



LEADING WITH SPIRIT

Leading female spiritual
voices of our time-
an incomplete guide

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Humanity, take a good look at yourself.
Inside, you've got heaven and earth,
and all of creation. You're a world—
everything is hidden in you.

Hildegard of Bingen

LEADING FEMALE SPIRITUAL VOICES OF OUR TIME- AN INCOMPLETE GUIDE

This guide is intended for those with an interest in female leaders working at the **intersection(s)** of science, medicine/health, and religion **+ spirituality**. It is an introduction at best and by no means a complete listing or representation of women's leadership in these domains.

This guide is approached from the understanding that everything in the Universe comes from one Source (God) -- expressed through each of us and known by many names and divine faces throughout human history.

The list presented here was compiled in partnership with ChatGPT, Co-Pilot, and Google Gemini searches throughout January 2025. The leaders featured in this guide are listed in the following sections:

- **Quantum physics & theory**
- **Medicine/health & spirituality**
- **Native American spirituality**
- **Hindu spirituality**
- **Buddhist spirituality**
- **Jewish spirituality**
- **Islamic spirituality**
- **Christian spirituality**
- **Interfaith and Spiritual Activism**

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QUANTUM PHYSICS & THEORY

Dr. Jude Currivan - Explores the intersection of quantum physics, spirituality, and universal coherence.

Dr. Lynne McTaggart - Investigates the interconnectedness of life through quantum energy fields and collective consciousness.

Dr. Karen Barad - Known for quantum field theory and the philosophy of science, integrating spiritual and feminist perspectives.

Dr. Marjorie Woollacott - Explores the intersection of meditation, spirituality, and quantum consciousness.

Dr. Candace Pert (Posthumous Influence)- Connected quantum-level neuropeptides with emotions and spiritual health.

Dr. Nisha Manek - Collaborates with consciousness researchers to bridge quantum physics and spiritual healing.

Dr. Dee Joy Coulter - Neuroscientist and educator exploring quantum and spiritual consciousness.

Dr. Elisabeth Rauscher - Explored quantum mechanics and consciousness, working at the intersection of science and spirituality (now deceased, but her work influences many).

Dr. Sylvia Schäfer - Work focused on the quantum implications of consciousness and spirituality (now deceased, but her husband continues her work).

MEDICINE (HEALTH) AND SPIRITUALITY

Dr. Esther Sternberg - Investigates how spiritual practices and the environment impact the brain and body.

Dr. Christina Puchalski - Advocates for integrating spiritual care into medical practice.

Dr. Victoria Sweet - Advocates for integrating spiritual care and compassion into modern medicine.

Dr. Marilyn Schlitz - Studies the role of spirituality and consciousness in health.

Dr. Kavita Khalsa - Uses yoga, meditation, and spirituality to support cancer patients.

Dr. Judith Orloff - Merges Western medicine with intuition and spiritual practices for emotional well-being.

Dr. Shamini Jain - Studies the science of energy healing and the role of consciousness in health.

Dr. Anita Moorjani - Shares spiritual insights from her near-death experience to inspire healing.

Dr. Lissa Rankin - Explores how thoughts, emotions, and spirituality influence health and healing.

Dr. Rachel Naomi Remen - Uses storytelling to explore the spiritual dimensions of healing and medicine.

Dr. Wendy Suzuki - Explores how meditation and mindfulness enhance brain health.

Dr. Cynthia Li - Integrates spiritual practices like qigong into healing from autoimmune conditions.

Dr. Shauna Shapiro - Studies mindfulness, compassion, and how spiritual practices enhance health outcomes.

Dr. Deepa Apte - Combines traditional Indian medicine with spiritual practices to promote holistic wellness.

NATIVE AMERICAN

Winona LaDuke (Anishinaabe): Environmental activist, economist, and spiritual leader among the Ojibwe people, advocating for land sovereignty and cultural preservation.

Grandmother Mona Polacca (Hopi/Havasupai/Tewa): Member of the International Council of Thirteen Indigenous Grandmothers, focusing on water rights and spiritual healing.

Grandmother Flordemayo (Mayan): Spiritual healer and another member of the International Council of Thirteen Indigenous Grandmothers, bridging spiritual wisdom and ecological awareness.

