

NH CONFERENCE, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
N.H. WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP
WOMEN'S LINK

WINTER 2017

**YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO THE TENTH (X)
CELEBRATION OF THE NEW ENGLAND UCC WOMEN!**

Women you know have been doing great things for 40
years and many have served in the planning, leading,
liturgy, and music that brought us all together every four
years, since 1982!!

While trends in our churches have somewhat decreased, let that not affect this event. So, start planning now, spread the word, find someone to share a room with, and come relax and renew this coming spring! Sounds funny to talk that far ahead, but many of us have been working for almost three years in subcommittee form, online, and meeting together to make this a fabulous time to be in the UCC and Portland, Maine!

With most things in this world, all come at a price. We have worked long and hard at trying to provide you with a weekend event, meeting spaces, inspirational worship, dynamic speakers, fellowship, "mall area" and, of course, luscious food. Holiday Inn by the Bay will be our host site, keeping us all in one place. We want all women to have a voice and chance to be at the table. So, encourage your young women (ages 14 and up), daughters, and granddaughters to come with you and be part of this awesome time in the life of the wider church. Why we encourage you to come with a friend or family member is that hotel room rates and meal prices are set so that they are affordable for most, and that using them subsidizes the use of the larger meeting and ballroom spaces for us to gather in. Costs are real, but please **do not** let that be a reason not to join us. Start saving now, run a bake sale at your church, ice cream Sunday/Sundae, put on a soup and bread supper this fall and ask for donations... you will be surprised at the results. (Be creative and tell us those stories on our Web site and/or Face book page and it will encourage others to do the same.)

There will be NO childcare provided at this event, so we ask you to be creative at how one's congregation can be of help to assist some women in this important time away from their families to be truly present with God's Spirit.

See you next April, so mark your calendar now!

—CELEBRATION X Co-chairs: Pam Burnham and Sharon Beckwith

A SEAT AT THE TABLE



Come for all things are now ready.

-Luke 14:17b

WOMEN LEADERS OF NEW ENGLAND (WLNE) **WHAT IS IT?**

Women Leaders of New England (WLNE) is a group of about 25 women from NH, CT, ME, MA, RI, and VT who plan and organize an event called Celebration, held every four years since 1982. There were 600+ women in attendance for Celebration IX in 2014 in Portland ME. The task team is hoping for at least the same number for Celebration X in Portland on April 6–7–8, 2018. Visit our Web site at: www.UCCwomenscelebration.org.

HISTORY OF THE UCC WOMEN LEADERS OF NEW ENGLAND

In 1980, at Geneva Point, during the Annual Meeting of the New England Women's Presidents, a committee was formed for the purpose of establishing a UCC Regional Women's Event in New England. Carol Seaman from CT, Barbara Bowman from MA, Laura Bailey and Rosalyn Baston from ME, Elinor Burroughs from NH or VT, and Sally Bradley from RI served on that exploratory committee. These women gathered with several others in MA to brainstorm and develop the concept of NEW ENGLAND WOMEN'S CELEBRATIONS.

PURPOSE: *The purpose was to reach the women in the pews, and to involve them in learning about and sharing their Faith beyond the local church and the Conference setting.*

Mid-March, mid-Lent was chosen as the time for Celebrations because of the historical reference to Mothering Sunday, which was a time when the strict observances of Lent were relaxed for a day so church folks could return to their Mother Church or their roots. The purpose of the celebrations was to reach the women in the pews, to involve them in learning about and sharing their Faith beyond the local church and the Conference setting. These Founding Mothers had a dream and incredible Faith. They were drawn to Lydia, the weaver of purple cloth. From there it was decided that the gathering would have a special color, purple, and many of the traditions that were used at subsequent Celebrations come from the early researching and deliberations of these representatives from each of our six states. **WEAVING THE FABRIC OF OUR FAITH** was the first theme. They had no funds, so each state put up some seed money to get them started. They had no idea how many women would come, but they had nearly 1,100 show up. And they had money left over, hence the tradition of sending off the excess to a good cause. At the first Celebration in 1982, many women volunteered to do all sorts of work that none of them ever imagined they could do. Rosalyn Baston from ME was coordinator and she traveled to all the New England Conferences to publicize that first event. Rosalyn was the mother of volunteers!

In 1986, Celebration II, registration remained at \$25 making the weekend away very affordable for most women. **MOVED BY FAITH—WHERE DO WE GROW FROM HERE** was the theme and the color was green! The Steering Committee's hopes for these early events were for OPENNESS, ACCEPTANCE, SEEKING TRANSFORMATION, and SERVICE.

For Celebration III, 1990, other sites beyond Portland ME were investigated, with the findings that more central facilities were too costly and didn't afford the luxury of having a Hospitality Room filled with our own food from each state. **WELLSPRINGS OF WOMEN—LIVING, LOVING, LAUGHING**, blue for the color and registration raised to \$40 marked this event's history. The Chaplaincy Program was started at this time, Job Descriptions were explored, and an Honorarium Policy was developed.

