



A not-for-profit ministry sponsored by
the Sisters of the Holy Cross

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A Place for Women to Gather provides a welcoming place, programs and services to foster spiritual and human growth development for women. While we endeavor to keep fees at a minimum to support our ministry, cost need not be a hindrance for anyone. Unless otherwise noted, events take place at our center.

— Sister Mary Margaret Weber, CSC, and Sister Judith Hallock, CSC

Programs for October 2015 — January 2016

October

Monthly series program

Creating a Sacred Circle

This is a monthly discussion group designed to support a creative spirit. Have you read *The Artist's Way*? Perhaps you were once part of a study group? Do you remember the basic tools? Are you still doing morning pages? Do you remember the core of Week 1: Recovering a Sense of Safety? We will meet monthly with the intention of stimulating our creative flow and leave each time with at least one affirmation to support our intention for the following month, if not for the rest of our lives. It is suggested that participants read *Creating Positive Affirmations, Living an Intentional Life*, by Jean Costa. A previous knowledge of Julia Cameron's book would be helpful but not essential. What is essential is the desire to live a more creative life, to be willing to nurture the other women in the circle and to come with a sense of adventure and discovery.

Presenter: Jean Costa

Dates/Times: second Thursdays, October 8, November 12, December 10, January 14, 2:30-4 p.m.

Free will donation

She Who Is: The Mystery of God through the Eyes of the Feminine

This series is for women who would like to engage in an in-depth reflection, study and discussion of the Divine Feminine. Using Elizabeth Johnson's classic work on the topic, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Theological Discourse*, we will explore why language about the Divine is so crucial to spirituality; how and why referring to God in the feminine was condemned; how Jesus fits into the Feminine Divine; and how important it is for a woman to see the Divine in her own image. The first two registrants will receive a complimentary, though slightly used, copy of *She Who Is*.

Presenter: Sister Mary Margaret Weber

Dates/Times: third Mondays, October 19, November 16, December 21, January 18, 7-9 p.m.

Free will donation

Creating a Sacred Circle

Thursday, October 8, 2:30-4p.m.

Book Discussion

***The Invention of Wings* by Sue Monk Kidd**

"A searing and soaring story of two women bound together as mistress and slave" reads the description on the front of this remarkable book. Another description from *Entertainment Weekly*: "(It) isn't just the story of a friendship that defies an oppressive society... It's a much more satisfying story of two people discovering together that their lives are worth the fight." We will look at this story from our usual perspective: women's spirituality. How is it displayed in Sarah Grimke, the mistress, and in Handful, the slave? What "wings" might their example encourage us to invent?

Presenter: Sister Mary Margaret Weber

Dates/Times: Monday, October 12, 7-8:30 p.m. OR Thursday, October 15, 1:30-3 p.m.

Free will donation

Blessed be: On care for our common home

For many of us, our spirituality includes our love for all creation. We recognize and value Earth as our sacred source of life and sustenance and whose gifts are to be shared among all Earth's family. But our Earth is in crisis, her systems are failing! Pope Francis wrote an encyclical (letter) in June for all of us human members of Earth's community. He paid close attention to scientific data which indicates that Earth is in crisis. His letter is about our common Earth home and our human role within this Community of Life. *Blessed be* is a balanced and careful presentation of ethics and a very helpful document for any person who seeks guidance through the morass of voices about climate change, the environment and economic well-being now and in generations to come. We will review the context for the situation the Earth is in and explore select quotes to give an overview of Pope Francis' encyclical. You then may be inspired to read this letter in its entirety if you have not already. The document may be found under its Latin title, *Laudato si': On care for our common home*.

Presenter: Sister Judy Hallock

Dates/Times: Thursday, October 15, 7-8:30 p.m. OR Monday, October 19, 10-11:30 a.m.

Free will donation

She Who Is

Monday, October 19, 7-9 p.m.

Retreat Day at Timberlake: Scriptures of the Earth

Everything in nature will speak to you, if you love it enough.

