Cartwright noted the ways in which his own engagements with the Benedictine tradition have shaped the ways that he has come to think about the importance of hospitality for an institution that seeks to live out its motto of “education for service.” Furthermore, the University is sponsoring a two-year consultation, through the Crossings Project, that will explore the growing pattern of Methodist clergy and laity discovering Benedictine spirituality as an enriching way for them to live out their own commitment to “covenant discipleship.”⁵⁷

There is no question that the ministry of the Benedictine alumni is a rich story of “education for service,” but we should be careful not to attribute too much to the fact that these alumni went to the University of Indianapolis. The young women who came to Indiana Central in the 1960s and 1970s to receive training to serve as teachers were already immersed in a process of spiritual formation that emphasized service to God, church, and community. Whatever they may have learned about the significance of service at the University of Indianapolis would simply have reinforced a conviction that they were already living out in their daily lives in the context of the monastic community at Our Lady of Grace. Nevertheless, the University has been positively affected by its initial engagement with the “Singing Sisters,” which caused faculty and students alike to think more carefully about how to be hospitable to the wider variety of Christian groups as well as to the growing population of non-Christians on this campus.

When Mary Lucien Dippel '66 first began taking nursing courses at Indiana Central University in the mid-1960s, neither she nor other Benedictine women could have predicted that some day this decision would develop into a creative partnership. Nor could anyone have foreseen that the positive engagement of the “Singing Sisters” with Protestants on this campus in the late 1960s would someday be followed by the creation of a ministry that would target the spiritual needs of Protestant clergywomen. At a time when the University community is growing in its commitment to be “ecumenical and interfaith” in the way it goes about achieving its mission of education for service, the “Benedictine story” of education for service continues to contribute a great deal to the life of the University of Indianapolis as it discovers its own charism of hospitality.

VIII. A MATHEMATICIAN AND A PRIEST IN THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST: THE STORY OF IONE BOODT

From the mid-1960s to the early 1980s, when the faculty and administration included the largest number of ordained clergy ever, they ranged from ten to fifteen, and all were male. Did any ordained women ever apply for teaching positions at the University during this period of time? Based on available records, it is not possible at this point to establish whether they did or not.⁵⁸

What we do know is that in the year 1982 Dr. Ione Boodt joined the faculty of Indiana Central University as assistant professor of Mathematics. Dr. Boodt was also the first woman hired full-time to teach in the science division of the University. She would go on to be granted tenure, promoted to associate professor, and serve for three years (1987-1990) as chairperson of the Mathematics Department. Having earlier experienced a sense of calling to become a priest while attending the ordination of Jacqueline Means at Christ Church Cathedral in 1976, Ione Boodt chose to affirm her call by seeking ordination in the Episcopal Church. When she was due for a sabbatical, Dr. Boodt used that time to begin her seminary studies for the priesthood. In due course, Dr. Boodt resigned her position after a two-year leave of absence, during which time she worked on her Master of Divinity degree at Seabury-Western Seminary in Evanston, Illinois. Having completed her seminary studies and serving as a curate en route to her ordination as priest, The Reverend Dr. Ione Boodt served as a chaplain in a hospice in the Chicago area.

Later, she returned to the University of Indianapolis to teach on a part-time basis in the mid-1990s. From 1995 to 2001, she worked half-time at the University, where she held the rank of associate professor and served half-time as the rector of St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Martinsville, Indiana. Based on a review of available records, Ione Boodt is the first woman faculty-person of the University of Indianapolis to be ordained. During that period she would often teach in the mornings, then don her clergy collar and cross and leave campus to go to the hospital to visit a parishioner or to prepare her sermon for the next Sunday's gathering of the St. Mary's congregation for worship. On several occasions, Dr. Boodt presided at the University's monthly University Ecumenical Communion Service.

Dr. Boodt also contributed to the work of the Lantz Center for Christian Vocations in a variety of ways, teaching the CVOC 101 "Vocation Exploration I" course (on two occasions), as well as making special presentations to incoming student groups and serving as a mentor to students in the program in various ways. On April 18, 2001, Rev. Dr. Ione Boodt was recognized by the University of Indianapolis for her service as "a priest in the church of Jesus Christ and a mathematician at the University of Indianapolis."⁵⁹ On that occasion, President Jerry Israel presented her with a Lantz Center medallion (see cover) for Christian Service in recognition of her service to University, church, and community.

While we believe that Ione Boodt was the first ordained woman to serve on the faculty of this University, we also know that she is not the only female member of the faculty to have served congregations and other church bodies in significant leadership capacities as ordered



Professor Ione Boodt speaks with University trustee and alumna Ann Cory Bretz '48

in those traditions. In fact, there are many examples of faculty women who have offered significant leadership as appropriate to their particular congregation, synod, or diocese. To take but one notable example, Dr. Rebecca Blair '80 has served as an associate faculty in the English Department from 2001 to 2003. Prior to returning to her alma mater to teach, Blair served as the (first and only woman) stated clerk of the Presbytery of Missouri Union from 1996 to 2000. (This presbytery was the first to be created at the reunion of the Presbyterian Church US and the United Presbyterian Church in 1983.) The stated clerk is the chief ecclesiastical officer of the presbytery. Blair also served "pulpit supply" in several churches in Missouri, Illinois, and Indiana from 1991-2000. In 1999, while serving on the faculty of Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, she served as lay pastor to the Tri-County Parish near Sedalia, Missouri.

During the two-year period that Dr. Blair served on the University faculty, she has contributed in a variety of ways. In addition to teaching courses in English composition and literature, Rebecca Blair participated in the first edition of the EduServ Faculty Seminar, and she has worked with Associate Professor James Fuller to produce a book of narratives about "education for service." As she has had opportunity to do so, Dr. Blair has preached in Presbyterian congregations. Beginning in September 2003, Blair will become a member of the faculty at Wartburg College in Iowa, where she will teach half-time and spend the remainder of her time working with Wartburg's Discovering and Claiming Faith initiative. Dr. Blair's bivocational identity as a scholar-churchwoman, like Dr. Boodt's lifework as a "mathematician and priest," is another way that the story of women in ministry is being written at the beginning of this University's second century of "education for service."

IX. PARISH NURSES: A STORY OF A CONTEMPORARY CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR WOMEN IN MINISTRY

During the last three decades of the twentieth century, the University of Indianapolis became well-known for the quality of its programs for nursing, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and other health-care professions. Alongside the various undergraduate and graduate degree programs, various short-term re-certification and continuing education programs have been created in the health sciences schools of the University. The Parish Nursing Program is an example of one of the latter kinds of initiatives (it can be taken for credit also). "The mission of parish nursing is the intentional integration of the practice of faith with the practice of nursing so that people can achieve wholeness in, with, and through the community of faith in which parish nurses serve."⁶⁰

This program is offered in collaboration with various community "partners"—churches, hospitals, etc.—that agree to provide tuition, books, etc. for nurses desiring to receive this training. During the six sessions, parish nurses learn about the importance of hospitality and the role of the congregation, discover the theological significance of healing, health, and wholeness, and receive practical training related to the practice of parish nursing.⁶¹ The very existence of this program is the result of the persistent efforts of an alumna of Indiana Central University who currently teaches at her *alma mater*: L. Cheryl Catlin Larson received her Associate of Science degree in Nursing in 1966 and subsequently returned to the University for coursework in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree, which she completed in 1971.

As the daughter of an Evangelical United Brethren pastor, Cheryl Larson grew up knowing missionaries who came to her home to stay at various points. She initially considered the possibility of becoming a missionary through the United Methodist Church. During the summer of 1972, Cheryl spent two months serving as a short-term missionary in Zaire, serving in place of another nurse who had to be gone for the summer. Cheryl learned through this experience that there are many needs but that missionary work was not what she was called to do.

