



Did you know Mary Webb...

Mary Webb was just five when disaster struck. A "severe sickness" paralyzed her. She survived but was unable to move her legs. From then on she had to be carried or get herself around in a wheelchair.

Even as a girl, she was the "life of the party" and the focus of many friendships. A kindly preacher befriended her when she was thirteen and this led to her spiritual awakening. She turned her zest for life toward working for the Lord.

A mission sermon preached by Nathanael Emmons in May 1799, made a deep impression on Mary. Emmons took as his text the words of 2 Chronicles 15:7, "Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded."

Seventeen months later, on October 9, 1800, twenty-one year old Mary Webb organized fourteen Baptist and Congregational women into the Boston Female Society for Missionary Purposes. This was the first women's mission society in the United States. At that time, women were not expected to have their own societies. Mary altered this expectation.

From the start Mary showed an ecumenical spirit, uniting Baptists and Congregationalists in her effort. From her wheelchair, she organized, directed, and pleaded the cause of world missions. For 56 years, as secretary and treasurer of the society, she inspired new mission societies, and promoted cooperation between the 200 that sprang up. She could not travel to speak face to face with women, nor did she have access to the conveniences of modern communication. Instead, she wrote thousands of letters.

...was a Congregationalist?

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400 YEARS OF *Faith*
AMERICAN
CONGREGATIONALISM
SINCE 1620

Call To Worship

L: We gather together, to ask the Lord's blessing

C: God chastens and hastens, divine will to make known

L: The world's constant oppressors will cease from distressing

C: For we have the voice, and heart, and will to be God's pilgrim people

L: Come, let us worship as God's pilgrim people

Invocation (in unison)

Gracious God, we thank You for Jesus Christ, who inspired our ancestors to be who they became, and for each like revelation of Yourself in the hearts of all who followed them in the last four centuries. Teach us to know that Christ can inspire us this and every hour to be what we ought to be ourselves. Amen

Historical story by: Rev. Garry Fisher

Liturgy by: Rev. Tom Richard