



The Sophia Sun

Newsletter of
 The Rudolf Steiner Branch (NC) of
 The Anthroposophical Society in America
 Chapel Hill, NC

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2011
 VOLUME IV, NUMBER 6

Peace Prayer of St. Francis

Lord, make me an instrument
 of your peace,
 where there is hatred, let me sow love;
 where there is injury, pardon;
 where there is doubt, faith;
 where there is darkness, light;
 and where there is sadness, joy.
 O Divine Master,
 grant that I may not so much seek
 to be consoled as to console,
 to be understood as to understand,
 to be loved as to love.
 For it is in giving that we receive,
 it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
 and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.



St. Francis of Assisi
 by Francisco de Zurbarán (1598-1664)

In This Issue...

| | |
|---|----|
| All Souls Observance..... | 5 |
| Fundraiser for Mindy Kash..... | 6 |
| Death, Dying and Dessert..... | 6 |
| Christian Community News..... | 7 |
| Whitted-Bowers Biodynamic Farm News..... | 8 |
| Branch Home Report..... | 9 |
| New Center for Earthosophy..... | 11 |
| News from Asheville Community..... | 13 |
| Richard Wagner Website and New Book..... | 14 |
| Eurythmy Flash Mob..... | 16 |
| Torin Finser Visit and Lecture..... | 17 |
| Holy Nights Journaling..... | 17 |
| Midwife in Haiti..... | 18 |
| Southeastern Conference Report – Part II..... | 21 |

Logo above: “Woman Clothed With the Sun” by Baron Arild Rosenkrantz

October 2011 Calendar of Events

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|--|---|--|---|---|
| | | | | | | 1 RSB Michaelmas Festival-12:30p |
| 2 The Goethean Conversation SG-3p Clemmons SG-6p Greensboro SG-7p | 3 Michaelmas Pageant at EWS 1p RSB Board Meeting 7:30p | 4 Feast of St. Francis Rosecroix SG 6:30p | 5 Eurythmy Classes 8:30a Ita Wegman SG- 11:30a Rose Cross SG- 7:30p | 6 | 7 Choral Gathering- 7:30p | 8 |
| 9 Meeting of the First Class-10a, (Review-11a) The Goethean Conversation SG-3p Greensboro SG-7p | 10 | 11 Rosecroix SG 6:30p | 12 Eurythmy Classes 8:30a Ita Wegman SG- 11:30a Rose Cross SG- 7:30p | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16 The Goethean Conversation SG-3p Clemmons SG-6p Greensboro SG-7p | 17 Death, Dying and Dessert 7p | 18 Rosecroix SG 6:30p | 19 Eurythmy Classes 8:30a Ita Wegman SG- 11:30a Rose Cross SG- 7:30p | 20 Reading to the Dead Group-7p | 21 | 22 Asheville Biodynamic SG Hands-On-10a CC Priest Talk- 7:30p |
| 23 CC Children's Service-9a CC Act of Consecration of Man-10:30a The Goethean Conversation SG-3p Greensboro SG-7p | 24 | 25 Rosecroix SG 6:30p NDE Group 7:00p | 26 Eurythmy Classes 8:30a Ita Wegman SG- 11:30a Rose Cross SG- 7:30p | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30 The Goethean Conversation SG-3p Greensboro SG-7p | 31 Halloween | | | | | |

November 2011 Calendar of Events

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|--|---|--|--|--|
| | | 1 | 2 Eurythmy Classes 8:30a Ita Wegman SG- 11:30a Rose Cross SG- 7:30p | 3 | 4 Choral Gathering 7:30p | 5 RSB All Soul's Observation-3p |
| 6 The Goethean Conversation SG-3p Clemmons SG-6p Greensboro SG-7p | 7 RSB Board Meeting 7:30p | 8 Rosecroix SG 6:30p | 9 Eurythmy Classes 8:30a Ita Wegman SG- 11:30a Rose Cross SG- 7:30p | 10 | 11 Martinmas | 12 |
| 13 Meeting of the First Class-10a, (Review-11a) The Goethean Conversation SG-3p Greensboro SG-7p | 14 | 15 NDE SG-7p Rosecroix SG 6:30p | 16 Eurythmy Classes 8:30a Ita Wegman SG- 11:30a Rose Cross SG- 7:30p | 17 Reading to the Dead 7p | 18 | 19 |
| 20 The Goethean Conversation SG-3p Clemmons SG-6p Greensboro SG-7p | 21 Death, Dying and Dessert 7p | 22 Rosecroix SG 6:30p Festivals Committee- 7:30p | 23 | 24 Thanksgiving | 25 | 26 |
| 27 The Goethean Conversation SG-3p Greensboro SG-7p | 28 | 29 Rosecroix SG 6:30p | 30 Eurythmy Classes 8:30a Ita Wegman SG- 11:30a Rose Cross SG- 7:30p | | | |

Calendar Details: October/November 2011

Rudolf Steiner Branch of the Anthroposophical Society in America

Oct 1, 12:30p - **RSB Michaelmas Observation and Potluck.**

Oct. 3, 7:30 pm - Board Meeting – Meeting at the home of Board President Peg Carmody. For more details contact Peg Carmody at 919-537-8142 or mcarmody@nc.rr.com. To contact the Rudolf Steiner Branch by mail: PO BOX 16024, Chapel Hill, NC 27516.

Oct 9, 10a – **The School for Spiritual Science, Meeting of First Class.** Review session follows the main lesson and begins at approximately 11am. For more information please contact Suzanne Mays at 919-929-1073 or mays@ieeee.org.

Oct 18, 7:30p – **Rudolf Steiner Branch Festivals Committee** meeting at the home of Margaretta Bornhorst. Please join us if you are interested in continuing to bring the Festivals to our community. For more details contact Peg Carmody at 919-537-8142 or mcarmody@nc.rr.com

Nov 5, 3p - **All Soul's Observance** at the home of Marie Nordgren. See article in this newsletter for detailed information.

Christian Community

Oct 22 and 23:

Visit from Rev Carol Kelly of the DC community. There will be a public talk on Saturday evening and children's and adult services on Sunday 10/23. See flyer in this newsletter for further details.

Please mark your calendars with the Christian Community priest visit dates scheduled for winter and spring:

2011-Dec 10 and 11

2012- Jan 21 and 22, March 31 and April 1, June 2 and 3

EWS

For information about EWS events, see the detailed school calendar at:

<http://www.calendarwiz.com/calendars/calendar.php?crd=emersonwaldorf&op=cal&month=10&year=2011>

Other Activities of Interest

Oct 7, 7:30p - **Choral Gatherings** - usually the 1st Friday of each month, 7:30p - 9:30p. At the home of Joanna Carey, 112 Solterra Way in Durham. Bring a potluck snack if you desire. We welcome all ranges, especially altos. After some healthy warm ups, we will begin to work on some beautiful pieces from many traditions. Some will be rounds and some are part pieces. No previous singing experience is necessary, just a desire to sing with others. All are welcome. Please RSVP to Joanna Carey at 919-403-7060 or call for more information.

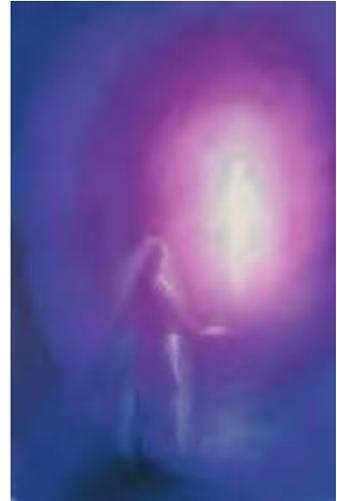
Oct 25, 7p - NDE Study Group - a once-a-month study group, generally on the 2nd Tuesday of the month (upcoming dates: Oct 25, Nov 15, Dec 13) for near-death experiences (NDEs). The Raleigh/Durham Friends of IANDES group is part of the **International Association for Near-Death Studies**. This is part of our research work in the fields of consciousness studies, neuroscience and NDEs. We welcome all people who are interested in NDEs, especially those who have had an NDE are invited to share their experience with the others. At the home of Robert and Suzanne Mays, 5622 Brisbane Dr, in Chapel Hill. Call 929-1073 for more information.

