

PLAINFIELD INDEPENDENT

A NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS OF THE PLAINFIELD CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CHURCH

NUMBER 148

DECEMBER 2012

A call to our members:

“Drink with me the living waters of the spirit of my life-purpose, — to impress humanity with the genuine recognition of practical, operative Christian Science.” - *Mary Baker Eddy*

INDEPENDENT LESSON SERMON

Editor's note: Over 30 years ago, Mrs. Evans noticed a stultifying influence from the Boston Lesson Sermons. She was divinely inspired to start us on the path we are presently on. As she described, at first the resistance was fierce. The room would spin as she sat down to work, but she overcame, wrote most of the lessons for many years, and trained us to take over. We can never be grateful enough to Mrs. Evans for this profoundly important step towards independence.

I recently happened upon a Christian Science Reading Room in a town I was visiting. The attendant asked if I knew about Christian Science, so I mentioned that I attended the Plainfield Christian Science, Independent church online. As I had put forward the idea that more churches could become independent as Mrs. Eddy had intended, if her Manual had been followed, the attendant had one concern: but what would they do without Boston's Lesson Sermons?

Each church could write their own! I replied. We all follow the same topics, so we would all be “in sync.” This idea did not go over well, as this person could not believe that anyone but the Boston lesson writers could possibly do justice to Christian Science. I reassured her that we have wonderful lesson sermons and that our church is thriving! Interestingly, this was the stumbling block in our conversation. To diverge from the

“mother ship” seemed an impossibility. To those of us who have joined the Plainfield fold, and enjoy our independent Lesson Sermons, we know this is not an issue because our lesson writers are truly inspired. Many have testified as to how Plainfield lesson sermons are so much more uplifting than what is currently being published in Boston. For me, Christian Science became alive when I joined the Plainfield Church: for the first time in my life, I was actually eager to mark my books!

After this exchange at the Reading Room, I came away reminded how grateful I am for Plainfield taking a stand to preserve Mrs. Eddy's pure Christian Science, and for our members being awake and alert. That “alertness to duty” is being reflected in our uplifting and healing Lesson Sermons. Thank you lesson writers!

Susanne Walker Abetti, VT

Full-Text Publication

Editor's note: Only the actual printing is done in Plainfield. Laura Gill, FL, has established the process and design of the lesson presentation, as well as compiling them to date. Dale Wallis, VA, is the premier proofer. Carl Miller, NM, formats the monthly booklet. Shahidat Abbas, MD, is in training to aid in the full-text compilation.

I will admit that while I know how to mark my books I usually rely on the full-text lesson (FTL) sermons produced by the church. I carry the FTL in my purse and read it on the train during my travels to/fro work. I also like to write questions and ideas in the FTL to bring to the Roundtable and Bible Study on the weekend. Did you know that Laura Gill in Florida has been lovingly and painstakingly assembling the FTL for several years now? Laura is meticulous in her work and until recently I've completely taken this work for granted. As Laura has been training me to help out, I've become newly aware of the time and effort involved

in producing the FTL I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Laura for this tremendous work!

Shahidat Abbas, MD

Full Text Translations

The priority for me is to get these lessons out to more people! Considering the amount of people that speak Spanish and Portuguese in the Western Hemisphere, it makes sense to me that I should make use of what ability I possess in those languages to help in that direction.

At present, I am doing the lesson citations in Spanish, and I think I MAY be able to do them in Portuguese, also, as it is very close to Spanish in its structure and I do have reference materials to help. I have been using the Reina-Valera Gómez 2010 translation as it is a Textus-Receptus based one and reads very close to the King James Version. I have just located what appears to be a useable Portuguese Bible at evangelicalbible.com.

I am so very grateful to have Teresa from Argentina on board with us to record the Lesson in Spanish. This is a good start.

Teresa contacted us because she is trying to get the Carpenter materials (and other “unauthorized” ones) translated into Spanish, which is no easy feat for someone who does not speak English!

