

April 2014

Dear Friends,

In March I heard the discussion of and vote on HR 1814, a bill that would allow individuals to decline without penalty, mandatory purchase of health insurance that does not cover reliance on prayer and spiritual treatment or nursing. As I write this, the bill still will have to pass in the Senate and be signed by the President if it is to become law, but its easy passage in the House of Representatives should lead Christian Scientists to stay informed. Please contact the Fern Lodge business office to learn the current options available to pay for Christian Science nursing.

Whatever the eventual outcome, we are assured of the eternal promise, “Divine Love always has met, and always will meet, every human need.” Christian Science nursing demonstrates Love’s tender, ministering, healing care. Fern Lodge will, of course, continue to provide healing Christian Science nursing services, and substantial financial assistance still will be needed by most of those who come to us for care, whether or not private health insurance will cover some of the costs at Christian Science nursing facilities. We are seeking to grow the Fern Lodge Benevolence Fund so these financial needs may be met in an orderly way.

Sometimes it’s simple things that bring smiles to our faces. Fern Lodge regularly assesses its use of resources. It’s part of our commitment to “wisdom, economy, and brotherly love” in our business operations. We recently received a commendation from the Castro Valley Sanitary District, acknowledging our successful conservation as part of their 4R program: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Rot (compost). A framed certificate, a cash award of \$330, and an opportunity to place an advertisement in our local town newspaper accompanied the commendation.

Now is a great time to visit Fern Lodge! The wisteria on the eaves just finished blooming; dogwood, flowering cherry, rhododendron, and roses are in full flower, accompanied by smaller shrubs and annuals tucked into the flower beds. If you come for a tour, you’ll see our gardens and the new works of art, most by Christian Scientists, hung in the nursing wing halls.

With gratitude and affection,



George Strong  
Administrator



# A HEARTWARMING GIFT OF GRATITUDE FOR HEALING

April 2014

*Fern Lodge, Inc.*

*Dear Friends:*

*I want you to know how grateful I am for the time I spent at Fern Lodge. Everyone I met, all of you,—nurses, cooks, gardeners, office staff, those who provided opportunity to attend activities—all showed such love and devotion for what they had learned through their understanding of Christian Science.*

*This love and devotion was poured on me in abundance. I felt such joy in the hugs and cheerful “good mornings” given with lovely smiles. The dear Practitioner who supported me so faithfully gave me clear, healing ideas to work with during the day. How wise this provision is for care at Fern Lodge.*

*My nightly study of our textbook was the most glorious experience for me—I took time to consider every statement, to see what I needed to do to be a true Christian Scientist. I completely gave up any human or willful planning on how or when I would return home, but left it up to divine Mind to instruct me. What a revelation, every action from then on came to me—each step of the way came about not by me, but by divine Mind.*

*I can honestly say that I wouldn't have missed this time for anything. Since I returned home I have had ample opportunity to use what I learned and find it glorious to see the results. I am following our Leader as she followed our Way-shower. Thank you my dears. You are all vitally important in your support of this great Cause.*

*Lovingly,*

*Pat Smith*

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## VISITING CHRISTIAN SCIENCE NURSE SERVICES FOR MONTEREY

Fern Lodge recently began working with Sally Stock, a *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurse, and First Church of Christ, Scientist, Monterey, to provide Christian Science nursing services for the greater Monterey area, including Santa Cruz, Aptos, Watsonville, Salinas, Monterey, Carmel and the surrounding area. We are grateful for the financial support that allows this service to be given free of charge.



Sally Stock

Home visits will be made to help those receiving treatment from a *Journal*-listed Christian Science practitioner. The visiting Christian Science nurse provides assistance with cleansing and bandaging of wounds, bathing and personal care, mobility, newborn and infant care. All Christian Science nursing care is a healing activity.

Sally's contact number is: 831-236-0476

If Sally is not available, a Christian Science nurse from Arden Wood will gladly make the visit. We're glad for this opportunity to work with our sister Christian Science nursing facility in San Francisco.

