



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 February 2017 — May 2017

### February

**Presenter:** Sherylyn Pitt

**Dates/Times:** Tuesday, February 21, 7-9pm

**Suggested Donation:** \$20

#### Everyday Mysticism

*“The mystic is not a special human being. Every human being is a special kind of mystic.”* (Brother David Steindl-Rast)

The exploration of everyday mysticism includes a dialogue about how we navigate our experience of our short time on Earth in such a way that we leave it better than we found it and we do it with compassion, joy and great love. You may discover that your current spiritual practices make you a special kind of mystic!

**Presenter:** Sister Judy Hallock

**Dates/Times:** Wednesday, February 8, 10:30-noon OR  
Thursday, February 9, 7-8:30pm

**Free will donation**

#### Spirituality of the Mundane

The mundane can be defined as dull, humdrum, boring, tedious, tiresome, run-of-the-mill, and boring, to name just a few synonyms. Resonate with anyone's experience? Where can spirituality be found in all of that? That's what this program will explore! We'll pose the question, “Can the mundane be sacred and, if so, how? Come and help discover the answer!

**Presenter:** Sister Mary Margaret Weber

**Dates/Times:** Monday, February 13, 1:30-3:00pm OR  
Thursday, February 16, 7-8:30pm

**Free will donation**

#### Going Deeper into Conscious Eldering: Compassion, Forgiveness and Letting Go

During this evening of depth exploration, we will focus on the powerful inner work of conscious elder. We will create a circle of elders and open to rich meaningful passionate wisdom through the process of council. Bring your courage and an item for the altar that represents your hopes, dreams, fears, or concerns about deeply exploring forgiveness of self and others. Come move into the sense of peace and purpose created by acts of Compassion, Forgiveness and Letting Go! Women 50 years and older can benefit from this program.

### March

#### WOMAN TO WOMAN - INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY, MARCH 8<sup>th</sup>

Once again we invite you to join us in giving support to women receiving community assistance in Raleigh by sending handwritten notes of encouragement. Use index cards or note cards of your choosing and drop them in the “mailbox” in the front room at The Place or mail them to us by March 1st. Blank cards will be available at The Place for those attending a program to fill out. Using only your first name, write as many as you wish. Compose your own message or copy the sample provided below. During the first week in March we will deliver the cards to various agencies serving women in need as well as some local nursing homes.

SAMPLE: Hi! My name is (first name). Even though we have not met, I know that as a woman you have within you the strength, courage and wisdom to face whatever challenges that may lie ahead. As the world celebrates International Women's Day on March 8th, I want you to know, woman to woman, that I celebrate YOU and wish you peace, health and happiness. Be strong and don't ever stop believing in yourself!

## An Exploration of Kindness

Kindness – it is not, to quote Sharon Salzberg in *The Power of Kindness*, “a cushy, undemanding path. It is easy to overlook the power of kindness or misunderstand it . . . But if we can commit to the open-hearted exploration of kindness, it will reveal itself as a force that can change our lives.” This program is a five-week exploration of the virtue of kindness (designed to coincide with Lent for those who observe this season). We will look at kindness as so much more than “being good to others,” though it is certainly that. We will look to discover the power of kindness to transform our lives and our world and learn how to cultivate this most necessary action.

**Presenter:** Sister Mary Margaret Weber

**Date/Time:** Thursday mornings, March 9, 16, 23, 30,  
April 6 - 10:30-11:30am

**Free will donation**

## Spiritually Embracing Our Wisdom Years

Our wisdom years can be a time of deepening integration, joyous love and increased intimacy with God. This program invites women of all ages, but particularly those over 50, to explore creative, new and simple ways to seek and embrace God as the center of their lives. This is a reminder to us to be sensitive to the fullness of that time in life – the wisdom years – when we have sufficient experience to discern and share the essentials of life.

**Presenter:** Sister Judy Hallock

**Dates/Times:** Thursday, March 16, 7-8:30pm OR  
Wednesday, March 22, 10:30-noon

**Free will donation**

## Sleep Monsters and Superheros: Empowering Children through Creative Dreamplay

Dreams can be just as powerful for children as they are for adults, maybe more so. Dreams often speak in a language that is their own and offer children messages to help them understand what they experience - i.e. nightmares, death of parents, grandparents, playmates, violence they see on TV. With the help of Martha Taylor, lover of children and trained in dream exploration, this program will examine how children can understand their dreams and offer the adults in their lives the tools to help them. If just one dream can give a child solace after bereavement or self-worth after abuse, then what might be possible when we help children work and play with their dreams on a regular basis? Come to this program and learn how to do just that! Especially designed for parents, teachers, counselors and therapists. Participants may request a discounted coupon to purchase the book through the publishers. The book is called: *Sleep Monsters and Superheros: Empowering Children through Creative Dreamplay*, edited by Clare R. Johnson and Jean M. Campbell. It contains a chapter Martha wrote.