Laura Gill, FL

Creating the Lesson in Dutch is something I love doing. I regularly use the Dutch versions of the Bible and Science and Health anyway as I spend a lot of time in the Netherlands. I was disappointed that the Dutch version of Science and Health is copyrighted which means I can only produce the Bible citations. In translating the Lesson, the different meanings that some of the words have in Dutch has opened up a much wider understanding of the Lesson. The Dutch version of the Bible which is the same as our King James Bible is called the Statenvertaling (“translation of the States,” or Authorized Version) and was completed in 1637. It was translated directly from the most original sources available at the time - just like Luther’s translation (1522-1534) and the King James Version (1611) - and not from the Vulgata. However, the influence of this Latin translation (382-405) is manifest, especially in the difficult

parts. One thing which makes translating the Lesson more difficult is the fact that the verse numbers in the Dutch version don’t always match the King James Bible even though the actual text is identical.

I’m really hoping that we find a way of bringing other languages to the Site. I have a few ideas in mind of perhaps translating some of the articles into Dutch. If you speak another language and are looking for ways to serve – there’s always room for another grateful heart to help!

Joseph McTaggart, United Kingdom

Lesson Sermon On Audio

I’m one of the newest members of the Church. I joined only two months ago. I had been looking at the website for the last few years and always loved the writings of Mrs Eddy. Plainfield is different from other churches because it has a high number of out-of-town members, so I was praying a lot about how to contribute and meet people. I knew that God would give me a way to serve but it was unclear how that would unfold, bearing in mind I live thousands of miles away from the actual church building. The idea of Church being the “structure of Truth and Love” rather than the stone building took on a real meaning in my life when the idea came to create an audio version of the Plainfield Bible Lesson. I had wondered why Plainfield had never done one before, so I suggested it and Mrs. Singleterry threw it back in my court, and I realized that it was something I could serve with.

Creating the audio version is actually very simple. Mostly I record it on my smart-phone either at dawn in the garden (hence some birds singing in the background sometimes) or else when the house is quiet late in the evening. I’ve recently purchased a proper recording program for the iPad so from the start of January it should be coming in stereo which will hopefully match the quality of other audio on the site.

I knew that purity was paramount for something like this, not only with ensuring the Lesson is correct but also ensuring my intentions are pure, as any contribution to the church in whatever form will directly affect the church’s mission if any impurity exists. So the responsibility of doing the

audio really made me look at my own practice of Christian Science. This is perhaps one of the challenges we all face as members.

Joseph McTaggart, United Kingdom

An email from the dear one who is providing the audio for the Independent Lesson Sermon in Spanish:

If my humble contribution serves to bring the healing message, I will do it with the greatest love you can have. Thanks to you for spreading genuine Christian Science. Believe me, since I found your website and started reading everything put into it, I have seen a huge change. I was and am a faithful student, believe that your items have strengthened me greatly. God will guide and govern our work.

Thanks for all of you in Christ,

Teresa Stolarski, Argentina

EVOLUTION OF THE BIBLE STUDY

“I, Mary Baker Eddy, ordain the Bible, and Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Pastor over The Mother Church,…” (Misc. Wr.) This ordination does not seem to ordain S&H as the sole pastor. Nor does it seem to ordain S&H as the primary pastor. In practice, it seems as if the Bible is relegated to some secondary role. Indeed, if you were to ask a Christian Scientist what else there is to read other than the S&H, they would probably refer you to other writings by MBE. However, Mary Baker Eddy said that together they are the Pastor. Therefore, it should be just as worthy to read each page in the Bible as it is to read each page of S&H.

When I visit a Reading Room, I notice that there are only a few books available for studying the Bible and the selection is virtually unchanged from many decades ago. I also notice that when the Bible is studied, the focus is so oriented to the spiritual interpretation that there is little learning of the Bible and much of the Bible just seems to be ignored.