## REVERSING THE TESTIMONY OF PERSONAL SENSE — ELIZABETH SCHWARTZ, C.S.

Each month Fern Lodge asks a Christian Science practitioner to work for the harmony and healing efficacy of the Christian Science nursing services we provide. During the month, these practitioners are invited to give inspirational talks to the Fern Lodge staff. The following is the edited talk given by Elizabeth Schwartz, C.S. You may remember hearing from Elizabeth before, she is on the Fern Lodge Board of Directors and has served for several years as Treasurer.

I would like to begin with a story called “The Rabbi’s Gift.” There was a monastery that had fallen upon hard times. There were only five monks left, the abbot and four others, all over seventy in age. In the deep woods surrounding the monastery, there was a little hut that a rabbi from a nearby town occasionally used for a hermitage. It occurred to the abbot to visit the hermitage and ask the rabbi if by some possible chance he could offer any advice that might save the monastery. “No, I am sorry” the rabbi responded. “I have no advice to give. The only thing I can tell you is that the Messiah is one of you.” The abbot returned to the monastery and told the monks what the Rabbi had said.

The old monks pondered what the rabbi had said. Could he possibly have meant one of us monks here at the monastery? If so, which one? Each one thought about each other and wondered if they were the one. Or, could he possibly have meant me? As they contemplated in this manner, the old monks began to treat each other with extraordinary respect on the off chance that one among them might be the Messiah. And on the off, off chance that each monk himself might be the Messiah, they began to treat themselves with extraordinary respect.

Because the forest in which the monastery was situated was beautiful, people still occasionally came to visit the monastery to picnic on its tiny lawn and to wander its paths. As they did so, without even being conscious of it, they sensed this aura of

extraordinary respect that now seemed to permeate the atmosphere of the place. Hardly knowing why, they began to come back to the monastery more frequently to picnic, to play, to pray. They began to bring their friends. The younger men that came began to talk with the old monks. After a while, one asked if he could join them, then another, and another. So within a few years, the monastery had once again become a thriving order and thanks to the rabbi’s gift, a vibrant center of light and spirituality.

Now, I would like to put this story next to Mrs. Eddy’s counsel to Martha Wilcox, a worker in Mrs. Eddy’s home:

“Then she began to talk to me on mental malpractice. In effect this is what she said: ‘Sometimes a sense of personality arises before your thought and leads you to believe that a personality is something outside and separate from your thought, that can harm you’. She showed me that the real danger was never this threatened attack from outside my thought where the personality seemed to be, but that the real danger was always within my thought. She made it clear that my sense of personality was mental—a mental image formed in my so-called mortal mind and was never external or separate from my mind. This supposititious mortal mind outlined itself as a belief of a material personality with form and conditions and laws and circumstances—in fact with all the phenomena that is embraced in what is called material life or personality. And then she showed me that not one solitary fact in this whole fabric of supposititious evil was true. She showed me that I must detect that all this mental phenomena was only aggressive mental suggestion coming to me, for me to adopt it, as my own thought.”

The rabbi’s gift to the monks was to help them turn away from personality and to acknowledge that each one of them is an expression of the Christ. Wasn’t this Mrs. Eddy’s gift to Martha? Isn’t this why Fern Lodge exists? Isn’t this why you come to work each



day? You don't come for a paycheck, or to be a part of a worthwhile human activity, or because you have a kind heart and want to comfort others. You come to bear witness to Mrs. Eddy's words in *Science and Health*, "Man is the likeness of Spirit, but a material personality is not this likeness" (544:240), and in *Miscellaneous Writings* (282:4), "Remember, it is personality, and the sense of personality in God or in man, that limits man."

When God revealed Himself to Moses as "I AM" he established true identity. The third commandment,

**An individual cannot be tempted to think or act against their own nature. God is the only real influence in every individual's life.**

"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain" forbids the association of "I AM" with anything unlike God. Who are your fellow workers? Who are you? Who are the patients? Why, the embodiment of the very essence of God. Man is God's concept of Himself. So personal sense, personality, is a false sense of man that must be given up. We come to work each day to discover every patient, everyone on the payroll of Fern Lodge as Christlike.

