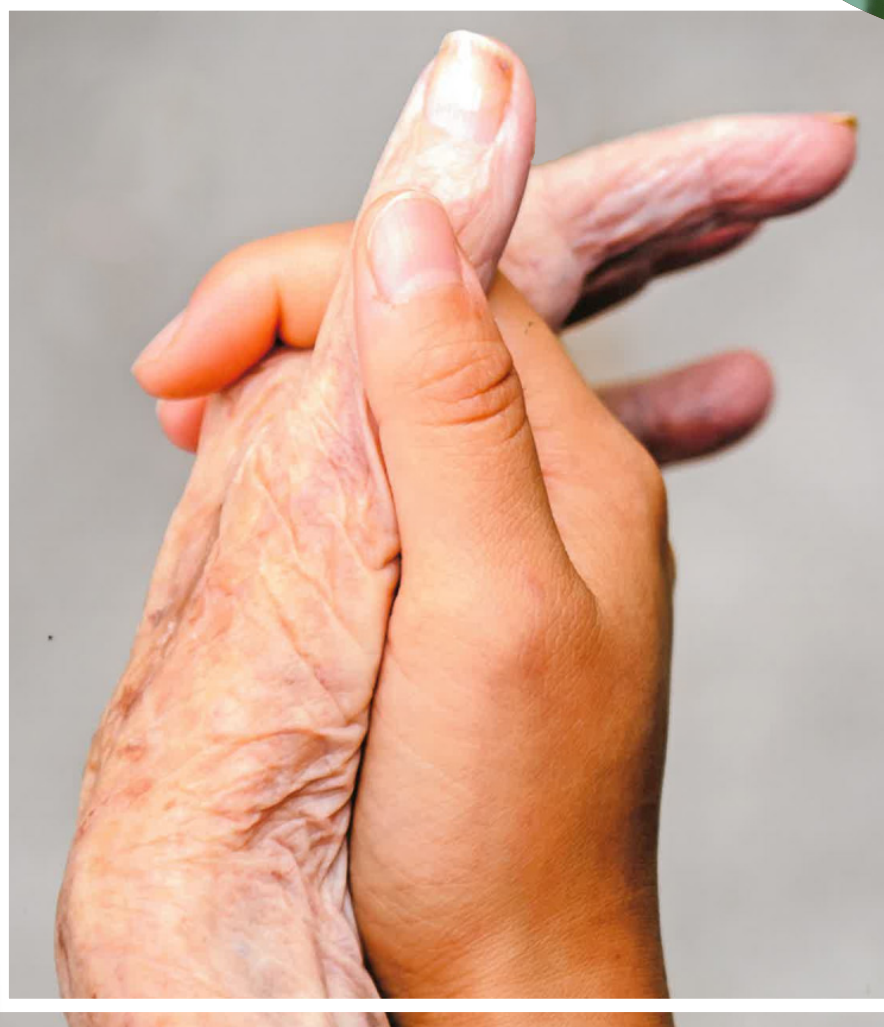


November 2023

# Fern Lodge

F O C U S



“And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto to one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” - Christ Jesus (Matthew 25:40)



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## Demonstration of God’s Constant Care

by George Strong

Hello again, dear friends! In our most recent *Fern Lodge Focus*, one article ended with our invitation for you to join us in the holy work that is Christian Science nursing. Of course, we will welcome anyone who is led in prayer to learn and practice Christian Science nursing as their calling and profession. But our invitation was for much more than that.

We have been giving regular, deep consideration of the lessons Christ Jesus shared. It seems apparent that he was giving his followers the clear, thorough, and focused teaching that would enable them, both individually and collectively, to follow his example—to “heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons,” just as he had been doing throughout his life.

Through the years at Fern Lodge, we have thought deeply about the place of Christian Science nursing in The Mother Church, in our branch churches, and in the individual practice of Christian Science healing, helping and healing all mankind. Of course, we have sought and found encouragement and inspiration in the Bible, and especially in the Gospel accounts of the teachings of Christ Jesus. There is much to be gained from the parable of the Good Samaritan, in Luke 10. We have prayed for ourselves to be careful of the thinking of the priest and the Levite—who were the authorities of their day—as they saw the man in need and “passed by on the other side.”

