



FERN LODGE FOCUS — ANNUAL MEETING 2015 REPORT

In 1895 Mary Baker Eddy said to Church members (Misc 147:3): “Another year has rolled on, another annual meeting has convened, another space of time has been given us and has another duty been done and another victory won for time and eternity? Do you meet in unity, preferring one another, and demonstrating the divine Principle of Christian Science? Have you improved past hours, and ladened them with records worthy to be borne heavenward? Have you learned that sin is inadmissible, and indicates a small mind? Do you manifest love for those that hate you and spitefully use you?”

Let's look at this quote in relation to the past year at Fern Lodge. “Has another duty been done and another victory won for time and eternity?” We have been privileged to participate in several Christian Science healings. Healing is our duty, our mission. The summer childcare program has been a blessing for all. We look forward to continuing and extending this helpful, healing activity. Our Christian Science nursing education program is among the finest, most complete programs available.

“Do you meet in unity, preferring one another, and demonstrating the divine Principle of Christian Science?” We work closely with our fellow Christian Science nursing facilities to provide accreditation services to help us all to maintain consistently high standards. We are united within Fern Lodge in our dedication to the ministry of Christian Science nursing. At the heart of nursing is the vital and healing Christian idea of “preferring one another,” putting another's needs ahead of our own, demonstrating the Principle of Christian Science, divine Love.

“Have you improved past hours, and ladened them with records worthy to be borne heavenward?” That is our prayer, and I believe we can answer, Yes. We have maintained our patient occupancy and served individuals in their homes and as outpatients. We have had more Christian Scientists enrolled in our

education programs. And our childcare program has continued to improve. These are wonderful activities, giving valuable services to our community, and the fruits of these activities are borne heavenward as expanding expressions of our love for God and man.

“Have you learned that sin is inadmissible, and indicates a small mind? Do you manifest love for those that hate you and spitefully use you?” These are questions we take seriously, because we recognize that they indicate Mrs. Eddy's urgent counsel that we all handle aggressive mental suggestions with Christian Science and destroy animal magnetism with the realization of spiritual affection, grounded in and expressing divine Love.

Preferring one another leads us to help each other work out our own salvation, forsaking the aggression of sin and the emotionalism of small-mindedness by affirming our unity with divine Mind. We resolve to “work, watch and pray” to know nothing of hatred, to turn away from any temptation to personalize and react to evil, and to return blessing for cursing. We realize that righteousness is its own reward, so we will not shrink from doing good, even if it means that we have opportunities to learn the blessing that comes from being “persecuted for righteousness' sake.” We realize that the path to this goal lies in fulfilling the solemn promise in our sixth tenet, “...to watch, and pray for that Mind which was also in Christ Jesus; to do unto others as we would have them do unto us; and to merciful, just and pure.”

George Strong
Administrator



OUR MISSION IS TO HEAL! — HEATHER BECK

“God expresses in man the infinite idea forever developing itself, broadening and rising higher and higher from a boundless basis” (S&H 258:13-15). This statement applies beautifully to Fern Lodge. We are broadening and rising in our understanding that God cares for man. We are seeing that healing is possible because with God all things are possible. Our Mission is to Heal. This simple statement guides us in all areas of our work. Though simple, its implications are profound, and it’s woven into *everything* we do.

When I take an admission call, I am almost always asked, “How much does it cost to be a patient at Fern Lodge?” I always very gently say something like, “I understand finances are a concern, but may I ask a few questions first?” And then I ask how we can help meet the needs. We talk about the patient’s love for Christian Science and what we do to support their study and practice. I love hearing all the ways these dear ones have served the Cause for so many years. Then I bring up the most important thing of all—the *expectancy of healing*. We think of every patient’s stay as a temporary one, because we are focused on healing. That said, we will provide care for someone *as long as is necessary* for the healing. We never turn a patient away just because they are unable to pay.

It is so important for the patients and their families to have an expectancy of healing. There is a subtle suggestion that tries to dupe us all into believing that at a certain point in life one will run out of money, out of time, out of options, and be too old to be healed. Not so! We have seen people of advanced years come to Fern Lodge, be healed, find a new place to live, and have all their needs met by radically relying on God.