Ultimately, Cheryl discerned her calling in the context of teaching and serving as a parish nurse. She returned to the faculty at the University of Indianapolis in 1995 after serving for four years as a Parish Nurse at the Honey Creek United Methodist Church in Greenwood, Indiana. Three years later, in 1998, she completed her Master of Science in Nursing from Indiana Wesleyan University. Larson's passion for parish nursing led her to propose that the University of Indianapolis begin its own training program for parish nurses through the School of Nursing. In proposing this new program in 1996, Larson argued that this new initiative was consistent with the University's motto of "education for service" as well as its Methodist roots.

Over the next seven years, almost two hundred people would complete this program, almost all of whom were women.⁶² Four of these persons were—or currently are—members of the University of Indianapolis nursing faculty: Judy Bryan, Carolyn Sue Ellis, Margie Porter, and Lou Ellen Sears. Each of these women has found her own way to integrate her faith and nursing practice through this unique form of ministry. When Lou Ellen Sears retired from the University in 2001, one of the reasons that she did so was because she felt called to give herself to the work of parish nursing in the context of the ministries of the congregation of Southport United Methodist Church, a congregation on the south side of Indianapolis.

As the interest of her colleagues in the School of Nursing suggests, Larson's enthusiasm for this kind of ministry has proven to be infectious. Persons who enroll in the Parish Nursing program must be registered nurses, have three years of experience in the nursing profession, and be spiritually mature. Upon completion of the course, parish nurses perform the following seven functions: integrator of faith and health, health educator, personal health counselor, referral agent, trainer of volunteers, developer of support groups, and health advocate.⁶³ In some cases, the ministry of parish nurses is combined with the office of the deaconess. In other cases, parish nurses serve as eucharistic ministers and visit shut-ins on behalf of the congregation.

Although the responsibilities of a parish nurse may vary from congregation to congregation, the integrative practice of faith with health is common to all. Similarly, at the commissioning service that is held at the end of the course, each parish nurse is invited to offer his or her own statement about how she understands her own identity as a person who has been called into the ministry of parish nursing. At the most recent Parish Nursing Commissioning Service, held in the University Chapel on March 22, 2003, Jeanne Brownlee offered the following Statement of Commitment:

"God gives to each of us a mission in life. Once we start living our lives with that conviction, we will soon know what we are sent to do.

"The image of cupped hands is important to me. It symbolizes our ability to hold what is offered to us as a gift, or to open our hands to give to others. As I begin this new mission as a parish nurse, I am aware that the power of our hands also involves healing and being healed, as well as giving and receiving.



Cheryl L. Catlin Larson



Recent class of Parish Nurses

“Pope John Paul II said, ‘Nobody is so poor that she or he has nothing to give and nobody is so rich that she or he has nothing to receive.’ May I never give anything without asking what I am receiving from the person I give, and may I never receive anything without asking what I have to give to the person from whom I receive.

“Here I am, Lord.”⁶⁴

Following the commitment statements, the leader anoints each of the candidates, making the sign of the cross with oil on each forehead. “Jeanne, I commission you to a ministry of healing and wholeness, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” The ancient rite of anointing is the church’s way of affirming the particular ministry of the nurses and to commission them to their tasks with the blessing of God and the University of Indianapolis.

To date, approximately twenty-five percent of the persons who have been commissioned have been United Methodists and approximately fifteen percent have been Roman Catholic. The remaining sixty percent are Lutherans, Presbyterians, Baptists, Disciples of Christ, etc. While almost all of those persons who have completed this program are Christians, there has been one person who was commissioned for service at one of the Indianapolis-area synagogues.⁶⁵ Although the story of the parish nursing program is probably not well known across the campus of the University, this particular program displays the kind of ecumenical and interfaith thrust that is consistent with the mission of this particular United Methodist-related comprehensive University.

Thanks to the persistent leadership of Cheryl Catlin Larson and the commitment of students and faculty alike to this project, the Parish Nursing Program continues to thrive. Recently a new course has been created that fosters the vocational development of parish nurses in the context of their ministry with congregations. Larson is now working with Clarian Health partners and other parish nursing coordinators to bring her vision of an “Indiana Center for Parish Nursing” into existence. Whatever may happen in the future as the ministry of parish nursing expands, the model offered by Larson and the women of the Parish Nursing Program in an effective method of how to foster vocational reflection in the life of the University. This model has proven to be generative for how the University now goes about offering curricular and co-curricular opportunities for students through the Lantz Center for Christian Vocations in particular and the University’s Campus Ministries offerings more generally.⁶⁶

X. WOMEN ASSOCIATED WITH THE UNIVERSITY'S CHRISTIAN VOCATIONS PROGRAM

The Lantz Center for Christian Vocations was founded in 1998 by two faculty from the Philosophy and Religion Department, Michael G. Cartwright and Greg Clapper. From the beginning, women have made up the largest aggregate of students who have enrolled in the Christian Vocations course. Not surprisingly the majority of students who have been commissioned through this program thus far also have been women (See Appendix II for list). Some of these persons are preparing for ordained ministry, but the majority of them intend a "life work" of lay ministry through such professions as social workers, doctors, teachers, and so on.



Shalimar Holderly

All of the students who seek to be commissioned for Christian service take a sequence of courses that invite them to explore Christian vocations as well as to be formed for service through the practice of Christian disciplines. Students also have the opportunity to engage in various kinds of action/reflection experiences ranging from taking a service-learning course to serving a Christian Vocations internship for a semester. Students have served as interns in a variety of ministries in area churches and community centers including Broadway United Methodist Church, Community Church of Greenwood, Calvary Lutheran Church, Fletcher Place United Methodist Ministries, and others.

Christian Vocations interns have also benefited from learning from the ministries of various alumnae of the University. For example, in 2001, Ms. Shalimar Wray Holderly served a Christian Vocations internship in Spiritual Direction at Benedict Inn Conference and Retreat Center of Our Lady of Grace Monastery under the direction of Sr. Betty Drewes O.S.B., the director of the Spiritual Direction Internship Program offered by Benedict Inn. During that same semester, Holderly completed an Honors Project on the notion of what it means for a United Methodist woman in ministry to live a "rule of life." Her exploration of the intersections between the United Methodist and Benedictine traditions was inspired, in part, by the lives of Methodist and Catholic "saints" as well as the founding of the first United Methodist monastic community by Mary Ewing Stamps in Collegeville, Minnesota.⁶⁷

At the Christian Vocations Commissioning Service held each spring, those students who have completed the prescribed course of study and who desire to state publicly their commitment to a life of Christian service are commissioned before a gathered company of faculty, staff, students, family members, and church leaders. The liturgy for this service is structured around the celebration of the Eucharist, or Lord's Supper, which takes place along with the washing of feet based on the practice described in the thirteenth chapter of John's Gospel. Prior to these "responses" to the Word of God, those students who are being commissioned offer their commitment statements as a way of proclaiming the good news of the Gospel on this occasion. The following commitment statement commenting on a text from one of the Psalms was given on April 26, 2001, by Shalimar Wray Holderly.

"My heart says of you, 'Seek his face!' Your face, Lord, I will seek. (Psalm 27:8.)

"I believe that God has called me to 'seek his face,' to live a life in which my vocation as a Christian encompasses all of whom I am and what I do. I believe that



*Christian Vocations Students Commissioned
for service in 2000:
Brian Beidenbach
Jennifer Malone
Megan Faussett
Angie McDaniel
Amy Scheuerman
Katy O'Bryan
Kathy Simpher*

as part of this calling to radical Christian discipleship, God has called me to live it out within the context of the ordained ministry and the covenant of the order of elders through the North Indiana Conference of the United Methodist Church. I believe that God has called me to be set apart for his service, to wash the feet of his people, to proclaim the truth of his word, to teach the text of the Bible, to counsel the people of his church and to testify to His loving grace through the administration of the sacraments. I believe that God has called me to live as a humble servant and follower of Jesus Christ even as He has called me to lead His people in worship and service.