But a Samaritan, a stranger from a different culture, “had compassion on him, and went to him, pouring in oil and wine, and...brought him to an inn, and took care of him.” What’s more, he paid all the costs, and said to the host, “Take care of him, and whatever else you spend, I will repay you when I come back this way.” The final words Jesus shared in this story were, “Go and do the same.”

In Matthew, chapter 25, we learn that Jesus’ counsel was more than just a pretty good idea. Jesus says, “When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. All the nations will be assembled before him, and he will separate people one from another like a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.”

All people. All of us. What’s the difference between the sheep and the goats? Well, it’s pretty easy. Here’s what Jesus said:

*I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.*

Jesus also clearly said that there is a reward when we care for others. “Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

Feeding hungry people, giving thirsty people drink, taking in those who need a home, giving clothes to those who need them, caring for the sick, and visiting people in prison. Each of these simple activities are aspects of Christian Science nursing. And these are what earn us the blessing of living in “the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” I won’t say much about it here, but also in Matthew 25 we learn that refusing to give people what they need leads to condemnation: “these shall go away into everlasting punishment.”

Fern Lodge is, and always has been, dedicated to caring for others, in demonstration of God’s constant care for everyone. Recently, we’ve been thinking of Fern Lodge as a Matthew 25 facility—a place where Christian, scientific care is given in support of those who are trusting in Christian Science for healing, right now, regardless of ability to pay, regardless of length of stay.

When we invited you to join us in the holy work that is Christian Science nursing, this is what we meant: expressing Christian Science every day with simple acts of helping each other. We love serving our fellow women and men who are helped by Christian care that supports Christian Science healing. And we love everyone who supports us in our work and who cares for others in their own communities and branch churches. Thank you!!!



— A Matthew 25 Facility —

# Letter from our Administrator

## Witnessing the Light

Recently, a Christian Science nurse asked me to explain the difference between a practitioner and a Christian Science nurse. I once heard a simplistic answer: A Christian Science nurse is a practitioner who does windows. At a certain level, this is true, for a Christian Science nurse is a hands-on worker who meets practical human needs. But we deserve a deeper answer.

The core duty of every Christian Scientist is the same—we are all called to be spiritual witnesses, to be windows through which the light of Christ shines. Such radiant witnessing brings healing. Mrs. Eddy makes this clear on p. 295 in *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*:

*The manifestation of God through mortals is as light passing through the window-pane. The light and the glass never mingle, but as matter, the glass is less opaque than the walls. The mortal mind through which Truth appears most vividly is that one which has lost much materiality—much error—in order to become a better transparency for Truth. Then, like a cloud melting into thin vapor, it no longer hides the sun.*

Both the practitioner and nurse are spiritual witnesses. Each lovingly strives to see a patient's spiritual identity. In addition, the Christian Science practitioner and nurse are windows through which the light of Christ enters a sickroom. In that sense, the Christian Science nurse and practitioner have overlapping roles. Their offices differ, but both should be spiritual witnesses and radiant transparencies for divine Love.

In recent years, it is increasingly clear that a Christian Science nurse's "primary role" is to witness a patient's spiritual individuality, as Eva Hussey noted in 2008: "Christian Science nurses . . . have every expectation of seeing the patient from a spiritual basis, the man of God's creating. . . [T]he primary role of the Christian Science nurse . . . is to witness to each patient's innate spiritual identity." ("A Quiet, Mighty Band of Healers", *Christian Science Journal*, May 2008)

Thus, a Christian Science nurse's primary duty is to witness a patient's spiritual identity while taking proper care of their own thought, thereby becoming a transparency for divine Love—and this form of Christian care must have a practical, healing effect. Likewise, the heart of a practitioner's work is to witness the patient spiritually while reflecting the irradiance of divine Love—and such loving witnessing can heal instantly. There remains, however, a significant distinction in the roles of the Christian Science practitioner and nurse. The practitioner gives direct metaphysical treatment to patients through Christian Science, while the Christian Science nurse provides excellent physical care and supports a patient's spiritual growth.