I’d like to share a few healings we have seen this year. A patient apparently lost consciousness. A Christian Science practitioner was called, and the Fern Lodge staff worked with her; in a short time she got up and resumed all of her regular activities. While speaking with a Christian Science nurse, a patient expressing anger and agitation became calm, quiet, and grateful. Another patient recently returned home after a

beautiful healing. He came to Fern Lodge able to stand just long enough to transfer himself from chair to chair, but unable to walk. Soon he left walking. What do these healings prove? We all know, because we have experienced healing too, that God is Love and All, and that we are healed as we glimpse the truth as revealed in Christian Science.

The Christian Science nurses are key to the healing work at Fern Lodge. I have never seen a more consecrated, hard-working group. They never hesitate to go the extra mile in giving Christianly scientific care to the patients. They are creative problem solvers; they strive to be economical in their use of materials and resources; and they are loving, wise, forgiving, and flexible. They are joyful and buoyant. They help without hesitation when a fellow staff member isn’t feeling well. They love the patients and each other and it is a *privilege* to work with them. Their expectancy of healing is evidenced in the words of encouragement I hear as they are helping someone to walk, and in their steadfast trust that a patient expressing anger or confusion will yield to the Christ as they read to them and offer a cool drink. They come to work everyday with renewed joy, and a willingness to give unselfishly to support the patients’ reliance on Christian Science.

Our Activities Department, which weaves Christian Science into everything they do, encourages and supports a sense of the fullness of Life for the patients. Our staff in the other departments—Kitchen, Maintenance, Housekeeping and Laundry, and the office—give their individual talents faithfully and with so much love. Our wonderful volunteers conduct Sunday and Wednesday services, take patients on outings, read to them, and offer inspired, loving assistance. Our house practitioners so faithfully support us, and they have helped us on so many occasions. We are blessed by each one’s dedication. What I see at Fern Lodge is a blending of hearts whose *sole purpose* is to support the patients and each other, and to love God. We expect to see healing, and we *are* seeing it, daily.

Heather Beck
Director of Christian Science Nursing

ACCESS BY ONE SPIRIT — EXCERPTS FROM A TALK BY CAROLEEN SCHOLET

In Ephesians 2:18, we read one small but magnificent aspect of Paul's ministry. "Through him [Christ Jesus] we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." I hope you will realize a stronger, clearer sense of this promise that cannot be denied. I hope you will be encouraged to share this message with others through your Christian Science healing practice. Let's begin by giving gratitude for the moment when you or your family came into Christian Science. Think about how much that moment has changed your life. Let's take a minute to give thanks.

We are here on behalf of Fern Lodge, where individuals dedicate their lives to offering a haven for those in need, to rekindle their connection with God, to understand that they have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Christian Science nurses, as spiritual witnesses, are faithfully standing with those challenged by sickness, sin, disease—you name it—and endeavoring, through inspiration and prayerful wisdom, to care for human needs. Their work promotes Christ healing, carrying on what our Master and apostles and Mary Baker Eddy taught and practiced.

We have more work to do, because there are individuals who are hungering, questioning, and searching for the

answers that Christian Science reveals: that Spirit is present; Christ is present and can be called upon; that all can have access to our Father-Mother, God. There is an awakening going on. While our mission and work are good, we're continuously being called to greater works: to embrace humanity more, to offer Christian Science nursing more, beyond our current comfort zones. It takes moral courage; it takes answering the call in the face of persecution, of anger, of misunderstanding and fear. It takes telling people what we do instead of what we don't do as Christian Scientists. Of course demonstrating what we understand makes a more powerful difference.

Let's dive into the topic of the talk today: "access by one Spirit." Paul lived among the Ephesians for about three years. As recorded in his words from Acts 20:18, he said, "Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: *And* how I kept back nothing that was profitable *unto you*, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

In his farewell a few verses later, Paul says (Acts 20:35) "I have showed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." He sets the tone for the need to help one another, he does his best to BE the example, just as our Master Christ Jesus did. They already know and love him, so when he writes the letter to them from prison, he's really just reminding

WE'RE CONTINUALLY BEING CALLED TO EMBRACE HUMANITY MORE, TO OFFER CHRISTIAN SCIENCE NURSING MORE.

them that they all, Jews and Gentiles, believers and non-believers, have access, through Christ Jesus, by one Spirit, to our Father.

He is sending them a promise, and the Scriptures reach right through the centuries to us today and echo this promise: we, too, have access by one Spirit. We can stop putting up walls of separation in our churches, between religions, in our thoughts, in our lives. Ephesians 2 also tells us that Christ Jesus, "is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us...for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace." Our Master removed that partition, that

division. He taught us to see one man, one idea of God. This is the man we strive to see in our practice of Christian Science, which includes nursing.