**ALL SOULS DAY WILL BE OBSERVED
ON NOVEMBER 5 AT 3 PM
AT MARIE NORDGREN'S HOME**

All are welcome to attend the annual All Souls Day gathering to remember our Loved ones who have crossed the Threshold. It will take place on **Saturday, November 5th at 3pm** at the home of Marie Nordgren.

The program will be a simple one: music, a short talk and candle lighting for those who have died in recent years. If you would like to bring a picture of your loved ones who have passed, feel free to do so.

(Painting on the right:
"Threshold" by Iris Sullivan)



Following the observance, the Festivals Committee will provide a simple supper of Soup, bread, salad and dessert.. For more information, please contact Marie at **544-9184** or email her at amnordgren@aol.com. Her address is **3928 Hope Valley Rd. Durham 27713**



Uniting With Spirit by Iris Sullivan

May love of hearts reach out to love of souls
May warmth of love ray out to Spirit-light
Even so would we draw near to you
Thinking with you Thoughts of Spirit
Feeling in you the Love of Worlds
Consciously at one with you
Willing in silent being

by: Rudolf Steiner

For one who has died

The Good Shepherd lead thee
Where thou art transformed
That thou mayest breathe
The air of eternal being
Where thou workest as soul
For worlds to come
The grace of the Spirit
Unite us with thee

by: Adam Bittleston

Editor's Note: An excellent website you should check out is www.invisiblenews.org. It contains articles, Verses, books, and links that have to do with the Dead and their presence here and now, how to contact them, etc. There are many refereneses to Rudolf Steiner on it.

Fundraiser for Mindy Kash To Be Held 11-11-11



All are invited and encouraged to attend a Fundraiser for Mindy Kash on Friday evening November 11, 2011. Mindy has cancer and has wisely chosen not to endure the typical American chemo regimen in favor of natural and anthroposophic methods of healing. Unfortunately, her insurance does not cover alternative treatments for cancer, so we as a community are going to pitch in to help Mindy with this fundraiser.

Melanie Maupin and Linda Folsom are organizing the event which will include dinner with food donated by area restaurants and a live auction. Many things are needed for the silent auction. Please let Melanie or Linda know if you have something to offer. Ideas include: art objects, jewelry, crafts, furniture in good shape, services of all kinds (such as massages, landscaping, house painting, pet sitting, piano lessons, computer services, housecleaning, etc.) Please do not give books or clothing.

As of this writing the venue has not been selected yet. Please keep posted to the list-serve for more details as to the time and place. Please mark your calendar now and plan to be there!

By the way, according to German tradition 11-11 is the luckiest day of the year, a day when "anything goes" at 11 AM and PM. This being a year that ends with 11 adds even more power to the day, so let's hope this tradition proves true for Mindy.

Contact Linda at lolsom@nc.rr.com or Melanie at melmaup@gmail.com.

Death, Dying & Dessert:

A conversation group to be held once a month ; to share experiences and concerns, ask questions, and become active in our community in our relationship to death and dying.

When: Every 3rd Monday Oct 17, Nov 21, Dec 19th

Where: 208 Murray St, Hillsborough

Contact: jennybingham@yahoo.com 919 214 4304



I continue to offer the Advanced Care Planning Workshops on an ongoing basis as soon as I have 4 or more people. Please contact me if you are interested

Jenny Bingham

"Moving Air" by Iris Sullivan



**NC Triangle Affiliate of the Christian
Community, October 2011, Rev. Carol Kelly**

Saturday evening Oct 22, 7:30p

Rev. Carol Kelly will give a public talk on:

"Willingness of the Heart"

Summoning a New Knighthood for the 21st Century

Sunday Oct 23

9:30a - Children's Story and Service

10:30a - The Act of Consecration of Man

11:45: Community Potluck

We have developed over the last century a strong sense of individuality. We have developed in freedom our own moral code (or lack thereof), our own philosophy of life, our own way of being. How can we learn to gather together again, to work together to summon the super-human forces necessary to meet the darkness in our world today? What is waiting for us out of the spirit of America and what are we waiting for?

Friday 10/21 and Saturday 10/22 (as scheduled in advance):

Sacramental Consultation or other private conversations with Rev Carol Kelly at the home of Linda Folsom. Please phone Linda as soon as possible to schedule time with Carol. Linda's address is 3118 Dixon Rd, Durham, NC 27707. 919-493-8323.

Please Note: There will be no gathering on Friday evening.

Saturday, 10/22, 7:30p: Rev. Carol Kelly will give a public talk on:

"Willingness of the Heart"- Summoning a New Knighthood for the 21st Century

Sunday, 10/23:

9am: Children's Story

9:30am Children's Service

10:30am: The Act of Consecration of Man

11:45am: Community Potluck Brunch - Everyone is welcome! Please bring a dish to share.

Beverages will be provided.

All events will be held in the Fleming Building at New Hope Camp and Conference Center, 4805 NC HWY 86, Chapel Hill, NC 27514. Brunch will be held in the Oak Rood.

Please help! We need teams to assist us in setting up the space in Fleming on Saturdays late afternoon and taking down the altar on Sunday after brunch. Call 919-493-8323 or email lfolsom@nc.rr.com if you can offer this valuable service to YOUR Christian Community.

News From Whitted-Bowers Biodynamic Farm

As we write this, we appear to have left the unbearably hot and dry weather of late summer and are ready to put 20,000 new strawberry plants in the ground. The earth has been giving so much for the better part of 5 months now, it just feels tired and in need of rest, much like ourselves. Notwithstanding our current state of mind, it has been a wonderful season for the farm. We are so looking forward to cooler temperatures and the crunchy goodness that comes with fall to wrap up a blessed season. Times of transition often provide the perfect poker for reflection, the nudge that can't be obtained when all is sympatico. As we transit into fall, we are reflecting on the farm, on biodynamics, on our greatest desires and fears and hope to align all of them in the pursuit of peace on every front and in every respect. We offer the following thoughts toward that end.



The motto of the Josephine Porter Institute for Applied Biodynamics, located not far from here in Woolwine Virginia, is "To Heal the Earth," a phrase Steiner coined for the practice of biodynamics. The motto is apt, as biodynamics offers tremendous healing possibilities and contains extraordinary power. However, in order for the motto to be realized, more people need to be practicing, or at least conscious of, biodynamics and its ability to heal the earth and its people. Too often, biodynamics is viewed (when it is viewed at all!) simply as an agricultural manifestation of anthroposophy, and not as a tool to revitalize the soil, our bodies and our souls. Biodynamics offers a tangible way to cultivate the sustenance and nourishment of our physical and spiritual bodies and to heal the earth in the process. So, one could reasonably ask, why aren't more farmers practicing biodynamics? And, why aren't more people demanding biodynamic produce? We are one of roughly 150 farms in the entire country that is certified biodynamic. If the results are for real (and any farmer who goes the extra mile to practice biodynamics simply couldn't do it were they not for real) why is biodynamics still essentially a

fringe practice in this country? The answer to that question is complicated to say the least. But, one contributing factor that resides in our sphere of influence has to do with a certain discomfort within the biodynamic community in talking about biodynamics to people who are not anthroposophists or otherwise steeped in the ways of Steiner. We reached the conclusion at the start of this farm that if biodynamics is going to heal the earth, then we need to spend a lot more time talking to people who have no idea who Rudolf Steiner is about what we do. While it is easier to revel in a certain self-satisfaction of those who "get it", such revelry doesn't advance the whole, and advancing the whole is what is critical now. As a consequence, we spend a lot of time talking with people outside of anthroposophical circles about biodynamics and its conceptual and practical application.