“As God calls me to a life of servant leadership, I actively strive to answer that call every day of my life with all of my life. I do this first, by developing my own ‘rule of life’ as I explore and practice the spiritual disciplines, allowing them to shape me as I grow in knowledge and stature and faithful Christian discipleship. Secondly, I continue to head down the track toward ordination as elder, continuing candidacy studies as a certified candidate. In the fall [of 2001] I will begin attending Duke Divinity School in Durham, North Carolina, where I will pursue a Master of Divinity degree in preparation for the work of the Church.

“I humbly acknowledge that as a member of the Body of Christ, I do not live out my life of Christian discipleship nor my call to full-time ministry alone. I readily submit myself to the relationship of accountability I have with my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ across denominations, in my home church, and in the wider United Methodist Church. I willingly open myself to the counsel of those in the faith who will help and guide me as I continue to discern the specific call God has on my life.”⁶⁸

After publicly stating their commitment to a life of Christian service, each student is anointed with oil and a blessing is pronounced on his or her life as the Christian Vocations staff lays hands on the student’s head or shoulders. Following the consecration of the bread and the cup, the students serve as the Eucharistic ministers for this occasion. While this occasion is hardly the same as the chapel services that were once required of students who attended Indiana Central, neither should the emphases of this contemporary Christian Vocations program be thought of as alien to the practices of the first generation of students, faculty, and staff of the University.

Like the earliest generation of men and women, some of the students who come to the University of Indianapolis have a strong sense of “calling” to serve in Christian ministry. Unlike that generation, the students at the University of Indianapolis in the 1990s and 2000s face a world of seemingly incessant change, which in turn creates uncertainty about the course that their lives will take in the years following graduation.

In the midst of the changes, one thing remains constant, the adventurous quest for life that leads Christian “life workers” past and present to lift their voices to God in faith, hope and love to pray “the worker’s prayer.”

Prepare us Lord for this great work of thine
By thine own process; we know not the way
To fit ourselves; we only grope; the day
Is thine; its light, a ray from the divine.
Illumines the path where thou wouldst have it shine,
And in thy Light our own poor struggling ray
Gets new encouragement until we say,
With longing hearts, “Thy will be done, not mine.”
Then we are ready; then thou wilt use our powers
To spread thy Kingdom and build up thy cause
And thou wilt make our consecrated hours
Our sunniest; nor will the world’s applause
Affect our service, for we look to thee
For all we have and all we hope to be. (*1923 Oracle*, 128)

Public recognition by the University of the contributions of women in ministry has grown over the past half century. The University has honored four women in ministry with honorary degrees,⁶⁹ and five women have given the University’s Showers Lectures in the Christian Religion.⁷⁰ On many other occasions, women in ministry (both lay and clergy) have been invited to speak to various groups on campus. Nonetheless, the involvement of women in Christian Ministries on campus has been comparatively recent and is closely connected to the Christian Vocations curricula that have been developed since the founding of the Lantz Center for Christian Vocations.

In fact, the first time that women were employed by the University for this purpose was in the fall of 2002. At that time, two persons were hired to serve in interim positions during the restructuring of the campus ministries staffing made possible by the Crossings Project. Janet F. Hoover '97 served as interim director of the Youth Ministry Training Program during the 2002-2003 academic year. An active American Baptist laywoman throughout her adult life, Hoover completed her undergraduate degree in English Literature in mid-life at a time when her four children were still in school. As an undergraduate, Janet worked in the Writing Lab at the University of Indianapolis where her efforts were greatly appreciated. As a “nontraditional student” who returned to college in the early 1990s, Hoover’s story is a narrative that several other clergy alumnae of the University could tell. Following the completion of her theological education, Hoover worked with the Center for Congregations, where she developed the learning pathway for the practice of Christian hospitality, a resource designed to assist Christian congregations in learning to give and to receive hospitality to strangers.



The Reverend Janice Kemp presiding at dedication of the University chapel, January 2003

Serving as a liaison between institutions is a special kind of ministry that requires patience as well as persistent communication. With grace and good humor, Hoover was able to help the faculty of the Philosophy and Religion Department at the University of Indianapolis and the faculty at Christian Theological Seminary to create a joint curriculum in youth ministry while also helping to promote this new curriculum on campus and throughout the state of Indiana. The Youth Ministry Training Program is built around the Christian Vocations curriculum and provides students with an alternative to the already-existing majors offered by the Philosophy and Religion Department. Although much of her work took place off campus, Janet Hoover has made a significant contribution to “education for service” at her alma mater by making it possible for students who are called to ministry to and with youth to be able to prepare for that ministry.

Janice Kemp served as interim director of the Lantz Center for Christian Vocations during the 2002-2003 academic year. Kemp, like Professor Ione Boodt, began her career by teaching in the science division. Originally trained as a biologist, she earned a Ph.D. in zoology before serving on the faculty of several church-related colleges and universities over the next fifteen years. Following the death of her husband in 1999, Kemp resigned her position at Hanover College to pursue theological study at Christian Theological Seminary. While in seminary, Dr. Kemp was named a Lilly Fellow through the Fund for Theological Education. This fellowship enabled her to travel to several pilgrimage sites in Europe as well as to learn more about spirituality and meditation practices. At the time that Kemp was hired, she had already completed a Spiritual Direction Internship Program offered through the Benedict Inn at Beech Grove, Indiana, and was enrolled in her last semester of seminary studies. While serving part-time at the University of Indianapolis, Kemp was licensed by the United Church of Christ. In addition to playing a major role in the design and leadership of the dedication of the University Chapel, Kemp has worked with students in the Christian Vocations program, led book discussion groups, and led a weekly meditation group.

Although their responsibilities led them to serve in different spheres of the University’s program, both Janet Hoover and Janice Kemp have offered their own witness, thereby adding to the stream of women in ministry associated with the University of Indianapolis over the past century. The fact that these two women have been employed for public service as ordained ministers at the University of Indianapolis is what is most notable.

As the preceding “chapters” in this particular story of education for service indicates, women have been in ministry at Indiana Central University and the University of Indianapolis almost continuously over the past century. What has changed is the fact that the University community is beginning to notice what has been happening since the days when Alva Button Roberts served the community in the context of performing domestic chores. Today it is much more likely that a woman will be seen presiding at a public Eucharist (see photo above), leading students, faculty, and staff in a celebration that proclaims the good news of the Gospel, whether or not those males around her believe what they hear.

CONCLUSION:

Each of these “chapters” from the story of women in ministry associated with Indiana Central University/University of Indianapolis is incomplete. Not only have we not been able to find the article that Alva Button Roberts wrote that served as the “efficient cause” of her contact with her future husband and subsequent service to the fledgling institution known as Indiana Central University, but also we by no means have a full listing of all the women in ministry from the past century (see Appendix I below). Much more could be said about the many contributions that contemporary Christian alumnae of the University of Indianapolis are making in a variety of ways. These range from writing Christian education curriculum and serving on the Boards of Ordained Ministry of the United Methodist Church to serving as parish nurses to creating innovative opportunities to minister to Protestant clergywomen, at least some of whom have found it difficult to “plow ahead” in the face of the resistance of congregations to their public ministries.

The ten stories that we have chosen to lift up in this booklet are not intended to suggest that the University of Indianapolis faculty, staff, and students have fully grasped the contributions of its alumnae who believe that they have been called to a “life work” of Christian ministry. Nor should these narrations be taken to suggest that this institution has always played a critical role in all of these lives, for that is not the case. In some instances, the University may have played a confirming role in the lives of women who were already searching for their call. In other instances, such as the story of the “Singing Sisters” of Our Lady of Grace Monastery, the women called to witness received their primary formation elsewhere. That is as it should be. Even at its best, a church-related university can only play an auxiliary role to the church’s own responsibility for the *lifelong formation* of disciples of Jesus Christ.

