

## WFWP Grand Junction, CO: PSWMA Interreligious Sharing

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For this month's Colorado Interreligious Sharing Group celebrated International Women's Day together online. The meaning of International Women's Day and the 2026 theme were read aloud to begin the program, setting the tone for reflection on the vital contributions of women across faith traditions.

Each participant was invited to choose an inspiring woman from within their religious tradition and share why she serves as a model of faith, courage, and service.

From the **Baha'i Faith**, participants highlighted Zaynab, a sixteen-year-old young woman from Persia who went to battle in 1848 to defend the Baha'i teaching of the equality of men and women. She demonstrated lofty faith and remarkable courage in the midst of an oppressive, male-centered culture.

From **Christian Science**, the founder Mary Baker Eddy was remembered as a remarkable spiritual leader who wrote the metaphysical work *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, along with sixteen other books. At the age of 87, she founded *The Christian Science Monitor*. Her teachings emphasized unselfish love, spiritual perfection, and healing through the understanding of mind over matter.

From the **Unification movement**, Hak Ja Han, known as Mother of Peace, True Mother, and the Only Begotten Daughter, was recognized for proclaiming the Era of Women and emphasizing women's central role in building a peaceful world. Participants also shared concerns regarding current challenges facing the movement, including issues related to religious freedom and the recent dissolution of the church in Japan.

From the **Baha'i Faith**, Mona, a seventeen-year-old young woman, was remembered for her steadfast faith. She was executed in Iran in 1982 for teaching the Baha'i faith to children and for writing an essay challenging the government's persecution of Baha'is. Despite severe hardship, she remained firm in her beliefs and demonstrated spiritual courage.

Another Baha'i figure honored was Martha Root, one of the early American pioneers of the Baha'i Faith in the twentieth century. She exemplified independence of thought, openness to new ideas, and dedication to service, traveling widely to share her message and meeting with kings, queens, and presidents in her efforts to promote unity and understanding.

The program provided a meaningful opportunity to recognize the spiritual strength, moral leadership, and enduring contributions of women of faith whose lives continue to inspire efforts toward peace, justice, and equality.