— George Washington Carver

Come away for a day from the bombardment of technology and the frantic tempo of our times to be spiritually renewed in the beauty of the fall season at Timberlake Earth Sanctuary. We will remember our own sacred relationships to the waters, the woods and the creatures of our lives; walk the meditation trails; and listen to the prayers and psalms of Earth and share its scriptures with one another. Please bring your journal and a bag lunch. Drinks will be provided.

Presenter: Carolyn Toben

Date/Time: Tuesday, October 20, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Location: Timberlake Earth Sanctuary, 1501 Rock Creek Dairy Road, Whitsett, N.C. For directions, go to www.timberlakeearthsanctuary.com.

Suggested Donation: \$40

Expressing Your Creative Spirit

Let your soul speak with paint, markers, collage and other fun mediums in this series. Drawing on *The Artist's Way*, *Writing Down Your Soul*, and *Creativity and Divine Surprise*, we'll experiment with a different theme each week such as prayer, relationships, joy and voice using a variety of supplies. No art experience required! All art from your heart is perfect.

Presenter: Sarah Friday Peters

Dates/Times: Mondays, October 26, November 2, November 9, November 16, 1-3 p.m.

Suggested Donation: \$75 for series/\$20 per session

November

Stress Free ... Morning, Noon and Night!

We all live with stress in our lives, and some stress is necessary to accomplish our goals. Healthy stress gets us moving. But chronic stress has been found to be the cause behind 90 percent of disease! And it ages us more quickly as it causes damage to the digestive and immune systems. Stress brings sleepless nights filled with anxiety and tense days with little to no energy for accomplishing our goals. It makes us forget to smile and enjoy all that is good in life. During this program, Olivia Fried will share simple, holistic practices based in the sciences of Ayurveda and yoga to help you release stress from the body and the mind — before stress takes its toll. She also will share practices to address stress-related conditions such as insomnia, digestive issues, skin disorders and anxiety. Using these practices, you will find that you are able to transform your jittery, nervous energy into sustainable, vital energy.

Presenter: Olivia Fried

Dates/Times: Tuesday, November 10, 10:30 a.m.-noon OR Tuesday, December 1, 1:30-3 p.m.

Suggested donation: \$20

Creating a Sacred Circle

Thursday, November 12, 2:30-4 p.m.

MARY, MARY, MARY—Compassion and the Face of the Divine Feminine

Contemplate the different Marys in Jesus' life – his Mother, Mary Magdalene, Mary of Bethany, Mary of Clopas, and 'the other Mary.' Through discussion, reading of scripture and personal writing, explore the compassion and faith exemplified in the Marys and their role in Jesus' ministry. Olivia Woodford, who has created four plays featuring women of the Bible, will be reading from scripts that are in draft form as a way to engage everyone in a process of bringing these women to life within ourselves and for the group. Giving a day to explore the Marys will open us to the beauty of the divine feminine and nurture radical loving kindness for ourselves and others.

Presenter: Olivia Woodford

Date/Time: Sunday, November 15, 1-5 p.m.

Suggested Donation: \$45

She Who Is

Monday, November 16, 7-9 p.m.

Retreat Day: If Mother Earth Could Speak, What Would She Say?

As a matter of fact, Mother Earth can speak and does — through all the creatures that, along with us humans, live and move and have their being in her. One woman who has made it her life's work to listen to Earth and its creatures is Mary Oliver. Using her poetry, we will attune ourselves to the voices of nature as they speak; listen to messages we may not ever have heard before; and be amazed at how connected we really are to these relatives of ours. We'll do all this in that part of Mother Earth where Alice Whyte lives. Please bring your lunch. Drinks will be provided.

Presenters: Sister Mary Margaret Weber and Sister Judy Hallock

Date/Time: Tuesday, November 17, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Location: Home of Alice Whyte, 12201 Chastain Drive, Raleigh, N.C. 27614

Suggested Donation: \$30

December

Leaning into the Darkness

December is the month when darkness noticeably increases, culminating in the Winter Solstice, the longest night of the year. This program, which will begin on the eve of December, offers the opportunity to experience a "prayer-full" darkness during which we will explore the gifts darkness holds for us, especially when contrasted with the light. Without darkness there would be no contrast! December is also one of the busiest months of the year for many. Give yourself this opportunity to step out of that hectic rhythm and enjoy an hour of peaceful darkness.

