

Press Release

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Entering the gates of a small farm in New Hampshire the first thing that caught my eye was a majestic maple tree half way between the house and the barn where we held **Nature's Way Leadership Program** and the Episcopal Church Women's *Women of Vision* training of facilitators. Mini horses and goats and six hens all contributed to learning from nature, as part of nature, discovering and practicing leadership skills for bringing justice and peace for all creation. Women from around the country ranging in age from 30 to 80 gathered in the barn and barnyard where we identified our talents, skills and spiritual gifts, practiced assertive communication and circle facilitation that included The World Café and Open Space Technology. Prayers, poems, creative arts, singing, dancing, laughing and silence added to the joyful and loving learning experience.

National Board of Episcopal Women's *Women of Vision* program has been revitalized and will be offered to women, men and youth. Attending Nature's Way were Episcopal and other women from around the country. In deep listening we found our common values and vision. We became a community of compassionate and loving leaders learning to care for ourselves, one another and all creation. Barbara Thorngren, owner of the farm, Avalon Healing Arts Barn Studio, Edna Brown WOV co-creator and trainer and I served as trainers and facilitators during the four-day intensive leadership program, August 24-28th in Temple, New Hampshire.

Participant, Melissa Swain, suggested our work is like taking the pebble of collective wisdom and dropping it into many ponds; "one pebble causes a ripple, collective ripples from many pebbles cause waves." WOV Facilitators will offer the program in their diocese and beyond.

The next **Nature's Way Leadership Program will be offered September 21 to 24th** at Avalon where these adorable animals and the trainers eagerly welcome women and men on this journey as nature-centered spiritual leaders. A few spaces in September are still available. To register, please contact, Barbara Thorngren at infopeaceworksnh@gmail.com

Ann Smith, Former Director Women in Mission and Ministry Episcopal Church, Director of Circle Connections, www.circleconnections.com