While the University of Indianapolis should not expropriate the lives of these women in ministry for institutional self-interest, nor should we ignore the ways in which these lives have displayed the kinds of service that the University of Indianapolis espouses. And so we dare to remember these stories, recognizing that this particular set of narratives of “education for service” intersects with a variety of other stories of church and community. We hope that by lifting up this set of narratives, we evoke memories from faculty, alumni, and students of stories about other women in ministry associated with this institution’s history that should also be told. In the meantime, we give thanks for the life work of the women called to witness whose lives have come to be associated with the history of Indiana Central and the University of Indianapolis.

We also notice the shifts in institutional boundaries and the ways individual women register their sense of calling. The University that prepared the Hardy sisters to undertake future study at a time when women were effectively barred from theological education now benefits from partnerships with a community of Benedictine women, some of whom are proud alumnae, that has much to offer our University in sharing the wisdom gleaned from centuries of practicing hospitality. The University that once benefited from having an ordained woman who cooked the meals and washed the clothes for the students now offers women the opportunity to serve in public in the roles of presiding at the Eucharist in the University Chapel, where feet are washed as a reminder of the profound ways in which Jesus embodied the role of a servant. A University that at the beginning of the twenty-first century offers both parish nursing programs and pre-theology curricula—as well as a new Youth

Ministry Training Program—is a University that can be said to be grappling with the needs of women “creatively to live out such vocations outside the prescribed paths, and have found meaningful paths of service in the process.”⁷¹

One question remains to be addressed. Why has the story of women in ministry associated with this University not been told with a greater sense of the contribution that they have made to “education for service”? There is probably no one answer to this question, just as no one person or group can be held accountable for such a lapse in memory, and it is quite possible that such neglect is more of an act of omission than a sin of commission. Perhaps it is worth considering some possibilities as we consider this particular set of “lost and found” narratives of the role of religion at Indiana Central and the University of Indianapolis.⁷²

Some observers have said that the United Brethren in Christ were “careful keepers of the stories, but they did not tell the stories well.” This does not mean that the stories were not told at all, but that they were not told for external consumption. In fact, the humility of United Brethren students, faculty, and staff of the University may have contributed to the neglect of this story. Believing that it was more important to *do* good deeds than to talk about the deeds that they had done, the United Brethren lived an ethic of “education for service.” A century later, in an era when the University’s embrace of ecumenical and interfaith engagements has become more explicit, we are beginning to recognize the need to tell these stories in the awareness that the lives described in such narratives offer inspiration for the next generation of leaders in church and community.

Another answer might be that these stories did not fit with the narratives of progress that faculty and staff in an entrepreneurial university community found it most flattering to share in describing their place of employment during the past three decades of rapid growth and development. Nor is this the only story of “education for service” that has been neglected. On other occasions, other members of this academic community have noted the peculiarity of the fact that we don’t tell stories of education for service in music, the arts, and sports. Even “social work” and the civic engagement programs associated with the University’s Office of Community Programs appear to be oddly under-narrated with respect to the University’s commitment to service. Clearly, we have many more stories that need to be gathered and recounted where students, faculty, and staff come together in the context of our common endeavors.

One of the things that we can learn from recognizing our neglect of the stories about women in ministry is that a University committed to “education for service” should tell the stories of those women and men who have lived faithful lives of Christian service. Just as in the first century of the Common Era, Mary the Mother of Jesus and the other women dared to stand “last at the cross, and first at the grave,” today there are many men and women who persist in “plowing ahead,” serving as they are able despite whatever obstacles they may find themselves facing. For the inspiration that they offer, and the encouragement that we gain from sharing their stories, we give thanks to God. For the privilege of being associated with them in the context of a century-long legacy of “education for service,” we rejoice that where we often find ourselves struggling, their witness shines bright with the hope of those who have successfully embodied “education for service” in the context of their ministries as “women called to witness.”⁷³

APPENDIX I

Women in Ministry Alumnae of Indiana Central College/University & University of Indianapolis

Lota Emery '15
Celia Austin Pellett '17*
Bertha Hardy '25
Elva Hardy '25
Treasie Hardy '27
Ruby Bushee '43
Olive K. Oliver Truesdale '43
Wilma Harner Allen '45
Emilee A. Toliver Griffith '50
Vera Jo Taylor Edington '55
Pauline J. Milhouse Vermillion '61
Nancy G. Ridenour Haas '62
Linda W. Wyatt Muterspaugh '62
Sr. Mary Lucien Dippel O.S.B. '66
Sr. Mary Frederic Turner O.S.B. '66
Evelyn F. Resnick Drummond '68 **
Diana R. Gaier Hill '69
Sr Anna Marie Megel O.S.B. '70
Rosemary Cooley '71
Sr. Juliann Babcock O.S.B. '71
Angela Jarboe O.S.B. '71
Sr. Mary L. Jones O.S.B. '71
Sr. Mary Sue Freiberger O.S.B. '72
Vicki L. Pawlisch Hobbs '72
Susan Shockey Firebaugh '72
Karen F. Siegfried '73
Esther Edwards '74 (honorary doctoral degree)
Donna J. Hoover Olsen '74
Esther M. Littrell Wilson '74
Terri Ray Chattin '75
Sr. Mary J. Piccione '76
Doris Arnett-Whitaker '76
Sally Shockey '76
Roberta K. Carlson White '77
Linda L. Yoder Pittman '77
Caroline M. Casey Reed '80
Sharon F. White Sharp '80
Sr. Rebecca Marie Fitterer O.S.B. '82
Diedre Funkhouser Roberts '83
Judith Ann McGuire Marshall '85
Mary J. Scifres '87
Ruth C. Cain Godsey '88
Sr. Margaret Ann Dailey O.S.B. '89
Linda M. Willey '89
Patricia A. Clark '92
Gloria Mann Nelson '93
Amy M. Lee Covington '94
Kim E. Gastineau '95
Sr. Sharon Bierman O.S.B. '97
Janet F. Hoover '97
Melissa M. Bracht-Wagner '97

* *Attended the Indiana Central Academy but did not enroll in the University.*

** *Subsequently left her monastic profession.*

APPENDIX II

Women Commissioned for Christian Service Through the Lantz Center for Christian Vocations 2000-2003

Kathy Simpher '00* (Broadway United Methodist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Meghan Faussett '00 (Mt. Pleasant Christian Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Jennifer Malone '00 (High Street UMC, Muncie, Ind.)
Angie McDaniel '00 (Community Church of Greenwood, Ind.)
Katy O'Bryan '00 (Community Church of Greenwood, Ind.)
Amy Scheuerman Marine '00 (Immanuel Presbyterian Church, Indianapolis)
Shalimar Wray Holderly '01* (Reynolds United Methodist Church)
Sarah Turner '01 (United Church of Huntington, Ohio)
Carolyn Peck '01 (First Baptist Church of North Indianapolis)
Amy L. Sell '02 (Brook United Methodist Church, Brook, Ind.)
Meredith Mangan '02 (Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Rapid City, S.D.)
Tiffany True '03 * (St. James West UMC, Evansville, Ind.)
Amy Peterson '03* (Trinity UMC, Rensselaer, Ind.)

* *Recipient of the Leila Anderson Award for Christian Service*

During this same period, the following six women faculty and staff members have taught Christian Vocations courses:

Ione Boodt, College of Arts and Sciences
Vickie Carter, School of Nursing
Carolyn Sue Ellis, School of Nursing

Janice Kemp, Lantz Center for Christian Vocations
Cheryl Larson, School of Nursing
Martha Thie, School of Nursing

APPENDIX III: WOMEN COMMISSIONED AS PARISH NURSES

1996-2003

Please note: The congregation or agency that shared in commissioning each Parish Nurse is listed after each person's name. The city is where the student lives, not the address of the congregation listed.