Presenter: Sister Mary Margaret Weber

Dates/Times: Mondays, November 30, December 7, December 14, 7-8 p.m.

Free will donation

Set Sail with God

Using the metaphor of being at sea with God, our spiritual journey reveals many insights and discoveries. It has nothing to do with creed or doctrine, but everything to do with the lived experience of being “at sea” in the events and relationships of life. Each of us is a unique vessel, sailing our own course. We will explore together what is needed as we prepare to set sail. You do not have to ever have been in a boat to benefit!

Presenter: Sister Judy Hallock

Dates/Times: Monday, December 7, 10-11:30 a.m. OR
Thursday, December 10, 7-8:30 p.m.

Free will donation

Creating a Sacred Circle

Thursday, December 10, 2:30-4 p.m.

She Who Is

Monday, December 21, 7-9 p.m.

Winter Solstice Labyrinth Walk

All of creation needs some time to pause and have its spent energy renewed. So do humans. Winter offers this gift of essential renewal. — Joyce Rupp, The Circle of Life

What better way to welcome the arrival of winter, with its invitation to slow down, maybe even hibernate, than by walking the labyrinth in the cold and dark! These two elements can serve as experiential reminders of the gifts of warmth and light we so often take for granted, gifts that nurture our quiet time and our creative thoughts.

Date/Time: Tuesday, December 22, 7 p.m.

Location: Millbrook Baptist Church, 1519 East
Millbrook Road, North Raleigh

Free will donation

January

Beyond Your Wildest Dreams

Ever wonder why you still dream about your old high school sweetheart or flying giraffes in your attic? Join us for a four-week series and learn about the language of dreams and how they gently call us to grow in ways we may never imagine! For centuries dreams and their insights have connected us more deeply to our authentic selves and the Divine. Bring a dream to share and a journal to each session.

Presenter: Sarah Peters

Dates/Times: Thursdays, January 7, 14, 21, 28, 7-9 p.m.

Suggested Donation: \$15 per session

Patriarchy:

Is It Harmful and Could I Die from It?

This program will explore why the answer to both of these questions is a resounding “yes”! Together we will look at how patriarchal values have shaped us and our understanding of the Divine, and the harm this has done to society, to relationships with all living things, and especially to our spiritual lives. Once these wounds are named, they then can be treated and healed, and we can create a world where ladders are replaced by circles, inclusion is the norm, and everyone’s innate gifts can be unwrapped and used lavishly! Come and be a part of creating such a world!

Presenter: Sister Mary Margaret Weber

Dates/Times: Monday, January 11, 7-8:30 p.m. OR Tuesday,
January 19, 1:30-3 p.m.

Free will donation

Creating a Sacred Circle

Thursday, January 14, 2:30-4 p.m.

She Who Is

Monday, January 18, 7-9 p.m.

Retreat Day: Toward the Red Tent

This intergenerational, daylong women’s retreat launches an inquiry about the feminine face of God. We are reminded of the power of the sacred feminine when elder women, mothers and maidens gather together in circle to explore body image, pleasure and beauty from a sacred feminine perspective. What is your current relationship with beauty? with body image? with your intuition and instinct? What does intuition feel like in your body? Would you like more pleasure in your life? “Toward the Red Tent” invites participants to honor and welcome the sensuous beauty of the sacred feminine. Many of us have become distanced from that creative feminine force within us. “What we deny ourselves, we deny to all life,” says Anat Vaughan-Lee, the Sufi teacher. In denying the feminine her sacred power and purpose, we have impoverished life on personal and global levels in ways we do not understand. Come “Toward the Red Tent” to gather for a day of nourishment, rest, meditation and sharing with a focus on the beauty of feminine receptivity, intuition and bodily knowing. Bring a bag lunch (drinks will be provided), your journal, comfortable clothing, a drum or rattle if you have one, an item for the altar that represents something that brings you intense pleasure, and an open mind.

