

UCC ROOTS

Remembering our History

August 2015

Seven Remarkable Women

Seven remarkable women, hosted by the UCC Historical Council, came to the 30th General Synod in Cleveland last month.

Anne Hutchinson, a Puritan rebel, told us about how she challenged church and political leaders in Boston in the seventeenth century.

Abigail Roberts, a “female laborer” on the expanding nineteenth century frontier, led revivals and founded “Christian churches” in New Jersey and New York State. Fifty years later, another woman, *Melissa Terrill* became the first woman ordained by the Christian Churches. In the twentieth century, Christians joined with Congregationalists to become the Congregational Christian Churches.



Another General Synod visitor was *Mary Peake*, a dynamic African American woman who secretly started teaching slaves to read and write in the back of her dress shop during the Civil War. She was eventually hired by the American Missionary Association, an abolitionist organization founded by Congregationalists.

Women in the German Reformed Church also pioneered in mission work. At General Synod we welcomed *Alliene Saeger DeChant*, a Pennsylvania missionary who spent time in Japan. At General Synod, we talked with Sister *Lydia Daries*, an Evangelical Deaconess in St. Louis during the late nineteenth century. She told us about all the remarkable medical and human services carried out by Evangelical Deaconesses.

And finally we conversed with *Emma Newman*, a nineteenth century frontier Congregational minister, and *Hulda Niebuhr*, the older sister of the well-known Niebuhr brothers. Emma Newman, educated in New England, went West and served churches in small towns on the prairie frontier. Hulda Niebuhr, part of a strong German Evangelical family, told us about her work in Christian education during the first half of the twentieth century.

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