Abbott, Debbie (Pittsboro Christian Church, Pittsboro, Ind.)
Adler, Cathy (St. Benedict Catholic Parish, Terre Haute, Ind.)
Allen, Julie K. (Grace United Methodist Church, Franklin, Ind.)
Almeida, Ruth (Park Chapel Christian Church, New Palestine, Ind.)
Anderson, Jill*
Arata, Janita (Our Lady of Greenwood Catholic, Greenwood, Ind.)
Armor, Susan E. (Franklin Presbyterian Church, Franklin, Ind.)
Atkinson, Nancy (Rosedale Hills United Methodist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Auberry, Kathy (St. Frances & Clare Catholic Church, Trafalgar, Ind.)

Baker, Mary (St. John's United Church of Christ, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Baxter, Tina (Bethesda Missionary Baptist Church, Anderson, Ind.)
Beatty, Phyllis (Hope Covenant Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Beck, Sharon (Community Church of Greenwood, Ind.)
Benson, (Kelley) Lisa (Franklin Road Baptist Church, New Palestine, Ind.)
Bittelmeyer, Paula (Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Bowen, Leslie (New Whiteland Christian Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Bowman, Audrey (Brookside United Methodist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Boring, Karyl (Community Church of Greenwood, Greenwood, Ind.)
Bracht, Cheryl (Huntertown United Methodist Church, Huntertown, Ky.)
Bradley, Deborah (Memorial United Methodist Church, Ind.)
Bradley, Sandra (Crooked Creek Baptist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Brandemeyer, Donna (Faith United Church of Christ, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Brinkman, Louise (Whiteland United Methodist Church, Whiteland, Ind.)
Broadus, Margaret (Eastern Star Missionary Baptist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Brown, Lynith "Lynne" (Good Shepherd United Methodist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Brownlee, Jean (Roberts Park United Methodist Church, Franklin, Ind.)
Brumbaugh, Joyce (St. Peter's United Church of Christ, Carmel, Ind.)
Burns, Sherry L (Faith United Church of Christ, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Bush, Mary (St. Mark Catholic Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Bryan, Judith ** (Heather Hills Baptist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)

Calderon, Patricia (Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Campbell, Karen (Stringtown Church of the Nazarene, Greenfield, Ind.)
Carter, Barbara S. (Carmel United Methodist Church, Carmel, Ind.)
Cartledge, Rebecca (Christ United Methodist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Cherry, Carol Lee (St. Luke's United Methodist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Chestnut, Marilyn (Southport Baptist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Clark, Dana (Carmel United Methodist Church, Carmel, Ind.)
Clary, Donna (Northview Christian Life, Carmel, Ind.)
Collision, Ann

Conklin, Suzanne (St. Andrews Anglican Catholic, Indianapolis, Ind.)
 Crawley, Kimberly (First Christian Church, Greensburg, Ind.)
 Crook, Rebecca (Southport Heights Christian Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
 Dangler, Brenda (1st Church of the Nazarene, Greenfield, Ind.)
 Dellacca, Ruth (St. Andrews United Methodist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
 Dilbone, Marina (Emmanuel Christian Fellowship, Indianapolis, Ind.)
 Doane, Mary (Christ United Methodist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
 Dorsey, Melissa R. (Holy Spirit Parish at Geist, Indianapolis, Ind.)
 Dougherty, Patricia (First Baptist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
 Douglas, Betty Jo (Covenant Community Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
 Dutkevitch, Sarah (North United Methodist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
 Ellis, Carolyn (Community United Methodist Church, Vincennes, Ind.)
 Ellis, Carolyn Sue ** (Amity Baptist Church, Franklin, Ind.)
 Emmanuel, Lilith (Eastern Star Missionary Baptist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
 Ericson, P. Larradine (Morgantown United Methodist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
 Erlenbaugh, Jan (Holy Cross Catholic Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
 Ewers, Linda (Holy Name Catholic Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
 Felker, Joann (St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church, Greenfield, Ind.)
 Fenneman, Molly (First Presbyterian Church, Martinsville, Ind.)
 Fenter, Kristi Kay (Greenwood United Methodist Church, Greenwood, Ind.)
 Ferrell, Michele (Englewood Christian Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
 Findlay, Rebecca (Rocklane Christian Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
 Fiorenza Victoria L. (Community Church of Greenwood, Ind.)
 Fischer, Melissa (Christ Community Church, Sheridan, Ind.)
 Fleetwood, Selena (First Pentecostal Church, Greenwood, Ind.)
 Ford, Gwendolyn (Greenwood Christian Church, Greenwood, Ind.)
 Franklin, Elaine (King of Glory Lutheran Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
 Frazier, Donna (King of Glory Lutheran Church, Westfield, Ind.)
 Fredette, Faith (Our Lady of Greenwood Catholic Church, Greenwood, Ind.)
 Freeman, Linda L (Divine Savior Lutheran Church, Fishers, Ind.)
 Funk, Julie, (St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
 Gaston, Karla (Orchard Park Presbyterian, Indianapolis, Ind.)
 Giraud, Susan (New Whiteland Christian Church, New Whiteland, Ind.)
 Goss, Suzanne J. (St. Jude Catholic Church, Greenwood, Ind.)
 Grabowski, Tina (St. Christopher Catholic Church, Speedway, Ind.)
 Graves, Linda (St. Joseph Catholic Church, Shelbyville, Ind.)
 Grutzner, Jennifer (Englewood Christian Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
 Gunderman, Marilyn (Old Bethel UMC, Indianapolis, Ind.)
 Hanesworth, Sharon * (First Baptist Church, Plainfield, Ind.)
 Hardin, Karen (Tabernacle Christian Church, Franklin, Ind.)
 Harmon, Valerie (Mt. Paran Baptist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
 Hein, Connie (Richmond Catholic Community, Richmond, Ind.)
 Hensel, Desiree (St. David's Episcopal Church, Nashville, Ind.)
 Heustis, Jane (Irvington United Methodist, Indianapolis, Ind.)
 Hill, Lyndsay (Eastside Church of Nazarene, Indianapolis, Ind.)
 Hobbs, Myrna (Witherspoon Presbyterian Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
 Hofmann, Beulah Ann (14th & Chestnut Community Center, Brazil, Ind.)
 Holmes, Carolyn (Washington Street United Methodist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
 Hoover, Marty (St. Malachy Catholic Church, Pittsboro, Ind.)
 Hopkins, Carolyn (Epworth United Methodist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
 Hostrawser, Sandra K. (Speedway Christian Church, Speedway, Ind.)
 Howard, Cheryl D. (First United Methodist Church, Mooresville, Ind.)
 Humpherys, Karen (Fairland Christian Church, Shelbyville, Ind.)

Hunsaker, Karen (Rosedale Hills United Methodist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)

Impicicche, Georgia St. (Little Flower Catholic Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)

Jackson, Linda (First Missionary Church, Fort Wayne, Ind.)

Jenkins, Bonnie (Cumberland United Methodist Church, Cumberland, Ind.)

Jenkins, Marcia (Russellville Community Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)

Jinks, Marilyn K. *

Johnson, Ellen N. (Zion Evangelical United Church of Christ, Indianapolis, Ind.)

Johnson, Jo Ann (Pleasant Run United Church of Christ, Indianapolis, Ind.)

Jordan, Sue (St. Luke's United Methodist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)

Julius, Mary (Southport Baptist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)

Kachlik, Stacy Jo (Greenwood Christian Church, Greenwood, Ind.)

Kaehr, Carolyn (Hazel Dell Christian Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)

Keen, Patricia (St. Simon the Apostle Catholic Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)

Kobierski, Christine (Our Lady of Greenwood Church, Greenwood, Ind.)

Kramer, Evelyn (Pilgrim Lutheran Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)

LeMasters, Jill (St. Mark's Catholic Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)

Lewis, Mary (Speedway United Methodist Church, Speedway, Ind.)

Lewis, Millie (North United Methodist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)

Lightner, Ann (Unity Church of Indianapolis, Ind.)

Lips, Kathleen (First Missionary Baptist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)

Loesch, Shirley (SS Francis and Clare Catholic Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)

Long, Mertie (Morristown United Methodist Church, Morristown, Ind.)

