

# Preaching on the Plains: Methodist Women Preachers in Kansas, 1920D1956

Kendra Weddle Irons

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**Preaching on the Plains: Methodist Women Preachers in Kansas, 1920D1956** Kendra Weddle Irons *Preaching on the Plains* is about women unknown or almost forgotten. By sharpening the focus on rural Methodist pulpits during the Dust Bowl and World War II, this study brings to life women who preached and provided leadership when Kansas faced one of its most difficult eras. What propelled these women to step into roles usually deemed appropriate only for men and how did their congregations respond to their initiative?

At the center of this hidden history is Mabel Madeline Southard, a vanguard evangelist who sought ecclesial equality in 1920 and 1924 at the Methodist Church's quadrennial meetings. Additionally, she protested against alcohol with Carry Nation in the famous Topeka raid, worked on the Woman's Christian Temperance Union lecture circuit, and formed an international organization for women preachers. Others also stepped forward, meeting the needs of struggling congregations and thereby prompting congregants and the church to reexamine the assumptions made about women in the pulpit. Against a backdrop of Kansas and Methodist histories, Professor Weddle Irons reveals ten brave women, each with a unique message and calling, each no longer forgotten.



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