

Justice, Action top United Methodist Women Agenda in Nashville

by Yvette Moore*

Aug. 7, 2007 - More than 200 United Methodist Women members and friends from across the country will take action on poverty, immigrant rights, living wages and other critical justice issues at the 2007 National Seminar: "For Christ's Sake, Turn the World Upside Down," at Scarritt-Bennett Center in Nashville, Aug. 11-16.

The quadrennial event equips members to renew their commitment to know God and to join in the local and global mission of justice and advocacy.

"National Seminar is an opportunity for members of United Methodist Women to explore God's actions in the current moment and dialogue about how we must respond," said Sung-ok Lee, Women's Division executive for Christian social responsibility. "In a gathering that reflects our rich diversity of race, ethnicity and age, we will reflect on the early Christians who were accused of 'turning the world upside down' in Acts. 17:19."

Throughout the event, women will participate in one of seven tracks of workshops focusing on:

- Health care;
- Immigration;
- Public education;
- Economic justice;
- Environmental justice;
- Community food security; and
- Militarism, peace and national security.

The workshops will include visits to projects and organizations in Nashville addressing the focus issues Aug. 13. National Seminar will also include a day of action Aug. 14, when participants will join with Nashville advocacy groups in several public vigils around the city. The vigils will protest violence and poverty, the impact of immigration-related raids on immigrant families; and support payment of living wages for workers. Each vigil will convene Aug. 14, 1-2 p.m., at locations in Nashville, including:

Vigil to Stop the Violence of Poverty
Riverfront Park (1st Avenue and Broadway)

Contact: Matt Leber, Nashville Homeless Power Project, 615-733-0633. This action is in memory of Tara Cole, a 32-year-old homeless woman murdered in a city park Aug. 12, 2006.

March/Vigil with Low-Wage Workers at Vanderbilt University
Scarritt-Bennett Center (19th Avenue South near Grand Avenue) and marchers will proceed to Benton Chapel on Vanderbilt University (21st Street and Scarritt).

Contact: Megan Macaraeg, Interfaith Worker Justice, 615-495-6902.

Vigil to Stop the Immigration Raids

Tennessee State Capitol at the War Memorial Plaza (Union and 6th Avenue)

Contact: Ariel Safdie, Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition, 615-833-0384 x19.