Let's take a look at a few definitions of *access*: permission or the right to enter, a leading or bringing into the presence of. In the Bible it may refer to having audience with God. Access is an important component of life these days. People access the news, social media, health care, bank and investment accounts, businesses, and resources like water, energy, solar power. They have access to homes, to friends, churches, safety; access to answers. What does it take

"Honor thy Father and Mother, God. Continue in His love. Bring forth fruit—'signs following'—that your prayers be not hindered. Pray without ceasing. Watch diligently; never desert the post of spiritual observation and self-examination. Strive for self-abnegation, justice, meekness, mercy, purity, love. Let your light reflect Light. Have no ambition, affection, nor aim apart from holiness. Forget not for a moment, that God is All-in-all—therefore, that in reality there is but one cause and effect. Forget self in laboring for mankind; then will you woo the weary wanderer to your door, win the pilgrim and stranger to your church, and find access to the heart of humanity" (Mis. 154:23-10).

COMPANION WITH COMFORTERS OF "CHRISTLIKE TOUCH." CLAIM THE ACCESS WE'VE BEEN PROMISED.

to gain access? Keys? Intelligence? A master mind that can break through any code? A security code? Does it require a thumbprint? A blueprint? Or a Holy Spirit imprint!

In Ephesians, Paul promises that through Christ Jesus we have access unto the Father. We know that access is through our Master, Christ Jesus, who told us he IS the door (John 10). We know that the one Spirit determines what passes through that door. All that passes through must be in sync with, must identify with Spirit. Spirit is what makes the Master key turn in the door: "the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." We belong. We all belong.

HOW do we gain access? Sure, we talk about it being a key or a code, but when we're talking about Spirit, it has to have a spiritually inspired answer. A passage in Mrs. Eddy's *Miscellaneous Writings* captures several ideas that are like pins in a lock, so that when the key goes into the lock, the key can be turned. These ideas give us access to our Father.

What does it look like when we can't or don't gain the access we long for? Sometimes it feels like someone stamped a huge "ACCESS DENIED" stamp on our foreheads, in our hearts, and it feels miserable. Does it look like closed doors, locked doors, no doors at all, blocked roads, discouragement, desperation, doubt? Does it look like sickness, disease, destruction, ill health, ill-temper, ill-behavior, misdirected motives, lack of education, lack of resources? Yes, all of the above, and as metaphysicians we hear these cries from others. Mortal mind presents disturbing thought-patterns that try to keep us running in circles, going nowhere fast. And at this point we long for an understanding of the promise that we indeed DO HAVE ACCESS to our Father and we cannot be kept from Him. How do we get there when we don't feel it?

Companion with comforters of "Christlike touch" (Ret 95). Begin by acknowledging the truth. Claim the access we've been promised. We can do that. It's our divine right. Mary Baker Eddy designed within the church structure an avenue by which anyone can call on Christian Science practitioners, Christian Science nurses—healers in the Church. Those

individuals are dedicated each day to be there when someone is struggling beyond what they feel confident and capable of handling themselves. When we don't feel it, even after praying diligently, we can call on an experienced Christian Scientist to help us: "If students do not readily heal themselves, they should early call an experienced Christian Scientist to aid them. If they are unwilling to do this for themselves, they need only to know that error cannot produce this unnatural reluctance" (SH 420:4). These Christian Science nurses and practitioners are available to you.

Sometimes individuals need a haven, a tangible "secret place of the most high" place to pray, and to have spiritual witnesses by their side, while they dismiss the access-denied-imposter and claim their innate freedom as loved, strong, capable spiritual ideas of our all loving, Father-Mother, God. Fern Lodge is such a haven: a Christian Science nursing facility where healing takes place. A haven where everyone is striving to do the same thing: "Realize the presence of health and the fact of harmonious being, until the body corresponds with the normal conditions of health and harmony" (SH 412:24). Notice that it's not about time; it's UNTIL the body corresponds with the normal conditions.

Sometimes it just feels tough to keep it up. A couple of years ago a colleague of mine, who is an experienced Christian Scientist, was asked, "What do you do if... or when...?" He responded, "Never give up." It rings in my thought from time to time when a situation appears to be repetitive, confrontational, when someone is tempted to give up. I hear that voice ring clear: Never give up. It's something to consider in our metaphysical practice, in our ministry of Christian Science nursing. God will never give up on being God. Christ will never give up on being the cornerstone of spiritual building. Spirit will never give up on granting access to our heavenly Father. Therefore we have strength in Spirit, to never give up.