In many respects, the year has been highlighted with this kind of dance. We have lectured on biodynamics at NC State in the Horticulture Department, which was locally televised, at the CCCC Sustainable Ag Program in Pittsboro, to students at Elon and Guilford College, the Emerson Waldorf School and others. We lectured to young and aspiring farmers at the Breeze Farm Incubator Program in Hillsborough. We have sat in front of a foundation grant review committee (comprised of farmers, many conventional) talking about our cultural practices. And, perhaps most importantly, at every farmers' market we attend in Carrboro (46 so far this season) we answer the question "what is biodynamics?" at least half a dozen times. And, while we do occasionally get the dreaded eye roll when we start talking about Moon and Saturn oppositions, the vast majority of people resonate with the concepts and ultimately the products. It is enormously gratifying to have customers seek you out who don't know about Demeter or any like thing but simply love the food. At these moments, we feel hope for the healing of the earth that Steiner talked about.

And, the dance will continue in the weeks to come. This fall, we will be speaking on biodynamics at the TerraVITA symposium in Chapel Hill. In November, we will be lecturing on biodynamics and commercial fruit production at the Carolina Farm Stewardship Association Annual gathering in. Most gratifying is that all of this outreach appears to be having an effect, at least as measured by the farm's exposure and knowledge of our biodynamic methods. Our heirloom melons, tomatoes and melon blossom honey were featured in Andrea Reusing's (Chef and Owner of Lantern Restaurant in Chapel Hill) new cookbook ***Cooking in the Moment***. In April, ***Newsweek*** came to the farm with Andrea to do a photo shoot for a review of her book and our strawberry field was featured in the May 16th edition of the magazine. More recently, the farm was selected as a subject in a short documentary funded by the United Arts Council and filmed by Brad Herring. The feature will be submitted to the Carrboro film festival. We were also selected to appear in a forthcoming book by Brenda Breen on sustainable agriculture in the Piedmont. And, the farm was featured in Chapel Hill magazine doing a photo essay on local family farms. We are grateful indeed. So, we carry on.



WHITTED BOWERS FARM
Certified Organic and
Certified Biodynamic
Heirloom Fruit and Specialty
Vegetables

8707 Art Road
 Cedar Grove, NC 27231
 919.732.5132

www.whittedbowersfarm.com

Wednesdays & Saturdays at the
Carrboro Farmers' Market

Cheri, Rob and Tea Whitted-Bowers

REPORT FROM THE BRANCH HOME ENVISIONING COMMITTEE

by Joanna Carey

Throughout the summer 3 members of the Branch have been meeting to discuss how to go about the reawakening of a dormant idea for establishing a Branch home in the Chapel Hill area of North Carolina. During these discussions, we wrestled with what it is that we seek and how do we go about implementing a process to recognize the need for this home.

Although many thoughts have arisen, there seem to emerge 2 essential components, which have stayed with us through all subsequent public meetings thus far.

1. What is our statement and higher purpose as a Branch?
2. How can we engender living connections with each other among the membership and beyond?

To the first question, we have realized that we are meant to allow a higher being to live among us; that our Branch has always had a spiritual being who has presided over our endeavors who

perhaps needs to be recognized and invited to co-create with us what is meant to unfold with this Branch.

To the second question, we realized that the group can create a new paradigm that an individual cannot. To this belongs the whole nature of self-reflection, biography and the threefold social order.

Our first public meeting was August 23rd of this year.
9 people attended and we worked with the following questions:

How do we create a spiritual atmosphere?

How do we bring it into this world?

What are the functions that can happen there?

What is holding us back from forming the home?

By looking at this we saw questions in relation to time:

Present: What can happen?

Past: What were we not able to do?

Future: What will we create?

Along with this we addressed:

What in the history of the Branch would have been different if there had been a home?

What could we have done that we didn't do?

What can we do now if we have a home? What will we create?

What are the necessary pre-conditions to sustaining a Branch home?

What momentum is there at this time? What is the feeling of the community at this time?

What are the qualities that are present at this time that help promote what we wish to have happen? What are the hindrances?

Much discussion has arisen over the nature of the past history of the Branch. Much has been learned from this sharing.

We all seem to agree that among our many desires for a home and its activities, the bottom line lives within the context of what is a Branch's purpose? Some have shared that a Branch home's purpose is to foster Anthroposophy.

How do we articulate this to the World? What are the values that we hope to foster through Anthroposophy and within our Branch?

Through our mutual study and reading of *The Life, Nature and Cultivation of Anthroposophy*, we are exploring the higher nature of our existence through Anthroposophy.

At our September 13th meeting, we re-read the first section and again launched into a dynamic interchange. This time it was around the first Goetheanum and what arose as a result of its destruction. It was mentioned that the first Goetheanum was a temple and the second Goetheanum is a fortress.

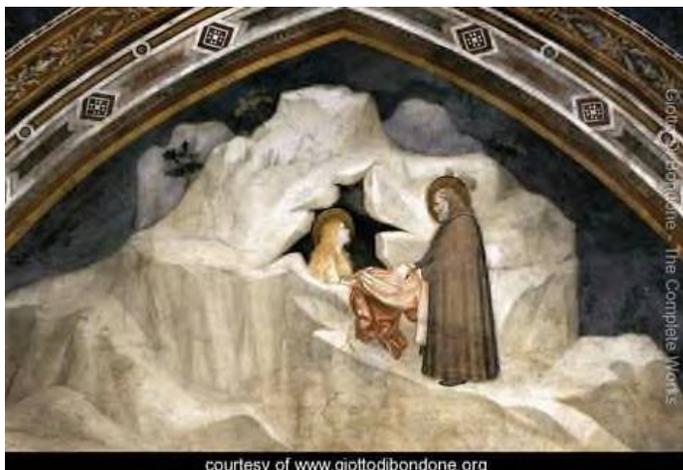
This led to our contemplating where the spiritual temple really lies and how we as individuals and as a group, can be part of an up building process of spiritual work for the community and the larger world.

Thoughts of the temple in the Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily came forward and we worked with how the human being and a Branch are one and the same as a creative force in the world.

Throughout our meetings a request has been made to research other Branches in the U.S. and how they are functioning. The realization that we are one of 11 active Branches in the U.S. gave us some perspective on what lives here as potential and reality compared with many areas of the country. Thus this Branch can become a conduit for spiritual light that heals and regenerates in the world.

Our meetings will continue to be held the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month at 7:30 pm. Please consider joining us. We would really like more members on our committee. It's a dynamic and rich encounter each time.

THE SCHOOL OF SPIRITUAL PSYCHOLOGY ANNOUNCES: THE CENTER OF EARTHOSOPHY “The Wisdom of the Spiritual Earth”



The School of Spiritual Psychology announces a new endeavor –The Center of Earthosophy. This development reflects our coming to recognize that meeting the future with courage of heart requires unique modalities of inner presence.

While various forms of psychology and depth psychology help interpret soul, healing the disconnection between individual soul life and the Earth’s life has always guided the work of the School of Spiritual Psychology. These pressing times ask that this primary unity be even more specifically developed.

Presence with the Spiritual Earth brings about conscious living within an expansion of embodied soul life that includes

sensing unity with Earth as central to soul’s existence and Earth as the primary formative dimension of soul life, locating soul life here, in the present moment, and Earth as living soul presence. Our culture’s deranged connection with Earth indicates the strong urgency to bring this form of consciousness to ways of conduct in the world. This contemplative orientation can be a way of creative service through the adverse times we are now within and will be into the future.

The term ‘Spiritual Earth’ refers to unified sensing of Earth in her every presentation as living spiritual and soul presence.

