



EEWC-Christian Feminism Today

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For Immediate Release

Kimberly Shank Awarded “Honorable Mention” by Christian Feminism Today

Indianapolis – The Selection Committee for the eighth annual Nancy A. Hardesty Memorial Scholarship, sponsored by Christian Feminism Today, has named Eastern Mennonite Seminary student Kimberly (Kim) Shank as one of two “Honorable Mention” designees for 2021.

Ms. Shank, who lives in Mount Solon, Virginia, is a second-year Master of Divinity student who was recently granted dual degree status by EMU’s Master of Arts in Counseling program. Aspiring to help those marginalized by the church to deconstruct harmful theologies that oppress instead of liberate, she is characterized by one of her references as “promoting a gospel of freedom and inclusivity through the ministry of spiritual direction, affirmations of LGBTQI+ persons in the church,” and engagement in “unceasing labor to discern love and liberty in the scriptures.”

In addition to her academic pursuits, Ms. Shank has been engaged in pandemic-schooling five children, working as a food pantry volunteer, and providing regular spiritual direction for several young adults. She has published two works of fiction under a pen name and spent a decade as a therapeutic foster parent – asserting now that two of her teenaged daughters, who influenced her deeply, “needed to be able to stand in the strength of a bigger gospel.”

Noting that many in our time are “deconstructing from purity narratives that did violence to their hearts, souls, and bodies,” she asks, “How do we integrate sexuality and spirituality in a way that does not harken back to the ancient economic system of an agrarian society, but is life giving and faithful to the spirit of the law?” Above all, she asserts that “I hold a dear hope for the evangelical church that it will continue to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, wrestling as it has through generations, finding a path forward of faithful witness. If I can be a part of that hope and that struggle, I would like to.”

As an Honorable Mention awardee, Ms. Shank will receive a year’s gift membership in Christian Feminism Today and a 2021–2022 subscription to The Humble Gathering, CFT’s monthly online lectureship series that brings the Christian feminist community together for insightful presentations and discussion with outstanding artists and theologians. The other Honorable Mention awardee for 2021 is Ms. Josefine Parker, a student at Vanderbilt Divinity School in Nashville, Tennessee. The Hardesty Memorial Scholarship recipient this year is Ms. JoDeanne Francis of Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, Massachusetts.

The Hardesty Scholarship competition is held annually in memory of Nancy A. Hardesty (1941–2011), a founding member of the Evangelical Women’s Caucus that, over the past 46 years, has grown into Christian Feminism Today. Until her death, Dr. Hardesty was a professor of religion in

the Department of Philosophy and Religion at Clemson University, in Clemson, South Carolina. Previously, she had taught English and writing at Trinity College in Deerfield, Illinois, and had worked on the editorial staffs of *Eternity* magazine and *The Christian Century*.

Ms. Hardesty's first book, co-authored with Letha Dawson Scanzoni, was *All We're Meant to Be: A Biblical Approach to Women's Liberation*. Originally published in 1974, the book has gone through several editions and has influenced countless Christian feminists, from evangelicals to mainline Protestants to Roman Catholics. In 2006, *Christianity Today* magazine ranked *All We're Meant to Be* among the top fifty books that had influenced the evangelical Christian movement over half a century.

Christian Feminism Today is an organization with a long history of working for gender equality. CFT welcomes members of any gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, color, creed, marital status, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, age, political party, parental status, economic class, or disability. Its biennial conferences sustain spiritual connectedness and foster learning about critical Christian feminist issues. The CFT website, www.eewc.com, provides Christian feminist news, articles, book reviews, blogs, Bible studies, links to explore, and inspiration.

For more information about Christian Feminism Today or the Nancy A. Hardesty Memorial Scholarship, contact Marilyn McDonald, Christian Feminism Today Executive Council Coordinator, at office [at] eewc [dot] com or 317-721-3660.

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