

WELCOME TO FERN LODGE

One afternoon not long ago I was working at my desk when I heard music coming from outside. I opened my door, and on the patio I saw a small group of guests gathered around a man who was playing sweet and lively melodies on his fiddle. His mom was one of those in the group listening, and I was grateful, both that I had this chance to hear some music in a style that I really enjoy, and that this dear mother and son were sharing the priceless gifts of their time and his talent with others who had come to Fern Lodge for Christian Science nursing care.

As I listened to what sounded to me like Appalachian folk tunes, I noticed a Fern Lodge employee who works in the kitchen come out and sit nearby, listening. This young man is Hispanic. I've heard, and I appreciate, the music he listens to in the kitchen. I don't think mountain fiddle songs are on his iPod, but when one of the tunes ended and the group on the patio applauded, both he and I joined in the applause, and I heard our kitchen worker say, "That was nice!"

Each of us who heard that fine fiddle player was enveloped by the harmony of music, the expression of God-given and much-practiced talent, the generous affection of family and Christian friendship, the fruits of work done well. We all were embraced in divine Love, revealing to each of us something of our own identity in the family of God's children, not limited or defined by age, occupation, nationality, language, or physical appearance and ability.

Our experience that afternoon demonstrated the spiritual qualities that make Fern Lodge a place for healing. Loving friends, helpful staff, gracious accommodations and beautiful grounds are visible indications of the deep spirituality and steadfast trust in God that form the foundation for and permeate every aspect of the healing mission of Christian Science nursing at Fern Lodge.

In this *Fern Lodge Focus* we will share with you information about this precious Christian Science nursing facility. We'll shine our light of love on the healing Christian Science nursing services we offer. You'll learn about the Christian Science nursing education opportunities we offer. We'll tell you about our benevolence policy and ask you to join us in providing the necessary resources to ensure the availability of the healing ministry of Christian Science nursing at Fern Lodge and beyond. And as you read, if you are wondering what the pictures are in the background of this *Focus*, they are photos of flowers from the Fern Lodge gardens.

Also in this *Focus*, you will find excerpts of the wonderful annual meeting talk given by our speaker, Trinka Wasik, C.S., on the topic, "Christ Alive."

We extend our warm welcome to you and invite you to come for a visit to see, hear, and feel the love that characterizes the ministry of Christian Science nursing and the work of the Fern Lodge staff in demonstration and support of that spiritual, healing ministry.

Welcome to Fern Lodge,

George Strong
Administrator

OUR PURPOSE IS TO HEAL

To fulfill our purpose Fern Lodge provides the following services:

- Christian Science nursing for individuals who rely wholly on Christian Science for healing;
- Benevolence for patients who qualify;
- Education in Christian Science nursing, including bilingual English/Spanish instruction;
- Helpful information about Christian Science nursing and the unique role of Fern Lodge.

The Christian Science nursing ministry fulfills the law of God, because it is a manifestation of divine Love, and Christian Science nurses reflect God's love in the tender care they offer. Christian Science nursing is a vital aspect of the healing mission of Christian Science, and every day, in each case, we expect healing to result from the spiritually inspired understanding of the services given by Christian Science nurses on our staff.

Here is an overview of the Christian Science nursing services available at Fern Lodge.

Christian Science Nursing Care at Fern Lodge

Fern Lodge offers Christian Science nursing to meet a full range of individual needs, including loving assistance with normal activities of daily living and skillful care for physical and mental conditions that require a great degree of attentiveness to divine Truth and Love, as well as practical prayer and assistance. Our dedicated staff of faithful, inspired, educated and experienced Christian Science nurses provide and oversee the tender, healing care given for those who come for a stay at the Fern Lodge facility.

Outpatient and Home Care

Fern Lodge Christian Science nursing staff members are ready 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to give practical inspiration, calm presence, and skillful Christian Science nursing to meet immediate needs that do not require an individual to stay at our facility. Among our many talents, we are good at cleansing and bandaging any injuries, removing splinters, keeping fingernails and toe nails clean, neat and safe. In some cases Fern Lodge staff members will visit and care for individuals for short periods in their own homes, and in case of sudden needs they may stay for more extended periods.

