

May 2024

# Fern Lodge

F O C U S



“What is termed material sense can report only a mortal temporary sense of things, whereas spiritual sense can bear witness only to Truth.”

*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Mary Baker Eddy*



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## Our Focus This Spring:

### *Seeing the Divine Truth*

Spring has arrived at Fern Lodge, and we've had a lovely season so far. At the beginning of April, we held our annual meeting, a bright and inspiring event. A summary of the talk is in this edition of the *Focus*. We are connecting with several new patients as they focus on spiritual reality. We also have expanded our use of social media and focused more on Matthew 25. We are excited to tell you more and show you the wonderful flowers that are blooming.

## Community Inspiration

We have written a lot about Matthew 25, but we would like to hear your inspiration on the subject. What spiritual verses come to mind when you hear the caring message of Matthew 25? How do you find yourself acting as a caring sheep with those around you? Send them to us and we may feature them in an upcoming newsletter. You can mail by post or email us at [info@fernlodge.org](mailto:info@fernlodge.org). You can also submit directly via our website by following the link at [www.fernlodge.org/Matthew25](http://www.fernlodge.org/Matthew25). We look forward to hearing spiritual inspiration from you!



## Continuity and Change

What is changing at Fern Lodge? What remains the same?

### Continuity:

The foundations on which Fern Lodge is built will never change. Fern Lodge is based on Christian Science, the authority of the Bible, Mrs. Eddy's revelation, and the spiritual power of authentic Christianity. We embrace prayer, community, family, home. We strive to exemplify the ministry of spiritual witnessing — seeing each other as God sees us, embracing each other in the living power of divine Love. We remain committed to demonstrating the spiritual nature of supply and benevolence, including our willingness to care for patients needing financial support, so long as they rely on Christian Science for healing.

### Change:

We pray to know when change is God-impelled. God-impelled change is progress, and “progress is the law of God,” as Mrs. Eddy says. She also says: “Truth is changing the universe” (*Science & Health* 233, 255). So, change of the right sort is requisite. Eventually, we all must yield to progress, to the unfolding continuity of good. (For more on this subject, see my remarks for Arden Wood's 2023 annual meeting, posted on its website.)

- **Partnership.** We are embracing a new, vital spirit of collaboration. We have strong working relationships with Arden Wood and Twelveacres, the two other Christian Science care facilities in the Bay Area. We regularly support and are supported by Olive Glen and Broadview, the facilities in Sacramento and Los Angeles. We are developing a strong partnership with Tenacre in New Jersey, building new levels of collaboration, which may include staff exchanges, cooperation in education, and a significant exploration of the metaphysics of benevolence. We also have a longstanding friendship with Redwood Community in Santa Rosa (although we are no longer assisting them administratively).
- **Economy.** We are striving to be good stewards of the resources you share with us, while doing all that needs to be done.
- **Renewal.** We are preparing to upgrade and renovate the facility, especially the oldest wing. We need a new van that will accommodate wheelchairs. We welcome your financial support for these initiatives.
- **Joy.** We are working diligently to increase our joy in the healing ministry, to feel more fully divine Love's embrace of us all. This uplift has a direct impact on patients' quality of life and healing.

(Continued)

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As one example of continuity, which also embraces change, we remain committed to becoming a better example of a Matthew 25 facility. What does that mean? Years ago, George Strong (Fern Lodge’s former administrator) began exploring Jesus’ parable of the sheep and goats in Matthew 25. As we noted in last summer’s newsletter, we believe a Matthew 25 facility should be

1. **Unswervingly Christian.** We should strive to imbibe the spirit of Christ, putting our all on the altar for Christ, treating each other compassionately while abiding in Principle.
2. **Fully committed to Christian care.** We should strive to provide excellent physical care. More importantly, we should strive to be clear-eyed spiritual witnesses. True witnessing is the heart of Christian Science, the heart of Christian Science nursing. If we see each other as God sees us, love each other as God loves us, this witnessing has a healing impact. (See *Science & Health* 476, “Jesus beheld.”)
3. **Embrace fellowship in Christ.** Christian Science nursing is an integral activity of Church, an integral part of The Mother Church *Manual*. Thus, Christian Science nursing and its healing activity partakes of the nature of Church. In essence, Christian Science care is a collective demonstration of Church, embracing all of us in one collective, benevolent activity.