Emphasis on the Spiritual Earth balances the excessive ‘cosmic spirituality’ that characterizes most spiritual, esoteric, and religious traditions. Inner connection with the presence of the Spiritual Earth requires entering into a more feminine, receptive, body/soul/spirit consciousness. When we become one with Spiritual Earth Wisdom, it wakens to a porosity that pours itself forth in a new magical service for the sake of others and the world.

Directors: Robert Sardello, Ph.D. Cheryl Sanders-Sardello, Ph.D.

The offerings of the Center of Earthosophy of the School of Spiritual Psychology begin in the Spring of 2012. These offerings include:

One Year Courses

Course sessions run from Thursday evening until noon on Monday

Angels of the Earth and the New Vision of Being Human

a one year course, meeting four times during the year.

Curriculum includes:

- Sophia and The Creative Imagination of the Unity of Nature, Earth, and Human
- Mary and embodying the Soul of the Earth
- The Black Madonna and Earth-Human transformation
- Mary Magdalene and our Alchemical Entry into the Spiritual Earth

The Wisdom of the Spiritual Earth: Crystals, Minerals, and the Presence of Angels

a one year course meeting four times during the year

Curriculum includes:

- Stilling the mind to find the way through the narrowness of mental organization and opening to the breadth and depth of body awareness.
- Learning to develop bodily capability of sensing inner dimensions of crystals and minerals as Earth-Spiritualizing Forces

- Developing capacities of perceiving in reverence – giving spiritual attention to the physical mineral world as an entry into sensing the Spiritual Earth
- Developing the capacity of feeling-knowing of a stone as it resonates within the individual body/soul; the particular soul resonances of different minerals and crystals and what they reveal – what they do, how they inspire us and work through us, renewing the spiritual forces of Earth
- Meeting the presence of the arising of the world into wholeness of spiritual being. Learning to navigate through the help of crystals, the intricate worlds of wholeness.
- Working with the most powerful of crystal beings, those beings concerned with the transformation of the human body into a vessel of Earth-transformation.
- Working with the stories, myths, and mystery schools concerned with transformation through the beings of stones.
 - Homeopathic work with the mineral world

Extended Weekend Courses

Course sessions run from Thursday evening through Monday at noon

Creative Imagination and Our Relationship with the Spiritual Earth May 3-7 2012

We are destroying Earth because we really don't see. When we look at anything of the Earth, we have made Earth into an object. When we look at Earth and we experience the mystery of Earth looking back, then we encounter Her. This weekend collage helps develop a true, creative imagining of Earth again - directly, immediately, bodily, resulting in imaginal, soul-knowing. Such sensing changes us – and Her, deeply, permanently.

Themes to be explored include:

- What is Nature?
- Humus and Humility
- The Nature Spirits
- The traps of Power and Aesthetics
- Listening to Earth
- Contemplating Nature
- Contemplative action
- Saving the Earth ?
- Who is the 'Spiritual Earth':
Earth as Our spiritual home

The Way of Sensory Bodily Presence October 25-29 2012

This weekend will be the moment we learn the true meaning of what the body is doing every moment, in relation to ourselves, each other, the Earth around and within us. Living forgetfully of what brings the world toward us, we obliterate the sensed world in favor of the conclusion we know of anything sensed. If I know that is a tree, I don't look at the awe and majesty of this growing life form, I dismiss it as tree and get on with what is more interesting, like, what I am doing, who I am, what vitally important thing I have to sell today for my company. Here, in the contemplative work of this course, we learn to live in the company of the Spiritual Earth.

Themes to be explored include:

- Why are there 12 senses?
The Mystery of 12 in Relation to the Cosmos and Earth
- What are "Disruptions" in the Senses / Why do They Matter to the Earth?
- Spiritual Gifts of the Senses that are the Foundation of the Earth
- Pulling the Teeth out of Cultural Forms: Religion, Politics, Medicine, Education: Returning the
World Senses
Think We Are / Where do We Think We are Going/Why we are not Just "on" the Earth, but "OF" the Earth
Whole)
- Cosmic Revelations and Personal Intimations – or – Why What We Sense Matters...Who We
- What Are Our Senses Really Telling Us Every Moment? (The Middle Senses in Relation to the
- When We Die Do We 'Lose' Our Sense-Ability and Does the Earth still Exist for Us?
- How We Know the Other (The Higher, or Spiritual Senses) How the Earth Gives us the Other

For an email brochure on any of the courses, send a request to

spiritualheart@embarqmail.com (Be sure and indicate which course you are interested in)

The School of Spiritual Psychology, PO Box 7, Benson, NC 27504

News from our Anthroposophical Friends in Asheville, NC

by Elizabeth Gilbert

We are pleased to share that the Azalea Mountain Cooperative School, Asheville's Waldorf initiative, has opened its doors. For its first year, the school is offering early childhood through 4th grade and has over 35 students enrolled.

Azalea Mountain's mixed aged kindergarten has children ranging in age from 3.5 to 6 years old. Kate Donnelly, the lead teacher, moved to take the lead position from Arizona where she taught at the Tucson Waldorf School for many years. Ashley Masters is her assistant and also the part time office manager. There is also a parent-child class offered once a week which is very popular.

The combination 1st/2nd grade has 12 students and is taught by Todd Crowe. Mr. Crowe was at the Pittsburgh Waldorf School before moving to Asheville to help begin the new school. The 3rd/4th grade class has 9 students and is taught by Laura Coleman. Ms. Laura also directs the Nature Based Learning program.



The Nature Based Learning program grade students spend each Friday at Sacred Mountain Sanctuary, a 90-acre piece of land dedicated to environmental education. Volunteers with biodynamic training will be guiding the children in making beds and BD preps this fall.

Other specialty subjects at the school include handwork, games, music and eurhythmy.

On September 25, the Waldorf Festival Guild held our 4th Michaelmas Festival. The afternoon included craft activities, apple cider pressing, a puppet show and potluck.

Michaelmas is an especially significant festival for our community. It was the first festival created in laying the groundwork for a future school. While we expected perhaps 20-30 people at the first festival in 2008, we were awed when close to 100 showed up! The festivals continue to draw our large community together and have steadily grown over the past years.

In addition to Azalea Mountain, there are three other early childhood programs based on Waldorf education in the Asheville area. Dandelion Hill, The Little Round Schoolhouse, and The Children's Earth are thriving and in intricate part of the Waldorf community in Western North Carolina.

The Foundation Studies Program, offered through the Center for Anthroposophy, is entering its final semester this fall with around 25 students.

There is also a bi-weekly study group, which is currently studying **Occult Science**.

Other activities this summer included a visit from Brian Gray, director of Anthroposophical Studies at Steiner College. He offered an evening lecture on Sacred Architecture and a 4 day seminar on the Planetary Seals. This event was hosted by the Vesica Institute.

This month, veteran Waldorf teachers and a founding family of Cedar Springs Waldorf School, Patti and Tim Connolly, were in Asheville for a former student's wedding. They led a wonderful afternoon discussion on Waldorf education for the Asheville community. Also participating were a number of Waldorf graduates, including former students of the Connolly's.

Anyone who is interested in following what is happening with Waldorf and Anthroposophy in WNC is invited to join our Yahoo group, "The Asheville Waldorf and Steiner Study Group". Photos from the Azalea Mountain Cooperative can be found at www.azaleamountain.org as well as on Facebook. **Photo Above: Laura Coleman and her class**

WEBSITE, BLOG AND BOOK DEDICATED TO WAGNER ACCORDING TO ANTHROPOSOPHIC INSIGHTS

Anthroposophist George Hastings has recently published a book about the esoteric meaning behind Wagner's operas entitled ***Richard Wagner, Rudolf Steiner: Allegories of the Ring: From the Mundane to the Esoteric***. It is available on Amazon for \$11.21 and on Kindle for \$7.99. He also has a website www.allegoriesofthering.com where you can order his book and read the articles he has written about Richard Wagner in the light of Anthroposophy. He states on the website:

"This website is dedicated to understanding the profound and subtle messages hidden in Richard Wagner's *Ring* cycle and *Parsival* operas, and to expand upon the ideas presented in the book *Richard Wagner, Rudolf Steiner & Allegories of the Ring*."