Long, Sharon (Huntertown United Methodist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)

Mackenzie, Janet (The Church at Mt. Gilead, Monrovia, Ind.)

May, Madelyn Jo (Tuxedo Park Baptist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)

Maynard, Cynthia (St. Mark's United Methodist Church, Carmel, Ind.)

McCabe, Katherine R. (Charity Tabernacle Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)

McClain, Katrina (Brownsburg Christian Church, Brownsburg, Ind.)

McCray, Bobbie A. (Pleasant Union Missionary Baptist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)

McGaughy, Nancy Ellen (Russellville Community Church, Russellville, Ind.)

McIntyre, Sharon (Amity United Methodist Church, Greenfield, Ind.)

McKinney, Marcia (Bethany Christian Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)

McMillin, Alice (House of Prayer Community, Indianapolis, Ind.)

McVicker, Lisa (McCordsville United Methodist, McCordsville, Ind.)

Meeks, Cheri (Indian Creek Christian Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)

Meredith, Toni (Central United Methodist Church, Richmond, Ind.)

Miller, Pauline (Calvary Lutheran Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)

Moran, Nedra (Holy Spirit at Geist, Indianapolis, Ind.)

Neal, Myra (Maple Hill United Methodist Church, Spencer, Ind.)

Newhouse, Debra (Emmanuel Baptist Church, Whiteland, Ind.)

O'Conner, Michelle (St. Gabriel Catholic, Indianapolis, Ind.)

O'Donnell, Donna (Christ the King Catholic Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)

Ohl, Marjory (Old Bethel United Methodist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)

Olivier, Loretta S. (Northminster Presbyterian Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)

O'Reilly, Deborah (Lawrence Church of God, Lawrence, Ind.)

Overby, Glenda S. (Franklin Church of the Nazarene, Franklin, Ind.)

Owen, Peggy (Heartland Ministries, Tipton, Ind.)

Pahl, Deb (Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Trafalgar, Ind.)

Pappas, Sherry M. (St. Luke Catholic Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)

Podgorski, Martina (Carmel United Methodist, Carmel, Ind.)

Porter, Deb (Northminster Presbyterian Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)

Porter, Margie ** (First Presbyterian Church, Martinsville, Ind.)
Price, Marilyn (Cross and Crown Lutheran Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Pritchett, Cindy (Plainfield United Methodist Church, Plainfield, Ind.)
Pulliam, Cindy (Southport United Methodist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)

Quillen, Terri Lynn (New Life in Christ Ministry, Greenwood, Ind.)

Raasch, Kathleen (Calvary Lutheran Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Raker, Janet (Friends United Church of Christ, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Riley, Miriam (Zion Hope Baptist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Robling, Patricia (7th & 8th United Church of Christ, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Rogan, Marcella L. (First Baptist Church of North Indianapolis, Ind.)
Runyon, Ruth Ann (Pleasant Ridge United Methodist Church, Englewood, Fla.)

St. Jean, Jane A. (East 91st Street Christian Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Sandos, Janice (Rossville Presbyterian Church, Rossville, Ind.)
Schneeman, Gloria (Honey Creek United Methodist Church, Greenwood, Ind.)
Sears, Lou Ellen ** (Southport UMC, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Shiple, Sharon Kay (Calvary Church of the Nazarene, Columbus, Ind.)
Simpson, Lynn (Anderson 1st Church of the Nazarene, Anderson, Ind.)
Singer, Cheryl (Zion Lutheran Church, New Palestine, Ind.)
Smith, Mary F. (Northminster Presbyterian Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Snyder, Judith A. (Zion Evangelical United Church of Christ, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Spears, Janet (College Park Baptist Church, Carmel, Ind.)
Staker, Beth (Linwood Christian Church, Linwood, Ind.)
Stevens, Ruth (First UMC, Marion, Ind.)
Straub, Wendy (Christ United Methodist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Sullivan, Holly (Cornerstone Church Inc., Trafalgar, Ind.)

Taylor, Sarah (Zionsville Presbyterian Church, Zionsville, Ind.)
Taylor, Sharon S. (East Columbus UMC, Columbus, Ind.)
Taylor, Susan (Broadway UMC, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Terzini-Gatton Sheryl (St. Mark's United Methodist Church, Carmel, Ind.)
Thomsen, Marcy (Smith Valley UMC, Greenwood, Ind.)
Thorlton, Pat (Greenwood UMC, Greenwood, Ind.)
Toon, Jane (St Joseph Catholic Church, Greenwood, Ind.)
Trackwell, Sharon R. (First Presbyterian-Southport, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Tripp, Darlene (Plainfield Christian Church, Plainfield, Ind.)
Twigg, Prudence (St. Luke's UMC, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Tyring, Michele A. (North Salem UMC, North Salem, Ind.)

Unversaw, Ann (St. Michael's Catholic Church, Greenfield, Ind.)

VanHook, Elva (College Park Baptist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
VanMiddlesworth, Bernadette (Richmond Catholic Community, Richmond, Ind.)
VanVleet, Barbara (Christ the Savior Lutheran, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Voelz, Shelley (Monrovia Christian Church, Monrovia, Ind.)

Webb, Carol E. (Second Presbyterian Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Weidner, Cythia
Welter, Helen (St. Barnabas Catholic Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
White, Judith A. (Shirley United Methodist Church, Shirley, Ind.)
Williams, Diana Lynn (Calvary Temple Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)
Wolfe, Marjorie A. (Southport Baptist Church, Indianapolis, Ind.)

Young, Judith (Batesville Baptist Church, Batesville, Ind.)
Younkin, Carol (Community Church of Southport, Indianapolis, Ind.)

** deceased*

*** University of Indianapolis faculty*

NOTES

- ¹ I want to acknowledge Fred Hill's assistance in the preparation of this narrative. At my request, the university's archivist gathered information about women in ministry in preparation for a luncheon at which we honored retiring faculty member Dr. Ione Boody on April 18, 2001. In addition to Professor Hill's research notes (Feb. 2001), I have added material that I have gathered with the assistance of Ms. Shalimar Holderly, Class of 2001, and Ms. Amy Peterson, Class of 2003.
- ² In preparing this booklet, I have had to decide what kind of definition of "women in ministry" to use. I have chosen to be inclusive by telling stories of some unordained women as well as those who were formally set aside by the church as ministers or priests. Even so, the following narratives are about women who at some point committed themselves to Christian ministries as their "life work," to use a phrase that the earliest generation of students (male and female alike) found meaningful to describe the common calling of Christians who give themselves for service in response to God's call through the church.
- ³ See my related essay "Legends of the Lost and Found: Reflections on the Narratives about the Role of Religion at Indiana Central and the University of Indianapolis" in the forthcoming *Crossings Booklet #3*.
- ⁴ Nancy Hardesty, *Women Called to Witness: Evangelical Feminism in the Nineteenth Century* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1984).
- ⁵ Phoebe Palmer, *The Promise of the Father; Or, A Neglected Speciality of the Last Days Addressed to All Clergy and Laity of all Christian Communities* (Boston, Henry V. Degen, 1859), 14. This poem is printed at the beginning of Chapter II of Palmer's book.
- ⁶ For a very helpful explanation of this tension in Wesley's spirituality, see Richard P. Heitzenrater, *Wesley and the People Called Methodists* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1995), 248. Heitzenrater is quoting from the Wesley Works edition of *John Wesley's Letters* 5:257. For a perceptive study of how one early Methodist woman preacher, Mary Bosanquet Fletcher, shaped her own "rule of life" according to the practices prescribed by the "General Rules of the United Societies," see "A Trellis for Shaping the Soul" by Ms. Shalimar Holderly, Honors thesis, University of Indianapolis (April 11, 2001).
- ⁷ Heitzenrater, *Wesley and the People Called Methodists*, 236 cited in Holderly 50.
- ⁸ Paul Chilcote's book *John Wesley and the Women Preachers of Early Methodism* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1991) is the best study of this aspect of early Methodism.
- ⁹ Henry Moore, *The Life of Mrs. Mary Fletcher compiled from her journal and other authentic documents* (New York: T. Mason and G. Lane, 1837), 248.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.* The subtitle of Palmer's book was "A Neglected Speciality of the Last Days Addressed to All Clergy and Laity of all Christian Communities"; see note #5 above.
- ¹¹ Frances Willard, *Woman in the Pulpit* (Chicago, IL: Women's Christian Temperance Association, 1888). See especially Chapter I "The Letter Killeth" and Chapter II "The Spirit Giveth Life," pp. 17-62.
- ¹² "The Ordination of Women—The Development in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ" in *Woman's Rightful Place: Women in United Methodist History* (Dayton, OH: United Theological Seminary, 1980), 28.
- ¹³ Professor Fred Hill thinks that the more matter-of-fact way that United Brethren in Christ went about ordaining women may suggest the influence of the former Mennonite founder Jacob Boehm.
- ¹⁴ "In Memorium," an anonymous obituary in the John T. Roberts Papers File in the Roberts Box in the Archives of the University of Indianapolis.
- ¹⁵ I am grateful to Fred Hill for his diligent research in checking the conference records to verify the appointments that Alva Button Roberts served.
- ¹⁶ The University has had three names over its first century of existence: Indiana Central University, Indiana Central College, University of Indianapolis. For simplicity's sake, hereafter I refer to "Indiana Central" in this booklet for the institution for the period of 1902 to 1986.
- ¹⁷ "In Memorium," an anonymous obituary in the John T. Roberts Papers File in the Roberts Box in the Archives of the University of Indianapolis.
- ¹⁸ Jim Will, "The Ordination of Women—The Development in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ" in *"Woman's Rightful Place": Women in United Methodist History*, edited by Donald K. Gorrell (Dayton, OH: United

