

# THIS YEAR THE FERN LODGE ANNUAL MEETING

will be held

**Sunday afternoon**  
**April 27, 2003 at 2:30 P.M.**

The meeting will be at

**First Church of Christ, Scientist**  
**1807 The Alameda, San Jose**

**Ron Ballard, C.S.B.**

**from Ashland Oregon**

will share ideas on the topic

## ***THE FUTURE OF CHRISTIAN HEALING***

Ron Ballard has served as a lecturer, author, teacher, and practitioner of healing spiritually for over 30 years.

In the full-time practice of Christian Science, with listing in *The Christian Science Journal* since 1969, he became a teacher of Christian Science in 1979. Ron has traveled extensively, talking before a variety of groups and conferences worldwide including representing Christian Science to the media. He was a Christian Science lecturer from 1994-2000, and he contributes to the Christian Science periodicals including the *Christian Science Sentinel*, *Journal*, and the radio editions of the *Herald* and *Sentinel* programs.

Ron is married with two children, and lives in San Francisco, CA and Ashland, OR. He now serves on numerous nonprofit boards involving youth causes and environmental issues.

**Parking is available at the church, and child care will be provided.**

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**FERN LODGE FOCUS — April 2003**

Please look inside for a message of gratitude and love to our readers.



# A MESSAGE OF LOVE ...

Fern Lodge is in a period of great progress. As I review our growth over the recent years, our increased staff, our nurses training program, the fact that we are able to offer care for more individuals who need nursing, I remember Mary Baker Eddy's statements regarding history and progress. "The true theory of the universe, including man, is not in material history but in spiritual development," *Science and Health*. And, "Every step of progress is a step more spiritual. The great element of reform is not born of human wisdom; it draws not its life from human organizations; rather is it the crumbling away of material elements from reason, the translation of law back to its original language, —Mind, and the final unity between man and God," *The People's Idea of God*.

The true history of Fern Lodge is a record of the development of a more spiritual understanding of the nature of the care with which our divine Father-Mother God holds, protects, nurtures and provides for each one of Her precious children. The history of Fern Lodge is a record of growth in understanding that it is only by spiritual reflection that Christian Science nurses at the facility are enabled to give healing care for others. The history of Fern Lodge is a record of the "crumbling away of material elements" from reasoning about nursing and about facility organization.

**W**hat has impelled our progress? The first day I came to Fern Lodge, in 1975, I could feel a power I didn't understand. As I worked as a nurses' aide I soon came to realize that this power is divine Love. Perhaps it is imperfectly demonstrated; perhaps human will or ignorance obscures certain aspects of Love's expression. But the feeling that the love of God, Love, permeates every area of activity at Fern Lodge was and is unmistakable.

Love's presence rests equally and impartially on each individual who is a part of this precious facility, and individual demonstration brings the love of God into our daily lives. Mary Baker Eddy wrote a short, simple statement that I feel tells the story of Fern Lodge, because it describes the experience of those who have served here over the years, "Love inspires, illumines, designates, and leads the way," *Science and Health*, page 454. This statement brings to thought the ideas indicated in the first chapter of *Genesis*.

To *inspire* includes these ideas: "to affect, guide, or arouse by divine influence; to be the cause or source of; bring about." In a sense, "Love inspires" is equivalent to *Genesis* 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." In the only time and place we have, —right here, right now— God, Love, brings into being the fullness of creation, including every idea in infinite Mind, every activity of divine Principle, and so on.

**Love inspires.** This is a powerful idea. Realization of the fact that God is the only source, the only cause, is able to instantly change a discordant human condition, restoring harmony and confirming Mrs. Eddy's promise, "If Spirit or the power of divine Love bear witness to the truth, this is the ultimatum, the scientific way, and the healing is instantaneous," *Science and Health* 411:10.

**E**ach one of us is receptive to the inspiration of Love. All we need is to have our hearts open to receive the understanding of God. But have you ever done that, really prayed for a fuller understanding of God as All-in-all, only to feel overwhelmed by the sheer immensity of God's creation? That feeling of God's incomprehensible vastness came to me early in my nursing career, but by entertaining the humbling feeling of God's infinite creation my eyes were opened in a new way, and I learned an irreplaceable lesson. **Love illumines!** "And God said, Let there be light: and there was light," *Genesis* 1:3.