**Presenter:** Martha Taylor

**Dates/Times:** Saturday, March 18, 10:30-noon

**Suggested Donation: \$20**

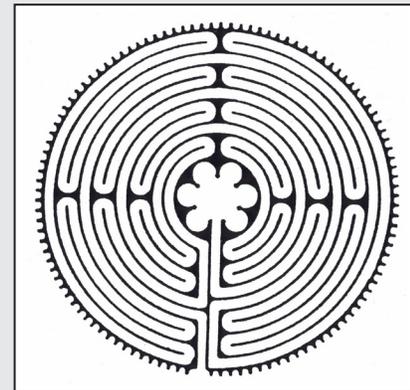
# SPRING EQUINOX LABYRINTH WALK

## Monday, March 20, 7pm

We will gather on the labyrinth to participate in an experience intended to open our hearts to the balance of the Spring Equinox. We will rest our hearts in the warming seeds, lengthening days and newly running sap in the veins of the earth. What in our lives need be warmed, nourished, and called forth? The program begins at 7:00pm and ends at 8:30pm. We gather in hope that we can offer and receive healing for ourselves, our families, our community, and our earth. We will utilize the two ancient spiritual practices Sound healing and the labyrinth pilgrimage, to enhance our celebration of the Spring Equinox. Please *bring a folding chair* for your comfort during the ceremony and a frame drum or rattle if you have one. You are also invited to bring an item that reflects what you would like to balance and call forth this Spring. Come and join with your companions on their journey! A suggested donation of \$10.00 will be gratefully accepted.

**Presenter** Sherylyn Pitt

**Site:** Millbrook Baptist Church,  
1519 East Millbrook Rd., North Raleigh



## Choosing Your Words, Crafting Your Life.

What words do you use the most often? Have you given any thought to the phrases you've adopted over the years? Do they nurture and empower or do they detract and weaken. We have a choice and with some conscious decisions we can change our self-talk in a way that can improve every aspect of our lives. Come and develop a new appreciation for the words you choose and leave with a renewed sense of what's really important to you.

**Presenter:** Jean Costa

**Dates/Times:** Tuesday, March 21, 1:30-3:30pm OR  
Tuesday, April 18, 1:30-3:30pm

**Suggested Donation: \$20**

# April

## Retreat Day: SPRING Into Life!

The seasons of Mother Earth are full of gifts and guidance for those who have eyes to see and ears to hear. Her season of Spring bursts forth with new life for all her creatures, including her human ones. Come and spend the day being nourished by and reveling in the new life our Mother is offering in this Spring season.

**Presenter:** Sister Judy Hallock & Sister Mary Margaret Weber

**Dates/Times:** Wednesday, April 5, 9:30am-2:30pm

**Site:** home of Margaret Thurston  
6405 Lakeland Drive, North Raleigh

**Suggested Donation: \$30**

(Please bring your lunch. Drinks and dessert provided.)

## An Exploration of Kindness

Sister Mary Margaret Weber - April 6 - 10:30-11:30am

## Choosing Your Words, Crafting Your Life

Jean Costa - Tuesday, April 18, 1:30-3:30pm

(See March for description)

## From Sorrow to Joy – Buddhist Wisdom & Meditation

We all experience moments of “offness”, when life isn’t meeting our expectations or when somehow something doesn’t feel right. We will explore how the teachings of Buddha Shakayamuni, the enlightened or awakened teacher in Northern India 2500 years ago, can help us today to lead happier, more fulfilling and joy-filled lives. Overcoming the sorrow or suffering that he saw, was his central goal and forms the core of his first teaching.

Meditation is an ancient practice. Quieting the mind by making it more open, calm and friendly helps to create a sense of well being and peacefulness. Basic technique will be offered along with short meditation sessions.

Through presentation, group discussion and meditation practice, this program will offer a brief but practical look into Buddhist practice. Meditation experience or no meditation background, you are welcome. Bring your questions.

**Presenter:** Clarissa Schaeffer

**Dates/Times:** Thursday, April 20, 7– 9pm OR  
Tuesday, April 25, 10am – noon

**Free will offering**

## Does Being Busy Have to be a Disease?

We all have responsibilities that occupy our time. We are often overwhelmed with schedules and commitments. Somewhere we read, “The unexamined life is not worth living...for a human.” How are we supposed to live, to examine, to be, to become, to be fully human when we are so busy? The dis-ease of being busy is spiritually destructive to our health and wellbeing. How do we balance all this and still maintain a quality of life that is meaningful for ourselves and our loved ones?

**Presenter:** Sister Judy Hallock

**Dates/Times:** Wednesday, April 26, 7-8:30pm OR  
Thursday, April 27, 10-11:30am

**Free will donation**

# May

## Give Me the Simple Life – Please!

“Why does everything have to be so complicated?” “I feel like I’m on a treadmill and can’t get off!” “I remember when life was simpler . . .” Do any of these quotes resonate with you? Would you like to simplify your life? This program is designed to help! It will explore the possibility of living what, in abbreviated form, is called the KISS method – “Keep It Simple, Sister!” Come and learn simple bits of wisdom that will contribute to a simpler, more manageable life.