It was not always that way. Over 50 years ago, Edith Hoyt wrote a book and gave lectures on “Studies in the Apocalypse of St. John.” She was a Christian Scientist and many Christian Scientists studied her book. For her study, she extensively used the Bible and other Bible study books, and she even delved into the meaning of Greek words.

In 1911, the C.S. Publishing Society published the pamphlet, “Causation, in the Light of Christian Science” by Frederick Dixon. This pamphlet was based on this statement on page 170 of S&H: “Spiritual causation is the one question to be considered, for more than all others spiritual causation relates to human progress.” In this pamphlet, Frederick Dixon frequently refers to Greek words from the New Testament. He also quotes from the Wycliff Bible.

There seems to have been a time and place when the Christian Scientist really studied the Bible. However that was not my experience and this was one of the reasons I questioned the Boston Church. When I joined the Plainfield Church, I observed that the Bible was an important part of the church and this was an important consideration when I become a member of this church.

When Andrew suggested having a Bible study I immediately said this was a great idea and I would be glad to help out. There was no precedent, so we were feeling our way.

I thought it was helpful to start out with some Bible facts as this was an easy way to get people to start talking as well as a way to learn something specific about the Bible. I included word definitions as I think this is critical to understanding the Bible and Christian Science. I felt that the participants should be using a wide range of sources to help in understanding the Bible. People should not be constrained in the reference material that is used and they should feel comfortable using different sources. However, the Bible study would not dictate what those sources should be.

The Plainfield Church is a lay church. Therefore, members participate and contribute. The purpose of the Bible Study leader is not to teach but to lead the discussion. The aim is to create an environment to foster learning, to promote people’s interest in the Bible, and to generate eagerness to contribute. Initially, it was discussed that the Bible Studies might only be a few here and there, but in the first year we saw it was held almost every week. Now, each week a different participant prepares questions and leads the discussion. It has become a regular part of the church activities and we look forward to more enriching and enjoyable Bible Studies.

Tom Richards, NY

Participants' Experiences

During a recent Bible Study I was asked if I might volunteer to prepare the next study. Even though I knew it would be a very busy week for me, and I felt really "green," I agreed to do it. I didn't know where to start, but in studying that week's lesson, one section stood out to me and so I began my research. What really helped me was guidance in a few emails from Tony and Andrew. I prepared some questions, and they were looked over by Tony and added to. He quickly put them up on the website. As the weekend approached, help came in Tony's encouraging words, "The more I tell myself I cannot do this, but God can, the better prepared I am." During the Bible study, any self-doubts were quickly dispelled and the whole experience turned out to be very rewarding. I've always had this notion that Bible studies were only ever conducted by the most experienced people and that "one day" I might aspire to be like them, but this study taught me that the Bible is truly accessible to all and that God is of course right there to guide us. I wholeheartedly recommend anyone to just jump in and get their feet wet! What a beautiful thing it is to become more familiar with the Bible and this is a perfect way to do just that. I look forward to doing it again.

Susanne Walker Abetti, VT

It has been quite a privilege to attend the Saturday morning Bible study sessions. Mrs. Eddy states on page 126 of Science and Health, "The Bible has been my only authority. I have had no other guide in 'the straight and narrow way' of Truth." Although I have been studying Christian Science for many years, after attending our Bible study, it became apparent that I had been missing something. Especially when you consider how frequently the Bible is quoted or referenced throughout the writings of Mrs. Eddy, there is a need to know the Bible. What an inspired idea it was to have our Bible study. Every time, I am amazed how much comes out of these study sessions and how much I learn from them. My thanks go out to those who prepare the study questions and all who contribute to the discussions.