Pat McCabe (Woman Stands Shining) (Diné/Navajo): Spiritual leader, writer, and activist focused on Indigenous knowledge, gender harmony, and restoring balance to the Earth.

Roxanne Swentzell (Santa Clara Pueblo): Artist and cultural leader deeply connected to Indigenous spirituality and community revitalization.

Angaangaq Angakkorsuaq (Greenlandic Inuit): Though technically Inuit, her focus on global Indigenous spiritual wisdom and the melting ice connects her to broader Native traditions.

LaDonna Brave Bull Allard (Standing Rock Sioux): Historian, activist, and spiritual voice behind the Standing Rock protests (Water Protectors).

Chief Caleen Sisk (Winnemem Wintu): Spiritual leader and tribal chief working to restore the McCloud River salmon runs and advocate for Indigenous water rights.

NATIVE AMERICAN (CONTINUED)

Sherri Mitchell (Weh'na Ha'mu Kwasset) (Penobscot Nation): Lawyer, teacher, and spiritual activist blending Indigenous knowledge and contemporary environmentalism.

Faith Spotted Eagle (Yankton Sioux/Dakota): Elder and activist, known for her leadership in environmental protection and as a voice for traditional Dakota spirituality.

Emerging and Regional Leaders

Tantoo Cardinal (Métis): Actress and activist who incorporates spiritual wisdom into her work in the arts and cultural education.

Deborah Parker (Tulalip): Activist for Native women's rights and an advocate for integrating cultural traditions into healing practices.

Jade Begay (Diné/Tesuque Pueblo): Climate activist weaving Indigenous knowledge into environmental justice work.

Louise Profeit-LeBlanc (Northern Tutchone): Storyteller and cultural educator preserving Native spiritual traditions through oral history.

Elder Marge Anderson (Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe): A spiritual and community leader promoting cultural preservation and social justice.

NATIVE AMERICAN (CONTINUED)

Intertribal or Global Context Leaders

Jennifer Kreisberg (Tuscarora): Singer and activist infusing spiritual tradition into music and community leadership.

Tina Calderon (Tongva/Chumash): Cultural and spiritual leader preserving Southern California Indigenous traditions and ceremonies.

Joanne Shenandoah (Oneida Nation): Singer-songwriter and spiritual guide who promotes peace and healing (recently passed, but her influence endures).

Rachelle Chenae Williams (Apache): Advocate for preserving Indigenous spirituality through educational outreach.

Cheryl Angel (Sicangu Lakota): Spiritual activist and leader involved in the Water Protector movement.

HINDU

Mata Amritanandamayi (Amma) (Humanitarian/spiritual teacher)

Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati: A spiritual leader based in Rishikesh, India, associated with Parmarth Niketan Ashram and an advocate for environmental causes and women's empowerment.

Swamini Pramananda (Ammaji): Founder of Purna Vidya, focusing on Vedic education and women's spiritual leadership.

Mother Meera: A spiritual teacher known for her silent darshan and teachings about connecting with divine grace.

Sri Karunamayi: A contemporary teacher of Vedanta and humanitarian, guiding spiritual aspirants worldwide.

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi (Sahaja Yoga): Though she passed in 2011, Sahaja Yoga continues to influence women spiritual leaders globally. Many women carry forward her teachings in regional communities.

Gayatri Devi: A modern spiritual teacher blending traditional Vedic wisdom with modern life practices.

Guru Ma Jaya Sati Bhagavati: Known for her teachings rooted in the Bhagavad Gita and interfaith spirituality.

Amma Sri Narayani (Sri Sakthi Amma): A revered leader at the Sri Narayani Peedam temple, guiding devotees through spiritual wisdom and service.

Didi Maa Sadhvi Ritambhara: A Hindu saint known for her teachings on dharma and spirituality, as well as her work in promoting social welfare.

HINDU

Shivani Verma (BK Sister Shivani): A teacher with the Brahma Kumaris, a spiritual movement inspired by Hindu teachings, focusing on mindfulness and self-transformation.

Emerging Leaders

Lakshmi Devi (ISKCON): A key female figure in the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, inspiring women within Vaishnavism.

Swamini Svatmavidyananda Saraswati: A teacher of Advaita Vedanta, trained by Swami Dayananda Saraswati, focusing on the Upanishads and Gita.

