

FROM KANSAS TO THE WORLD: M. MADELINE SOUTHARD, ACTIVIST AND PASTOR

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The sufficiency of God's grace (II Corinthians 12:9) motivated and propelled women to public ministry in American Methodism.¹ Numerous women responded to God's call on their lives, even when this meant taking action in ways deemed by society as unacceptable or inappropriate for women, because they believed God's grace to be sufficient. Mabel Madeline Southard certainly would not have chosen the particular course of her life for any other reason than that she was responding to the initiation of God. Because it was God who called her to particular tasks, she believed God would be faithful in enabling her to accomplish what she was meant to do. God's grace, however, did not make assurances regarding the specific components that might emerge.

Thus, as is the case for many women, Southard "composed" her life, improvising as she maneuvered through the many unexpected turns and surprising summits she faced.² Not bound by "the rhythms of procreation and the dependencies that these created" she lived with an inner conflict. Her life did not neatly fit into the traditional mold of marrying and raising children, and because of the incongruities she felt when her life did not fit the accepted pattern, she had to draw upon her creativity and resourcefulness in order to compose a life, out of step with societal mores. It is precisely because of this improvisational work that it is difficult to understand fully the decisions Southard made. Her life did not neatly follow a straight line, from beginning to end. Rather, her journey carried a varied texture as she worked to craft her path, drawing from a strong inner consciousness. Perhaps we would be doing her life an injustice if we tried to explain all of the reasons she did the things she did. She was surprised by the adventures she experienced. So, perhaps the best way we can examine that life is to respect the power of her belief in God and the way she used her faith to compose her life.

Born in Kansas near the small town of Rock on July 29, 1877, Southard's vanguard nature manifested early when she became a preacher and evangelist, beginning in her teens. She lectured on the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) circuit collaborating with Carry Nation for a

¹Jean Miller Schmidt, *Grace Sufficient: A History of Women in American Methodism, 1760-1939* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999).

²I am borrowing this idea as an appropriate framework for Southard's life. See, Mary Catherine Bateson, *Composing a Life* (New York: Plume, 1990).

time, worked as a foreign missionary, wrote extensively, prodded Methodism to address its patriarchy, founded an international organization for women ministers (then called the International Association of Women Preachers, IAWP), served as a pastor, and traveled as an evangelist. She lived to be ninety, maintaining a personal diary from the time she was fourteen years old. That diary, housed at The Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, provides the bulk of material used for this consideration of her activism and work as a pastor.

I

A tenacious spirit imbued Southard's activist role in ecclesiastical suffrage and in 1919 her dedication to this issue solidified. She intuitively foreshadowed the role she would play in that and subsequent years when she claimed Revelation 21:7 as her verse for 1919, a custom she practiced as she watched each old year pass away and welcomed the new. The text, "Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children," was aptly suited for the coming year, because she saw herself overcoming many things, including her shyness and lack of ambition regarding institutional barriers. Anticipating the year ahead, she wrote, "I go out into another year—of battle probably. But I shall trust and not be afraid."³ Further she quipped, "it seems very strange how willing men are for women to do everything for men except minister to them spiritually. Well, we shall see."⁴

Well, she did see! She began by serving her first pastorate, although brief, in Moundridge, Kansas, and did so largely because she wanted people to experience how a woman could do the job effectively. Additionally, in March at the Southwest Kansas Annual Conference in Newton, Kansas, she reported to the floor for the Moundridge congregation when the call was issued; a courageous move considering all other preachers reporting for their congregations were men. Shortly thereafter, she attended the Centenary banquet in Kansas City. She was the only woman in attendance, but had elected to go because, she noted with certitude, "I have decided to break thru this ecclesiastical male autocracy. I do not know any woman in better position to do it than I am."⁵

In addition to her pastoral appointment, Southard identified the culmination of three events that provided the impetus for her work at the 1920 General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Each of these also occurred in 1919. First, the IAWP with Southard at the helm was founded. Second, her article, "Woman and the Ministry," published in the *Methodist Review*, afforded her the opportunity to construct her philosophy of ecclesi-

³M. Madeline Southard Journal, The Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe College, vol. 51, December 1918.