Now, what might try to hinder the mission of Fern Lodge? I would like to go to John's explanation in the book of Revelation in the Bible and present the seven churches as seven ways that personal sense tries to rob us of our correct view of each other. I suspect we can trace most troubles to an undestroyed personal sense of existence.

**Ephesus:** "Thou has left thy first love," John says. This is often described as faith without works or clinging to materiality or resting on past efforts and successes. Our first love is the love of God and man as His image. When the thought comes that we read the lesson yesterday and we don't really need to make time for it before our shift today, we recognize that as Ephesus thought and "rise in rebellion" (*Sc&H* 391).

**Smyrna:** "I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not." This is hypocrisy. One way of thinking of hypocrisy is criticizing another destructively. As Christian Scientists we are committed to expressing God who is Love and always using the Golden Rule. Hypocrisy is an enemy within our own thought. It tries to make us untrue to what we know to be true. As we all know, an enemy within the camp is much more destructive than one without. This was evident in Smyrna, since the city was sacked!

As a reflector of infinite Love, we move mentally forward with our thought fixed on the true Christly nature of each one we come into contact with. We approach each one with an

outstretched hand to help lead away from sin or sickness. When we separate sin from an individual, we are denying that sin has any identity. An individual cannot be tempted to think or act against his or her true nature. God is the only real influence in every individual's life.

**Pergamos:** "Thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam." This is sensual worship, medicine, being tolerant of false gods. This sensuality would show itself in adulterating our sense of Truth, in idolatry, material medicine. It may come in the guise of being broad-minded or a concession to world opinion. It may try to convince us that time is a healing agent. Or, it may come by presenting a thought that age is an excuse for a problem or a cause of a problem. We can recognize this kind of thinking as Pergamos thought and "agree to disagree" (*Sc&H* 390).

**Thyatira:** "Thou sufferest ... Jezebel ... to seduce my servants." The church at Thyatira had allowed ... the amalgamation of different pagan religions. Other religions may accept that death is natural and necessary. As Christians, we go to the teachings of Jesus. He taught us that God is Life and the

## A TALK TO THE FERN LODGE STAFF BY ELIZABETH SCHWARTZ, C.S.

kingdom of heaven is at hand. He declared that they who believe his sayings will never die. He showed us resurrection and eternal life. So when someone appears to pass, we can help each other by magnifying who they actually are, their spiritual qualities, the ever-presence of those qualities. We can look for those qualities and acknowledge their presence. We banish the Thyatira thought that says it is necessary to accept to accept death as an end.

**Sardis:** “Thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead... Be watchful.” The suggestion may come that we have worked hard, have born the burden in the heat of the day and now we need to rest. We are worn out. We have given 100% at work and we are depleted. Sardis thought is a form of self-importance. It says it is *our* energy, *our* courage, *our* inspiration that has accomplished this day. We are alert to any suggestion of depletion and “never plead guilty.” Sardis thought may also make us asleep at the wheel so we don’t recognize that a problem is animal magnetism and we think it is a person, place or thing. We all know the old analogy that if a snake bites a horse and the horse bucks you off, you don’t get mad at the horse. You kill the snake!

**Philadelphia:** We are used to thinking of this state of thought as correct, and it is! It is brotherly love. With brotherly love, we help each other stay clear of temptation. Philadelphia thought holds fast to the truth of each staff member and patient. It magnifies their strengths and forgives their weaknesses. John had no rebuke for Philadelphia thought since it reinforces Mrs. Eddy’s words: “Let no root of bitterness spring up among you, but hold in your full hearts fervently the charity that seeketh not her own, but another’s good” (*Message for 1900* 14:17).

**Laodicea:** “Thou art neither cold nor hot,” or the suggestion of neutrality, is the error of the seventh church. It is the suggestion that our eyes can be

closed to the great value of our religion, that we are not willing to pay a price for it, a price for spiritual growth. It may come in the guise of, “I am too tired to go to church. I don’t need to, since I had church at Fern Lodge.” Or it might say something like “Some problems are difficult to heal.” Laodicea thought might try to let us forget that progress is the law of God and have us accept that a patient will be the same tomorrow as they are today.