WOMEN ABLAZE WITH THE SPIRIT with red, orange, and yellow colors framed 1994's Celebration IV event. Morning Watch and Evening Prayer were initiated during this period. The Steering Committee felt strongly that certain policies had evolved over the years of planning four regional events and they began to write them down, not to hinder growth, but to encourage progress without need to reinvent the wheel for each event.

Past Celebrations:

- I **Weaving the Fabric of Our Faith (1982) (purple)**
- II **Moved by Faith—Where Do We Grow From Here (1986) (green)**
- III **Wellsprings of Women—Living, Loving, Laughing (1990) (blue)**
- IV **Women Ablaze with the Spirit (1994) (red, orange, yellow)**
- V **Gifts of the Bread (1998) (gold)**
- VI **Vine of Life—Branches of the Spirit (2002) (no special color)**
- VII **Celebrate Micah's Call (2006)**
- VIII **Together Building Bridges (2010)**
- IX **Together We Can (2014) (red)**

X **A Seat at the Table (2018) (red, white, black)**

In 1998 we were into **GIFTS OF THE BREAD** and the color was gold for the wheat and bread. Once again a team of very talented volunteers worked extremely hard to produce a wonderful event with 1,200 women attending. The offering that year went to UCC World Hunger and was a whopping \$6,700.

That brings us to Celebration VI in March of 2002 when the event was moved to Burlington VT. For many of us, it was no farther than Portland, even though it seemed farther. It was no colder, even though we thought it would be. Our theme was **VINE OF LIFE—BRANCHES OF THE SPIRIT** and, for the first time, we had no special color. Women missed that.

Celebration VII, **CELEBRATE MICAH'S CALL**... to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God... was held in Burlington Vermont from March 17–19, 2006. Rev. Rona Kinsley led our worship, and Diane Spires led us in song; over 900 participated in this event, including four members from the Collegium of the United Church of Christ from Cleveland.

The Steering Committee members have changed over the years, but each new group of volunteers tries to respect the work of those who have shaped this every-four-year event since the early 1980s, maintaining a high standard and the aim of involving the women in the pews in a different, exciting experience—one of learning, fellowship, and praise, in the name of our Creator and the risen Christ!

CELEBRATION X IN PORTLAND ON APRIL 6–7–8, 2018

THIS IS A SENSATIONAL EVENT FOR WOMEN.

JUST THINK HOW EXCITING IT IS TO BE AMONGST 500+ WOMEN ALL IN THE SAME PLACE—

SHOPPING IN THE “HOLY MALL” TOGETHER

ATTENDING WORKSHOPS TOGETHER

SHARING COMMUNION TOGETHER

KNITTING, ETC., TOGETHER

WORSHIPPING TOGETHER

SINGING TOGETHER

DINING TOGETHER

You will find a happy, friendly, enthusiastic group of women. There will be an interesting program of passionate speakers. Meet old friends; make new friends. In 2014, at Celebration IX, a Greenland woman saw a relative she hadn't seen in 35 years! Now that's not going to happen to everyone, of course, but you never know who you will meet!

And you'll never know how much fun and enjoyable this weekend could be for you and your friends unless you go at least once—and remember the next Celebration won't happen again until **2022!!!** The Women Leaders of New England started planning Celebration X in September 2014, immediately after Celebration IX ended. It takes a lot of work to plan an event for 500+ women. Come and enjoy the fruits of our labor!

It is not inexpensive, so start saving **NOW**. The rooms are \$149/per night per room no matter how many share the room. Registration is \$125; the meal package is ~\$125. **IMPORTANT:** The more meal packages we sell, the more free rooms we get for workshops.

DON'T MISS OUT ON THIS EVENT!

MORNING WORKSHOPS 10:00 A.M.–11:30 A.M.

- 01 **2018: WHY “ONA” STILL MATTERS**—In a time of increased visibility and rights for gays and lesbians, the ONA designation can seem like a relic of an earlier time. Join us for an exploration of why being visibly ONA is more important than ever. (Eliza Buchakjian-Tweedy)
- 02 **ART FOR THE SOUL: PRAYER BEADS AND MORE!**—Engage your spirit and experience prayer through motion, color, ribbons, and beads. A guided sitting motion prayer will begin the workshop involving music, color, and ribbons, and then each participant will choose from a variety of meaningful beads to create a prayer bead chain. \$12 materials fee is required to be paid with registration. (Kristin Putney, Suzanne Seekell)
- 03 **TRANSGENDER 101**—This workshop provides a chance to listen to, and ask questions of, a transgender woman. We'll discuss some scriptures, why we should welcome trans-persons, and how we can include them in our fellowship. (Danielle Allen)