⁴Southard Journal, vol. 52, April 9, 1919.

⁵Southard Journal, vol. 51, March 11, 1919.

astical suffrage. Third, Southard completed her Master's thesis for a theological degree from Northwestern University. Entitled, "Jesus' Attitude Toward Woman," Southard argued that Jesus treated women with the respect appropriate to them as persons, not based upon their relationships to men, whether fathers, husbands, sons, or brothers.

Thus, the necessary groundwork for Southard's public role regarding this issue was firmly established when Sena Hartzell Wallace wrote Southard encouraging her to draft a memorial petition for the 1920 General Conference asking for ecclesiastical equality.⁶ Apparently, a certain Mrs. Stanely agreed with Wallace, both claiming Southard the appropriate person to make this presentation. They must have been convincing because Southard went to work.

According to her journal, she prepared a petition on "the woman question" and submitted it to an editor in Kansas City, who helped her refine it and then made numerous copies for signatures.⁷ She was convinced that her memorial would be received best if she had several prominent people sign it prior to her presenting it during Conference. To this end, she claimed she had the head of four theological schools (Boston University, Drew University, Garrett Theological School, and Iliff School of Theology), four clerical conferences and two lay conferences as well as several district superintendents sign it.

Thus, fully prepared, Southard, a lay delegate from the Southwest Kansas Conference in Des Moines, Iowa, on May 10, 1920 at the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, offered her Memorial to the floor.⁸ It read:

Whereas, Today the principle of equality of opportunity for women is being recognized in all fields of activity; and

Whereas, This General Conference has gone on record as urging political equality for women by requesting the Delaware house of representatives to sign the Susan B. Anthony amendment; therefore be it

⁶This contradicts William Noll's findings that Wallace constructed and circulated the Memorial. William T. Noll, "A Welcome in the Ministry: The 1920 and 1924 General Conferences Debate Clergy Rights for Women," *Methodist History* 30, no. 2 (January 1992): 93.

⁷Southard Journal, vol. 54, February 19, 1920.

⁸Going before the delegates took considerable courage for Southard. After Conference had ended she remarked in her journal, "I was rather surprised to not be more weary when General Conference was over. I considered very seriously before being a candidate, whether I had the nervous energy to go thru such an intense month. But I am sure I stood it as well as the average man there—I think it was largely due to the fact that I had many people praying for me." Southard Journal, vol. 55, June 25, 1920. She also described her hesitancy to present the memorial to the floor as opposed to handing it to the presiding officer.

Resolved, That the General Conference approve ecclesiastical equality for women, that it remove all restrictions and limitations upon women in the service of the church, and that it instruct the proper committee to make any changes in the Discipline necessary to accomplish this end.⁹

Upon presenting this petition to the floor of the Conference, she made an impassioned speech, reminiscent of her *Methodist Review* article, calling for change within the church. She used Anna Howard Shaw and Frances Willard as examples of women called to preach, but not given opportunity by the church. In light of the reform milieu of the day, a reference to the passage of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Amendments to the United States' Constitution, Southard argued the church should not be the last to adopt new standards, but conversely should lead the way.

She called on clergy to reject the misinterpretations of Paul's injunctions against women and to avoid being last in correcting the incorrect reading of Scripture. Finally, Southard dashed the argument of "separate spheres" in her speech. She pointed out the hypocrisy of asking women to serve in all aspects of the church without threatening the family, yet on the very basis of familial roles, rejecting the possibility of an ordained ministry of women. She then urged the passage of her Memorial, arguing that the church could not ask people in political arenas to make changes for women that they themselves were unwilling to make in ecclesiastical circles.

Two men immediately added their recommendations to passing the Memorial, though one opposed it. Ray Allen, a Genesee Conference delegate, asked for a point of order. Passing the Memorial would require a change in the *Discipline* and such a change was only binding if written copies were made available prior to such a vote. Since the Memorial had not been printed in advance, according to the rules of procedure, the resolution was not voted upon, but instead was referred to the Committee on Itinerancy. Four days later, on May 26, that committee recommended that women be included in the pool of accepted "local preachers" and that the question of granting women ordination and admission to Conference be referred to a commission whose recommendations be considered at the next General Conference in 1924.