Our individual commitment to Church is vitally important. In the application for joining The Mother Church, Mrs. Eddy lists four requirements. Since Christian Science nurses must be members of The Mother Church, these requirements are foundations for Christian Science nursing:

- Love Christian Science.
- Read “understandingly the Bible and Science and Health” (along with Mrs. Eddy’s other writings).
- Be “Christianly qualified.” Mrs. Eddy does not define this term, but we can safely assume that we are to serve God and love one another. Our lives should exemplify the moral law and Christ’s beatitudes.
- “Enter into full fellowship with the Tenets and Rules” of The Mother Church. In other words, we should strive to imbibe the spirit of all six tenets of Christian Science and demonstrate the necessity of each Manual bylaw, including these well-known bylaws: “A Rule for Motives and Acts,” “God’s Requirement,” “Daily Prayer,” and “Alertness to Duty.”

In *Miscellaneous Writings*, our Leader asks,

Will you doff your lavender-kid zeal, and become real and consecrated warriors? Will you give yourselves wholly and irrevocably to the great work of establishing the truth, the gospel, and the Science which are necessary to the salvation of the world from error, sin, disease, and death? Answer at once and practically, and answer aright! (177)

This is the genuine spirit of Christian Science and Christian Science nursing. We hope you will join us in pursuing the excellence of a healing ministry. We need your financial assistance, your time, prayers, love. We thank you for all you have done, are doing, will do. Together, we can move mountains. Please join us in supporting, more than ever before, the Christly, healing ministry of Fern Lodge.

Brad

Brad Stock

## Thank you to our donors!

Fern Lodge is a facility that strives to remain welcoming, spiritually-focused, and affordable for all our patients. We always appreciate the loving support our community provides so that we can keep Fern Lodge up to this standard. Donations support the care of our patients. If you would like to donate, you can go to our website at [www.fernlodge.org](http://www.fernlodge.org) or mail us a check at 18457 Madison Ave, Castro Valley, CA 94546. Thank you!

# Spring at Fern Lodge





# Fern Lodge Annual Meeting 2024

The first Sunday of April we held our Annual Meeting at Danville Church, and we had a wonderful turnout! It was great to see so many people come out to support Fern Lodge. We know many people sent their support from afar and have been eagerly awaiting to hear what inspiration was shared. Below is the summary of the talk as written by Ann Kneeland, C.S., and to the right are the citations shared by our board president, Gina Gozinsky, in her opening readings. Gina also expressed the board’s gratitude for George and Sharon Strong, the staff of Fern Lodge, and all of *you* who support Fern Lodge.

## The Healing Power of Spiritual Witnessing

Summary of Fern Lodge Annual Meeting talk April 7, 2024, by Ann Kneeland

We all have opportunities to nurse others—to meet others’ needs for physical and mental comfort in practical ways. Students of Christian Science can nurse others while seeing God’s view of His perfect, spiritual creation. This spiritual witnessing supports and leads to healing.

I’ve seen the healing effect of God’s view. The night before I left for a college term abroad, my boyfriend drove from his college varsity soccer camp to say goodbye. During the evening he was suddenly stricken with symptoms which interfered with normal communication or navigation. As I boarded the plane the next morning, I struggled with this distressing picture. My parents lovingly reached out to a family friend, a Christian Science practitioner, in the country where I’d be studying. They asked him to call me and to give me prayerful support, which he did.

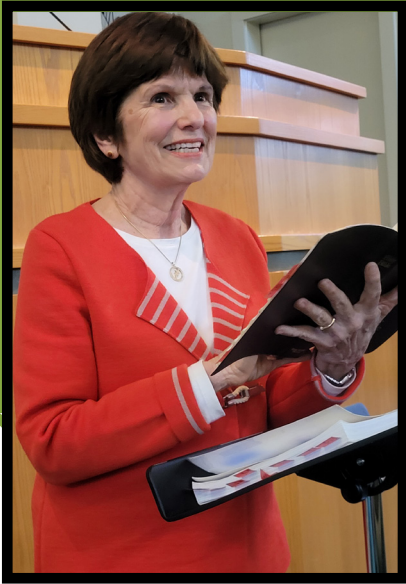
He told me about a Christian Science practitioner who was asked to give prayerful treatment for someone who’d been severely injured in an automobile accident. When the practitioner tried to pray, he couldn’t do it; he couldn’t get past the image of the bodily injuries. Finally he reached out to God and asked, “Father, you were there. What did you see?” God’s view of His spiritual and perfect creation poured into thought, and the patient was healed.

