



Left: Diann Neu and Cathy Jaskey at W-CC's meeting in Chicago in October **Top left:** Mary Hunt, Kate Stoltzfus, Crystal West, Joe Scinto, and Cathy Jaskey take a tea break at the WATER office **Top right:** Loretto Volunteers Cathy Jaskey, Mallory Daily, Martha Berhane, Jes Stevens, and Julie Cozzetto at the People's Climate March on September 21 in New York City **Right:** Cindy Lapp, pastor of Hyattsville Mennonite Church; Coralie Ling, minister of Sophia's Spring in Australia; and dear friend Joe Scinto.



Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics, and Ritual • NEWSLETTER

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Good Company in Guatemala City

by Mary E. Hunt

Guatemala City was the scene of the 17th conference on Women and Theology where the *Nucleo Mujeres y Teologia*, the sponsoring group, celebrated twenty years of work in the field. More than 150 people—students, ministers, activists (both women and men) from

all over Central America—came together for robust discussions, moving rituals, and plenty of fellowship.

I was honored to be the speaker for two intensive days of lectures and workshops entitled “Toward a feminist theo-ethics to create change.” Previous speakers include WATER friends Maria Pilar Aquino, Teresa Forcades, Ivone Gebara, Judy Ress, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, among others, so a strong foundation had already been laid for what I offered.

My lectures included an overview of gender, sexuality, and religion in the 21st century; the relationship of religion and gender in contemporary feminist theo-ethics; feminist theological resources for peace making; and how to create organizations and develop networks that will engage in social change.

Creative feminist pedagogy was the order of the day. Several rounds of workshops gave groups a chance to discuss the lecture material and present their own reflections in unique forms: murals, TV ads, radio spots, collages, songs, parodies, news clips, and the like. It was great to see concepts like “hearing each other into speech” and “hermeneutics of suspicion” depicted graphically, sung about, and acted out.

At the end of each day, we circled our chairs closely for discussion sessions that demonstrated the wide concerns and enormous commitments to justice of those present.



Women Crossing Worlds in Guatemala: Mary E. Hunt with feminist colleagues at the 17th conference on Women and Theology in Guatemala in September 2014.

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Thank You for Another Year

As we reflect on the bounty of this year, we are thankful for you. Your generosity in 2014 has been vital in sustaining WATER's resources, programming, and networks for the WATER community and broader world of religious feminists. Your support helps to continue a strong foundation of voices working for good and ensures that WATER's much-needed work for social justice will carry on to the next generation of young feminists in religion.

Please consider WATER in your year-end giving because you can count on us to keep feminist religious values alive. As a non-profit, we rely on the generous donations of people like you to sustain our work: producing feminist rituals and scholarship, growing our library, hosting events like the “Holy, Wholly Holy” retreat, producing scholars, and cultivating an environment where young scholars and activists can form connections and deepen understanding. Since you have benefited from our resources, and if you have the means to give, please donate today using the enclosed envelope or online at waterwomensalliance.org. Thank you for helping WATER continue to flow.



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Who We Are

WATER is a global network, an educational and spiritual space, a center for dialogue on feminism, faith, and justice. We connect activists, religious leaders, students, scholars, and allies who are using feminist religious values to create social change. WATER was founded in 1983 by Mary E. Hunt and Diann L. Neu and has been empowering women to address structural violence for more than thirty years — making WATER one of the oldest feminist religious non-profit organizations in the world. The WATER community needs you to work toward inclusive theologies and rituals, to push for social change, and to collaborate across many differences. Join us! **To learn more about what we do, visit waterwomensalliance.org.**

Mary E. Hunt

Diann L. Neu

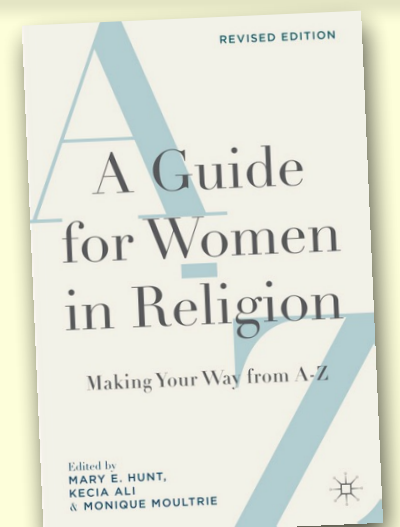
Cathy Jaskey

Kate Stoltzfus

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New Edition of *A Guide for Women in Religion* Released

When *A Guide for Women in Religion* was first published in 2003, the book was necessary and informative for women in theology. While the years and field might have changed, the book's endurance is a reminder of both the necessity for navigation of the often precarious spaces in religion for women, as well as the *Guide's* sage, well-formed advice. In the revised edition, editors Mary E. Hunt, Kecia Ali, and Monique Moultrie have updated the book for 2014's women in the field. See WATER's website for more information on how to get your hands on a copy (waterwomensalliance.org).





A WATER Welcome for 2014-2015

WATER is thrilled to welcome new colleagues to our office. Kate Stoltzfus, a recent graduate of Goshen College, began in August 2014 as a staff associate through the year-long Mennonite Voluntary Service program, and will be with us until September 2015. Crystal West, a student at Howard Divinity School, spent time in the office this fall doing a practicum during her final year of study. Cathy Jaskey continues as staff associate through her second year-long Loretto Volunteer Program. Join us in welcoming Kate, Crystal, and Cathy to the WATER community.

Photo from left to right: Kate Stoltzfus, Crystal West, and Cathy Jaskey

Women-Church Convergence Plans Future

Women-Church Convergence gathered for its 31st annual meeting on October 17-19, 2014 in Chicago, IL. WATER's Diann Neu and Cathy Jaskey were in attendance with representatives of 16 of the Catholic-rooted social justice member organizations and communities.