Each one of us has the capability as a student of Christian Science to calm and heal our own thought, and therefore to reach out to others, all others in need. It's imperative to remind ourselves that Christ Jesus wasn't healing and teaching those who already understood his message. And early in her work, Mary Baker Eddy wasn't healing and teaching Christian Scientists. How are we following in these footsteps? It's worth asking every once in a while.

WE HAVE ACCESS! Paul may have been thinking about gaining access himself. Consider his predicament; he wrote this letter to the people of Ephesus while imprisoned in Rome. And besides that, just think, if mankind were denied access because they had done something immoral, unethical, or sinful, then the very person, Saul—who persecuted Christians—would not have been transformed to Paul, to carry on the works and teachings of Christ Jesus. And yet he WAS transformed and each one of us is given the promise and the possibility to be healed, whole, redeemed, and transformed and to help others along the same lines.

***SOMETIMES INDIVIDUALS NEED A HAVEN, A TANGIBLE
"SECRET PLACE OF THE MOST HIGH" PLACE TO PRAY.***

The Master is the key to entering the kingdom, to gaining access to the kingdom of right thinking, right acting, wisdom, justice, purity, consistency, unanimity, whatever answers we need, whatever direction and guidance is requisite. We know when we try our own ways, sometimes the key just doesn't line up! We have to step back and be patient and let the Master open the Way. "We approach God, or Life, in proportion to our spirituality, our fidelity to Truth and Love; and in that ratio we know all human need and are able to discern the thought of the sick and the sinning for the purpose of healing them...Whoever reaches this point of moral culture and goodness

cannot injure others, and must do them good. The greater or lesser ability of a Christian Scientist to discern thought scientifically, depends upon his genuine spirituality. This kind of mind-reading is not clairvoyance, but it is important to success in healing, and is one of the special characteristics thereof" (SH 95:6-18).

Access to the Father doesn't lie in following statistics or trends. It isn't about an earth-shattering answer that someone is going to reveal beyond what we have already been given in the sanctity of God's Word through Scripture and the revelation of Christian Science through the writings of Mary Baker Eddy. The Master key that gives us access to a clearer, higher, purer way of life, is in the teachings of Christian Science.

I have one more concept to share, one that is essential in the building we are doing for humanity. I've come to call it "Macedonian generosity." It has come alive

giving was inspired of their oneness with and faith in God's generosity with his children. Also what they gave was entirely on their own. As one commentary put it, "In essence, the Macedonians were not pressured into giving. They gave willingly." In fact, they urgently pleaded to be involved—it wasn't a per capita tax or bylaw they were following, or a collection basket, or even an envelope from a Christian Science nursing facility. *The Pulpit Commentary* says: "So great was their desire to serve Christ that they would not allow their economic situation to keep them from being involved in the Lord's work."

In essence, Paul is saying, "Friends, I wish to inform you of this grace of God, that no matter what you have or don't have, give, and give beyond what you think is doable." Our generosity speaks to our understanding of the abundance of what God is supplying. This Macedonian generosity is a model for our giving to others.

LET'S ALLOW OURSELVES TO MOVE BEYOND OUR COMFORT ZONE AND INTO THE COMFORTER ZONE.

in my thought as a Biblical model for giving. In Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians, he writes to say that they would do well to look more closely at the grace God has bestowed on the churches of Macedonia. What was he pointing out here?

The Macedonian churches were abundant in joy—not merely joyful, but overflowing with joy, even while in affliction and severe trials. Persecution did not take away from their joy. They were generous even when it looked like they were in a state of extreme poverty. They were open-hearted with their possessions. They didn't give only as much as they were able, they gave beyond. The Bible doesn't give a sense that they were unwise or reckless in their giving, but they gave in proportion to their understanding. They had their giving priorities in order: first they gave themselves to God and then unto others "by the will of God," Their

In wrapping up today, let's carry this promise from Paul with us in our hearts: We have access by one Spirit unto the Father. This access enables us to persevere, to endure and never to give up, to reach out to others, and to share what we love and to tell how our lives have been transformed by Christ Jesus, by Christian Science. Let's allow ourselves to move beyond our own comfort zone, and into the Comforter zone where all things are possible. Let's dig deeper to understand Spirit; let's call upon our Pastor to teach us how to access our Father: how to deny sin and plead God's allness so that our lives can be examples for others, so that they will be drawn to our Father-Mother, God.