Presenter: Sherylyn Pitt

Date/Time: Saturday, January 30, 2016, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.
Please plan to arrive by 9:45 a.m. to settle into the space.

Location: Home of Margaret Thurston, 6405 Lakeland
Drive, Raleigh, N.C. 27612

Suggested donation: \$30

Guest Presenters

Jean Costa received her bachelor's degree in education with a major in mathematics from St. John's University, and in 1997 she earned a master's in social work from UNC, Chapel Hill. She has practiced yoga for over 40 years and became a certified yoga teacher at Kripalu Center for Yoga in 2007. Because of her personal experience with breast cancer, she began the Pink Ribbon Yoga Retreat for breast cancer survivors in 2005. She sits on the Duke Cancer Patient Support Advisory Board and the Preston Robert Tish Brain Tumor Advisory Board. She is an avid journaler and has practiced creating affirmations for over a decade. In addition to teaching yoga, she conducts workshops in creating positive affirmations and facilitates creativity development groups based on Julia Cameron's book, *The Artist's Way*.

Olivia Fried is a certified Ayurvedic practitioner and licensed massage therapist. She obtained her Ayurvedic certification from the Kripalu School of Yoga and Health in 2009 and furthered her studies in India in 2011. Olivia offers Swedish and lymphatic massage as well as Ayurvedic wellness consultations and bodywork at the Healing Arts and Massage School in Raleigh.

Sarah Friday Peters of Raleigh teaches spirituality, art and yoga. A spiritual director and co-director of the North Carolina Pastors as Spiritual Guides Program, Sarah holds a master's in Christian education from the Presbyterian School of Christian Education in Richmond, Virginia. She also holds certifications as a wellness counselor, in qigong and reiki, and has practiced dreamwork for more than 25 years with the Healing Touch Spiritual Ministry.

Sherylyn Pitt has a master's in social work and is a licensed clinical social worker with a private practice in Garner, N.C. She is a poet, artist, health rhythms facilitator, hasya yoga and reiki practitioner with extensive training in mindfulness, cbt, trauma, grief, addictions, compassion, women's issues, energy medicine, spirituality, happiness

and eco-contemplative practices. Sherylyn is the foundress of Feather Path Circles and is dedicated to manifesting interfaith opportunities for people to gather in sacred soul circles where they can enhance experiences of their innate value, place and purpose in relation to both Spirit and the natural world. She is a creative, playful and spiritual leader who invites each of us to Be Love and Cause Love, Because Love Heals!

Carolyn Toben is an educator, counselor and creator of new social forms with a spiritual dimension. In 2000 she founded the Center for Education, Imagination, and the Natural World, a work inspired by cultural historian and author Thomas Berry which offers children and teachers a new understanding of the human-Earth relationship. She currently creates programs, retreats, and events for individuals and groups seeking spiritual renewal and reconnection with the natural world at her family-owned land, Timberlake Earth Sanctuary, located between Greensboro and Burlington, N.C. Her book, *Recovering a Sense of the Sacred: Conversations with Thomas Berry*, is available on amazon.com. Carolyn's background includes degrees from UNC-G, postgraduate studies in spirituality, world religions and depth psychology, and teaching in both secondary and college settings with an emphasis on alternative and interdisciplinary education.

Olivia Woodford is a storyteller, theater artist, mythic astrologer and a member of The Network of Storytellers, International. Since 1992, she has led creativity and mythology workshops to people of all ages. She has a fine arts degree in theater and is the founder of Healing Theatre. She has created four one-woman plays featuring women of the Bible that she presents to churches of all denominations throughout the country, and she facilitates retreats focused on women of the Bible and the cultural/historic context of the time Jesus lived. She is an artist dedicated to bringing the sacred into people's lives.

If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation to support this ministry, please make checks payable to Sisters of the Holy Cross and mail to 8380 Six Forks Road, Suite 203, Raleigh, NC 27615.

All donations are greatly appreciated and gratefully received.