Day Care

The same Christian Science nursing services we give for those who stay at Fern Lodge are available for individuals who have good care in a home setting, but who can benefit from coming to Fern Lodge during the day, perhaps while others who give care are at work or away on vacation. Christian Science nursing services, our excellent meals, and a range of interesting, informative and inspiring activities all are provided throughout the day.

Rest & Study

The quiet and secluded setting of the Fern Lodge facility offers a calm and secure place for Christian Scientists to recruit and restore. Delicious meals are provided either among others at Fern Lodge or in the privacy of your room. We have a library of Christian Science literature and recordings available for you to borrow, and access to the Internet is available to assist you in your study and research. At this time we have only a few rooms that may be used for Rest and Study, so if you wish to use this service please contact Fern Lodge in advance.

Consultation Services

Christian Science nurses on the Fern Lodge staff are glad to answer questions about nursing needs. They many instruct others, including family and friends, in giving care, knowing that God provides the ability and guidance that lead to proper care of the sick. In every case our goal and commitment is to recognize and realize the practical, spiritual care of divine Love, meeting every human need for comfort, protection, and immediate as well as on-going aid and assistance.

CHRIST ALIVE! — A talk By Trinka Wasik, C.S. from Alamo, CA

I have had the privilege of visiting Fern Lodge just about every week for about five years or so, and I have seen so much love, and grace, and healing there. I have seen the living Christ expressed. Let me tell you, that's no small thing. And it has given me hope, and strengthened my faith, and prepared me for more of the Christ in my own life. So I am deeply grateful, and very much humbled. There is so much more that goes on at Fern Lodge than meets the eye. It is a place of immense spiritual growth, of metaphysical mountain moving, of progress at levels beyond our ken. We cannot possibly know all the good that goes on there, because it is infinite in its reflection of God's grace and power, even as we can't know all of God. But we can know something of God. We can know enough to understand that God's work is in action there. So even though we can't possibly know all the good that goes on at Fern Lodge, we do know that healing is happening. Fern Lodge is a place of healing.

In preparing this talk today, I thought I'd check out their web-site and see what their mission statement was. I was pleasantly surprised by its simplicity. "Our mission is to heal," it said. To heal. Period. And isn't this the Christ? Alive. Today. Here and now.

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and the gentle reassurance that this isn't God's man, is what is needed.
And this is exactly what the staff at Fern Lodge is trained to do.**

We have to be careful, as Christian Scientists, not to be impressed by anything that makes sin and suffering seem more powerful than the goodness of God and influence us away from our ideals of what a perfect God would create—the perfect man. In fact, right where pain and suffering appear to be is exactly where love, compassion, and the gentle reassurance that this isn't God's man, is just what is needed. And this is exactly what the staff at Fern Lodge is trained to do. From the very beginning, I saw the loving care the staff brought to every one of their cases, and I immediately knew that it wasn't the images of dire need that were important here. There was something much more than that going on, something deeply moving, something to really treasure.

One of the first people I met at Fern Lodge was an older woman who would sit outside the door of her room, unable to walk on her own. ... She was a wonderful woman, who had traveled the world, had her pilot's license, graduated from a top university. Living away from home, unable to take care of herself, just didn't seem right to her. She wanted to go home. She had a lifetime of loving God, and I decided I could learn a lot about God from her, so I kept asking her what she knew about God. Pretty soon, she started asking me what I knew about God, too, and we shared some lovely spiritual insights.

Meanwhile, she remained determined to go home, and she knew that Christian Science prayer and treatment could get her there. I remember one day talking about how she couldn't go home until she could take care of herself. She asked what that meant. I mentioned being able to walk on her own. Do you know, the next time I saw her she was walking with a walker up and down the halls, back and forth! It was like she was doing laps! In fact, the nurses told me she just wouldn't stop walking! All this time, she had someone she cared about working hard to find Christian Science nursing care for her in her own home. They knew she wanted to come home, and they were doing everything they could to make that possible. ... And sure enough, ...she was finally able to go home.

CHRIST ALIVE! — continued

This story defies conventional expectations. Rather than yielding to mental and physical deterioration, this woman claimed the renewal of life with everything she was, and lived it. What happened here? Well, to me it was the eternal Christ in action, the living Christ. Christ alive.

