Talk To Tell How Early Christian Women Filled Important Church Roles Despite Subservient Status

A four-part series of programs exploring the roles of women in world religions will begin Tuesday, Feb. 27 when the UCSB Affiliates present "Prophets and Servants of the Word: Women in Early Christianity," a talk by Christine M. Thomas, a professor of religious studies at UCSB.

The presentation will run from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. in the University Club, 1332 Santa Barbara St. in Santa Barbara. Cost is $5 to Affiliates or Chancellor's Council members and $8 to all others.

Despite early Christian philosophy which allowed women only a restricted role in the church, in fact, says Thomas, women carried out many important tasks.

They were missionary workers, benefactors, prophets and teachers, among other things, said Thomas, who will examine the differences between official church policy and reality.

Thomas studied the classics and ancient history at the University of Minnesota and the Eberhardt-Karls UniversitŠt in Germany and earned a Ph.D. in the study of religion at Harvard University.
She is an expert in early Christianity and since 1991 has spent part of each year in Turkey doing archaeological research seeking evidence of religion during the Roman Period.


Other programs in the women and religion series are "The Equivocal Attitude of Buddhism Toward Women," Wednesday, March 14, Vesna Wallace, lecturer, UCSB Department of Religious Studies; "Women and the Qur'an, Tuesday, March 27, Ruqayya Khan, visiting assistant professor, UCSB Department of Religious Studies; and "Mothers and Goddesses: Women in Search of the Feminine Divine," Monday, April 9, Nancy Ramsey Tosh, Ph.D., and Melissa Wilcox, faculty fellow, UCSB Department of Religious Studies.

For further information or to make reservations, contact UCSB Community Relations at 893-4388.

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