Mrs. Eddy also makes it clear that spiritual witnessing must always have a direct healing effect. In one of the most fundamental passages in *Science and Health*, she says:

*Jesus beheld in Science the perfect man [spiritual witnessing], who appeared to him where sinning mortal man appears to mortals. In this perfect man the Saviour saw God's own likeness, and this correct view of man healed the sick. Thus Jesus taught that the kingdom of God is intact, universal, and that man is pure and holy. (p. 476)*

In the words that Christ Jesus spoke to each one of us: "Go and do thou likewise..."

  
Brad Stock

## A Need Made Known

Fern Lodge needs your help. Largely due to a lower than usual number of patients, many of whom need financial benevolence, we're running a monthly deficit that is unsustainable, and the two largest sources of financial assistance for Christian Science nursing have recently announced they are reducing their financial support for the foreseeable future. Thus, we must ask you, our field, to do what you can to support the continued availability of Christian Science nursing at Fern Lodge. Your support for those brothers and sisters in need—who are looking to Christian Science for healing—is greatly appreciated. As Mrs. Eddy once said: "There was no urging, begging, or borrowing; only the need made known" (*Pulpit and Press*, p. 8), and this was enough to open the hearts of Christian Scientists.

## Journey to the True Nature of Christian Science Nursing: a calling to express home, family and community.

by Marjorie Dala, Fern Lodge's Co-Director of Christian Science Nursing

Watchfulness and individual spiritual growth lead to community bonds. As we apply Christian Science in our daily lives, we build a community that is continuously growing and reflects a "structure of Truth and Love," as stated by Mrs. Eddy.

I was introduced to Christian Science by my best friend. We were both introduced to Christian Science nursing by a fellow church member who was a Christian Science nurse. My best friend and I started our Christian Science nursing ministry in Ohio, far from our hometown in the Philippines.

I cannot describe my journey into Christian Science nursing by listing the physical steps, the classes I took or facilities I've worked in; my journey was not about my personal landmarks, but about the people I met and grew with as a community and family.

Christian Science nurses feel called to the ministry. Christian Science nurses do not leave home and their families, though to the physical sense it may appear so. Instead, as Christian Science nurses travel to help, they carry the sense of home with them. We are at home with God wherever we go. Every one that serves God in a heartbeat will continue to gather hearts in harmony with Him. The Church within us structures our demonstration of Love as we are willing to help and be helped. Our ability to commune with God individually brings us together in unity with the same purpose that brought us into the movement of Christian Science Healing. A quote I've always loved states:

*Oh, may the love that is talked, be felt! And so lived, that when weighed in the scale of God we be not found wanting. Love is consistent, uniform, sympathetic, self-sacrificing, unutterably kind; even that which lays all upon the altar, and, speechless and alone, bears all burdens, suffers all inflictions, endures all piercing for the sake of others, and for the kingdom of heaven's sake.*  
(Miscellaneous Writings 1883–1896, Mary Baker Eddy, p. 312:2)

The true nature of Christian Science nursing is seen in the way the teachings of Christ Jesus reach inward and outward mentally with the power of Truth. Jesus speaks with authority and compassion, and, in doing so, heals sickness, sin, and death. It is an uphill battle to overcome pride and timidity of worldly affairs that enslaves but it is not impossible to overcome. The Christian Science Nursing Ministry has taught me to be alert against wrong mental suggestions, to do my duty to God and to serve my fellow man.

Forbearance and humility is the way of Christian Science practice and needed in Christian Science nursing. There is still a need to take a hike higher and deeper in the Ministry of Christian Science Healing. I have joined the family here in California, Fern Lodge. It has been a joy to work with people who have the utmost love to give to the community we are in and beyond. In God's appointing we are set out for "... a more expansive love, a higher and more permanent peace." (Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Mary Baker Eddy, p. 265:14)

## Loving Correspondence

Over the years, we have received such an outpouring of love from the community and we wanted to take some time, as we look back fondly on these cards and letters, to tell you all how much we really appreciate every kind word sent to us, and every donation, whether it be of time or money that we receive. It makes a huge difference as we continue our mission to meet the needs of all who come to us.