Mr. Hastings also has a blog at www.allegoriesofthering.wordpress.com where you can read his posts about all things having to do with Wagner.

Do check out this website. It has been a long time since I have heard anthroposophists talking about Wagner. Steiner gave several lectures about Wagner and his operas, which unfortunately are not in print. Back in the 1980's Franz Winkler came out with a book called ***For Freedom Destined*** which was all about the esoteric symbolism in the operas which I read. It is long out of print. I was delighted to see this being taken up again and even more so to hear that George Hastings will be making a lecture tour on the East coast. If you are interested in hearing Mr. Hastings speak, please let our board members know.

Here is a sample of one of the articles George Hastings has on his website:

2012 and Parsival by George Hastings

December 21, 2012 CE – DOOMSDAY! At least that is what many people are saying, based on ancient Mayan prophecies. Others, however, assert there is reason to believe that date will mark the beginning of a glorious new age. Perhaps Wagner's Ring Cycle and Parsival operas will help shed light on the nature of this dilemma.

It wasn't just the Mayas. The ancient Egyptians, Aztecs, Incas, Malis, Pueblos, Cherokees, Senecas, Zulus, Maoris, Chinese, Tamils, Buddhists, Hindus, and Tibetans all prophesized a major event around 2000 CE, the time the sun's equator would travel across the center of the Milky Way. The calendars of many of these same civilizations began around 3000 BCE. These synchronicities have to be more than a coincidence.

Three thousand BCE was the beginning of the great Egyptian civilization, when the sun was worshiped, pyramids built, and the attraction to gold became an obsession. According

to Rudolf Steiner, this was the beginning of a new 2,160-year cycle in the precession of the equinoxes, a time when



painting at left; "Lifting the Veil" by Iris Sullivan

new levels of consciousness begin. In this case clairvoyant consciousness was replaced by a consciousness based upon the physical senses.

When people could “see” into the spiritual world, they felt at one with that world and were part of the flow, so to speak. But after 3000 BCE, people felt themselves to be physical beings on earth, not spiritual beings. Their new consciousness was revealed to them through their physical senses. They had become outsiders, isolated beings among isolated objects. That their calendars began at this time is indicative that they recognized the shift from spiritual consciousness to earthly consciousness.

The 2,160-year cycle which began around 3000 BCE is also the time frame of Richard Wagner’s opera *The Valkyrie*, in which the protagonists struggle to become independent of the gods.

Close to the time when this stage of the ‘fall’ was taking place, what the ancient Hindus called Kali Yuga, the Age of Darkness, also began. They believed humanity would be in the darkness throughout this period, i.e., without high level clairvoyance. According to them, Kali Yuga would last for tens of thousands of years. Rudolf Steiner agreed with the Hindu’s starting date, but said it would last 5,000 years, until 1899 CE. The discrepancy is at least partially due to the fact that Steiner was talking about the first person to ‘see the light,’ while the Hindus were referring to the last ones to see ‘the light.’ After 1899, the Age of Darkness would continue to get darker for some, while, simultaneously, the new Age of Light would get brighter for more and more people, until all but the most materialistic people saw the ‘light.’

There is scientific basis to all this, although much is still speculation. The ancient astronomers, or astrologers, knew the solar system was in the Milky Way and could visually detect the center. They made their predictions with amazing accuracy. In more recent times scientists using state-of-the-art technology have pinpointed the precise center of the Milky Way. The sun began to cross it in 1980 and will complete its passage in 2016, 36 years later. The center of the sun’s ecliptic passed the center of the Milky Way’s ecliptic in 1998.

The ancient Mayas believed it would be crossed in 2012. Some scholars believe the Mayas knew something we don’t, and that on December 21, 2012, something important will happen.



(Painting on left: *The Heavenly Signe* by Iris Sullivan) The passing of the Sun through the equator of the Milky Way signifies a new level of consciousness for humanity, just as it does on a smaller level when it, the sun, crosses the earth’s equator during the precession of the equinoxes.

If we accept ancient literature as history, extreme earthly upheavals accompany new levels of consciousness. According to the Old Testament, when humanity’s consciousness had to change from existing in a watery state to that of a solid state the “flood” took place. Homer’s epic poem *The Odyssey* takes place around the beginning of the third cultural epoch, the time human consciousness became dependent on the physical senses. In it, Odysseus destroys the clairvoyant eye of Cyclops (representing the end of clairvoyance), and the injured one-eyed monster throws rocks at Odysseus (mythologically speaking, a volcano erupted). Even today, it can be seen that around that time the island of Crete, on which this event took

place, went through a cataclysm. What was the harbor basin is now 16 feet above sea level and 100

yards inland; part of the island rose 26 feet, and other areas sank 3 or 4 feet. Early in the fourth 2,160 year cycle the New Testament tells of the sky darkening and major earthquakes occurring as Christ was crucified. Early in the fifth 2,160 year cycle a volcano erupted on the Canary Islands as Columbus sailed by, the time when Europeans first had the opportunity to become free of the feudal aristocrats and royalty.

Geological and atmospheric catastrophes occur continuously. But today it would be naïve to say there is not a dramatic spike in their frequency and intensity. Put it all together and maybe this situation deserves serious consideration.



Trevrizent and Parzival

Richard Wagner's Ring cycle operas follow the evolution of consciousness, in keeping with the precession of the equinoxes. Das Rheingold is about the 'fall,' The rest of the operas take place during Kali Yuga. The Valkyrie is also about the beginning of the third 2,160 year cycle; Siegfried the fourth 2,160 year cycle, time humanity learned to think intellectually; and Twilight of the Gods, the fifth cycle and present day cycle, is about humanity struggling to comprehend the fact that there is a non-physical, spiritual realm.

In the opera *Parsival*, a human being finally raises his level of consciousness to that of the higher spiritual world. Parsival succeeded because he always took the 'high road' during his earthly trials, and was persistent. When a rock wall allegorically opened up he was able to cross the threshold into the spiritual world. Had he been as materialistic as so many others, he would have considered the opening of the rock wall to be an hallucination and would not have been able to make the transition to the spiritual world. Parsival's challenges are the challenges humanity is currently being faced with during the period between 1980 and 2016.

Eurythmy Flash Mob

Hundreds of students assembled for the world's first eurythmy flashmob in Cologne. The students from Alanus College, an anthroposophical college near Bonn, assembled on the steps of the Great Cathedral in Cologne, performed a "Hallelujah" in eurythmy, then moved across the plaza to the main train station where they did more eurythmy on the platforms as the train came in for boarding.

(Ed. Note: this article was taken from WaldorfToday.com Wouldn't it be great to see something like this in America!)



TORIN FINSER TO VISIT IN DECEMBER

Mark your December calendars for a fascinating public lecture at the Emerson Waldorf School entitled "Initiative – Anthroposophy as a Living Resource." The lecture will be presented by Torin Finser, who is the director of Waldorf Teacher Training and the Collaborative Leadership Program at Antioch New England Graduate School, as well as a former Waldorf class teacher and author of several books. The lecture will be held in the Brown Wing of the EWS high school from 6-8:00 pm on **Friday, December 9, 2011**. This talk is co-sponsored by the Emerson Waldorf School and Chapel Hill Foundation Studies. Contact Claire Viadro (viadro@mindspring.com) or Mary Leonhardi (mleonhardi@hotmail.com) with questions.

