



Media release

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Women of Faith Awards

Three remarkable women to be honored for their visionary work in transforming the church and society

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Three remarkable women have been named recipients of the 2008 Women of Faith Awards by the General Assembly Council of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Recipients were approved by the council at its meeting on February 15.

The women will be honored at the Women of Faith Breakfast, June 22, during the 218th General Assembly (2008) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in San Jose, CA. The theme for this year's awards is "Visionary Women Transforming the Church and Society." Tickets for the 7:30 a.m. event at the Fairmont Hotel will be available at www.pcusa.org/ga218.

The Women of Faith Awards were established in 1986 to honor female members of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) whose lives exemplify their Christian commitment through witness, service and leadership.

The selection committee, comprised of representatives from groups officially related to the Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries/Presbyterian Women ministry area, received 30 nominations from throughout the church. Criteria include racial ethnic and geographic diversity.

"These are amazing women following God's call, transforming society and the church through their work," said Cynthia Joe, chair of the awards selection committee. Joe lives in the San Francisco Presbytery.

The 2008 Women of Faith recipients are:

Reverend Magdalena I. Garcia, Chicago, IL, Chicago Presbytery, Synod of Lincoln Trails, pastor of Ravenswood Presbyterian Church, a multicultural and bilingual congregation.

Reverend Ann L. Hayman, Santa Monica, CA, Pacific Presbytery, Synod of Southern California, founder of the Mary Magdalene Project, a program that provides alternatives to women involved in street prostitution.

Mrs. Theodora (Thea) Jackson, Brewster, NY, member, First Presbyterian Church, Katonah, NY, founder of the Jamaica Service Project in Queens, NY, a national model for developing comprehensive and coordinated systems of services for the aging.

Additional biographical background:

Reverend Magdalena I. Garcia

Rev. Magdalena I. García is a member of the Chicago Presbytery, where she has lived for more than 35 years and was ordained in 1993 as a Presbyterian minister of Word and Sacrament.

She is pastor of Ravenswood Presbyterian Church, a multicultural and bilingual congregation in Chicago, which has two ministries served by one pastor. The congregation offers language-specific worship services and Bible studies.

Magdalena is also a member of the presbytery's multicultural church committee and the Hispanic Ministries fellowship. She is currently serving as adjunct faculty for a ministries course at McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago, and as a teaching pastor at the University of Chicago Divinity School. She was previously associate director of funds development at McCormick, where she received a master's degree in divinity in 1989.

She has served as preacher, keynote speaker and worship leader for several national and regional church events, including the Churchwide Gathering of Presbyterian Women (2000) and Encuentro—the national conference of Hispanic Latin Presbyterian Women (1998, 2001 and 2007).

She is the author of the compendium *Toward a Liberating Faith: Introduction to Mujerista Theology*, published by the Women's Ministries office of the PC(USA). She also has been a freelance writer and translator for denominational resources. She was formerly the managing editor for *¡Exito!*, a Spanish-language weekly paper that was published in Chicago.

Born in Cuba, she has been married to Augusto Torres of Ecuador for 17 years. They have one son, Miguel Ángel.

Reverend Ann L. Hayman

Rev. Ann L. Hayman is the founder and current director of development of the Mary Magdalene Project, which is a long-term residential program that provides alternatives to women involved in street prostitution in southern California.

A native of Caldwell, Idaho, Ann was graduated from the College of Idaho in 1971 with a bachelor's degree in music education and German. After college, she taught typing and

journalism for a year at Wasatch Academy in Mount Pleasant, Utah and managed a retirement community for three years.

She attended San Francisco Theological Seminary, graduating in 1978. She was ordained as a Presbyterian minister of Word and Sacrament on Epiphany Sunday, January 6, 1979. She served as an assistant pastor at First Presbyterian Church, El Centro, CA, from 1978 to 1980.

In June 1980, Ann became the program director for the Mary Magdalene Project, and served in that capacity until July 2006 when she became director of development.

Mrs. Theodora G. Jackson

Mrs. Theodora G. Jackson (Thea) was born on October 25, 1923 in Richmond, VA. In 1943, she was graduated from Hampton University, Hampton, Virginia. She founded the Jamaica Service Project in Queens, NY.

Thea was the designer and director of the Older Adult Program in the First Presbyterian Church in Jamaica, NY, from 1969 to 1972. The Jamaica Service Project became one of two Administration on Aging national models for developing comprehensive and coordinated systems of services for the aging. She served as executive director of that multi-service agency until 1980, when she was appointed deputy director of the New York State Office for the Aging.

After leaving government service in 1991, she served as consultant on a variety of aging and educational projects. She also became a volunteer at the Bedford Hills Correctional Facility in the children and parenting programs. In 1996, she led efforts to re-establishment a college degree program at that correctional facility. She has received numerous awards and recognitions including the 2002 New York State Martin Luther King, Jr. Humanitarian Award.

Theo is a member of First Presbyterian Church of Katonah, NY. She and her husband, Bailey W. Jackson, have three children, seven grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.