Some of these letters are addressed to people in particular, such as George and Sharon, some are addressed to the Christian Science nurses or the staff as whole, and some are giving thanks for God and the divine qualities they witness. We love seeing the bright designs, hearing your touching stories, and reading the inspired thoughts and phrases within these messages.

"Dear Friends..."

"Thank you for all your support, comfort, caring, love..."

"...for the love, support, generosity, compassion, and inspiration I have received in the past from you all."

"You have helped break down the barriers that fear has artificially imposed."

"We have felt the expressed kindness to my mother and our family."

"Thank you for the love and compassion shown to my father..."

"...in all of this, God's love is felt..."

"Carry on with the good work"

"We will always fondly remember our time at Fern Lodge."

*Thank you from Fern Lodge*

# Motherly Eye

by Robin Barben

Walking into the breakfast kitchen one day, I noticed loving notes to Hilda from the patients all over the side of the fridge, each one expressing their gratitude for the love she puts into making breakfast a special time for them. There were hearts and flowers drawn on them, each one a piece of the breakfast tray liner torn off with ragged edges, like the morning experience of that day was so powerful as to elicit an immediate thanks. I have long noticed the breakfast nook as a place where the patients come and talk easily with each other and feel comfortable in knowing that they can ask for whatever they need and their needs will be immediately met. It's most definitely a dear expression of home.

Asking Hilda what she brings to Fern Lodge that expresses home, she said, "Family. I see everyone here as my family. It's my second home and sometimes I feel that I am more the mother here than I am at home."

From the outside this sense of family is easy to spot, but it's more than the wonderful breakfast she prepares each day. She keeps a motherly eye out for what is needed, whether is a refill on juice, some conversation, a ride to their room, or familial support. Every day she is very aware of any needs and takes steps to make sure Love is felt in numerous ways. I am always in awe at how much she has learned about each patient's life experience and how she respects and honors each one.

Hilda explained how important it was to her to interact with the patients during her whole shift, not just when she placed the meal down at the table, and that she tries to be aware of their needs through the day.

In the end, she said that one of the things that motivates her to be so attentive each and every day is the Bible passage "Do unto others as you would have done to you." As such, it is so important to her that every day she strives to "treat people like I hope I will be treated."



# Consoleteur Makengo on his Summer Internship at Fern Lodge

During the summer of 2023, I pursued a paid internship to cover my academic fees. As a Religious Studies major at Principia, I aimed to intern in a company offering professional and spiritual growth. I believed that Fern Lodge would meet my needs.

The experience matched my expectations, even as I encountered challenges. Thankfully, with the help of others, I gradually overcame them. I loved the fact that the class incorporated spiritual teachings from the Bible and *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*. The practice sessions helped me develop patience, gain spiritual insight, and improve my time management, communication skills, teamwork abilities.

I was impressed by the Christian Science nurses' close attention to supporting patients' reliance on Christian Science for healing, which, to me, sets them apart from medical nursing. Christian Science nursing should be an integral part of every Christian's daily life, encompassing acts of compassion and love towards others, continuous prayer, and recognizing the perfection in others as God created them. These principles are embraced by everyone at Fern Lodge, creating a comforting and welcoming atmosphere. I am striving to do the same. I would love to learn more about Christian Science nursing if given the opportunity again.

## Heart of All my Blessings: A Conversation with a Board Member

Our Fern Lodge board is passionate about the facility and the work that we do. They are always endeavoring to make the best decisions and take the best direction for Fern Lodge and its staff and occupants. We talked with board member Margaret Pereira about why her involvement with Fern Lodge is so important to her.