John ends this discussion with “Let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” We are roused to a quickened perception and discernment of the sacred need to listen to the demands of Truth and to strive our utmost to obey them. When we are going against the current of mortal beliefs, we are a target of personal sense, animal magnetism. But, we are only a victim of animal magnetism or personal sense when we accept that evil and all its pretensions to place and power can masquerade as something. We know that we are abundantly able to meet and

**We are roused to a quickened perception of the sacred need to listen to the demands of Truth and to strive our utmost to obey them.**

destroy the suggestions of personal sense because it has no validity. It can do nothing when we are alert to the Truth. We “must live under the constant pressure of the apostolic command to come out from the material world and be separate. [We] must renounce aggression, oppression and the pride of power. Christianity, with the crown of Love upon her brow, must be [our] queen of life” (S&H 451:2).

But how do we maintain this vision of the Christly identity of each one of us? How do we keep from the traps of the seven churches? If we are persistent in challenging every thought as it presents itself,—daily, hourly—then we are putting on immortality. What is it that sees error? Personal sense. What appears as an unlovable person is not the product

## REVERSING THE TESTIMONY OF PERSONAL SENSE (CONTINUED)

of the only cause, God. Mrs. Eddy asks us: “I earnestly advise all Christian Scientists to remove from their observation or study the personal sense of any one, and not to dwell in thought upon their own or others’ corporeality, either as good or evil” (*Miscellaneous Writings* 308:32).

If a fellow nurse, patient, staff member, seems to be carrying a cross, let us hurry to crown it with Love and keep our own consciousness undarkened by cross-forming shadows. Nothing can resist the light of Love. We can see all human frailties as false conditions of thought. If we don’t, we are accepting the lie and enlisting ourselves as mortal mind’s advocate. We can’t afford to brand a fellow worker with some un-Christlike quality.

Perhaps John was able to recognize the sacred city, that “lieth foursquare” and “cometh down from God, out of heaven” and represents the “light and glory of divine Science” (SH 575) because he was willing to identify and deny the false claims of personal sense trying to claim ground in the churches. John spent his adult life following and recognizing the presence of the Christ. Even isolated on a rocky, barren island in the middle of the Aegean Sea, he was bearing witness to the presence of the Christ idea. He has given us excellent counsel as to what to be alert to and to clean out so that we can recognize the Christ, the Messiah, ever-present among us.

The Messiah is expressed by every one of us at Fern Lodge. The love, comradeship, nourishing which goes on here each day is proof that all of you have heeded the Rabbi’s counsel. The respect that you show for each other is evident to anyone who visits and I can attest to that.

I would like to close with a portion of a letter Mrs. Eddy wrote in 1896 (*In My True Light and Life*, p. 313). The greeting says “My precious child.” Can we each put our own name in the greeting?

*My precious child,*

*Every day pray the Lord’s Prayer in the meaning and spirit thereof. Thy Kingdom is come. Here ask for the true sense of God and man to come to your understanding and into your affections. Ask for just what you need spiritually. Ask to be made patient and loving when persecuted; to be strictly honest, speaking the truth and never misrepresenting in even the smallest thing. Ask to be gentle, tempered and delivered from all anger or spirit of revenge. Ask for this daily bread to feed you. Under ‘forgive my debts as I forgive my debtors’, ask to love your enemies and to forgive them even as you need God’s dear pardon and deliverance from condemnation and punishment. Under “lead me not into temptation, etc. (Pray for deliverance from yielding to the influence of mortal mind), either your own or another’s and the recognition of but one Mind. Keep steadfast to this prayer and thought. Ask to know just how to do good and act wisely in your field of labor and that no sin or sinner can turn you aside from the right way or tempt you to stray....*

*Ever lovingly, Mother*



## CHRISTIAN SCIENCE NURSING EDUCATION — STUDENTS WRITE

CAROL HOREN, FROM COLORADO

I recently took my second level Christian Science nurse's training at Fern Lodge with Sharon Strong. I liked the level of flexibility. I had taken one part of it earlier on Skype, and almost a year later, I drove to California and took the whole class.

