NPUC Opens Dialogue on Ordination Without Regard to Gender

During their regularly-scheduled quarterly meeting held Nov. 14 in Ridgefield, Wash., North Pacific Union Conference (NPUC) executive committee members voted to engage Northwest membership in a discussion on gender-inclusiveness in gospel ministry. They approved a motion to 1) inform and educate Northwest members of the rationale toward biblical church leadership without regard to gender; 2) engage and encourage constituents in structured conversation and discussion on women in ministry; and 3) call a special session of the NPUC constituency to address ministerial ordination without regard to gender. The motion was presented in response to extensive reports provided by an Ad Hoc Committee on Women in Leadership which met during 2012. An online question and answer page about this vote and proposed process is available, Also a study document on the theology of ordination from Dr. John McVay.

Jimenez to Join NAD Office

Ray Jimenez III, currently Montana Conference vice president for administration/finance, will begin a new role Jan. 1, 2013, as an associate administrator for the North American Division (NAD) Adventist Retirement office in Silver Spring, Md. Before coming to the Montana Conference in 2006, Jimenez served as treasurer for the New Jersey Conference.

Washington Conference Pastor is Stewardship Sermon Winner

Looking Ahead

November
22: Thanksgiving Day
30–Dec. 1: Eagle, Id. Live Nativity
30–Dec 9: Follow the Star, Gladstone, Ore.

December
2: "Messiah", Collegeplace, Wash.
3–16: Fountainview Orchestra and Choir Tour
6–9: Journey to Bethlehem, Kelso, Wash.
6–9: Journey to Bethlehem, Auburn, Wash.
7: "At the Door", Collegeplace, Wash.
25: Christmas Day
31: New Year’s Eve
28–Jan. 1: GYC Seattle

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Winners in a recent Stewardship Sermon contest were announced recently. Out of 100 sermons entered, Robin Song, pastor of the Living Vine Fellowship Church in Washington Conference, was one of 12 awarded. The contest was open to active or retired ministers as well as graduate ministerial students. Sponsored by the North American Division (NAD) stewardship and ministerial departments as well as Ministry magazine, the winning sermons will be published in a book to be made available to pastors and church leaders. A full list of the winners is available online.

Walla Walla University to hold Community Blanket Drive
This fall, volunteers from Walla Walla University (WWU) will be collecting new or gently used blankets, sleeping bags, and cold weather apparel for their fifth annual Blanket Drive. The drive is sponsored by the WWU chaplain's office and will run from Nov. 12, 2012–Feb. 8 2013. There are drop off locations around College Place and Walla Walla, Wash., as well as several locations around the WWU campus. Last year students collected more than 400 blankets and nearly 30 sleeping bags. The blankets will be distributed through local service agencies as well as the Portland Rescue Mission. More information and specific drop-off locations are available at WallaWalla.edu.

Radio Program Targets Seattle
Joining other Adventist broadcasting efforts around the Northwest, Tacoma Central Church is reaching out to residents in the greater Seattle area with On the Edge of Time, a weekly radio program. Tacoma church members Greg Astin and Nelson Miles host the 30-minute program to discuss God’s love as revealed through His character and nature. Program information describes Astin as a technical trainer, writer and teacher, Miles as a scientist and theologian. The program airs on Seattle Christian radio station KGNW 820 AM on Sunday evenings at 7:30 p.m. If you're beyond the main broadcast area, you can listen to archived programs on the program's website.
NPUC Opens Dialogue on Ordination without Regard to Gender — UPDATED 11/15/12

During their regularly-scheduled quarterly meeting held Nov. 14 in Ridgefield, Wash., North Pacific Union Conference executive committee members voted to engage Northwest membership in a discussion on gender-inclusiveness in gospel ministry. They approved a motion to 1) inform and educate Northwest members of the rationale toward biblical church leadership without regard to gender; 2) engage and encourage constituents in structured conversation and discussion on women in ministry; and 3) call a special session of the NPUC constituency to address ministerial ordination without regard to gender. The motion was presented in response to extensive reports provided by an Ad Hoc Committee on Women in Leadership which met during 2012. No date was specified at the meeting for a proposed constituency session, but that will be determined as the process for discussion and decision-making is further defined within the next month. As a start to the discussion, an initial FAQ page is now available, as is a research document from Dr. John McVay, incoming Walla Walla University president, entitled “Reflections on the Theology and Practice of Ordination in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.” Additional documents from the NPUC Ad Hoc Committee on Women in Leadership will be available online soon.