**Fern Lodge:** Why do you support Fern Lodge?

**Margaret Pereira:** When I was in college, I experienced first-hand the loving, healing support of a Christian Science nurse in what has become a milestone healing for me. When I was recently asked if I'd be interested in serving on the Fern Lodge Board, I jumped at the opportunity to support such a worthwhile organization!

**FL:** What does Fern Lodge stand for in your mind?

**MP:** In a course on the History of Christian Science Nursing taught by Fern Lodge administrator, Brad Stock, our weekly assignment is to read and think about various articles from the Christian Science periodicals that pertain to Christian Science nursing. In one article, the author drew parallels between the definition of church (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, Mary Baker Eddy, p. 583) and the definition of a Christian Science nursing facility. I'm loving bearing witness to Fern Lodge as the active embodiment of church, including accomplishing its mission of healing and rousing from material beliefs.

**FL:** As we enter the holiday season, what is one thing you find yourself grateful for?

**MP:** I'm grateful for many, many things, but at the heart of all my blessings is God.



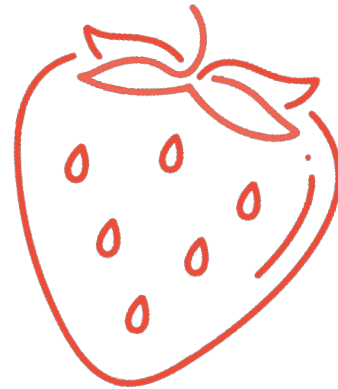
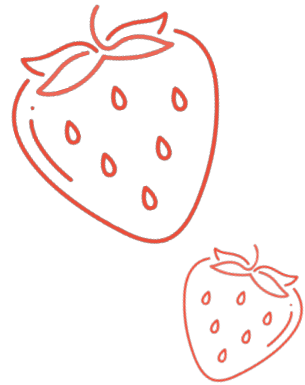
Is there someone you know who would appreciate reading the going-ons and spiritual words from Fern Lodge? Are you seeing this newsletter and would like the next issue sent to your home? Sign up for the free newsletter at:  
[www.fernlodge.org/newsletter-signup/](http://www.fernlodge.org/newsletter-signup/)



*"Today we are celebrating the sweetness of peace and harmony among ourselves, enabling that to shine on the folks who live here; the sweetness of victory following persistent effort in challenging situations; the sweetness of knowing God is here, God loves us all, and God is governing." - The Fern Lodge Executive Board*

The staff and the board of Fern Lodge are all working towards the same goals: the best interests of the facility and the patients inside. The Fern Lodge board hosted a lunch on our patio to show their appreciation for the day-to-day work and effort the staff puts in to continuing Fern Lodge forward the best they can.

There was homemade cake and fresh strawberries for all to eat. It was a welcome break for the staff to connect with each other and enjoy the bright summer day. Anna Lisa gave a speech, and afterwards homemade jam and personally signed letters were given to each of the staff, including those who couldn't come during the lunch. It was wonderful time for everyone.



Some more lovely testimonies from staff about staff!

**Ben C.**

I've always been inspired by the way Ben loves EVERYONE: he expresses a genuine love to all he meets. Not a one is left out. There is an evenness about how he expresses the same listening and caring love to patient or employee. It's definitely a standard I want to strive for in my relationships at work.

