

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Push an Agenda or Lift up Christ? *Which is the Top Priority for Christians*

**Washington, D.C.** — On Wednesday, September 21, women who represent widely divergent perspectives on theological, policy and social issues will meet in an historic face-to-face discussion over the concerns that have caused a massive loss of members in the United Methodist Church, a mainline denomination that used to be one of the strongest churches in America.

The RENEW Network, a coalition of evangelical women in the United Methodist Church, asked for an Open Forum with the leaders of the Women's Division, the entity that oversees the programs and policies of the local women's organizations as well as the international publications and policies. At the 2-hour session on Wednesday, discussion will focus on 8 questions — 4 from each of the two groups — that cover the major areas of disagreement.

Mrs. Faye Short, President of RENEW and former District and Conference officer for United Methodist Women, said, "In a broken world, Christian mission without the Gospel message is like putting a small band-aid on a massive hemorrhage." Short quoted one RENEW committee member as saying "After attending several Women's Division board meetings, looking at their mission studies and Response magazine, I have yet to see evidence of the Women's Division's use of funds to fulfill the Great Commission."

Mrs. Short asks, "With 1.7 billion people in the world who have never heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ, why would evangelistic outreach be so absent from the programs and policies of the Women's Division?"

Georgia laywoman, businesswoman and chair of numerous boards, Mrs. Helen Rhea Stumbo, said, "Sadly, the Women's Division programs and policies have little relevance for mainstream Christian women today." Stumbo continued, "Local United Methodist Women have a hard time finding Jesus lifted up through the pages of Response magazine, program books, Bible studies, recommendations on the Reading Program, altered words to hymns or in presentations at national and international gatherings. Instead, they find Biblical truths and the noble causes of early Methodism hijacked by radical activism and advocacy."

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**Open Forum – Oxnam Chapel – Wesley Theological Seminary – 4500 Mass Ave, DC  
Wednesday, September 21, 10 a.m. - Noon**