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- 04 **WALKING THE LABYRINTH—PRAYER IN MOTION**—Across centuries and civilizations, people have used a labyrinth as a tool for prayer and discernment. Come learn about how one church made and uses its labyrinth within its community, and walk it to give yourself a restorative, spiritual treat. (Eleanor MacLellan, Gayle Murphy)
- 05 **MANDALA JOURNALING AS SPIRITUAL PRACTICE**—Drawing and coloring within a sacred circle provides an entry into spiritual mystery in virtually every religious tradition. Discover for yourself how the practice of mandala journaling can deepen your exploration of scripture and tap into a healing spiritual reservoir. \$12 materials fee is required to be paid with registration. (Linda Carleton)
- 06 **AFRICAN DRUMMING**—Join us for a drum circle! Don't know where or how to start? Bring your Djembe or hand drum or use one of mine. This workshop is for those who are new to drumming and for those who have been in a drum circle before. Join us for the fun! (Rev. Leslie Chatfield)
- 07 **LET'S WRITE FOR RUNNERS AND CHILDREN!**—The prophet Habakkuk suggests we write so clearly that a runner could read it while sprinting past, and Psalm 102 reminds us to write our faith for generations yet unborn. What do you want to write? A prayer for opening a meeting or for a friend's online obituary/guestbook? A memory of your childhood for your grandchildren? A spiritual autobiography? A humorous short story? A book review for social media? An original poem for someone you love? A prayer journal? This workshop shares some simple tools available to anyone for clear and lasting occasional writing. Bring your laptop or your pencil. (Rev. Maren Tirabassi)
- 08 **A BIBLE STUDY RESOURCE PROGRESSIVES CAN LOVE**—Believe it or not, everyone should know the Bible. That is the tagline for “Exploring the Bible: The Dickinson Series,” a new educational resource from the Massachusetts Bible Society. Come learn about this highly-acclaimed new series of Bible studies for small groups, which can be used in ecumenical and interfaith groups and is welcoming for the “nones” in our communities. Easy to lead, inexpensive to run—come and get a free set of course materials. (Rev. Anne Robertson)
- 09 **ARE YOUR DREAMS SURPRISING YOU?**—Join Rev. Lee Ireland to learn how our night dreams offer us information to help us make decisions and/or offer insights into some of the riddles of our lives. She will share some historical dreams and some basic guidelines on interpreting our dreams. Come and share if you have a recurring dream or one that has puzzled you for a while. Learning their messages can bring relief and/or liberation, and many times with a humorous twist. (Rev. Lee Ireland)
- 10 **INTERGENERATIONAL COMMUNITY—GETTING ALL THE WOMEN TOGETHER**—We will explore how the era in which one grows up affects one's understanding of community. Using that knowledge, we will practice multi-generational conversations and activities that can be taken back to your faith community. (Rev. Jennifer Geary)
- 11 **FINDING HER PLACE**—As we ask questions of women in the gospels, they ask questions of us as well. Have you found your place in the community and the world, the role or niche that feels right for you? In scripture, we hear from women who serve, who disturb, who conceal, who choose their place or who are put in their place, who are even displaced or misplaced. Let us explore our own places in relation to God's beloved community; let us look through the lens of faithful women whose encounters with Jesus often signaled a crossing of boundaries, a shift in perspective, and an unexpected change in their "place at the table." (Rev. Ruth Martz)
- 12 **RE-IMAGINING CHURCH**—Planting a new ministry gives one both the opportunity and the impetus to re-imagine everything about church. Join Sarah Buteux, founding pastor of Common Ground, for a frank discussion about the joys and challenges of responding authentically and adapting organically to the place where God has called you to plant your ministry. From worship style to the role of the pastor, how you fund a new ministry to the question of who church is for, we'll inspire one another to think outside the 2000-year-old box we call church, and envision something new. (Rev. Sarah Buteux)

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- 13 **AUTHENTIC SPIRITUAL SUPPORT IN PRISON MINISTRY**—This workshop will provide insight and tools to be able to effectively provide help to those who are incarcerated or recently released, and their families. (Chontell Washington)
- 14 **GUESS WHO'S NOT COMING TO DINNER?**—What has being born white got to do with racism? Lots! As 2018 European Americans, most of us do not think we are racist, but there are both implicit biases we have absorbed that favor whiter skinned people and laws and practices that have given white people an economic advantage over people of color, particularly over African Americans who trace their history back to being enslaved. Being "rich" is not the same as being "privileged." Come and be at the table of justice! (Rev. Dawn Berry)
- 15 **WELCOMING PEOPLE EXPERIENCING MENTAL ILLNESS TO THE TABLE**—Each year one in five of us experiences a mental illness. "People with mental health problems are our neighbors. They are members of our congregations and our families; they are everywhere in this country. A problem of this magnitude will not go away. Because it will not go away, and because of our spiritual commitments, we are compelled to take action." (Rosalynn Carter) Positive, easily implemented actions and activities will be shared. (Peggy Matteson)
- 16 **UNDERSTANDING OUR REFUGEE NEIGHBORS**—As our state becomes increasingly diverse, people want to know more about our neighbors who have come here from different countries. In this session, three speakers will share their expertise about refugees resettling in the Granite State. (Amy Marchildon, Becky Field)
Photographer Becky Field will show images of the lives of new Americans. Amy Marchildon, from the resettlement agency—Ascentria Care Alliance—will talk about the path that refugees take to be resettled in the Granite State. A refugee from New Hampshire will share personal experiences of the opportunities and challenges faced in resettling in New Hampshire.
- 17 **INTERFAITH DIALOGUE: CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM**—The dialogue seeks common ground as it honors differences. (Rev. Robert Fellows, Rev. Robert Thompson, Imam Mohamed Ibrahim)
- 18 **PREBLE STREET RESOURCE CENTER**—(limit 15) off site and covers both workshop sessions

AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS 2:30 P.M.–4:00 P.M.

- 19 **2018: WHY "ONA" STILL MATTERS**—In a time of increased visibility and rights for gays and lesbians, the ONA designation can seem like a relic of an earlier time. Join us for an exploration of why being visibly ONA is more important than ever. (Eliza Buchakjian-Tweedy)
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- 26 **CONVERSATION WITH TRACI BLACKMON**—Enjoy a smaller group discussion with Traci Blackmon. (Rev. Traci Blackmon)
- 27 **BE STILL**—Moving from doing to being is an intentional awareness that can save your life. Being still requires a set of natural behaviors that we often ignore. Learn how to "Be Still" and experience God's presence and peace. (Rev. Cleo Graham)
- 28 **DISMANTLING RACISM IS NOT A SPECTATOR SPORT**—This workshop will be an overview on racism "then" and "now." We will look at what is needed to dismantle racism in our communities. We will explore together, as people of faith, the work ahead. (Rev. Renee Rouse)
- 29 **MULTI-RELIGIOUS ACTIVISM IN AN AGE OF CLIMATE CHANGE**—Climate change activism has reached unprecedented heights in the past year or so, and faith groups, including interfaith groups, are at the forefront of the struggle! We will look at the religious reasons for this activism in many religions, and at the reasons for success of this multifaith activism. (Barbara Darling)
- 30 **SACRED SPACES—SACRED PLACES**—What makes you stop and breathe? Where do you go to offer up prayer and to listen for God's faithful encouragement? Some people build altars in their gardens. Some arrange a table with plants, words, special books, and sculpture. Some create labyrinths they can hold in their hands; others place rocks in their yard to make a path where they might return to the center of God's heart. With hands, hearts, spirits, and prayer, we will ponder and create sacred spaces... take home tools for creating sacred spaces at home, at work, and in our churches. (Rev. Deborah Blood, Rev. Diane Wendorf)
- 31 **UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS: DO YOU REALLY KNOW WHO THEY ARE?**—This workshop will discuss root causes for immigration, the tortuous path of our broken immigration system, the many ways hopeful people are ensnared by it, and what you can do to help them. (Rev. Nancy Pape, Rev. Sandra Pontoh, Eva Castillo, Margaret Fogarty)
- 32 **OUR WOUNDED VETERANS—THE TRUTH, THE HEALING, THE HOPE**—Founded in 2008 by Pam Payeur, the Wounded Heroes Program of Maine was started due to the experience Pam and her son, Mike, had when he returned home from war as a wounded veteran. Hear the TRUTH about what our veterans face when they return home, what is involved in the HEALING process, especially when not all wounds are visible, and what HOPE is on the horizon for them. (Pam Payeur)
- 33 **WE ARE ALL CONNECTED—LAKOTA WHEEL OF LIFE AND WORLDWIDE CONNECTIONS**—As a guest of the Lakota in South Dakota, I was drawn in by their central constant that everything happens in a circle and is, therefore, connected. When people gather in a circle, everyone is equal. Everyone is connected. Join us to hear stories of exclusion and inclusion. (Janet Simmon)
- 34 **MINDFULNESS 101**—Are you searching for ways to improve your health and decrease stress? Come learn what mindfulness is and how it reduces the symptoms of stress and anxiety and can have significant, profound benefits in health and well-being. (MJ Allen)

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- 35 **THE “ART” OF SELF-COMPASSION**—Many of us are able to easily feel compassion for others, but struggle with finding self-compassion for ourselves. Participate in creative exercises designed to increase your capacity for mindfulness and self-compassion. Art therapy is one of the ways that I use to help people. (Bodhi Simpson)
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CELEBRATION X

A PLACE AT THE TABLE

Holiday Inn at the Bay—Portland ME

- 88 Spring Street ● Portland ME 04101 ● 207-775-2311 ●
- Portland Masonic ● 415 Congress Street ● Portland ME ●
- Williston Immanuel United Church ● 156 High Street ● Portland ME ●