The illumination of Love brings to the vastness of creation the clear indications of individuality; it shows that God's infinite universe is peopled with ideas we can comprehend and relate to; and it demonstrates to us the expression of God's unique attributes and qualities. We can trust Love to light the way any time we feel lost or overwhelmed by circumstances. Love's illumination shows clearly the distinct possibilities that are open to us. Love shows us how we can love.

But there are so many possibilities, so many ways to express infinite Love, you might ask, "How can I decide what is the best thing for me to do?" **Love designates.** Before I began nursing I was praying to see how I could be of service to God, man and Christian Science. Out of all the possibilities open to me, Love pointed out to me a path I would have said was unlikely, maybe even impossible. But divine Love knows what we cannot guess, and I



learned the comforting truth of Mrs. Eddy's statement, "...spiritual Love will force you to accept what best promotes your growth," *Science and Health* 266. And I came to Fern Lodge and began work in the ministry of Christian Science nursing.

Divine Love designates to man Love's own dominion over all the earth (Genesis 1:27). So many stories in the Bible, and especially the teachings and works of Christ Jesus, show how we can demonstrate dominion as the image and likeness of God. And through the Scriptures we see this beautiful unbroken thread, *Love leads the way*. Love tenderly, but oh so firmly, leads us through each day of our lives.

One night at Fern Lodge a nurse was making her rounds of the facility when suddenly she felt impelled to go to a room she had recently checked, to see a patient who never needed anything at night. When she got there, she found the patient had an urgent need and was unable to summon help. The nurse was able to meet the need quickly. Love directs our footsteps; Love leads the way.

Through many experiences such as the one of that nurse we have learned a valuable lesson, one that brings blessings to every aspect of our work. That lesson is to trust divine Love in every circumstance, in every way. "Love inspires, illumines, designates, and leads the way."

Divine Love has inspired so many individuals to want to do good. Of course this includes every Christian Scientist who has nursed or volunteered at Fern Lodge, each one who has given prayerful or financial support for our work, and all the dedicated workers at Rainbow's End thrift stores. Love illumined for them God's infinite possibilities for Love's own expression, and Love designated the specific contribution they could make to Christian Science nursing at Fern Lodge.

Love leads us on the path of irresistible spiritual progress. Our individual demonstration of Love is so important. Through this demonstration we contribute to "the crumbling away of material elements from reason."

In proportion as nurses love, each patient is bathed in an affection that transcends the personality quirks of the different nurses who care for them, and each nurse is able to draw on a source of

inspiration and strength that transcends their beliefs about their own and other nurses' personal character traits or limitations.

In proportion as we who work in administration love, —the patients and their families, each staff member, each volunteer, each board member— we witness and encourage the demonstration of divine Love that daily meets every human need.

In proportion as each member of the Fern Lodge board of directors loves, —the administration, the staff, and every one who supports the facility— they establish and maintain an organization that deserves to be called a Christian Science nursing facility.

Each individual demonstration of divine Love contributes directly to the security, stability and healing influence of the facility. Last September we told our readers of the commitment of the nursing staff to read our Leader's textbook, *Science and Health*. Our reading and meeting to share insights from this precious book that will help us in our nursing work continues, and we should complete this project this summer. One effect of our reading and discussion has been a deeper understanding of the guiding presence and power of Love and of our need to pray to demonstrate the love of Love in our work with patients, family members and our community.

This prayer from our Leader's poem, *Christ My Refuge*, guides the work at Fern Lodge.

My prayer, some daily good to do  
To Thine, for Thee;  
An offering pure of Love, whereto  
God leadeth me.

On behalf of patients, staff, board members and all connected with Fern Lodge, Thank you for your support, and especially for your love.

GEORGE STRONG  
Administrator



# HERE'S YOUR INVITATION TO THE FERN LODGE ANNUAL MEETING

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## ***THE FUTURE OF CHRISTIAN HEALING***

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The meeting will also include reports of progress.  
Parking is available in the church lot, and  
child care will be provided during the meeting.

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### **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

A simple expression of affection brings a wonderful blessing to you as well as to patients and staff. We will be deeply grateful if you could conduct a testimony meeting or Sunday service, read to patients, answer the office telephone, assist with a meal, or share with us your talents and experiences. Call Robin Barben or Adrienne Marshall to learn more about volunteer opportunities at Fern Lodge.

### ***FERN LODGE FOCUS* — April 2003**

**18457 Madison Avenue  
Castro Valley, CA 94546**

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