#gleanernow  #northwest news  #ordination
Answers to Questions Regarding NPUC Process on Women in Leadership

Why is the North Pacific Union Conference (NPUC) discussing the topic of women’s ordination?

Our Seventh-day Adventist Church, since the early pioneers and Ellen White’s own ministry, has stood for the priesthood of all believers not restricted to age, ethnicity or gender. Because this issue has been discussed for decades and recently brought to a head by recent decisions of other union conferences, many members and leaders have asked NPUC leadership to address it candidly and objectively. Although our current NPUC bylaws do not preclude the ordination of women, we feel it is important to examine biblical counsel and the good advice of our Northwest believers.

Does this place the NPUC in a position contrary to world church policy?

We do not believe so, and have not currently taken any position that would contradict our church’s official stance. We respect our world church leadership and understand the challenges they face in addressing diverse cultural norms around the world. Yet our church structure, with its geographical divisions, unions and local conferences, is uniquely set up to adapt the outreach of its mission and message to cultural differences. Since union conferences have been tasked with the responsibility of determining ordinations within their territories, the NPUC feels this topic is important and appropriate to address here.

What about the world church study on the theology of ordination? How will that impact any NPUC action?

That world church committee is tasked with bringing a report in 2014. It is possible but not certain that it will be an agenda item at the 2015 General Conference session. Some have actively wondered if perhaps our system of ordination is not even biblical, but rather, based on a tradition far removed from our own Protestant roots. Our NPUC Ad Hoc Committee received its
own study on the topic of ordination in a paper by Dr. John McVay, incoming Walla Walla University president. A copy of that document, entitled “Reflections on the Theology and Practice of Ordination in the Seventh-day Adventist Church,” is available online. As the world church studies its theological stance on ordination, we will eagerly join in that discussion. In the meantime, our own discovery process will move forward.

**What process has been put in place to pursue a NPUC-wide decision on this issue?**

More than a year ago, the NPUC executive committee set up a smaller Ad Hoc Committee on Women in Leadership which met during 2012 and looked at the issue from the perspectives of history, mission, church policy and unity. It presented a recommendation to the November 14 executive committee meeting that favored a decision in favor of the ordination of women. Executive committee members felt that before any firm decision on the issue is finalized an intentional effort should be made to bring as many Northwest members into the discussion as possible. Because of this, the executive committee voted at the Nov. 14 meeting to inform and educate members about the issue of ordination without regard to gender, to invite them to add their voice to the discussion and to allow for a potential future special constituency session to bring any proposed action to a vote.

**So no timeline has yet been set up for any firm decisions?**

No ... however, that will be determined as soon as possible and presented here and on the soon-to-be-created NPUC Women in Leadership website.

**Has the NPUC leadership already made up their minds? Is this process just an empty exercise?**

Many of our executive committee members and other leaders believe strongly in the value of equal inclusion of women in all facets of Adventist ministry and leadership. Many others are supportive of women in ministry, but very opposed to the idea of ordaining women. No decision has been made, or will be made, without a clear process of conversation, active listening, biblical study and prayer. Some of that has already happened, and now we are expanding the invitation to all Northwest members. Through the process we will also stay in touch with our world church and division leaders.

**Will the NPUC share any documents or reports that were developed by the Ad Hoc Committee?**

Yes, the paper by Dr. John McVay referred to above, “Reflections on the Theology and Practice of Ordination in the Seventh-day Adventist Church,” is currently online and others will be online and linked here shortly.
How do we share our personal feedback to NPUC leadership on this issue?