WWW.UCCWOMENSCELEBRATION.ORG

Friday–Saturday–Sunday, April 6–7–8, 2018

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE (SUBJECT TO CHANGE):

FRIDAY, APRIL 6

- NOON – 6:00 p.m.Information and Registration
1:00 p.m. –10:00 p.m.The Holy Mall (Marketplace) open
5:00 p.m.Dinner
7:00 p.m.Opening ceremonies / Worship
.....Keynote Speaker: LESLIE LEWIN

SATURDAY, APRIL 7

- 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.Information and Registration
7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.The Holy Mall (Marketplace) open
7:30 a.m.Breakfast
8:45 a.m.Gathering Music
9:00 a.m.Keynote Speaker: REV. RENEE ROUSE
10:00 a.m. –11:30 p.m.Workshops
12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.Lunch and Keynote Speaker: REV. TRACI BLACKMON
2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.Workshops
4:00 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.Labyrinth available at Portland Masonic until 4:45
6:00 p.m.Dinner and Keynote Speaker: REV. SARAH BUTEUX
8:00 p.m.Entertainment: Women in Harmony, an a cappella choir of local talent. **There will be a reception following the concert where you may meet/greet these ladies**

SUNDAY, APRIL 8

- 8:30 a.m.Breakfast and Keynote Speaker: REV. DEB BLOOD
10:00 a.m.Worship with Holy Communion
11:30 a.m.Pick up box lunches
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- ☐ **Sat. Breakfast: \$16** \$ _____
Menu: Chilled fruit juice, Scrambled Eggs, Bacon, Breakfast Potatoes, Fruit Muffin,
Coffee, Tea, and decaf
- ☐ **Sat. Lunch: \$25** \$ _____
Menu: Cup of Soup, Tossed Garden Salad, Grilled Chicken, Dessert, Iced Tea
- ☐ **Sat. Dinner: \$30** \$ _____
Menu: Tossed Salad, Vegetable Lasagna, Peas & Carrots, Garlic Bread sticks,
Lemon pound cake with Blueberry Sauce, Coffee, Tea, and decaf
- ☐ **Sunday Breakfast: \$22** \$ _____
Menu: Enhanced Continental Breakfast—Hot Oatmeal Station w/ toppings,
Vanilla Yogurt w/ Granola, Slice Fruit Display, Assortment of Muffins,
Coffee, Tea, and decaf
- ☐ **Sunday Box Lunch: \$18** \$ _____
Menu: Sandwich, Marinated Vegetable Salad, Homemade Potato Chips,
Cookie & Soft Drink.

PLEASE select a morning and afternoon workshop—descriptions are found on our Web site:
www.uccwomenscelebration.org

Morning Workshops 10:00–11:30 a.m.

1. **2018: Why “ONA” Still Matters**—Rev. Eliza Buchakjian-Tweedy _____
2. **Art for the Soul: Prayer Beads and More!** —Ms. Kristin Putney **\$12 fee** _____
3. **Transgender 101**—Ms. Danielle Allen _____
4. **Walking the Labyrinth—Prayer in Motion**—Ms. Eleanor MacLellan _____
5. **Mandala Journaling as Spiritual Practice**—Ms. Linda Carleton **\$12 fee** _____
6. **African Drumming**—Rev. Leslie Chatfield _____
7. **Let’s Write for Runners and Children!**—Rev. Maren Tirabassi _____
8. **A Bible Study Resource Progressives Can Love**—Rev. Anne Robertson _____
9. **Are your Dreams Surprising You?**—Rev. Lee Ireland _____
10. **Intergenerational Community—Getting ALL the Women Together**—Rev. Jennifer Geary _____
11. **Finding Her Place**—Rev. Ruth Martz _____
12. **Re-Imagining Church**—Rev. Sarah Buteux _____
13. **Authentic Spiritual Support in Prison Ministry**—Ms. Chontell Washington _____
14. **Guess Who’s Not Coming to Dinner?**—Rev. Dawn Berry _____
15. **Welcoming People Experiencing Mental Illness to the Table**—Ms. Peggy Matteson _____
16. **Understanding Our Refugee Neighbors**—Ms. Amy Marchildon _____
17. **Interfaith Dialogue**—Rev. Robert Fellows _____
18. **PREBLE STREET MISSION**—(limit 15) off site and covers both workshop sessions _____

Afternoon Workshops 2:30–4:00 p.m.