Prepare for the Holy Nights Now

Our next Sophia Sun will be come out on December 1. It will include the schedule for the Holy Nights. One way you might consider observing the Holy Nights is through journaling. William Bento has written several guides to journaling during the Holy Nights over the years. Last year he published a version that is good for two years. Here are the details about it:

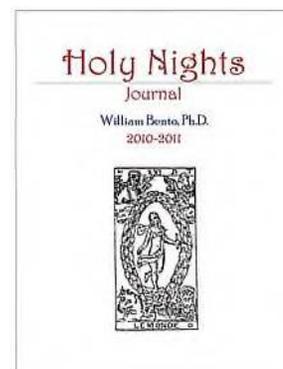
Holy Nights Journal

By: William Bento, PhD

The Holy Nights: Gateway to the Cosmos, Template for the Year 2011

William Bento, PhD, publishes a limited edition Holy Nights Journal which is available through the [Rudolf Steiner College Bookstore](#) for \$22.95. The following extract introduces "Holy Nights Journaling" as a practice. William is a transpersonal clinical psychologist and associate dean of academic affairs at Rudolf Steiner College.

Shining in the light of the Stars are the ethers of the Cosmos: Warmth, Light, Tone and Life. These ethers are the magical powers that bring the elements of Fire, Air, Water and Earth to form. Not only did these ethers imprint upon all forms of nature, but they are also active within each human life. They exist in that threshold between our conscious and unconscious realms. Like the uncanny emergence of images in dreams, these ethers appear as informants of what is living in the Cosmos. As we are given the opportunity to access these forces of the Cosmos during the Holy Nights, we are able to read in the images from above the concerns and questions of the Spiritual Beings within the Cosmos. It is therefore incumbent upon all those who can read what is written in the Stars to find a way to speak back to the Stars.



The Stars once Spoke to Man.
It is World Destiny that they are Silent now.
To be aware of this Silence
Can become Pain for Earthly Man.
But in the Deepening Silence
There Grows and Ripens
What Man Speaks to the Stars.
To be aware of this Speaking
Can become Strength for Spirit Man.

Reina Galjour, EWS Alumna and Midwife in Haiti: Profile of a Michaelic Individual in Action

By Kathleen Wright

In last month's *Sophia Sun*, we printed an article about Waldorf school alumni who are making a difference in the world. One of these was Reina Galjour, whom we mentioned was planning two fundraisers for the organization she works for - **Midwives for Haiti**. Those of you who were unable to attend really missed a fascinating presentation, so I thought it would be good to do a follow-up. Reina showed two documentaries – one about the organization Midwives for Haiti and one about the hospital she works in – St. Teresa's. She was featured in both of them. Reina also shared a slide presentation of photos she had taken in Haiti and spoke about her experiences there.

Haiti has hardly been mentioned in the news since the earthquake and cholera epidemic and so many probably think that things have improved there; after all, millions of dollars were donated, right? Wrong, according to Reina. She has been there for the past year and a half and has seen few improvements in the conditions of the country:

The majority of people are still living in tents. Cholera is still prevalent. Haiti has no infrastructure – no mail, no public education, hardly any electricity except for the few places lucky enough to have generators or solar panels. There is no running water, few wells, no paved roads, no public education – 70% of the people are illiterate and most believe in Voodoo; most people have no jobs and few have any money. One of the most horrifying stories Reina shared was that there are people who sell mud pies, which are bought by mothers who cannot afford to buy food for their children and so they fill their bellies with mud.



At St. Teresa's in the town of Hinche (pronounced "insh") there is no running water. Once a day the midwives gather water from a well – they are allowed to fill a large jug – that is all and it needs to last all day for their many patients. It is never enough. There is blood and filth everywhere. There is no electricity at the hospital, which has resulted in deaths, because although the hospital was gifted with an oxygen machine, they cannot use it without electricity. Unlike US hospitals where everything you need is supplied, in Haiti the mothers-to-be are expected to bring all their own supplies to the hospital – sheets, towels, diapers, soap, a bucket for toileting (there are no toilets or outhouses). The mattresses on the beds at the hospital are very old,

torn and stained. Often there are not enough sanitizers, and the midwives are covered in blood. There is also frequently a shortage of blood for transfusions, and this is a serious issue as so many women in Haiti are anemic because of their poor diet and the prevalency of sickle cell anemia. One tragic tale Reina told us was of a woman with sickle cell disease who arrived with a blood count about a third of what it should be. The hospital had no blood so they went begging at the Red Cross. The Red Cross people said they would only give the woman a pint of blood if four of the sick woman's family members would each donate a pint of blood. It took hours to round up the four family members and the poor woman was finally given a pint of blood, but she died anyway.

Hospital supplies and medicines are brought by volunteer nurses and midwives who each spend a week or two. Unfortunately many of these volunteers are so horrified at the conditions in Haiti that they become paralyzed and therefore, more of a burden than a help. Another problem is that the supplies they bring often 'disappear' the day after they are brought in. The expectant mothers are so poor that they often arrive at the hospital with no money and therefore no way to get home, which

may be as much as 100 miles away. As a result, Reina often gives the new mothers money from her own meager stipend to help them get home or buy food for their families. The need is overwhelming.

Reina admits that she herself was overwhelmed when she first arrived and feared that she might not be able to make a difference. The biggest problem at first was that she did not know Creole and most Haitians do not know English so it was difficult to communicate. The other nurses at the hospital were at first suspicious and distrustful of her. Many seemed hardened in their ways. There is significant prejudice against white people and with good reason – they have been exploited and mistreated by white people for centuries. Reina found that there was always so much to do; there was never enough time, supplies, or anything that she needed. And to compound matters, it is so noisy there at night that she had great difficulty sleeping no matter how exhausted she was. She eventually learned Creole, won over the other nurses, who now adore her; she got used to the shortage of supplies and even learned to sleep amidst all the chaos and noise.

When one person at the fundraiser audience asked her if she was afraid of getting AIDS being that she was always covered with blood, Reina just shrugged her shoulders. You get used to it, she said. You just do what needs to be done. Is this not the mark of what Steiner called an “ethical individual”, one who does the good simply because it is the right thing to do, not because of any desire for reward or even personal gratification? And her courage is downright Michaelic!

The question was asked about the mortality rates of mothers and children in Haiti. In the six and a half years that Reina worked as a midwife at the Maternidad la Luz in Texas, only one Mother and one baby were lost and they were not even Reina’s patients.. In Haiti, between 2 and 6 babies are lost **per week** in Haiti and about one Mother per month is lost.



Reina did try to bring some positive notes as well. Since she has been in Haiti she has trained 3 classes of women (12-16 women per class) to be midwives and those women are so proud and happy with their achievement. The classes last 10 months. Reina has taught them compassion as well as technical skills. The hospital’s good reputation has been spreading and more and more women are being saved. Reina said she was looking forward to going back to Haiti to see her fourth class graduate in November.

There are about 40,000 NGO’s (non-government organizations that do charitable work) that volunteer in Haiti; that is more than any country in the western hemisphere. The problem with these NGO’s is that they are simply giving “handouts”. You have undoubtedly heard the saying “Feed a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach him to fish and you feed him for life”. Many of these NGO’s are merely giving fishes. The Haitians need job skills and jobs. Midwives for Haiti is one of the few NGO’s that are doing this.

One anecdote that will be upsetting to animal lovers is that every night without fail dogs come and knock over the hospital’s trashcans and devour the blood-soaked rags. That is the only food they get.

Near St. Theresa’s is a home run by the nuns of Mother Teresa, the Sisters of Charity, where starving children and the dying are housed and fed. Reina says that she has only been there twice because it is just too painful to see the suffering there. She showed us slides of some of the children there – a 7 year old girl who looked like a two-year-old. She was so malnourished that she could not walk or speak and a two year-old boy who was so thin he didn’t look human. That home, like St. Theresa’s, welcomes volunteers who spend the day holding babies and feeding them. Many of the children are orphans.

