

## Women's History Month ... Did You Know?

*“I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church in Cenchrea, that you may receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and assist her in whatever business she has need of you; for indeed she has been a helper of many and of myself also.” ~ Romans 16:1*

Even before the week-long celebration was established by the California school district, the holiday began as National Women's Day. The International Women's Day website notes it was in 1908 when thousands of women got together and made their way through the streets of New York City in a march.

They were fighting for women's rights, including women's voting rights. The following year, in 1909, the first official National Woman's Day was celebrated, but instead of it being in March, it was on February 28. Other countries started recognizing a day for women in March, while Americans continued to celebrate on the last Sunday in February until the 1970s.

The Women's History Month we know today began as a local celebration in Santa Rosa, California. The Education Task Force of the Sonoma County (California) Commission on the Status of Women planned and executed a “Women's History Week” celebration in 1978. The organizers selected the week of March 8 to correspond with International Women's Day. The movement spread across the country as other communities initiated their own Women's History Week celebrations the following year.

In 1980, a consortium of women's groups and historians—led by the National Women's History Project (now the National Women's History Alliance)—successfully lobbied for national recognition. In February 1980, President Jimmy Carter issued the first Presidential Proclamation declaring the Week of March 8th 1980 as National Women's History Week.

Subsequent Presidents continued to proclaim a National Women's History Week in March until 1987 when Congress passed Public Law 100-9, designating March as “Women's History Month.” Between 1988 and 1994, Congress passed additional resolutions requesting and authorizing the President to proclaim March of each year as Women's History Month. Since 1995, each president has issued an annual proclamation designating the month of March as “Women's History Month.”

Each year, there is a theme for Women's History Month that is created by the National Women's History Alliance. ***The 2023 theme is “Celebrating Women Who Tell Stories,”*** which recognizes “women, past and present, who have been active in all forms of media and storytelling including print, radio, TV, stage, blogs, podcasts, news and social media,” according to the National Women's History Alliance website.

The colors of Women's History Month are purple, green and white. These colors are often worn in celebration of International Women's Day and in observance of the entire month of March.

*“Agreed to Differ, Resolved to Love, United to Serve”*



Did you know there were countless, phenomenal women forever preserved throughout the sacred pages of the Bible who should be remembered and honored this month as well? The following are just a few for your inspirational and devotional study:

- a. ***Puah and Shiphrah*** – They were Egyptian midwives who defied the edict of king of Egypt to kill all the Hebrew male babies upon birth. (*Exodus 1:15-21*)
- b. ***Daughters of Zelophehad*** – They stood before Moses and Eleazar the priest, to demand they receive their dead father’s inheritance of land, as he had no sons to entrust his inheritance to. (*Exodus 26:33 & 27:1-11*)
- c. ***Jael*** – As prophesied by Debra, Judge of Israel, boldly killed Sisera, commander of king Jabin’s Canaanite army, who unsuccessfully warred against the Israelites. (*Judges 4:17-21*)
- d. ***Rahab*** – The harlot in the city of Jericho who hid two Israelite men sent by Joshua to spy out the city and was later included in the lineage of Jesus Christ as the mother of Boaz. (*Joshua 2:1-22, 6:15-25 & Matthew 1:5*)
- e. ***Abigail*** – The wife of Nabal (whose name means Fool) who saved her household against an attack from David and his army. (*1 Samuel 25:1-35*)
- f. ***Woman with the Issue of Blood*** – The unnamed woman who defied the religious traditions of her day and pressed her way through a crowd to touch the hem of Jesus’ garment and was miraculously healed. (*Matthew 9:20-22*)
- g. ***The Sinful Woman*** – The unnamed woman, a harlot, who washed Jesus’ feet with her tears and anointed Him with oil from her alabaster box in the home of a Pharisee and other city and religious leaders. (*Luke 7:36-50*)

Undeniably throughout the history of humankind, women and girls have and continue to play significant and integral roles in all aspects of life and events around the globe. As we take time to recognize and honor their invaluable, expansive contributions, be mindful each of them, like ourselves, are unique, gifted and purposefully created by God to impact the world for the betterment of humanity and the expansion of His kingdom in the earth. We, as Church Women United women of faith, stand on the shoulders of so many dynamic, phenomenal women, let us reach even higher to accomplish greater feats for equality, social justice and human rights for all people.

***To learn more, see the following:***

- a. 50 Women Every Christian Should Know: Learning from Heroines of the Faith;  
Michelle DeRusha, Author

- b. Women’s History Month.gov website QR Code:



Joyfully Submitted,  
Rev. Lillie Holman, Spiritual Formation Director  
Church Women United, Inc.



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