⁹*The Daily Christian Advocate* (May 11, 1920): 190. Southard had been elected by the Southwest Kansas Lay Annual Conference as a member of General Conference, giving her the opportunity to make this presentation. Southard noted, "The voters gave me one hundred and fifteen out of one hundred and thirty-nine cast on the first ballot. It was a real triumph, a vote of confidence by the church people of my conference where I was born and brought up, and I appreciated it as that as well as the actual election to General Conference." Southard Journal, vol. 55, April 4, 1920.

According to Southard, she also presented this Memorial to the Southwest Kansas Lay Annual Conference where it passed unanimously. Also, it was well-received by the Clerical Conference and passed the Northwest Kansas Annual Conference and the Kansas Annual Conference. Southard Journal, vol. 55, April 4, 1920.

After a considerable parliamentary maneuvering, the Conference approved the committee's recommendations, Southard voting with the majority. This compromise position gave women local licenses but did not offer ordination nor Conference membership.

Despite the failure to expand significantly the denomination's recognition of women, Southard forged on, thinking ahead to her next opportunity. In August, 1921 on her way from South Dakota to Chicago, she visited Bishop H. E. Stuntz who had been appointed to head the commission regarding women's ordination at the 1924 General Conference.¹⁰ The following March, she attended the Southwest Kansas Annual Conference, in part, to urge women to complete their courses of study so that if ordination was approved, they would already be equipped with the appropriate requirements.¹¹

Two events provided additional motivation in Southard's continuing work for ecclesiastical equality. The first was an address she heard on May 10, 1922 in Hot Springs, Arkansas by Dr. George Stewart, pastor of the Birmingham, Alabama, Methodist Episcopal Church, South. His speech was titled, "When Women Become Men, What Then?" and his sentiments clearly offended her. She perceptively noted that he laid sole responsibility for the nation's morality on women and failed to speak about the role of men in this important area. Southard remarked twice in one journal entry that he talked as if he were from another time, certainly before the mid-nineteenth century! Southard passionately wrangled, "I cannot let this pass. Oh, if I could have an audience in this city after that, how I could speak!"¹²

The second impetus for Southard's abiding energy for this cause entailed Southard's being on the receiving end of some unwanted physical advances. Writing of one event with a male minister, Southard admitted she wanted to learn something of the pressures young women faced as well as to ascertain how inappropriately a married minister would act, if given the opportunity. In her words, "I determined to know just what this 'godly' man meant." And, "I thought he intended some 'petting,' but I was going to make sure just how far a reverend would go." Outraged when he did initiate physical contact, she reprimanded him on two occasions. Her anger is evident in the following entry: "The more I think of those men and Stewart's lecture, the madder I get. The licentious whelps. And directing the work of the Church of the Living God."¹³ She used the indignation stemming from these events not only to strengthen her resolve in working for increasing the rights for women preachers, but also as a new impetus to work more diligently with young girls and boys, teaching them the importance of purity.

¹⁰Southard Journal, vol. 56, August 27, 1921. She does not reveal the nature of their conversation.

¹¹Southard Journal, vol. 57, March 11, 1922.

¹²Southard Journal, vol. 57, May 10, 1922.

¹³Southard Journal, vol. 57, May 14, 1922.

In March, 1923 Southard attended the Southwest Kansas Annual Conference in Wellington, Kansas, hoping that a vote on ordination would occur before she left. It did not. However, after she left a vote was taken which resulted in the passage of ordination for women with eighty-eight in favor and thirty against the proposal.¹⁴ Three weeks later, after conducting two evangelistic meetings, Southard traveled to Concordia, Kansas to attend the Northwest Kansas Annual Conference and to speak with Bishop Stuntz again, inquiring about the status of his commission's report. He told her he was disappointed in what had been submitted to him and that he did not think the commission would support ordination.¹⁵