As soon as NPUC leadership has determined an active process and timeline for discussion, more information will be added to this FAQ to provide instructions on how and where you may respond in a structured way to this issue. In the meantime, you are welcome to email your response to talk@gleaneronline.org. We plan to set up an NPUC Women in Leadership blog that should be online the week after Thanksgiving, where you can join a more public conversation. We realize there are many strong feelings about this topic on all different sides of the issue. Remember that it’s very possible for good people to have very different perspectives, so keep respect in the center of your comments.

As questions and comments come in, this FAQ page will no doubt adapt and expand. Thanks for being a respectful part of this ongoing process.
11-12-12 Stewardship Sermon Contest Winners Announced

Some 100 sermons were submitted

November 12, 2012 - Twelve individuals from throughout North America won the Stewardship Sermon Contest. The contest was open to active or retired ministers and graduate ministerial students. Some 100 sermons were submitted. Judges selected the 12 winning sermons without knowing the names of the contestants.

Eight of the winners are currently or recently retired congregational pastors. Three of the winners are conference or union conference departmental directors and one is a graduate student at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University.

The twelve sermons will be published in a book and made available to pastors and church leaders.

List of winners:

C. Adelina Alexe, Graduate Student, Seventh-day Adventist Seminary, Andrews University

David L. Bissell, Former Pastor, Cedar Rapids Seventh-day Adventist Church, Iowa-Missouri Conference

G. Tom Carter, Director, Planned Giving and Trust Services, Southern Union Conference

Gerry Christman, Pastor, Aiea Seventh-day Adventist Church, Aiea, HI, Hawaii Conference

Ernest Dobkins, Former Trust Director, Northern California Conference

Daniel B. Martella, Pastor, Healdsburg and Cloverdale Seventh-day Adventist Church, North California Conference

Jeff Metherell, Director, Planned Giving & Trust Services, Stewardship, and Religious Liberty, Wisconsin Conference

Domingo Paulino, Pastor, Durham, Raleigh, Handerson, Samford, and Scarborough Spanish Seventh-day Adventist churches, Carolina Conference

Orlando Rosales, Pastor, Baltimore Spanish and Dundalk Spanish churches, Chesapeake Conference

Robin Song, Pastor, Living Vine Fellowship Seventh-day Adventist Church, Washington Conference

Patrick Vincent, Pastor, Mt. Calvary Seventh-day Adventist Church, Florida Conference

Harold O. White, Administrative Pastor, Sacramento Central Seventh-day Adventist Church, North California Conference
WWU Holding Community Blanket Drive

Students Collect Cold Weather Gear for Local, Portland Needs

By: Rosa Jimenez

Volunteers will be collecting new or gently used blankets, sleeping bags, and cold weather apparel for the 5th annual Blanket Drive. Sponsored by the Chaplain’s Office, the drive will be held from Nov. 12 through Feb. 8, 2013. The blankets will be distributed through local service agencies and also at Portland Rescue Mission.

University students will be going door-to-door in College Place and parts of Walla Walla and placing large plastic bags (donated by Crown Paper Products) for residents to fill with new, or gently used, blankets, sleeping bags, warm coats, hats, gloves, and thick socks.

On Saturday, Nov. 10, students will go out to collect the bags. Bag collection will be repeated in different areas on Jan. 12 and 19.

Community member can also bring their donations and drop them off at the followig locations: K-Mart, Andy’s Market, Blue Palm Frozen Yogurt, Positive Life Radio, Eastgate Seventh-day Adventist Church, Walla Walla University Church, and several locations on the WWU campus. For those who want to donate, but are unable to get to any of these locations, they can call 527-2010 and have someone pick up donations. Donations can also be dropped off at the Chaplain's Office, 301 S. College Ave., College Place, between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday to Thursday, and from 9 a.m. to noon on Fridays.

Last year more than 400 blankets, plus nearly 30 sleeping bags, were donated. Approximately 200 were distributed locally to Helpline and Christian Aid Center, with the rest delivered to Portland Rescue Mission over President's Weekend in February. Any other local agency needing help with blankets may call Ellie Veverka at 527-2102 to apply for assistance. Student Blanket Drive coordinators this year are Rychelle Willis and Chelsea Moon.