



# THE GRAPEVINE



Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of Northern New England  
Fall 2022

## Highlights From This Year's Spring Retreat!

### Praying All the Day



### The Divine Hours

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#### Summary by Joanna Damon

WE DID IT! On May 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> we held the first in person retreat in three years. And based on the evaluations it was a success. It was wonderful to see everyone!

Registration was a bit chaotic but Cathy and Martha got it under control and by

dinner fifteen of us were accounted for and enjoying one of Calumet's wonderful buffets. During the evening we were introduced to the concept of the Divine Hours and joined in a Vesper service. During the free time that followed several joined in what has become a tradition, a game of Five Crowns. Compliment prayers were placed in each room for those who wanted to celebrate the 9<sup>th</sup> hour before going to bed.

On Saturday early risers had a choice of two pre-breakfast activities. One choice was to attend a service celebrating Lauds, a divine hour. The other choice was a walk to the lake and back along a path with prayer stations.

At breakfast people who had stayed the night were joined by those coming for the day and our numbers grew to 47 women representing several churches in the Presbytery and the place was buzzing with excited voices.

At the business meeting some new people were welcomed on to the coordinating team. The team is delighted to have some awesome new members!

The Mid-Morning hour of Terce was celebrated and it was especially meaningful to have women from Marturia taking part in the day's services by reading the psalms in Indonesian along with Pastor Diane reading in English.

A reader's theater called the Lower Room presented women of the Bible who spoke about their encounters with Jesus and how they were transformed by them. This was very well received and a special thanks to everyone who took part. After that there was a choice of three breakout sessions, Praying the Labyrinth, Praying with Mandalas or an exercise session. All three activities received enthusiastic reviews. This was followed by a celebration of the divine hour, Sext.

After another great meal we were blessed with music and singing. Women from Elliot's choir and women from Marturia sang for us and that was followed everyone joining in a hymn sing. The day ended with a communion service during which a special offering was collected to support Ukrainian refugees.

What a great couple of days!

## **Walking the Prayer Labyrinth by Janet Fuhrmeister**

One of the break-out sessions was a practice run of walking the prayer labyrinth. A labyrinth is different from a maze. A maze is full of dead-ends and tricks. A labyrinth has only one path that always leads to the center... you cannot get lost... just stay on the path. There is no right or wrong way to walk a labyrinth and no set pace...Just follow the path at your own speed.

Labyrinths are ancient spiritual pathways found across the world, embraced since Medieval times as a support for prayer. Today, labyrinths are again being created to offer a spiritual space for prayer and reflection providing a stilling space in a busy world.

From the brochure we received: "Walking a labyrinth is like making a pilgrimage. It is a journey where you might think about loved ones, distractions or burdens on the way in, at the center be open to the grace and love of God and on your return be uplifted, blessed and renewed".

Finger labyrinths (we've included one for you here) can be used for prayerful reflection when it is not possible to walk a full sized labyrinth.

When walking, remember the three R's:

**Release** - Walking into the labyrinth  
This is the time to quiet the mind, let go of the mind chatter and release your troubles. Open your heart to feel whatever it might feel. Become aware of your breathing. Take slow breaths. Relax and move at your own pace. **Receive** - Standing or Sitting in the Center This is a place of reflection. Pause and stay as long as you like. Open yourself to your higher power. Listen to that small inner voice. In the safety of the labyrinth have a heart-to-heart talk with yourself. **Return** - Walking out of the labyrinth When you are ready, begin walking out the same path you followed in. Walking out, integration of your experience happens. Experience the sense of well-being, healing, excitement, calm or peace.



**2022 PNNE PW SPRING RETREAT  
Business Meeting Review  
By Barbara Holland Cooper**

After a nearly 3-year break in our in-person retreat time together, the women of the presbytery of northern new England gathered to celebrate our PW. We had time together to restore and strengthen bonds that have been sorely missed during the time of covid.

Thirty-three women attended the retreat including some who attended both Friday and Saturday activities. The theme “Praying All the Day Long: The Divine Hours” was ably led by Rev. Diane Hoppe-Hugo of Mid-Coast Presbyterian Church. Rev. Diane led sessions both on Friday evening and on Saturday.

On Saturday we held the customary closing worship service with communion and a special collection. This year the collection at the service totaled \$342.00 and was earmarked as a donation to aid Ukrainian refugees. This will be handled through the PCUSA disaster relief services. The service included lively and beautiful music sung by the women from Marturia Church and also the women from Eliot Presbyterian Church. There were several outdoor activities that were successful due to the outstanding weather in our favor. Among these were a nature walk along the shore of the Ossipee Lake, and a guided prayer walk along the outdoor labyrinth.

In summary, a good and uplifting time was had by all, and it was a real

blessing to enjoy each other’s company in person once again. Just take a look at some of the photos that were taken. Enjoy them and make your plans now to join us in 2023.

**SAVE THE DATE FOR 2023**

**May 12 and 13**

**Theme: “Planting faith seeds in the next generation”**

Exploring how to invite the next generation to faith through acts of service, acts of communication, and ways to share individual practices of prayer.

**LOOK FOR MORE INFORMATION  
EARLY 2023**

**CALUMET LUTHERAN CAMP &  
CONFERENCE CENTER**



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**PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN OF PRESBYTERY OF NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND  
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