Nevertheless, in October, 1923 she continued her push for women's ordination by writing an article for *The Woman's Pulpit* (the official journal of the IAWP), advocating the ministry as a "vocation for women." In this piece, she related a study she had made using statistics from 1920 about women and their careers. She explained that women's public jobs largely entailed menial tasks and manual labor. Furthermore, in these positions, women were most often subordinate to men. Arguing further, she wrote:

It looks as though the world is perfectly willing that women shall clean its dirty linen, but not that they shall cleanse its souls. In truth one of the great needs of the world today is the free creative thought of woman. And, with all the platitudes that it has sometimes been guilty of, there is no better place in the world for the expression of free creative thought than the Christian pulpit. It will be a great day for the world when that pulpit is freely offered to the prepared, consecrated women whom God calls to give His word.¹⁶

Her final preparation for the upcoming battle with the denomination's officials occurred at the Southwest Kansas Annual Lay Conference of 1924. Here, Southard was elected as a lay delegate to the next General Conference,¹⁷ guaranteeing she would have an opportunity to follow up on the changes she initiated four years earlier.

The 1924 General Conference convened in May in Chicago. Bishop Stuntz, originally appointed to direct the commission and who had kept Southard abreast of the commission's direction, died before it began. His replacement, J. M. M. Gray, submitted the report on May 8, 1924. While it

¹⁴*History of the Southwest Kansas Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, vol 1, 1860-1931 (United States of America: Southwest Kansas Conference, n.d.), 218. On admitting women to the Conference, the vote was 23 for and 63 against.

¹⁵Southard Journal, vol. 58, April 13, 1923.

¹⁶M. Madeline Southard, "The Ministry as a Vocation for Women," *The Woman's Pulpit* 1, no. 6 (October 1923): 4.

The Woman's Pulpit is the official journal of the IAWP. Southard served as editor of the journal from 1921-1928 and 1932-1939.

¹⁷*History of the Southwest Kansas Conference*, 223.

was routine procedure for reports to be made available before their official presentation to the Conference, this report was not. Thus, the first time Southard and others learned of its contents was the day it was presented to the floor. It contained three “definite convictions.” First, the validity of the call to preach for women had no direct relationship to the General Conference. Second, according to the report, ordination would, “inaugurate far-reaching social and spiritual issues,” and furthermore, “ought not to be undertaken either as an administrative expedient to meet the emergency created by a temporary decrease in ministerial supply, or as an economic expedient to adjust ministerial supply to inadequate financial support.” Third, “in the connectional polity of Methodism, the ordination of women and their admission to the annual conference would introduce peculiar and embarrassing difficulties.”¹⁸ The report recommended, therefore, that women be ordained according to the *Discipline*, but not granted Conference membership.¹⁹

Even though the report recommended ordination as local preachers for women, Southard judged that it, “was put on such grounds it certainly wasn’t much of a report.”²⁰ Following its reading, in Southard’s estimation, the meeting took an unforeseen turn.

Mrs. May Leonard Woodruff quickly moved to the platform to speak. She asserted that, “the commission had made a careful study of the matter,” and therefore she moved the adoption of the report. Southard explained this unexpected opposition in her journal:

Strange that I should have forgotten her, the woman who so signally defeated the plan God gave me for church women’s work for soldiers, because I would not turn down the W.F.M.S. and put the whole matter under her. The woman who was in the same committee, and followed me when I changed sub-committees to avoid having my memorial handled in the same sub-committee with her four years ago, who fought me all along the line of the women preacher work—strange that it would not occur to me what she would do.²¹

Procedure required that the Woodruff motion be considered. In addition, a myriad of amendments and motions ensued. Southard had an overwhelming sense that she needed to approach the platform in order to respond. She had been seated at the rear of the auditorium. “The feeling simply possessed

¹⁸*The Daily Christian Advocate* (May 8, 1924): 195.

¹⁹The 1924 *Discipline* provided direction for women by adding a footnote to the paragraphs related to Local Preachers. It stipulated that the provisions of designated paragraphs should “include women, except in so far as they apply to candidates for the traveling ministry.” *Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1924* (New York: The Methodist Book Concern, 1924), 183.