Bhakti Sundari Devi Dasi: A spiritual leader from the Gaudiya Vaishnava tradition, mentoring women in devotional practices.

BUDDHIST

Pema Chödrön (Tibetan Buddhist)

Sharon Salzberg (Insight Meditation)

Jetsunma Tenzin Palmo (Tibetan Buddhist)

Roshi Joan Halifax (Zen Buddhist)

Khandro Rinpoche (Tibetan Buddhist)

Ani Choying Drolma (Tibetan Buddhist nun)

Thubten Chodron (Tibetan Buddhist)

Karma Lekshe Tsomo (Tibetan Buddhist)

JEWISH

Rabbi Sharon Brous (Reform/Progressive)

Rabbi Deborah Waxman (Reconstructionist)

Sara Hurwitz (Modern Orthodox)

Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner (Reform Judaism)

ISLAMIC

Amina Wadud (Islamic feminist scholar)

Edina Lekovic (Muslim activist)

Imam Amina Darwish (Chaplain and scholar)

CHRISTIAN

Rev. Canon Stephanie Spellers: Canon for Evangelism and Reconciliation for the Episcopal Church.

Dr. Ruth Padilla DeBorst: Theologian and leader in Latin American theological circles.

Sister Helen Prejean: Advocate against the death penalty and author of *Dead Man Walking*.

Pope Francis' Women Cardinals Group (Unofficial): Emerging influential Catholic voices advocating for change.

Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde (Episcopal)

Joyce Meyer (Evangelical)

Beth Moore (Evangelical)

Barbara Brown Taylor (Episcopal)

Rev. Dr. Serene Jones (Presbyterian/Reformed)

Rev. Canon Mpho Tutu van Furth (Anglican)

Rev. Dr. Cynthia Bourgeault (Episcopal)

Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis (Reformed)

Rev. Dr. Barbara Williams-Skinner (Interdenominational)

Rev. Dr. Katie Cannon (Presbyterian)

Rev. Dr. Emilie Townes (Baptist)

Rev. Dr. Traci Blackmon (United Church of Christ)

Rev. Dr. Susan Henry-Crowe (Methodist)

Rev. Dr. Gina Stewart (Baptist)

Rev. Dr. Wil Gafney (Episcopal)

Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis (Presbyterian)

Rev. Dr. Kelly Brown Douglas (Episcopal)

Rev. Dr. Amy Butler (Baptist/Interdenominational)

Rev. Dr. Brenda Salter McNeil (Evangelical)

Rev. Dr. Cynthia Hale (Disciples of Christ)

INTERFAITH AND SPIRITUAL ACTIVISM

Eboo Patel's Female Leaders Network: Women working with Interfaith Youth Core (IFYC) to bridge interfaith divides.

Sister Joan Chittister: Benedictine nun and advocate for justice, peace, and gender equality.

Sister Simone Campbell: Leader of NETWORK, known for "Nuns on the Bus" social justice campaigns.

Dr. Vandana Shiva: Environmental activist and philosopher connecting spiritual and ecological well-being.

Leymah Gbowee: Liberian peace activist and interfaith leader, focusing on reconciliation and empowerment.

Grandmother Agnes Baker Pilgrim: Late but remembered as a founding member of the International Council of Thirteen Indigenous Grandmothers, inspiring similar women in the interfaith space.

Aziza Hasan: Co-founder of NewGround: A Muslim-Jewish Partnership for Change.

Rev. Dr. Marilyn Sewell: Unitarian Universalist minister and writer, blending spirituality with activism.

Dr. Rachael Kessler (late): Her work in "The Soul of Education" continues to inspire interfaith educators today.

Rev. Angel Kyodo Williams: Zen Buddhist teacher integrating contemplative practice with social justice.

Mirabai Starr: Author and translator of mystical texts from multiple traditions, bridging interfaith dialogue.

Dena Merriam: Founder of the Global Peace Initiative of Women, focusing on interfaith dialogue and climate change.

Sister Dang Nghiem: Vietnamese Buddhist nun integrating Western medicine and mindfulness for healing.

Claudia Horwitz: Founder of Stone Circles, using spirituality to support activists.

Heather McTeer Toney: Interfaith environmental activist and leader in faith-based climate justice.

Karen Armstrong: interfaith scholar, author and speaker

Valarie Kaur: Sikh activist and advocate for compassionate justice

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