Each group works for progress on social justice causes such as feminist Eucharist, women's leadership, support of Catholic sisters, LGBTIQ+ rights, women's ordination, and reproductive choice.

The groups met for strategic planning of W-CC's future direction, as well as a process of recommitment with liturgy and renewal. "Women-Church is where Catholic feminists come together to be church because the institutional Church doesn't give space," Neu said. "We discussed where we've been and where we're going – an intense, wonderful process. From

my perspective, I commit myself to passing this work on to the next generation."

Jaskey, a second-year staff associate at WATER, felt that empowerment.

"It makes you feel like you can actually do something," said Jaskey. "We can come together with all our differences and find power in that. We're better together."

W-CC also produced a statement about the Extraordinary Synod on the Family, a culmination of the weekend's discussions. "The egregious omission of women and families in forming Church policy has a devastating impact on Catholics and others worldwide," a portion of the statement reads. "We believe it is long overdue for all families to be welcomed into the sacramental life of our Church." For more information on Women-Church Convergence, visit women-churchconvergence.org. ■



W-CC representatives Kate McElwee of Women's Ordination Conference, Donna Quinn of the National Coalition of American Nuns, Dar Noesen of Chicago Women-Church, and Barbara Battista of the Peace with Justice Committee of the Sisters of Providence.

... Company in Guatemala



Mary E. Hunt with feminists in Guatemala.

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One lunch time, a group of us paid a visit to the neighboring meeting of the *Asociación para la Justicia y Reconciliación*. We brought greetings and solidarity to the more than 100 people gathered from dozens of communities where massacres have taken place in the last decade. Their struggles for life and justice in the midst of corruption and greed gave new urgency to our discussions.

The visit to Guatemala only made me want to spend more time in that beautiful country. I am inspired to learn from the women who live and work in marginalized areas. The hospitality of the *Mercedarias Misioneras de Bériz* made me feel at home. A visit to CEDEPCA, the Protestant Center for Pastoral Studies in Central America, with their women's work and newly accredited theological program, opened another horizon for WATER's commitment to women crossing worlds. I am grateful. ■

Mary E. Hunt is co-director of WATER.

Upcoming Programs

Our series of **WATERtalks** feature conversations with feminist activists and theologians for an open dialogue of ideas, research, and experiences. The 2015 line-up promises to be as refreshing as the last five years: **Rita Gross** (January 14), **Dawn-Marie Gibson** (February 4), **Jann Aldredge-Clanton** (March 4), **Namsoon Kang** (April 15), **Gina Messina-Dysert**, **Rosemary Radford Ruether**, and **Xochitl Alvizo** (May 6), **Nancy Wilson** (June 3), and **Aisha Beliso-De Jesus** (July 8). All WATERtalks are free and run from 1 to 2 p.m. EST on their selected dates.

The next **Catholic Lesbian/Queer Women's Discussion** will be **January 11, 2015** from 11:30am-12:30pm EST. Speaker **Bernadette Brooten** will share a talk on "**Sexual Violence at Home: In Our Families, at Our Colleges, Between Lesbians.**"

WATER also offers a monthly **Contemplative Prayer/Meditation** session, a gathering time for shared meditation and silence followed by discussion of the month's topic. Scheduled dates for 2015 are **January 12, February 2, March 2, April 13, May 4, June 8, and July 13.**

RSVP is required for all events to join by phone or in person at the Silver Spring, MD office. Register for upcoming talks on our website or email waterstaff@hers.com.

WATERtalks Highlights



The end of the year was full of rich WATER programs. In October, we gathered with **Debra Haffner** and **Marie Alford-Harkey** of the Religious Institute to discuss bisexuality in faith communities.

Later in October we celebrated with **Theresa Kane**, RSM, the 35th anniversary of her 1979 papal greeting and continued dedication to women's issues.

Kate Kelly, a human rights lawyer and founder of Ordain Women, spoke with us in November. She was recently excommunicated from the Church of Latter Day Saints for campaigning for equal rights for women. Kate shared about her continued activism for feminist social change.

If you missed these talks, the audio can be found on our website, waterwomensalliance.org.

Holiday Ritual: You Are *Home*

by Diann L. Neu with WATER staff

Take a minute. Make yourself a cup of tea or drink of choice. Light a candle. Think about what it means to be *home* for the holidays.

Home can be a source of joy and a cause for pain. *Home* is an important and meaningful place for many. Yet some are made homeless because economies favor a few, differences divide families, violence leaves scars, and some spaces are unsafe.

Home is that place within yourself where you can rest, take a deep breath, and be safe.

Come home to yourself, and be nourished. Welcome home!

"Maybe journey is not so much a journey ahead, or a journey into space, but a journey into presence...The Journey is Home." —*Nelle Morton*, American feminist theologian

Come home to your friends, family, family of choice, and be supported. Welcome home!

"The ache for home lives in all of us, the safe place where we can go as we are..." —*Maya Angelou*, American poet

Come home to WATER and your community, and find hope. Welcome home!

Bless Your Home

For believing that I am *home*, thanks!

For creating a *home* with others, thanks!

For having a *home* where people love me for who I am, thanks!

For welcoming others into my *home*, thanks!

For those who provide a *home* to people who do not have a *home*, thanks!

Act at Home

. Welcome friends to your *home* for the holidays.

. Let go of any pain and hurt connected with *home*.

. Be thankful for the spaces where you have felt at *home* and for the *homes* you have created.

. Volunteer at a local shelter.

. Educate yourself on why people are made homeless.

© Diann L. Neu is co-founder and co-director of WATER. A full version of this ritual is available on our website, waterwomensalliance.org.