²⁰Southard Journal, vol. 60, June 6, 1924.

²¹Southard Journal, vol. 60, June 6, 1924.

me that I had to have a hearing, that I could not let that vote be taken without my protest against continued discrimination," she recalled. Her speech revealed her outrage over the manner in which the commission had completed its work.

Southard reminded the constituents that this was a request for ordination and admission to the Conference, not based upon emergency measures, but based upon ecclesiastical equality. She closed her remarks with a strident warning:

. . . Now I submit to you that the brilliant young women in Methodism are not going to be satisfied to be shunted into a blind alley, and I submit to you, furthermore, that Methodism may lose the strength of her strongest young womanhood if it persists in turning them into a blind alley.²²

Following her speech, the vote was delayed until the next day, when the report that granted local preachers ordination was approved. Southard viewed this as a marginal victory, since complete equality was still denied. It was, to be sure, only an incremental improvement over the 1920 General Conference.²³

As the 1924 General Conference drew to a close, Southard afforded herself the opportunity to reflect on her work as an agent of change. She had given considerable effort to the campaign for ecclesiastical suffrage. She now fully considered herself a co-worker with other activist women such as Frances E. Willard and Mary Lyon, and she saw women's ordination as "the crowning opportunity of the whole woman's movement."²⁴ Nevertheless, she did not see herself as the sole standard bearer of change. Indeed, she intimated, "It may be that I am thru, that someone else will be raised up to carry

²²*The Daily Christian Advocate* (May 9, 1924): 212-13.

²³It is interesting to note that the following General Conference of 1928 seemed to take a dim view of women in the ministry. The Committee on Itinerancy had been asked to consider granting women Annual Conference membership. The committee flatly denied such action stating, "The question is not that of the validity of their call to preach. We do not question that. Nor is it that of their ordination to preach. That question, arising on the mission field and as an aftermath of the war, when ministerial numbers were depleted, came up eight and four years ago when, camel-like, the noise of this petticoat legislation opened the flap and now the whole body of it tries to stalk into the tent of the itinerant ministry." Four reasons were given for their continued exclusion from full membership: motherhood is a higher calling than preaching, women are too fragile to endure the hardships of itinerating with the long hours and travel required, unmarried women would bring undue economic competition within the ranks, and the itinerant ministry is a masculine ministry, a man's job. Finally, M.C. Wright, who presented the majority opinion, admitted, "Let me remind you in conclusion that the body of itinerant preachers is not a sorority but a fraternity, not a sisterhood but a brotherhood. We do not object to the sisters forming a sorority of their own. Let them form a feminine conference if they will from which churches may get women pastors if they desire them. But let us not by adopting this disastrous proposal break up the finest fraternity on the face of the earth." This report was adopted after significant parliamentary confusion. *The Daily Christian Advocate* (Wednesday, May 30, 1928): 699-700.

²⁴Southard Journal, vol. 60, June 25, 1924.

on the rest of the way. It matters so little so that the work be done. . . . Surely nothing matters much but to keep oneself in the love of God. I do not want to fail in that."²⁵

II

While Southard was passionate about ecclesiastical equality for women, she was also fervent about creating a way for women ministers to join in companionship, thereby overcoming the isolation that accompanied such pioneering work.²⁶ She turned her convictions to action when she founded an organization that provided female association.²⁷ She believed that by establishing a group of women ministers, women would no longer feel isolated and facing the male establishment alone. Rather, in coming together, women would recognize that other women faced similar struggles. So, in November, 1919 following a consultation with Anna Gordon, National and World President of the WCTU, Southard met with several other women and the IAWP was chartered in St. Louis, Missouri. Despite her role in organizing this group, Southard was surprised to find herself their newly elected president.²⁸ Dedicated to making this truly an international organization, Southard recruited members from Asia, Europe, Canada, and South America.²⁹

The purpose of the IAWP was, "to bring together women ministers and those who qualified for the ministry but whose denominations denied ordination." Southard clarified this agenda in 1922 when she wrote:

We do not undertake to turn the world upside down, we have not set any extravagant goal of achievement. But we do want Christian fellowship among women who are preaching the Gospel of the Son of God and the friends who are interested in their work. And we do want to "lift up a highway, gather out the stones" for the feet of the girls coming after us who may be called, as we have been, to this blessed ministry.³⁰

²⁵Southard Journal, vol. 60, June 25, 1924.