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23. Mandala Journaling as Spiritual Practice—Ms. Linda Carleton \$12 fee _____
24. African Drumming—Rev. Leslie Chatfield _____
25. Let’s Write for Runners and Children!—Rev. Maren Tirabassi _____
26. Conversation with Rev. Traci Blackmon, Executive Minister Justice and Witness Ministries _____
27. Be Still—Rev. Cleo Graham _____
28. Dismantling Racism Is Not a Spectator Sport—Rev. Renee Rouse _____
29. Multi-Religious Activism in an Age of Climate Change—Ms. Barbara Darling _____
30. Sacred Spaces—Sacred Places—Rev. Diane Wendorf _____
31. Undocumented Immigrants: Do You Really Know Who They Are?—Rev. Nancy Pape _____
32. Our Wounded Veterans—The Truth, the Healing, the Hope—Ms. Pam Payeur _____
33. We are All Connected—Lakota Wheel of Life and Worldwide Connections—
Ms. Janet Simmon _____
34. Mindfulness 101—Ms. MJ Allen _____
35. The “Art” of Self-Compassion—Ms. Bodhi Simpson _____

Remember that some Workshops *have a fee for materials.*

Please enter workshop total here: \$ _____

TOTAL (for Registration, meals, and workshops) \$ _____

Make check payable to Maine Conference UCC “memo” Celebration (**Do not send cash**)

If you are unable or choose not to register online, please return pages 1–3 of this registration form with a check to:

Kathy Olmsted, Registrar

P.O. Box 604

Rowley, MA 01969

Questions or problems, you may e-mail: kolmsted2@comcast.net

Or call: 978-948-3769

Meet Our Keynote Speakers

Brief bios here—more on the Celebration Web site: www.uccwomenscelebration.org

Friday Night—Leslie Adelson Lewin, Director of Seeds of Peace Leslie Adelson Lewin has been a part of the program team at Seeds of Peace for 18 years, never missing a summer at the Seeds of Peace Camp on Pleasant Lake in Maine. Following two summers as a counselor, she began full-time work for Seeds of Peace, preparing the Camp program and orchestrating all logistics and programming, a role which eventually led to her becoming Camp Director. Prior to becoming Executive Director, Leslie served for three years as the director of the Seeds of Peace Camp. In that

role, she recruited, hired, and supervised a team of over one hundred people, worked with participating governments to oversee selection of Seeds, and served on the executive management team to direct organizational priorities, including program management and strategic planning.

Leslie is a Term Member of the Council on Foreign Relations. She is involved in Womensphere and is a board member at the Country Roads Foundation. She is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and received a master's degree in Public Administration and Nonprofit Management & Policy from New York University's Wagner School of Public Service. She is one of the youngest leaders profiled in the book "How Great Women Lead," joining US diplomats Hillary Clinton, Condoleezza Rice, Susan Rice, and 17 other women.

Saturday Morning—Rev. Renee Rouse, Warner, NH Her first service in Warner was Easter Sunday last year. Shortly before the service began, a few members of the congregation approached their new minister to tell her there was a deaf man included in their church.

"I didn't know what to do," Rouse said. "We can't just let them sit there... So I started doing some homework."

So began an initiative at the church in Warner, something Rouse calls "extravagant hospitality" where the focus is "loving people based on their need."

Rouse implored the congregation to "listen with your eyes and ears" instead of reading along.

Rouse said there is no other church for the deaf in the state, and she hopes this church will continue to grow.

"This is a place they know they can come to," she said. "We are moving forward."

Saturday Lunch—Rev. Traci Blackmon, UCC Executive Minister of Justice and Witness Ministries A prominent community leader, a gifted preacher, and a much-loved pastor and teacher has been appointed as the acting executive of UCC Justice and Witness Ministries.

The Rev. Traci Blackmon, pastor of Christ the King UCC, in Florissant, Mo., called by the United Church of Christ General Minister and President and the UCC Board chair and vice-chair, and appointed to the position by an enthusiastic and unanimous vote of the Board of Directors, looks forward to beginning her work with the national offices.

Saturday Evening—Rev. Sarah Buteux, Associate Pastor Minister of Christian Education and Outreach, Founding Pastor of Common Ground; Sarah has ministered in the valley for the last nine years to a growing and thriving U.C.C. congregation in Hadley Massachusetts. As much as she loved her work in Hadley, Sarah left in order to follow the call God laid on her heart to explore alternative ways of creating a fully inclusive Christian community. That call led her to found Common Ground, a farm to table dinner church. In July of 2014 the congregation of First Churches invited Sarah to come on staff as their associate pastor and not only offered Common Ground a home, but formally adopted it as a new ministry of First Churches.

Sunday Breakfast—Rev. Deborah J. Blood, Maine Conference Minister Rev. Deborah Blood is the Conference Minister for the Maine Conference, UCC. She was ordained to Christian ministry in 2005 and served the First Congregational Church in Bloomfield CT, an increasingly multi-racial, multi-ethnic congregation, for 10 years. She has also served as Chair of the Wider Church Ministries/Co-chair of Global Ministries Boards of the UCC and has much experience across National and Conference settings, including significant involvement with the Racial Justice Ministries of the CT Conference, and with their Korean and Colombian Partnerships.