Theological Seminary, 1980), 32.

¹⁹ I am grateful to University Archivist Fred Hill for locating these records for me.

²⁰ The Academy existed during the first two decades of Indiana Central University's history. Established for the purpose of "providing training for young people whose parents desire them to take their high school course amid Christian influences," this preparatory school served as a "means" to the end of preparing students for the rigors of coursework in the "college department" (1917 *Oracle*, 40).

²¹ One of the best sources for this section of the booklet is the Indiana Central yearbooks, which were dubbed the *Oracle*. In these instances, I have chosen to integrate such notes into the body of the text.

²² Fred Hill, *"Downright Devotion to the Cause": A History of the University of Indianapolis and Its Legacy of Education for Service* (Indianapolis, IN: University of Indianapolis, 2002), 134.

²³ Given the practical orientation of the education that these students would have received, this image may reflect more of an ideal or an aspiration than the kind of thorough inquiry and critical thinking associated with the liberal arts tradition of American higher education. On the other hand, we should not underestimate the rigorous intent of the students and faculty who engaged one another in the context of limited means. For example, the library of the University would not have been very extensive at this time, yet the students would have been held to high standards for the quality of their writing.

²⁴ I am indebted to Ms. Shalimar Holderly '01 for this observation, which she, in turn, credits to a history of Christianity lecture by Professor Grant Wacker at Duke Divinity School.

²⁵ For a very helpful discussion of the concept of the "women's sphere" and the ways that it shaped the ethos of American Protestant Christianity in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, see Roger Betsworth, *Social Ethics: An Examination of American Moral Traditions* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990), 159-173.

²⁶ Thanks to The Reverend Ann Glass, pastor of Plainfield United Methodist Church in the South Indiana Conference of the United Methodist Church, this particular "chapter" of the story of women in ministry has not been forgotten. See "Role Models for Ministry: The Hardy Sisters of South Indiana," a paper presented to Dr. Charles Brockwell, Professor, Louisville Theological Seminary in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Course HT12 History of American Methodism, by Ann Sablan, Nov. 24, 1980. *Please note:* At the time that the seminary paper was written, Sablan was her last name. Since that time, she has been divorced and has remarried, and her last name is now Glass.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 32. In 1980, when they were interviewed by Ann Sablan [Glass] for a seminary project, Elva and Treasie, the two surviving Hardy sisters, recalled that in addition to their older sister, they had known women in ministry such as Myrtle Todd, an Old United Brethren evangelist, as well as Emma Himmelherber, Emma Husselman, Lucy Sharp, and Elizabeth Strode/Schrobe. Mrs. J. L. Smith, who worked out of the denominational headquarters in Dayton, Ohio, was another person they they admired. She had served as a missionary in Africa and then returned to the USA, at which point she would go around to various UB churches to encourage them to support the church's missionary endeavors.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 32.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 32.

³¹ See Frances Willard, *Woman in the Pulpit*, 27, where Willard uses the text from Joel 2:28-29 as quoted in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

³² *Ibid.*, 3.

³³ *Ibid.*, 3.

³⁴ Gorrell, "The Ordination of Women—The Development in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ," 33.

³⁵ As University Archivist Fred Hill reports, "E. B. and Ida M. Cunningham, husband and wife, both were admitted to White River Conference in 1910 and ordained in 1912. They seem to have left the ministry in 1919, and in 1928 he died." Correspondence with the author, March 2001.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ Gorrell, 33.

³⁸ Wilma Harner Allen, *The Life Story of A Lady Minister* (privately printed for family members, September 2000), 13.

³⁹ Ballard recalls that Allen made it a point of not making pastoral calls on men in hospital rooms or doing visitation at night. It seems that her first presiding elder told her that this was improper “for young ladies” to do.

⁴⁰ A copy of this memoir is available in the Archives of the University of Indianapolis.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 40.

⁴² Leila W. Anderson with Harriet Harmon Dexter, *Pilgrim Circuit Rider* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1960), 36.

⁴³ Rebecca Blair '80 recalls taking classes from Dr. Brooker. She recalls the adance with which Brooker would state his views on matters religious. He often told stories about his life, including the story about what happened when his mother died. A nearby church took in his sisters and cared for them but they left the three Brooker boys to fend for themselves. “He was very upset by their behavior and by the behavior of the church in general. I suspect that this early experience is what allowed him to be receptive to the more hands-on approach to hospitality and ministry of Leila Anderson. When people need help, one should give it to anyone who needs it, he believed.”

⁴⁴ The Peters family was memorialized in an award endowed by Dr. Brooker. The Peters “Good Neighbor Award” is given to the member of the faculty, staff, or student body who exemplifies what it means to be a neighbor. The question that Jesus asked his lawyer in the Parable of the Good Samaritan, “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell in the hands of robbers?” (Luke 10:36) is engraved on the plaque on which the names of Peters Good Neighbor honorees are listed.

⁴⁵ Conversations with the author 1996-2000.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 39-40.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 42.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 78.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 60.

⁵⁰ Rebecca Blair, correspondence with Michael G. Cartwright, April 5, 2003.

⁵¹ The Benedictine Community at Our Lady of Grace Monastery was established in the mid-1950s. Eight sisters established the community on August 11, 1956, when they “begin reciting the Daily Office, a practice that has continued uninterrupted to this day” (*Directory 2001* for Our Lady of Grace Monastery, Unnumbered page one). Today the Benedictine community at Beech Grove numbers eighty-eight; “seventy-six perpetually professed members, 2 junior professed members, 2 Sisters in the process of transferring to the community, 3 novices and 5 postulants.”

⁵² Benedictine women commit themselves to the vows of obedience (poverty and chastity), stability and conversion. They are involved in a variety of ministries while maintaining prayer as their primary work.

⁵³ I am indebted to Sr. Mary Luke Jones for gathering the perspectives of the Beech Grove Benedictine alumnae about the earliest years of their association with the University of Indianapolis.

⁵⁴ The standard English-language edition of the “Rule” of St. Benedict is *RB 1980 The Rule of St. Benedict in English* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1981).