²⁶Loneliness and isolation are frequent themes in Southard's journals.

²⁷Lucy T. Ayers, "Twentieth Anniversary Inspires Biographical Sketch," *The Woman's Pulpit* 45, no. 1 (January-March, 1967): 3. In this article, Ayers mentioned that "often in Assembly Miss Southard has told us that strong inner pressure was upon her for perhaps two years as she saw more and more clearly the need for fellowship among women who preach Christ's Gospel."

²⁸Ayers, 3 and Mansfield, 4. Southard mentions this surprise in "A Personal Word to Members." She remarked, "There are some things I can do, but organization work is not one of them. So all my life I had absolutely refused everything in the way of official position determined to 'give myself to prayer and the ministry of the word.' So settled a habit was this, that when God kept pressing on my heart the thought that women preachers should be drawn together in some kind of fellowship, the thought of my becoming the president of an organization never occurred to me." *The Woman's Pulpit* 10, no. 12 (December 1924): 3.

Southard had tried prior to this meeting to secure the first president for this organization. She had asked Dr. Anna Howard Shaw who declined, however. Southard Journal, vol. 54, March 13, 1919.

²⁹Southard Journal, vol. 54, March 13, 1919.

³⁰Southard, *The Woman's Pulpit* 1, no. 2, (September 1922): 4.

When the organization decided to publish its own journal in 1921, Southard served as its editor, and continued in this capacity until 1928, and again from 1932 to 1939. Because of her long editorial work, Southard had ample opportunity to serve essentially as a pastor to the women preachers of this organization. As the editor, she instructed, inspired, admonished, and encouraged all of those who joined this intrepid organization. Her experience as a woman evangelist and preacher enabled her to lead other women preachers, and she exercised this role with untiring dedication, often lamenting her lack of time to write for the general public and instead giving her attention to *The Woman's Pulpit* and maintaining correspondence with numerous members. Thus, she served as a mentor to many women who were preaching throughout various parts of the world. It is in this sense that she developed from an evangelist, working mostly in Kansas, to an international pastor.

In this pastoral capacity, she communicated her convictions about the role of a minister.³¹ She also shared her personal experience with her colleagues when the clash between religion and science was acute.³² She did not seek to persuade them in any particular way, but rather revealed her personal difficulties as she struggled to understand her faith in the midst of new and ongoing scientific discoveries. In light of the "crisis in the Protestant empire,"³³ she called her constituents to be patient and reserve definitive judgment on the issues until more scientific information was known. As the leader of an association, she asserted that the IAWP was both conservative and liberal. They were conservative in the sense that they were evangelical and "members" had to be standing members in an "evangelical denomination." They were liberal in the sense that they were inter-denominational and did not focus on theological differences.³⁴

In December, 1927, Southard wrote an article detailing her "systematic" theology as the doctrinal basis of the IAWP. She covered the following themes: God, Trinity, Christ, Atonement, and Personal/Social aspects of the Christian life. This article demonstrated the awareness Southard had of the fundamentalist-modernist controversies that were sweeping the nation.³⁵

When Southard returned to the United States from her overseas missionary work in 1932, she wrote, "A Call to Adventurous Preaching." In it, she claimed there were not many recognized women preachers in the Far East, except one. She believed this was due to the fact that women were largely

³¹*The Woman's Pulpit* 1, no. 8 (January-February, 1924): 3.

³²See, for example, "A Personal Letter Concerning a Personal Experience," *The Woman's Pulpit* 2, no. 3 (July 1925): 3.

³³This phrase is from Martin E. Marty's, *Pilgrims in Their Own Land: 500 Years of Religion in America* (New York: Penguin Books, 1985), 297.

³⁴Southard, "The Controversy in Tennessee," *The Woman's Pulpit* 2, no. 3 (July 1925): 1.