Bruce Singleterry, NJ

Reading Fruitage at Sunday Service

As a new member of the Plainfield church, initially I was very hesitant to agree to read a testimony from the Fruitage chapter of "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" by Mary Baker Eddy for one of our Sunday services. When a kind offer to participate was extended to me, all types of negative thoughts started to come in, such as "oh, you'll definitely mess this up, do you really want to do this?" or "wouldn't it be so much easier if you met the members in person first?" and the grand finale of negativity - "how about your Eastern European accent, do you know how annoying this could be to some people?" Hmm... As I listened to all of this, I remembered something that was mentioned during the roundtable discussion - that it was not uncommon to experience different types of deterrents that would try to come in and discourage one from church work and participation. So, if anything, it was a favorable indicator of the right thing to do! Once I was able to recognize this, the masquerade of discouraging thoughts was over and I gladly agreed to read the Fruitage testimony.

I would encourage anyone, especially the ones who are even a bit hesitant, to step forward and participate in church services and activities. You'll be amazed at how much love and support you'll receive and all the good that comes out of it!

Elena Talalaeva, FL

Proofing Audio of Miscellaneous Writings

Proofing the audio selections from Mrs. Eddy's Miscellaneous Writings has been a wonderful experience. Over the years I have read these writings, marked selections and copied passages, then tucked them away. Hearing these timeless truths and rules for thinking and acting read aloud with such sincerity and understanding have brought them alive to me right here, right now. Like Jesus' words, which he knew would not pass away, Mary Baker Eddy's words are timeless and prophetic. What are we doing with them? Let us take advantage of the glorious truth we have been given; listen to the audio recordings and take them into your heart and your life -- you will be glad you did!

(My response to Reader, upon proofing Message for 1901:

Thank you for this vital and spectacular reading. The tears did flow, as I have always loved and revered our dear Leader, and felt in this so much of her selfless love and dedication. It is very powerful; as you said, you felt her presence when you read it.)

Dale Wallis, VA

YouTube Outreach

YouTube Channel: PleasantViewToday. Here is the link: http://www.youtube.com/user/pleasantviewtoday?feature=results_main

Initially I created 5 videos using the audio files from previous Wednesday Night services. They seemed too long for the typical YouTube surfer, so I now make shorter versions or ‘micros.’

The most recent 5 video micros are much shorter and focus on excerpts from the Bible and S&H in response to national or international news. For each video, I upload many homemade photographs of nature submitted by members and read the selected verses. More photos of nature are needed to continue this outreach.

The videos are intended to reach non-CS people who surf the internet looking for answers. Hopefully one of these videos will reach a heart and bless them in some way, and lead them to our church website.

I am grateful for this work and hope to expand my editing skills and create more ‘professional’ looking micros.

Tony Moore, GA

CHURCH WATCH

The best defense is a good offense!

No worries, I’m not talking about football. Actually I’m one of those people who only watch the Super Bowl for the commercials and halftime spectacle.

I am speaking of protecting our church watch. Earlier this year when I began doing a half-hour church watch in the wee hours of the morning, I noticed that physical ailments would suspiciously interrupt my watch time. All would be well, then like clockwork I would become distracted from my church activity by a very aggressive mental suggestion (AMS) insisting that I look elsewhere just as I began my work for church. In one instance I had chest pains that nearly left me winded. After discussing this with my Plainfield practitioner it

became clear that I needed to do more protective work. I started working with Psalm 91 whenever I felt such aggressive negative suggestions “knocking on my door.” This worked well but felt very reactive as if I were waiting to be attacked instead of fortifying my house ahead of time. The practitioner suggested I work regularly with the last few lines of the Christian Science Practice chapter in Science and Health which goes, “Christian Scientists, be a law to yourselves that mental malpractice cannot harm you either when asleep or when awake” (page 442:30-32). So now, rather than defensively reacting to AMS I am offensively building my wall and joyously expecting my work to no longer be interrupted by any hint of an aggressive mental suggestion.