**Presenter:** Sister Mary Margaret Weber

**Dates/Times:** Thursday, May 4, 1:30-3:00pm OR  
Monday, May 22, 7-8:30pm

**Free will donation**

## Thy Wounded Self

We each carry a wounded self within us that calls for nurturing and attention. If we can embrace that wounded self and give it the comfort it needs, the healing will begin. But healing is a process and takes time and self-love. We will discuss ways we can begin this process of self-healing through meditation and gentle self-reflection. Come prepared to take the first steps in releasing self-judgment and seeing yourself as you truly are: a Divine being in a physical world.

**Presenter:** Celine Koropchak

**Dates/Times:** Monday, May 15, 10:30-noon OR  
Tues. May 16, 7-8:30pm

**Suggested Donation: \$20**

## RETREAT DAY: A New Dawning

The dawn from on high will break upon us, to  
give light to those who sit in darkness..to  
guide our feet into the way of peace.

Luke1:78-79

In the midst of strident and competing voices, tensions, and the radical transitions of our times, a new but ancient sacred story is unfolding. A new light is dawning as the Spirit of renewal arises from the depths of the earth and our own intuitive natures to bring faith, hope and healing to our individual lives and to our fragmented world. In this retreat day of inspiration, imagination, and community, we will deepen our participation with the Spirit of renewal by weaving our own experiences with the wisdom of spiritual writings, as well as through art, nature walks on the trails of Timberlake Earth Sanctuary, prayer and celebration, to create new chapters of the unfolding sacred story of our new dawning of consciousness. Participants: Please bring a favorite inspiring quotation, poem, or prayer to share. Also, your lunch. Drinks provided. If interested in car-pooling, let us know when you register.

**Presenter:** Carolyn Toben

**Site:** Carolyn’s home  
Timberlake Earth Sanctuary, 1501 Rock  
Creek Dairy Road, Whitsett, NC 27337

**Dates/Times:** Thursday, May 18, 9:30am-2:30pm

**Suggested Donation: \$40**

# Guest Presenters

**Jean Costa** received her BA in education with a major in mathematics from St. John's University, and in 1997 she earned an MSW 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. Besides teaching yoga she teaches workshops in Creating Positive Affirmations and facilitates creativity development groups based on Julia Cameron's book, *The Artist's Way*.

**Celine Koropchak**, A retired Duke University medical researcher, Celine is currently a blueberry farmer and author of the book 'One With All of Thee: Growing Your Sacred Connection.' She speaks and teaches locally sharing practical tools to help guide others on their personal journeys. Celine has been a repeat guest on BlogTalkRadio and writes a weekly blog, *TheTovaryshConnection*.

**Sherylyn Pitt** MSW LCSW LCAS holds a Master of Social Work from UNC Chapel Hill and is a licensed clinical social worker who has a private therapy practice in Garner, NC. She is a poet, artist, health rhythms facilitator, hasya yoga instructor, reiki practitioner and founder of Feather Path Circles. With extensive training in mindfulness, trauma, grief, addictions, compassion, women's issues, energy medicine and Eco contemplative practices she has provided services to a wide variety of organizations ranging from governmental to non-profit. Sherylyn is dedicated to manifesting interfaith and Intergenerational opportunities for people to gather in Sacred Soul Circles where they can enhance experiences of their innate value, place and purpose in relation to the natural world. She is a creative, playful and spiritual leader who invites each of us to Be Love, Cause Love, Because Love Heals!

**Clarissa Schaeffer** has had a meditation practice since 1991. She came to Buddhist study in 1998, after her marriage turned "crazy making" and painful. She has been fortunate to have studied with excellent teachers and Rinpoches (Precious Ones) in the Tibetan Kagyu tradition. For 7 years she lead a group of inmates in a California state prison, as well as facilitating a small Buddhist Center. She now leads secular and religion based meditation groups.

**Martha Anne Taylor**, MSN is a pediatric nurse who has worked with children in the US, Lebanon, and East Africa both in hospitals and home care. She became a body-oriented psychotherapist who worked with clients over several years. She is currently retired from nursing and has been following her interest in dreams into research and teaching of children specifically about their dreams. As a result of this teaching she was asked to write a chapter in a newly published book called Sleep Monsters and Superheroes: Empowering children through creative dreamplay. She has been following up this research and teaching with counseling parents of young children to help them to understanding their children's dreams. She belongs to several dream groups of adults who explore their own dreams.

**Carolyn Toben**, M.Ed., brings 40 years of experience as a retreat and seminar leader. She is the Director of Timberlake Earth Sanctuary ([www.timberlakeearthsanctuary.com](http://www.timberlakeearthsanctuary.com)) in Whitsett, N.C. and the author of *Recovering a Sense of the Sacred: Conversations with Thomas Berry* and *Cultivating a Sense of the Sacred: Practices Inspired by Thomas Berry*. In 2014 she received the "Sacred Universe" Award from the WELL Spirituality Center in La Grange, Illinois.



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.**