I dearly love Mary Baker Eddy for her discovery of Christian Science and her explanation of the Christ. Her gratitude for Jesus and the amplification of the Christ he lived and uniquely exemplified is palpable. Rather than set him apart from us regular guys so far we can't reach him, she empowered us to know the Christ, and therefore God, intimately, to the point of healing. Yes, Mrs. Eddy brought healing back into the practice of following Christ, back into the core of Christianity, because she had gained an understanding of the spiritual principles underlying Jesus' acts. What Jesus did, Mrs. Eddy explained and proved with her own history of healing. And many have followed, with healing in their wings.

Can't you just imagine Mrs. Eddy pouring over the Bible, analyzing over and over again Jesus' healings, out of a deep desire to understand God better? And from her desire to know God through Christ, healing came. Not necessarily as the primary goal, but as a secondary, naturally occurring benefit. She says in *Science & Health*, “. . . signs and wonders are wrought in the metaphysical healing of physical disease; but these signs are only to demonstrate its divine origin, -- to attest the reality of the higher mission of the Christ-power to take away the sins of the world.” (S&H 150:13)

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How does one wrap their thought around so infinite a theme? One good starting point is her definition of God. “God is incorporeal, divine, supreme, infinite Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, Love.” (S&H 465:9) Seven synonyms, each in its own right a complete name for God, drawn straight from Jesus' healing proofs, from the action of the Christ. Jesus healed the insane; God is Mind. Jesus walked on water; God is Spirit. Jesus healed the sinner; God is Soul. Jesus healed the multitudes; God is Principle. Jesus raised the dead; God is Life. Jesus healed; God is Truth. Jesus overcame suffering, persecution, hatred; God is Love. Yes, the importance of every healing is what it tells us about God, proves to us about God! And of course, the Truth behind Jesus' healings is bolstered by the raising the dead and healing the sick and saving the sinners that we read throughout the Bible —acts of Elijah, Elisha, Moses, David, Peter, Paul, and the list goes on. It wasn't only Jesus who lived the principles of God, living the Christ, all the spiritual leaders of the Bible lived the Christ in some way.

Just what is the Christ? That's not exactly an easy question to answer, because Christ is an infinite idea. Mrs. Eddy, in her discovery of Christian Science, saw that the Christ couldn't be limited to a certain person living at a certain point in history. On pages 332-333 of *Science and Health* she explores the relationship between Jesus and the Christ in depth. She says, “Jesus demonstrated Christ; he proved that Christ is the divine idea of God. . . revealing the divine Principle, Love, and leading into all truth.” She also says, . . . “the Christ is without beginning of years or end of days. Throughout all generations both before and after the Christian era, the Christ, as the spiritual idea, —the reflection of God— has come with some measure of power and grace to all prepared to receive Christ, Truth.” . . . “The divine image, idea, or Christ was, is, and ever will be inseparable from the divine Principle, God. Jesus referred to this unity of his spiritual identity thus: ‘Before Abraham was, I am;’ ‘I and my Father are one;’ ‘My Father is greater than I.’ The one Spirit includes all identities.”

In other words, the Christ refers to the primary relationship between God and man as explained in Genesis, chapter one, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them . . . And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good."

As described in Christian Science, the concept of God's infinite allness and oneness elucidates the concept of the Christ. God is infinite. Yet, God is One. There is only one God, but that One has infinite expression. It makes sense, if man is made in the image and likeness of God, that there is one idea of man with infinite expression. In order for me to really know that I'm just as much the perfect image and likeness as you are, and we are just as much the perfect image and likeness as every other man ever created, including Jesus and Moses and David and Peter and Paul and our neighbors across the globe, we must have some understanding of infinitude and its relationship to oneness. Take the seven synonyms we talked about earlier. There is one Truth with infinite ramifications, one Soul with infinite individual manifestation, one Mind with infinite means of understanding. You get the picture. You, as an individual, are the perfect image and likeness of God, in your own unique way, full of all that God is, and yet different somehow from me, who is also the perfect image and likeness of God in my own unique way. Individual expression ad infinitum, different and one at the same time.

This brings a certain relevance to Jesus' healings. Each healing we read about in the Bible is a proof of infinite Principle explaining some aspect of the nature of all of God's creation. Principle applies to every situation, every person, every facet of God's creation, including your situation right now, your being right now, and your relationship to every other person or part of God's creation, right now. One Principle, infinite applications.