³⁵Southard, "The Theology of Women Preachers," *The Woman's Pulpit* 3, no. 7 (December 1927): 4-5.

uneducated, and education had to be available before change could be initiated. The church had been too cautious in its attitude toward women, she asserted, and women would strengthen the church's stance with other religious traditions if women held leadership positions along with men, as both are needed for a balanced ministry.³⁶

In the same article she called on women to avoid complacency in their ministries. She charged:

For some of us the struggle to secure for women recognition in the church as preachers has been a costly one. Is its outcome to be merely that another kind of job is open to women, that they fall into the routine of compiling statistics and multiplying organizations that make the work-day of some pastors? Will they even join in the puny competition in these matters? If their lives drop to this level, we feel that we have spent our strength for naught.³⁷

Following this preaching theme, in 1933 and 1934, Southard wrote a series entitled "This Preaching." Her first installment addressed the question of the distinction between preaching and philanthropic or educational pursuits. Her response was to ground preaching in Scripture, tracing its existence through the prophets of the Old Testament, to John the Baptist, Jesus, and his disciples in the New Testament.³⁸

Her second installment contended that only preaching had the possibility of changing societal problems because, "the preaching of Christ brings constructive release from antisocial practices by furnishing the dynamic for building human relations on higher levels." In this segment she also warned, "when preaching becomes a profession to be coolly considered alongside other professions in the young person's choice of vocation, then indeed it becomes a deadly and a deadening thing."³⁹

In the last installment she called upon her constituents to continue their preaching because the, "New Testament is full of the responsibility and privilege of preaching."⁴⁰ These articles provided important guidance to other women who looked to Southard for inspiration and as a figure to emulate.

The Great Depression and the Dust Bowl caused economic hardship that resulted in less room for women ministers, in some cases. Southard, writing in the midst of this cultural context, urged other women preachers to use "spiritual tactics" to secure their opportunity to preach the gospel. In this respect, she suggested three ways to arouse interest in women preachers:

³⁶Southard, "A Call to Adventurous Preaching," *The Woman's Pulpit* 11, no. 2 (November-December 1932): 4.

³⁷Southard, "For Serious Thought," *The Woman's Pulpit* 11, no. 3 (January-February 1933): 3.

³⁸Southard, "This Preaching," *The Woman's Pulpit* 12, no. 1 (September-October 1933): 1-2.

³⁹Southard, "This Preaching," *The Woman's Pulpit* 12, no. 2 (November-December 1933): 1-2.

⁴⁰Southard, "This Preaching," *The Woman's Pulpit* 12, no. 3 (January-February 1934): 1, 3.

make friendships with ministers, give more attention to women who are engaged in all kinds of religious work, and be more cognizant of the role of laymen in the promotion of women ministers.⁴¹

This is only a small sampling of the numerous articles Southard wrote instructing and encouraging other women ministers. These writings reinforced the purpose of the IAWP by providing important communication among ministerial colleagues, by keeping the members aware of the developments in the various denominations regarding women preachers, by suggesting ways in which women could expand their presence in the pulpits, and by encouraging women to increase their education, both formally and informally.

III

Southard the activist and Southard the pastor to other women ministers achieved much. Furthermore, the two hats she wore were not unrelated. In establishing the IAWP in 1919 and serving a long editorial tenure for *The Woman's Pulpit*, Southard formed a coalition that helped in the ecclesiastical battle she waged at both the 1920 and 1924 General Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church. While she did not establish her organization in order to support her work for equality in the pulpit, it provided a very important step as she worked within her denomination for full ecclesiastical recognition. Yet, in dedicating her energy to the IAWP from 1919 until her death in 1967, Southard made clear that her work extended beyond any denominational policy. Southard, who tirelessly worked as an agent for change on behalf of women ministers and refused to recoil in fear from such a daunting task, at the same time, was willing to let those after her continue the work. Her life was larger than a particular cause or issue or geographical location. She did indeed begin in Kansas, but her legacy is felt around the world!

⁴¹Southard, "Making Friends for Woman's Preaching Ministry," *The Woman's Pulpit* 17, no. 1 (September-October, 1938): 2, 4.