As Conference Minister in Maine since 2015, Deborah is focused on liberating the Conference and churches from structures, practices, and habits that prevent engagement with the strong movement of the Holy Spirit toward the next version of the Church. The Spirit is leading us, and we need to follow, with confidence, courage, and trust in God's loving intentions for the Church. The Maine Conference is Moving Forward Together knowing that we are not alone and that we need one another as we

discern our future together with God. Our essential work in these times is listening for the voice of God and opening to the new people God is calling into leadership. This means looking to the margins of the Church and of society, and leaving behind our prejudices – welcoming ALL to the Table and following whomever God’s calls to lead us.

In a prior life, Deborah was a practicing attorney for 15 years, focused on litigation, mediation, and family law. She has a passion for music, and loves to sing, having been a music teacher in a brief early career. After many years of vacationing in Maine, Deborah has joyfully settled in as a permanent resident, relishing every chance to travel and experience the strong Spirit and beautiful variety of Maine’s UCC Congregations. She is delighted to welcome the New England Women’s Celebration X to Portland, Maine!!!

Saturday Entertainment

Women in Harmony—an a cappella choir of local talent: <http://www.wihmaine.org/>

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: Recognizing the power of music to bring people together, we will work to build bridges among women through singing, striving for unity among all women regardless of sexual orientation, race, class, economic background, or ethnicity.

Through music, we honor and celebrate those who have worked throughout history for the rights women enjoy today. We support those who continue to strive for political, social, and economic equality on behalf of all women. We advocate peace, freedom, and justice for all.

We provide learning opportunities for women of widely varying levels of musical experience, encouraging all members to expand their skills and grow musically within a supportive environment. We are dedicated to musical excellence and work hard to accommodate different learning styles to reach our musical goals.

We recognize that we have a role in the community, not only to provide women of diverse backgrounds the opportunity for creative expression and growth through music, but also to make choral music accessible to the community at large. We will work to enhance the community’s awareness, appreciation and understanding of choral music, in particular bringing the work of women composers and musicians to the public

There will be a reception following the concert where you may meet/greet these ladies.

MISSION PROJECT FOR CELEBRATION X: CHURCH WORLD SERVICES

The mission project for Celebration X will be Church World Services (CWS) Hygiene Kits. Two, three, or more individuals may put together a kit. The kits must be complete with the following items put into a one-gallon zipper closure bag: One hand towel measuring approximately 15” x 28” to 16” x 32” (no fingertip, bath, dish towel, or micro-fiber); one washcloth; one wide-tooth comb removed from the package; one bath size bar of soap in the wrapper; one toothbrush in the package; and ten standard size Band-aids.

Remove the excess air from the bag and seal. Do NOT add any extra items or toothpaste. A tube of extended expiration date toothpaste will be added to each Hygiene Kit just prior to its journey. There is a \$2 processing fee per kit. Do NOT enclose money

inside the kits. Kits should be delivered to the CWS table in the Holy Mall. There will also be a donation can at the CWS table for those who may wish to donate but not make a kit.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE REQUEST FOR COMMUNION PICTURES AND STORIES

Have you had a meaningful communion experience? One that lives in our memory that is surrounded by wonder, love, transformation, forgiveness, or hope? Rev. Abby Lynn Haskell is a sacred story teller and is collecting communion pictures and stories to share in worship at Celebration X. If you have a communion experience story to share, please contact Abby at sabbaticalstories@gmail.com. Not all stories easily translate to print, so if you’d prefer to share it verbally or face-to-face rather than in written form please text or call 207-415-5858.

Dear UCCWLNE member and friend,

I am writing on behalf of the UCC Women Leaders who are sponsoring Celebration X. We hope that you will be instrumental in finding funding from your state for this event.

Great plans are being made for the UCC Women's Celebration X to be held in Portland ME from April 6 to 8, 2018. The chairs and their committees are working diligently to have everything work smoothly, but financial concerns remain. Many donations from UCC state conferences, churches, and individuals are needed to make this a success. The UCCWLNE asks only for \$100 from each New England state, but, of course, more would be very much appreciated.

We hope that you will notify church members of this need and encourage giving from them and from their churches.

Checks may be made out and mailed to the Maine Conference, UCC, One Weston Court, Suite 104, Augusta ME 04330.

If you have questions, I may be reached at 207-744-9446, kathrynsme@yahoo.com or outreach@fccucc.org.

Thank you for considering support for Celebration X.

Sincerely,

Kathy Sahrbeck
Treasurer, UCCWLNE

*Let's show New England what New Hampshire can do. If at least 100 people send \$5, NH could donate at least \$500. Write out your check now for \$5 or more to the NH UCC Women's Fellowship, mail it to **Dot Pitman, 12 Maple Knoll Drive, Hollis NH 03049**, and Dot will send one GREAT BIG check to the Maine Conference UCC.*

REMITTANCE FORM

We will print a "thank you" in a future LINK.