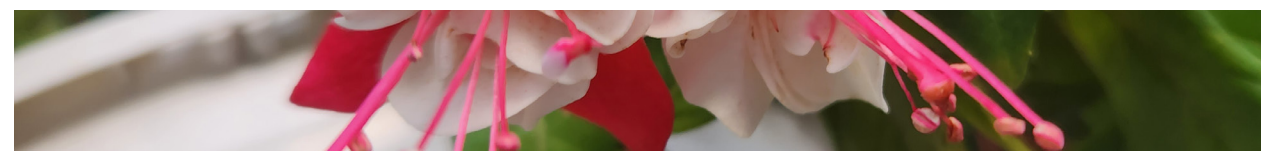
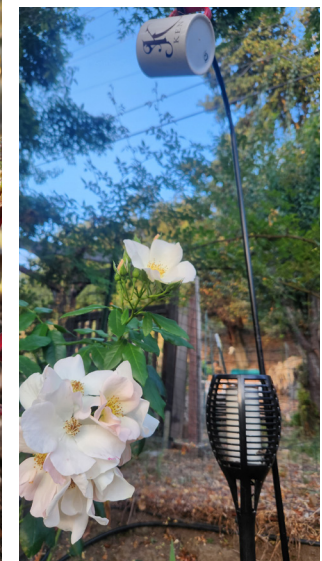
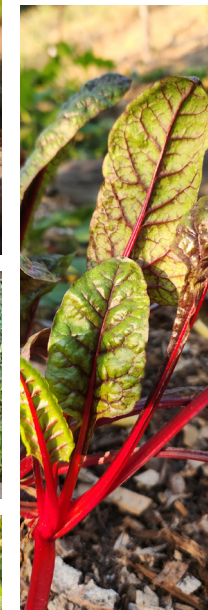
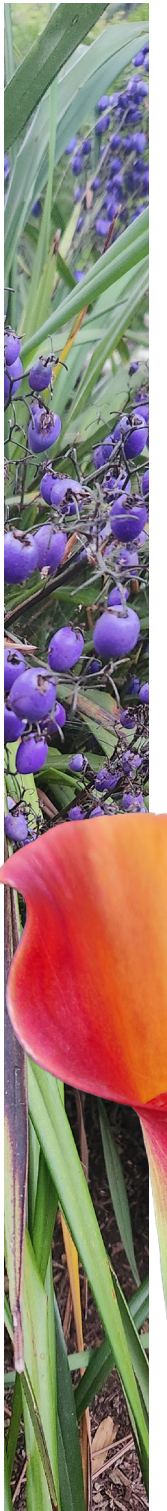
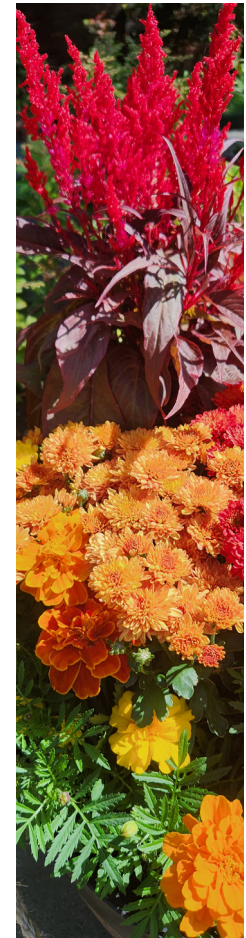
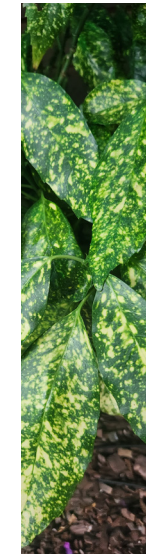
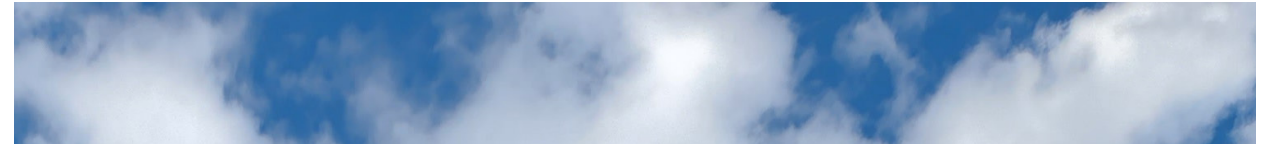
- Anonymous

**Dianne E.**

Grace, graceful, grace-filled. From the beautiful and deep testimonies she shares in our Fern Lodge church services, to the light that always seems to be glowing from her face, she is a constant reminder of the Light I'd like to express more in my day. Just lovely!

- Anonymous

# Autumn at Fern Lodge





*Fern Lodge.*

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The kingdom of heaven is the reign of  
divine Science: it is a mental state.

*(Miscellaneous Writings 1883–1896, Mary Baker Eddy, p. 174:23-24)*