Thank you.

Caroleen Scholet
Christian Science Nurse

"ACADEMICS OF THE RIGHT SORT" — SHARON STRONG

In *Science and Health*, Mrs. Eddy says, "Academics of the right sort are requisite." She goes on to list four qualities essential to learning: "Observation, invention, study, and original thought are expansive and should promote the growth of mortal mind out of itself, out of all that is mortal" (*SH* 195).

Observation is critical for a Christian Science nurse. What do we observe: a physical situation requiring a specific set of learned skills, or a situation where the Christian Science nurse is conscious of divine Mind's wisdom while tending to an individual's need for comfort, cleanliness, mobility, safety, rest, and nourishment? "Observe mind instead of body," Mrs. Eddy counsels (*SH* 419). Invention follows naturally from observation. Observing Mind instead of body, and following Mind's direction, a Christian Science nurse will recognize new and original ways of doing things to meet particular needs. This is the expression of divine Love and Motherhood, fundamental elements of Christian Science nursing.

Then study. Study is the process of learning a subject by reading, going to school, etc. The Amplified Bible translates the phrase "rightly dividing the word of truth in 2 Tim 2:15 as "correctly analyzing and ... [rightly handling and skillfully teaching] the Word of Truth." How important that CS nurses then "Study thoroughly the letter and imbibe the Spirit," as our Leader urges (*SH* 495:27-28). Why? Because it is Spirit that quickens us and breathes new life into familiar concepts. Learning the underlying fundamentals of any art or skill expands our thought and helps us to make intelligent and appropriate adaptations to ensure proper care is given.

Original thought is the reflection of Mind; it builds on our prayer and study and gives us fresh insights as we practice. It indicates that we have learned a subject and can share our inspiration and insights with others. These "academics of the right" sort serve "to promote the growth of mortal mind out of itself, out of all that is mortal." This is the type of assistance we all would like to receive from a Christian Science nurse: someone who will not

believe in the reality of the situation but will respond with calm clarity, wise words, and tender, skillful actions to meet the need.

This is the type of thinking and assistance we provide in our training program in order to assist a practicing Christian Scientist to be a fully confident, competent Christian Science nurse: one who is aware of a patient's environment, who is attuned to meeting spiritual needs, who prayerfully understands how to support another in his demonstration, who provides skillful care with mobility, cleansing and bandaging, who tenderly and fearlessly ministers to the needs of those with mental impositions such as confusion, or aggression, and who clearly understands the Christian Science ethics of each situation, and who acts from the highest standard of right while dealing with all others compassionately.

At a recent conference for Christian Science nursing educators, it was inspiring to hear instructors from around the world speak in similar terms about the gentle yet skillful nurturing of their students and how they pray and listen for progressive ways to impart the spiritual essence of Christian Science nursing while teaching and demonstrating practical skills. No matter where we are in the world, we are all teaching from what lies fundamentally within the *Church Manual* bylaw, "Christian Science Nurse."

It has been a fun, full year in our Christian Science Nursing Education program! Seven students came for beginning and advanced classes and returned to their facilities. Two others are working at Fern Lodge right now. We've also given refresher courses at Twelveacres and other facilities in the US and Canada. Our education program is meeting the needs of many Christian Science nurses who desire to have a complete education in comfort's arts. All are prepared to demonstrate Christian Science nursing with a sense of confidence, inspiration, skillfulness, and cheer.

Sharon Strong
Director of Christian Science Nursing Education

TREASURER'S REPORT — 2015

Fern Lodge operates with “wisdom, economy, and brotherly love.” Love leads us to be benevolent and humanitarian. Our charges for Christian Science nursing are among the most reasonable anywhere, and we keep our costs within budget each year. Patients regularly come to Fern Lodge because they are unable to stay at other facilities due to financial reasons. We are on track to give about \$725,000 in financial assistance in 2015.

By far the largest portion of our expenses for operations goes to provide fair compensation for the Fern Lodge staff, whose loving care in all departments does so much to maintain our healing mental environment.

Patient payments and government programs together proved about 67% of the funds needed for operation. Because many patients do have resources to pay the full cost of care, additional funding is needed to provide benevolence. For 2015, donations and grants will be needed to supply about \$725,000 in financial aid that will be given as benevolence for those who need it.

ANNUAL MEETING AUDIO

You may listen to the Fern Lodge Annual Meeting on the Fern Lodge website: fern lodge.org/blog



***Fern Lodge Focus* — November 2015**

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