Shahidat Abbas, MD

Watch Guidance Center

The following is currently on our website:

Tom shared with us the following in this week’s Bible Study - Nimrod, the founder of Babel:

“Now it was Nimrod who excited them to such an affront and contempt of God. He was the grandson of Ham, the son of Noah, a bold man, and of great strength of hand. He persuaded them not to ascribe it to God, as if it was through his means they were happy, but to believe that it was their own courage which procured that happiness. He also gradually changed the government into tyranny, seeing no other way of turning men from the fear of God, but to bring them into a constant dependence on his power.” (Flavius Josephus)

Contempt of God in government and in education *and religious institutions*, is like a deadly drug:

“The law of Life, Truth, and Love is a law of instant and complete expulsion and elimination of all the impurities and poisons from the system. Why? Because Truth, Life, and Love are pouring and surging through consciousness, purifying, uplifting, healing, nourishing, elevating, sustaining, energizing mankind.” (WPA)

Watch to keep out the enemy: materialism, human sense of family, hopelessness regarding nation, world, especially aggressive during the Christmas season:

“If we go at an error with a determination to

conquer with Truth, we shall know that an error is a coward; it will retreat.

Try not to see mental work as treatment, but as a watch to keep out the enemy. Jesus said, "Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation."... We have got all things. Dominion is our right. It is necessary to realize this, by arguing down evil which says we have not. The enemy will try to make us do wrong, or make us sick, or try to kill us to the end; so we must stand guard, and the way to do it is to declare that evil cannot do these things. Mortal mind will try in every conceivable way to prevent this thought from being declared. Why? Because it means death to error." (WPA)

MESSAGE TO THE MEMBERS

"For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required:" Luke 12:48

As we celebrate the wonderful signs of "Unto us a child is born" as it relates to our Cause, as we recognize that our church has no walls, that each of you has the opportunity to serve in whatever way God will lead you (notice we do not say "may lead you!"), let us turn back to our Leader:

"In calling on students to watch faithfully with her, Mrs. Eddy put them on their honor, that they would spend the hour in no other way, nor cut it short because it became wearisome. She indicated that the success of the church and mission was largely dependent on such work: "This Cause must be carried by silent argument, just the same as you carry it physically. This is the great duty for Christians that they must do, or be accountable to God for leaving it undone...."

She knew that in the midst of interesting activity in connection with the church, one might lose sight of the main purpose of the church, namely, to interest strangers in our doctrine, and forget that it belongs to the public, as well as its members." (WPA)

Please share with the members inspired thoughts and experiences in doing this work in the February 2013 Newsletter. As you have seen in this issue, it is stimulating for all. Email your submissions to mrakidd@yahoo.com, drop on the

website, or mail to the church with "Attention to Membership."

*Andrew Kidd,
Chairman of the Membership Committee*

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Christmas Eve Carol Service

Gerald, our organist, has been working on the Christmas Eve Carol/Candlelight Service for some time now. He earnestly believes that everything done in this church must be done "in the spirit." Plan to be there December 24, 8:00 pm Eastern Time. It will be a holy atmosphere, and will help insure that your Christmas is founded upon the rock, Christ.

Plainfield Church Calendar for 2013

This calendar makes a great gift for anyone who can use the truth! Free of Christian Science jargon, it is inspired and reaches the heart with a wonderful statement for each day of the year.

The price is \$13 for the first calendar, and \$11 for any additional ones to the same address.

FINAL NOTE: If ever we are tempted to feel alone or discouraged in this important work, Mrs. Eddy, who led the way, reassures us:

"The guerdon of meritorious faith or trustworthiness rests on being willing to work alone with God and for Him, — willing to suffer patiently for error until all error is destroyed and His rod and His staff comfort you.

Self-ignorance, self-will, self-righteousness, lust, covetousness, envy, revenge, are foes to grace, peace, and progress; they must be met manfully and overcome, or they will uproot all happiness. Be of good cheer; the warfare with one's self is grand; it gives one plenty of employment, and the divine Principle worketh with you, — and obedience crowns persistent effort with everlasting victory. Every attempt of evil to harm good is futile, and ends in the fiery punishment of the evil-doer." (Misc. Wr.)