Reinas’ main outlet from all the suffering of Haiti is dancing. She has come to love the Haitian people and their music and dance. In spite of the poverty, they still make music and dance. It was at a dance that Reina met her fiancé, Desauguste Johnson. She says that she will stay in Haiti until

she can bring Desauguste home to North Carolina. It is currently very difficult to get a Visa of any kind for Haitians. The government there loves to collect the fees for Visa applications, but virtually no one is granted a Visa and no refunds for the applications are ever made. Reina says that men in Haiti have come up to her and asked her if she has any friends who will marry them, so they can leave Haiti and go to America.

Reina returned to Haiti on September 28, ready to resume her good work on Michaelmas. As I think about Reina, I realize what a Michaelic human being she is. What are the qualities of the Archangel Michael? Courage, compassion and determination that drive one to do good deeds, along with a cosmopolitan attitude – blood ties and one's nationality are not what matter; realization that we are all one human family does. I saw these qualities in Reina even when she was a tiny first grader in my class. She really stood out because of this. And so Reina is off again fighting the dragons of poverty, ignorance and disease with her loving heart and strong will to do good in the world. She is truly an inspiration to all of us.

If you would like to help Reina's work, please go to the website www.midwivesforHaiti.org and follow the instructions for donating. Be sure to mention Reina Galjour as your source for inspiration for giving.

Michaelmas Meditation

There works in me the dragon's power
Which wants to drag me down.
I do not see it; I feel it as that
Which wants to make of me
What is beneath my being.
But I see in the spirit the radiant Angel
Whose Cosmic task it has always been
To conquer the dragon,
I concentrate my warm-hearted feeling-will
Upon this radiant figure.
I let its light ray into
My warm-hearted feeling-will.



“Young Girl With Michael” by Iris Sullivan

Moving the Soul With Color

A delight for your eyes and your soul are the paintings of artist Iris Sullivan. I received permission from her to publish some of her paintings, which are scattered throughout this newsletter with the title of the painting and her name. You can view her work, which I consider to be the most beautiful veil paintings I have ever seen at her website:

www.movingthesoulwithcolor.com . Iris's paintings are for sale and she has prints of some of them that have been made into cards, as well as blank notebooks. Write to her at iris@movingthesoulwithcolor.com to get the price list for the cards.

This summer, Iris will be teaching a painting course at the Summer Renewal Program in New Hampshire in June and July. She will also be teaching a course in Maui.

SOUTHEASTERN SUMMER CONFERENCE – PART II: “ANTHROPOSOPHY: WHAT? HOW? WHY? WHO?”

by Kathleen Wright

The very enigmatic title of the Chattanooga Conference might at first make one think the conference was a simple exposition about the history of Anthroposophy, but no, that's not at all what the title really suggests. It is far more complex. The color coding in the title refers to a very specific method of reading, thinking and writing that is “organic” or living. A good part of Michael Ronall's presentations were about this method of study or observation. Participants were even asked to bring colored pencils to the workshop to learn it. At the end of the workshop, Michael revealed that we could learn more about this process at a website known as www.organicthinking.org. Upon researching the website, one learns that it is dedicated to the Rudolf Steiner's writing and how theories about it were developed by George O'Neill. There are numerous articles, study group notes and even books on this site and lots of colorful diagrams to explain organic thinking. It is definitely worth the time to browse, study and apply the teachings of this site. Michael has used this method in Study groups he has led on *The Philosophy of Freedom* (which the site recommends calling the *Philosophy of “Freehood”*) for many years.

Because the website does a far better job at explaining the process of study than we could put into a short article, this review will concentrate on the other interesting things Michael presented. We were impressed with how lively and frequently hilariously humorous Michael was in his presentation of this topic, which could easily have been boring and tedious if presented by almost anyone else. Below are notes I took at the four lectures Michael gave:

LECTURE ONE: WHAT?

One of Michael's opening remarks was that the anthroposophical movement is small – but not weak. It is like yeast – a little is all you need for a great effect. He said that the modern world falsely believes that evolution depends on the survival of the fittest. These animal dynamics do not apply to us if we realize that the seed is within us to counter this principle and that real evolution actually progresses through **sacrifice**, not competition.

Through thinking we can become co-Creators of the universe. While danger is the ‘sign of our times’, we have within us the greatest resource for overcoming evil: tranquility.

Since the time of the Scientific Revolution people have believed that they can predict by previous experience and that all psychological, biological and mechanical phenomena can be reduced to “mechanics”. This results in the conclusion that knowledge is limited and that the realm of the soul is not investigatable. Therefore it must be relegated to an authority (i.e. Churches). Steiner strongly disagreed with this and stated that human beings can be active agents, not merely observers with our thinking. If you observe your own thinking, you are focusing your energy on who you *really* are.

Our evolution asks us to “give away” or lose something in order to progress to the next stage. This is illustrated by Aristotle's causality and Goethe's metamorphosis. The plant is drawn by the periphery, just as our creativity depends on us being able to transfer mechanical causality into living thinking.

After these introductory remarks, Michael went on to define the inner meanings of the four questions in the title of the conference:

WHAT – represents the mineral world e.g. crystals, that which forms, endures, changes by breaking into smaller pieces. It is subject to the laws of gravity and entropy. Science explains all our experience through matter. They regard planets and stars as matter too. They believe that physical and chemical reactions explain everything.

HOW – represents the life world or plant world. Science would like to reduce this world to the “what” world. The life world is a process. New growth comes from dying. Growth is vertical. Mechanical thinking is lifeless. The question one must ask is: How do I think? How do we develop organically?

WHY – represents the animal world, the world of conscious feeling, sympathy and antipathy. There is lateral growth and movement. Freud saw animality in the human soul.

WHO – represents the Human Kingdom, the world of unique individuals.

Steiner's ideas on consciousness were dismissed by the intellectual world of his time. They insisted on reproducible results – this is not possible with spiritual research. Steiner wrote that the most important observation a person can make is the process of his own thinking. He states this in Chapter 3 of the *Philosophy of Freedom*. If you do not do this, then you are not free; you are then what Freud said – you are controlled by your drives and appetites.

The four questions and four kingdoms outlined above correspond to the four features of metamorphosis. All four are represented in the plant kingdom. These are:

1. rhythm (it distinguishes living from non-living; e.g. circulation and breathing)
2. growth – life processes, reproduction; things become more complex as they grow.
3. polarity – inner and outer
4. inversion – turning inside out; cause and effect are often the reverse.

These four principles also apply to spiritual investigation.

LECTURE TWO - HOW

Michael began this Saturday morning talk by stating that rhythm consists of repetition and this is most important in meditation. Meditation prepares the soul to be “more efficient” in its travels during sleep. Look at yourself as if you were someone else with total objectivity. The Rückschau practice breaks causality. Sleep and waking are the microcosms of death and life. During the Rückschau one should try to see how others experienced you during the day, not just how you experienced them.