⁵⁵ The titles of the four audiocassettes that the “Beech Grove Benedictines” recorded between 1975 and 1995 are *Time Don't Run Away*, *I Have Loved You*, *Plant a New Vineyard*, and *Seek God*. The title of their new compact disc recording is *Morning Noon and Night*. All of these recordings are available for sale in the Bookstore at the Benedict Inn Conference and Retreat Center in Beech Grove, Indiana.

⁵⁶ Fred Hill believes that the basis of this rumor may lie in the fact that the University did initially offer to exempt these Benedictine women from the weekly Protestant worship service. What the myth of the nuns locked in the library fails to take into account, however, was the generous character of the gesture, which communicated that you are not required to attend chapel but feel free to go and study.

- ⁵⁷ The St. Brigid of Kildare Methodist-Benedictine Consultations (2002-2005), sponsored by *The Crossings Project* at the University of Indianapolis, has brought together United Methodist leaders who have an active interest in monastic spirituality with Catholic Benedictine men and women to discuss issues of vocation, community, and what it means to live out a "Rule of Life."
- ⁵⁸ Fred Hill, Professor of History Emeritus, has stated: "There can be no doubt that both President Esch and President Sease would have given equal consideration to any who did."
- ⁵⁹ See citation prepared by Michael G. Cartwright for that occasion, available from the author.
- ⁶⁰ See the Web site for the International Parish Nursing Resource Center, www.parishnurses.org.
- ⁶¹ See the 2002-2003 brochure for the Parish Nursing Primary Health Ministry Course offered through the University of Indianapolis School of Nursing and Nursing Center.
- ⁶² Of the 198 persons who have been commissioned for service as parish nurses, only two have been male.
- ⁶³ See the resource listing available from the International Parish Nurse Resource Center at www.parishnurses.org. I am grateful to my colleague Cheryl Larson for providing me with resources and documentation used in this section of the booklet.
- ⁶⁴ I am grateful to Jeanne Brownlee for granting me permission to use her commitment statement in this booklet. Brownlee will be serving as a Parish Nurse for the congregation of Roberts Park United Methodist Church in Indianapolis, Ind.
- ⁶⁵ In December 1998, Patricia Calderon was commissioned for service. Rabbi Geoffrey Dennis of Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation, the Reformed Jewish Synagogue in Indianapolis, pronounced a special *berakah* or blessing for Patricia Calderon at the time that the other women in the class were anointed for service. At the conclusion of that service, Rabbi Geoffrey Dennis spoke the Hebrew words for the "Aaronic blessing" and the United Methodist faculty member who presided at the service translated the lines into English: "The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you, the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you give you strength and grant you peace."
- ⁶⁶ Larson has contributed a great deal to the development of the Lantz Center programs, first as a member of the integration team that helped to develop the Lantz Center programs (1998-2001), and more recently as a member of Planning Committee and later the Steering Committee for the Crossings Project, a set of initiatives that has been created through a grant the University received in December 2001 through the Theological Exploration of Vocations Initiative of the Religion Division of Lilly Endowment, Inc. Larson coordinates the Parish Nursing Vocational Initiative of the Crossings Project.
- ⁶⁷ Under the sponsorship of *The Crossings Project*, St. Brigid of Kildare Monastery is hosting a two-year consultation (2002-2004) on the vocational significance of Methodist-Benedictine monasticism within and beyond the walls of the monastery. Sr. Jennifer Horner of Our Lady of Grace Monastery and Michael G. Cartwright, dean for Ecumenical and Interfaith Programs at the University of Indianapolis, are two of the eight members of that consultation.
- ⁶⁸ I am grateful to Ms. Holderly for granting me permission to use the first half of her commitment statement that she offered on April 26, 2001, on the occasion of being commissioned for Christian service by the University of Indianapolis and the congregation of Reynolds United Methodist Church. In the remaining section of her commitment statement, Ms. Holderly thanked the congregation of Reynolds United Methodist Church, members of her family, and friends who have sustained her on her journey of faith. In the closing paragraph she thanked members of the Philosophy and Religion Department and the University Chaplain for their role in helping her to reach her own potential for academic excellence as well as for encouraging her to see what it could mean for her to live out the University's motto of "Education for Service."
- ⁶⁹ To date, four honorary degrees have been given to (lay and clergy) women in ministry. The first honorary degree given to a woman in ministry was to Magdalene Stauffacher Mueller, the spouse of Bishop Rueben H. Mueller, who was awarded the L. H. D. (Doctor of Humane Letters) in 1971.
- In 1974, Esther E. Edwards was invited to serve as the Baccalaureate speaker and receive a Doctor of Divinity degree. At the time, she was serving as director of Loans and Scholarships in the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of the United Methodist Church. The Reverend Edwards attended Indiana Central University as a nontraditional student in 1962. Prior to her enrollment at ICU, Edwards had served as a commis-

sioned worker in the Salvation Army. Later a scholarship was named after her in recognition of her service with the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of the United Methodist Church. The Esther Edwards Scholarship is given to a person who is pursuing graduate study in the area of higher education administration.

The Doctor of Divinity degree was given to Sr. Jeanne Knoerle, in 1978, who was at that time serving as the president of St. Mary-of-the-Woods, a college near Terre Haute, Indiana, that is affiliated with the Sisters of Providence religious order.

In 1985, Mattie M. Coney was awarded an L.H.D. degree for her leadership in organizing neighborhoods in the African-American community of Indianapolis.

⁷⁰ The Showers Lectures in the Christian Religion have been delivered annually since 1962. The first woman lecturer was Cynthia Wedel in 1977. Since that time four other women have given the University's distinguished lectureship in Christianity: Marjorie Suchocki (1983), Rosemary Skinner Keller (1989), Catherine Gunsalus Gonzalez (1990), and Karen King (1999).

⁷¹ Rebecca Blair offered these words in response to an earlier version of this booklet.

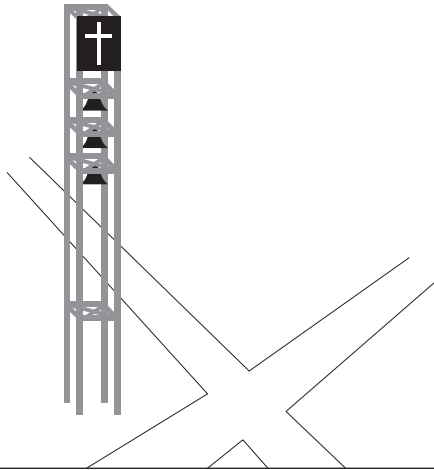
⁷² See Michael G. Cartwright's related essay "Legends of the Lost and Found: The Role of Religion at Indiana Central College and the University of Indianapolis" forthcoming *Crossings Booklet #3*.

⁷³ I am grateful to my colleagues Dr. Rebecca Blair and Emeritus Professor of History Fred Hill for their comments on a previous draft of this essay. Lois Stead and Mary Wilder Cartwright also proofread the text.

I have benefited from conversations with the "first edition" of the EduServ Faculty Seminar at the University of Indianapolis. My conversation with the twelve faculty colleagues in response to a presentation based on my research in progress has informed my sense of how the material in this booklet needed to be presented.

Finally, I am also indebted to Ms. Shalimar Holderly '01, who once served as my research assistant, and who was one of the students who has both benefited from and offered helpful input for the evolving Christian Vocations program. I am grateful to Shalimar for offering perceptive comments and a close critical reading of an earlier draft of this essay. Fortunately for me, Ms. Holderly, who is currently studying at Duke Divinity School in preparation for service as a clergywoman in the North Indiana Annual Conference, chose not to assign a grade for that draft! Fortunately for the readers of this essay, she caught many substantive mistakes and infelicities of style that would have eluded my own weary eyes. Any remaining errors are my responsibility.





The Crossings Project

University of Indianapolis

Crossings Project Booklet #2

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