Christ assures us that even though we have to accept much unknown in the realm of the infinite real, we don't have to fear the unknown, because it's all God. It's all Love. It's all Life. We don't need to find safety and comfort in a limited definition of ourselves or others. All that exists according to the Principle of Love, which includes good for each and every one of us all at once at every moment. We are eternally safe in the realm of the infinite, in God's creation, in the kingdom of heaven.

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This Christly thought is the atmosphere our Christian Science nursing facilities embrace and exude. And that's why we see healing there. It breaks through the restrictions of mortal, material thinking which takes on the appearance of disease or decrepitude.

In making a distinction between our spiritual selves, (the me that God created and knows, that is the REAL me), and our human selves, (the me that I am conscious of, which may unwittingly include limitations or misperceptions), there sometimes seems to be a big difference, especially when I'm experiencing suffering, or when I see someone else experiencing suffering. How do I keep the true idea of man clear in my thought with all that suffering creating such an aggressive distraction? One important thing I've learned is that I don't need to explain the difference. Whether the suffering I see is in my consciousness only, or someone else's, if it isn't in God's consciousness, it isn't true and will never have a rational explanation. Seeking an explanation is the first step to figuring out how to fix it, but the idea of fixing something has behind it an assumption that it's really broken and needs to be fixed. What I really want to do is see it as it actually IS. I want to see it how God sees it, in all His

CHRIST ALIVE! — conclusion

infinite wisdom and perfection. How? How do I re-align my experience so that it is consistent with what I know to be true about God and His/Her power and pure goodness? Well, Christ is the key.

Mrs. Eddy calls the Christ, “the true idea voicing good. The divine message from God to men speaking to the human consciousness. . . . dispelling the illusions of the senses, . . . healing the sick and casting out evils, destroying sin, disease, and death” (*SC&H* 38). So how do we bring the Christ to the situation? Through prayer. Prayer opens our hearts and minds and souls to the power of the Christ, to the Truth about reality. Mrs. Eddy says, “Prayer cannot change the Science of being, but it tends to bring us into harmony with it” (*SC&H* 2:15). Our experience of reality, and our knowledge of it, is re-aligned to conform to the truth about God through Christ, and we are healed.

What if it doesn't seem like prayer is working? What if I've prayed and prayed and prayed, and I'm not getting the healing I expect? I want you to know, and this is really important, that prayer ALWAYS works. Let me repeat that. PRAYER ALWAYS WORKS. Our sincere desire to know God's truth in any situation, does and will bring that truth into action at some level. We just might not have full knowledge of its effect. We need to claim the effectiveness of every prayer, and then stay open for the infinite possibilities of how that healing is manifested. In doing so, we may be required to let go of an expected outcome.

I have heard it said that Christian Science nursing homes are places Christian Scientists go to die. No. It is where Christian Scientists go to live, and be healed.

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We cannot know all the spiritual transformation going on in each other, as we help each other move forward. But we know enough about God, to know that we each live according to the spiritual laws of Love, in eternal Life, just as Jesus and the Biblical giants proved to us over and over again. We each see what we are ready to see, as much of God as we know. And we help each other expand our knowledge of God, through the living Christ, the Christ our lives express and that we see expressed by others. You and I are evidence of the Christ alive. We show the Christ alive by living love, through gratitude to God for healings large and small, each one of them proving the infinite immensity of the One Principle of Life that is God.

And so, I am here today to express deeply felt gratitude to Fern Lodge, for its mission to heal, for the staff that lives the Christ, to the dear people who stay there, each and every one of them proving the power and goodness of God in their own ways through Christ. Fern Lodge is about healing. It is about Life. It is about Love. It is about God. And it consistently provides proof that the Christ is most definitely alive.

Thank you all, for your love for Fern Lodge, and for your individual expression of the Christ alive.

Trinka Wasik, C.S.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE NURSING EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

At Fern Lodge a practicing Christian Scientist can gain the necessary skills, judgments, and practical experience Mary Baker Eddy envisioned for a Christian Science nurse (*Church Manual*, pg 49). We welcome individuals who are able to heal themselves through their own prayers, who have hearts full of love and cheerful dispositions.