Name _____ Amount _____

Address _____

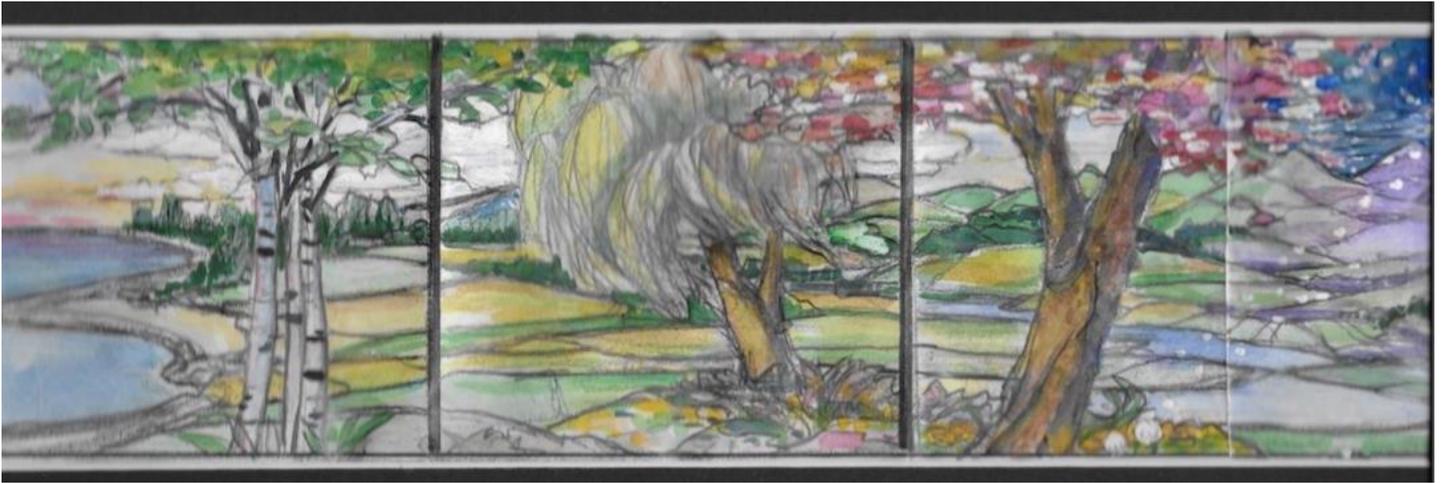
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Church: _____

Please send articles, book reviews, and other information to LINK editor: Trudie Bergeron, 46 Nantucket Place, Greenland NH 03840; E-mail: TrudieGlenn@yahoo.com; Cell: 603-828-4200.

~A Window of Peace~

Stained Glass Window for Interfaith Chapel in New Women's Prison



The NH Council of Churches and the Greater Concord Interfaith Council are raised funds for a Stained Glass Window for the Interfaith Chapel in the NH Correctional Facility for Women being built in Concord scheduled to open in late 2017.

The Chapel will be a sacred place for women of all religions who are incarcerated. Rev. Beth Richeson, Chaplain for the NHCF-W, has long hoped for a Chapel that would be a place of peace, restoration, and renewal in the midst of harsh prison life.

NH Stained Glass Artist, Susan Pratt-Smith met with a group of women in the current women's prison in Goffstown to create an image from their inspiration. What was created for the Stained Glass Window in the Interfaith Chapel is the drawing on this flyer.

Time has a different meaning in prison. It too often stands still, so in the drawing you will see the movement of time from dawn to night and through the passage of seasons. There is also the movement of air in the wind blowing the weeping willow and the flowers and the dandelion seeds and the movement of water with a river flowing into a pond.

The women shared with Susan that they needed to see something stable and strong and life-giving; something they can lean on; something rooted in what is good—so the drawing includes trees. And, of course, there are images of nature within our state in the drawing, from the ocean to the fields and the mountains.

The size of the Stained Glass Window is projected to be 26 inches high and 8 feet long. It will be backlit and in a wooden case on a wall. The combined fundraising goal of \$8,000 has been raised, but there will be other fundraising projects in 2018.

Two ways to make a donation: *Send a check made out to the NH Council of Churches, with "NHCF-W Chapel Stained Glass project" on the memo line, or mail to: NHCC, PO Box 1087, Concord, NH 03302-1087.

~Thank you~

For further information, e-mail: pastorbeth@nhchurches.org



NH Conference, UCC
140 Sheep Davis Road
Pembroke NH 03275

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NH Women's Fellowship
WOMEN'S LINK

NHCUCC Women's Fellowship Board meetings
Tuesday, January 16, 2018, at 10:30 a.m.
Tuesday, February 13, 2018, at 10:30 a.m.
at the Conference Center, 140 Sheep Davis Road, Pembroke NH
Everyone welcome!

Celebration X—April 6–8, 2018—Portland ME
Spring Gathering—April 28, 2018—Deerfield NH