What is God’s view? In the first book of the Bible, God pronounces His creation, including man—whom God made in His image and likeness—“very good” (Genesis 1:26, 27, 31). Mary Baker Eddy confirms this: “The Scriptures inform us that man is made in the image and likeness of God. Matter is not that likeness. ... Man is spiritual and perfect; and because he is spiritual and perfect, he must be so understood in Christian Science” (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 475).

I was familiar with these wonderful truths. So, every time the distressing picture of my boyfriend came to thought, I asked, “Father, you’re there; what are you seeing?” And God answered, “I see my son who is spiritual, perfect, strong, free, joyous, and complete.” I was confident that God’s witness was true. My fear dissolved and I trusted that all was well.

My boyfriend’s mother, also a student of Christian Science, joined him at my parents’ home to help care for him. He was completely healed in two weeks with prayerful treatment by a Christian Science practitioner. He returned to college, and that quarter he lettered in varsity soccer.

God Himself is the first witness in the Bible, a witness being one who knows and testifies to facts. God continually witnesses the perfection of His spiritual creation, including man. This Godlike view is how Jesus healed, and he described it as his life mission, “to this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth” (John 18:37).



## Citations

Isa. 43:12 ye	SH 303:25–30	‘00 8:26 (only); 9:8, 16
John 1:1–5 (to ;)	SH 37:16–17, 20–25	My. 166:19–20
Rom. 8:16	SH 417:16	Mis. 238:9–11
SH 298:8–15	SH 411:10	Hymn 529

The world largely lost sight of this healing truth a few hundred years after Jesus’ ascension, and religion was mostly limited to healing sin, not sickness. But in the 1800s, chronically ill and weak Mary Baker (who later became Mary Baker Eddy), having exhausted many conventional and alternative healing methods, wanted to know the spiritual truth that could heal her, as Jesus promised his followers would do.

After a severe accident, she was told by doctors that she was on her deathbed. She writes, “On the third day thereafter, I called for my Bible, and opened it at Matthew ix. 2. As I read, the healing Truth dawned upon my sense; and the result was that I rose, dressed myself, and ever after was in better health than I had before enjoyed. That short experience included a glimpse of the great fact that I have since tried to make plain to others, namely, Life in and of Spirit; this Life being the sole reality of existence” (*Miscellaneous Writings 1883–1896*, p. 24).

What healed her? To find the answer, she deeply explored the Bible, and she discovered the spiritual principles behind her healing. She tested her discovery—Life in and of Spirit as the only reality of existence—and it healed others. After nine years of study, healing, and writing about what she’d discovered, the first edition of her seminal work, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* was published.

This textbook explains how Jesus healed. It gives us the spiritual understanding to silence false witnesses—the material senses—with the true witness of perfect God and perfect man. The result today is healing, and the fulfillment of Jesus’ prophecy, “ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32).

As a Christian Science practitioner, I’ve seen the healing effect of working with a Christian Science nurse to witness spiritually. A man called me for prayerful treatment because he’d fallen in his garden and had several facial wounds. I went to his home, where I realized that it would be helpful to ask a Christian Science visiting nurse to come and bandage the wounds, something which Christian Science nurses are specially trained to do, all the while mentally seeing God’s spiritual creation as whole and complete.

The nurse knew the patient, having visited his home previously. When she arrived, she looked him in the eye and said simply, “Nothing happened.”

She wasn’t ignoring his need for practical care (the wounds were carefully cleaned and bandaged), but she was sharing God’s view of His uninterrupted harmony, which I was also doing through silent Christian Science treatment. The next morning the patient felt free to usher at the Sunday service in his Christian Science branch church.

The nurse followed up with two more visits, and by the fifth day neither bandages nor further prayerful treatment was needed. The next week the patient spoke about his healing in a Wednesday testimony meeting. He commented, “When the nurse said, ‘nothing happened,’ a wave of relief washed over me, and I felt the assurance that everything was going to be OK.”

Paul writes, “The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God” (Romans 8:16). Spirit’s witness obliterates the false witness of the material senses. It destroys fear, and shows what’s always been true: perfect God and perfect man. The result is healing.





Fern Lodge™

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**Change Service Requested**

Jesus said, “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God” [Truth].

*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Mary Baker Eddy*



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