Fern Lodge offers a flexible, professional approach to Christian Science nursing education. Courses are offered regularly throughout the year. Experienced Christian Science nurses provide classroom instruction in subjects such as Ethics; Patient Handling techniques; Food Preparation and Modification; Personal Care and Bathing; Bed Care; Special Nourishment Needs; Cleansing and Bandaging of wounds; Legal Issues; Special Care Needs, including Sudden Care Needs; Care of Mental Needs; and In-Home Nursing. Stand alone courses in Supervision, Maternity Nursing, and Christian Science Nursing are available.

Class sizes of 3-4 provide an intimate setting and enable a close working relationship between students and instructors. An ethics class may convene on a walk in a nearby park, a bandaging class at a Christian Science camp, a foods class in an instructor's home nearby. For three years, a thorough course in Christian Science nursing was held for three women in a remote location three hours from the facility. A Christian Science nurse may fit in a course around a home case. Some have come from other facilities for several weeks of classroom and on-job instruction. Others take a class before or after their shift. These alternate environments promote a mental flexibility important for the expression of that practical wisdom so requisite in order to give proper care to the sick. These ideas are evidence of "Creative Mind, all good supplying" (Hymn 381).

Qualifying candidates may be employed at the facility for on-job instruction. Hands-on instruction with a mentor or on-job instructor carefully shepherds nurses from theory into practice of what has been taught in classes. On-job instructors demonstrate skills that can be learned only from experience. In this way completeness is brought to the course work. On-job instruction begins when a student finishes the 6-week classroom instruction. Afterwards, one day a week until the next level begins, students return to the classroom to further refine their skills, ask questions, and share their growing understanding. In each phase of Christian Science nursing education, students and instructors bear witness together to the assurance in John 6:45, "They shall be all taught of God."

Fern Lodge also works with qualified individuals from Spanish speaking countries, designing programs for them to learn Christian Science nursing while improving their English. Courses have been translated into Spanish. This year, a patient from Central America was grateful to be cared for by Christian Science nurses who spoke his own language.

Our Christian Science nursing program is as thorough and comprehensive as any being offered elsewhere. We provide distinct and unique educational opportunities. We take seriously the education of sincere Christian Science church members who exhibit promising, practical, loving natures and the prayerful ability to make sound judgments in the care of others. Our complete education program helps individuals learn to care for all mankind, not just the patients in the facility. Those who complete the Fern Lodge courses and who demonstrate their own practice of Christian Science nursing may be qualified to advertise in *The Christian Science Journal*. Whatever the setting or language, the Christian Science nursing principles remain the same, are universal, and immediately available.

Interested? Please contact Sharon Strong, Director of Christian Science Nursing, for an application or to ask questions. She can be reached by email at SharStrong@comcast.net, or by phone at 510-886-2448 ext. 225.

PAYMENT FOR SERVICES AND BENEVOLENCE

No one who would benefit from and be blessed by Christian Science nursing care should hesitate to call Fern Lodge because of financial considerations. We understand that divine Love's provision meets every human need, including the supply that provides for all necessary care.

Christian Science nursing care at Fern Lodge may be partially paid for by the Medicare or Medi-Cal programs, if the specific requirements of those programs are met. The Fern Lodge office staff will be happy to answer your questions about either program and also about individual health care insurance. While we participate in these government funding programs, we pray to be free from any influence that might interfere with full reliance on Christ, the divine, healing influence ever present in human consciousness.

Fern Lodge provides Christian Science nursing care for individuals without regard to the length of time care is needed, and in many cases individuals who need care are able to pay only a portion of the cost. We are grateful to God for His unfailing provision for each of His children, and we gladly accept guests who lack financial resources to pay for their care. Fern Lodge does not have an endowment fund or investments to draw on to give financial aid. Gifts from many supporters provide the funds to help those who need such aid while at Fern Lodge.

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED AND MUCH APPRECIATED

Benevolence is simply good will for others. Benevolent funds come from the good will of many individuals, churches, and Christian Science student associations who see and help meet the needs of deserving Christian Scientists. These funds may come in the form of financial gifts or bequests of cash or other resources such as stocks, bonds or real estate. We are deeply grateful to all who give in support of Christian Science nursing services, at Fern Lodge or elsewhere.

To help ensure the availability of Christian Science nursing throughout the country, Fern Lodge is working with other Christian Science nursing facilities to found a national Benevolence Fund for Christian Science Nursing Care.

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