Sharon is very knowledgeable, and I learned a lot. She listened to the students as she taught and even changed the classes to accommodate our numerous questions. We really delved into the metaphysical side of things, and often her answers to our queries started with, "So I just really listened and prayed to say/do the right thing." Sharon brings a lot of experience and joy to the table.

The Administrator, George Strong, talked to our class a couple of times. It was interesting to see the thought behind the administration. He not only shared a lot, but he also asked us some pretty tough questions. He really made me think, not only what nursing is about, but about where Christian Scientists are going as a Church.

I enjoyed staying at Fern Lodge. I have worked only at Wide Horizon in CO, and it was interesting to see what was different and what was the same. Just to let you know, the food is very good. Thank you Fern Lodge for the learning experience!

ASHLEY NILES, FROM IDAHO

I had been working to express more grace in my daily activities and towards others. I felt nothing but peace when I decided on attending the Christian Science Nurses training at Fern Lodge. At the time I didn't know why I was led there over another place, but now coming full circle, as I write this letter, I'm realizing why: I was led by God.

The first thing that stood out to me when I arrived at Fern Lodge was the grace that the staff expressed in their daily activities, whether it be on the nursing floor or in the kitchen. Being surrounded by so many people expressing grace during my Christian Science Nurses training at Fern Lodge really was an answer to my prayers. Love is bountiful!

"...progress lifts mortals to discern the Science of mental formation and find the highway of holiness," Mary Baker Eddy, *Miscellaneous Writings* 287:15-17.

The Christian Science Nurses training at Fern Lodge continued to support my progress forward on my spiritual adventure. Seeing (spiritually discerning) new ways to think about and execute the activities that needed to get done.

My gratitude overflows for the understanding that might not have been clear at first, but with a desire to progress and think, Truth comes into full bloom!

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GARY BOTTJE, FROM ILLINOIS

After several months of Internet review classes, followed by working ten days at Fern Lodge, Gary wrote: "My time at Fern Lodge was productive and rewarding. My nurse-mentors regularly and readily shared valuable insights, skills, practical knowledge and metaphysical concepts. I can't express enough gratitude for the nurses' selfless love and willingness to share their expertise with me, all under the watchful supervision of Sharon and the staff nurses.

I was also grateful to attend a class session in person while there. This gave me additional insights into proper procedures and methods for resolving issues whenever needed.

I was particularly grateful for my mentors who shared specific metaphysical ideas relating to the care being given for specific patients. These were valuable insights into the process of bringing and maintaining a healing atmosphere in the patients' rooms and in the entire facility. I also took special note of how well the nurses worked together. The teams of nurses support each other in practical and spiritual ways that blesses all involved. They also readily support decisions related to patient care so the patient experiences a unified and consistent healing approach from the entire staff.

I am so thankful that I had the opportunity to visit Fern Lodge, and learn from such an excellent teacher, and an inspired and dedicated staff of nurses. The experience was invaluable in its blessings for me.



## ART — OUTSIDE AND INSIDE

The Fern Lodge gardens are in bloom and the halls have a fresh coat of paint, with harmonizing colors to indicate the neighborhoods and common areas through the facility. Inspired by Nancy Mooslin's donation of her paintings, we are decorating the halls with artwork by Christian Scientists from all over the country. Some pieces have been donated to Fern Lodge, and others are on loan from private collections or from the artist. Come take a look!



## BENEVOLENCE FUND UPDATE

Thanks to a generous bequest from a long-time supporter of Fern Lodge, our Benevolence Fund is growing. Income from investments will be used to meet requests for financial assistance from patients who are not able to pay the full cost of their care. The Fund now has just over \$500,000 invested. We welcome contributions to the Benevolence Fund. Each gift will help provide for fellow Christian Scientists through the years.

***Fern Lodge Focus* — April 2014**  
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