Galileo, the father of the scientific revolution said that if one sees flames, smells it, and feels the warmth, one concludes: “I know there is a fire. If I bring my hand closer and closer, eventually I will feel pain. The pain is in me; all other characteristics are without me. I only know my own sensations. The world is therefore reduced to my physiology.” The antidote for this kind of thinking can be found in Chapter 4 of the POF. There are two “jailers” in each human being - one on the outside and one on the inside opposing the ruler outside (e.g. addictions and temptations). Thinking can liberate us from both. Michael then did a recapitulation of yesterday's lesson about the four questions and showed how each represents a plant part during its metamorphosis:

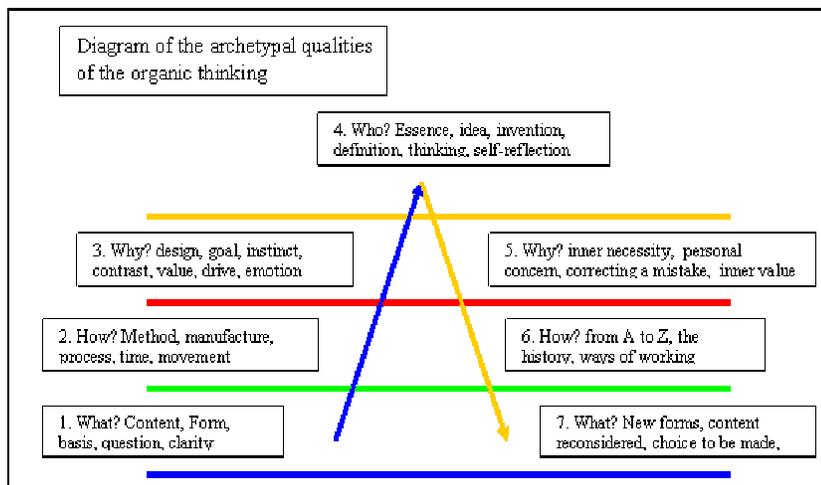


Chart on left is from the website www.organicthinking.com

(What) the seed expands and contracts as it metamorphoses; (How) the leaf; (why) the bud; (who) the blossom. After the parts are all manifest, the plant then contracts into the reproductive parts, goes back to the animal phase, the fruit; then it

contracts once more to the seed; however now there are many seeds, although it started as just one. This is a miracle. These seven steps in plant metamorphosis correspond to the 7 stages of life in the human being. Goethe wrote: “What the plant does unconsciously, do that deliberately!” Botany as related to human consciousness was a theme both Goethe and Steiner loved. One can apply this to

Ethics. It is no longer valid to decide if something is right or wrong according to laws, but rather: is it fruitful; is it life-enhancing?

Easterners have a cyclical view of time related to agricultural cycles and represented by the circle; Westerners have the idea of linear progress, always going forward, represented by a straight line. Neither is correct by itself. The resolution of the two is the spiral. It is the organic view that recapitulation keeps occurring, but at a higher level each time with a Pralaya (pause) in between epochs. Plants do this as well. This is the evolutionary pattern. A Parabola form also illustrates this principle.

Consciousness comes at the expense of life. The head is full of “death forces”. It is not good to have a “hot head” or “cold feet”. The heart is the mediator. Between the ages of 30-33 you have to give something up. If you don’t it will be taken from you. Evil is good out of time. We must redeem evil, not suppress it.

In nature, life forces are represented by asymmetrical forms, while symmetrical forms represent the death forces. Thus in the peony (Pfingstenrose – Whitsun rose) the astral or sentient soul is seen, overflowing in its beauty and the wildness of life; orchids, on the other hand represent physical consciousness; it is imbued with death forces. The daisy is balanced and represents the ether or intellectual soul.

Steiner’s works are written in Metamorphic style. e.g. there are 7 lectures in some of his cycles; also he states that one cannot read his Philosophy of freedom out of sequence. Reading it in the right way will purify the astral body. The Philosophy of Freedom is divided into two parts of seven chapters each, plus a third part of four paragraphs. This is all framed by a six-paragraph Preface to the Second edition and a 14-paragraph ‘second Appendix’, which had been the introduction to the First edition of the book. The number of parts, chapters, paragraphs and even sentences may be significant for the ‘dry, mathematical style’ (Autobiography, Chapter 33): in which Steiner wrote.

In Michael’s POF Study group, one sentence per week is read aloud! They read it aloud, note the structure, get the facts straight, look at the key words – what is important; everyone then paraphrases it; a consensus is arrived at; then they look at the rhythm and intensification in the sentence. Michael demonstrated how the pattern of blue (physical) green (etheric) red(astral) and yellow (ego) manifest in each paragraph of the Preface. In an artistic session the conference participants observed the form in a chapter and underlined with colored pencils the patterns that we saw. It was truly amazing. Michael said that the Philosophy of Freedom gives the method for research; all Steiner’s subsequent books are the results of Steiner’s investigations. Michael noted that Lincoln’s Gettysburg address also follows this organic pattern.

LECTURE THREE - WHY

Michael began by drawing the well-known anthroposophical parabola with the cultural epochs on it: on the left side are the Indian, Persian, and Egypt-Chaldean with the Graeco-Roman at the bottom; on the right side of the parabola are the Central European (our current epoch), the Slavic (6th) and the Neo-American (7th). Each epoch on the right corresponds to the epoch opposite it on the left. Our present epoch is a recapitulation of the Egyptian. The vices evident today from that ancient time include the prominence of imagery over sense-free thinking, resulting in resistance to thinking e.g. advertising, government propaganda, the media, video games. These teach people to react rather than respond. Another vice is the pandemic of narcissism – rather than feel shame, one transfers the guilt to others. This can result in sociopathic behavior. Steiner gave us exercises to overcome these characteristics by awakening the Chakras in his ***Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and Its Attainment***.

Michael then spoke about the 6 subsidiary exercises, which awaken the Heart Chakra and noted the patterns they have: control of thinking, control of willing, control of feeling. He also noted the 7 petitions in the Lord’s Prayer and related them to the 7 steps of metamorphosis.

LECTURE FOUR – WHO

The final talk began with a resumption of the previous theme - the recapitulation of our age with that of the Egypto-Chaldean. One method for remedying the defects we have inherited from that period is to raise it to a “mystery culture”. Instead, it appears our civilization has made a cult of youth worship. We are encouraged by the media to dress like the young, to listen to their music, to have plastic surgery, etc.

The historical parabola is represented by the U-shaped parabola, while the individual’s biography is represented by the inverse parabola. When something works “parabolically” it isn’t given linearly; one needs to enter the meaning actively, just as with anthroposophical reading.

Michael referred to the previous night’s dramatic recitation of the **St. John Gospel** by Robert Brock by stating that this Gospel also follows the pattern of 7 that we have been studying. There are 21 Chapters (3 x 7); there are 7 I Ams – note the pattern of ascent in them! Steiner’s lecture cycle on the St. John Gospel has 14 lectures.



Robert Brock

Michael then shared how one can use the principles learned through the 4 questions and the 7 stages to work with the first subsidiary exercise, which focuses on thinking. He recommends choosing a manufactured object to observe (not a crystal or daisy as anthroposophists love to do). An object such as a pin or paper clip is simpler to use and apply the 7 principles to. Think about where it came from, how it was made. Exhaust all the interesting thoughts and then the exercise begins to be worthwhile. This exercise is not supposed to be fun or interesting – that belongs to the sentient world. We need to get beyond that. Look at the object and let it go. Ask questions: how did it come into being? Trace it backwards. This releases the causality and frees the etheric, allowing you to be more creative. Michael joked that one “gets bored” into clairvoyance. Go through the questions in the parabola – what, how, why, who, do a pause (pralaya). The “who” could be the inventor, the “why” – why he chose the word; what else could he have made?

Michael then spoke about the website organicthinking.org which we mentioned at the opening of this article. He mentioned the book **The Human Life** by George and Gisela O’Neil, which tells about the parabola in human life; he also recommended Florin Lowndes’s book **Awakening the Heart Chakra**. The final thought he brought was that in Chapter 9 of the POF Steiner states that the world works without us, but our thinking recreates the world; it is a spiritual form of love.

About Michael Ronall



Michael Ronall received his MA in Philosophy from the New School for Social Research and his Waldorf high school teacher training at the Center for Anthroposophy in Wilton, NH. He also did graduate and anthroposophical studies in Europe. An alumnus of the Rudolf Steiner School in NYC, he worked for 20 years in advertising in NY and has actively served the Anthroposophical Society in America, its NY Branch, and the Youth Section of the School of Spiritual Science. He has been the Consulting Editor and a contributor to the Newsletter of the Anthroposophical Society in America, and has taught at Sunbridge College, Eurythmy Spring Valley, the Fellowship Community and the Foundation Studies Program in Princeton, NJ. His writings have appeared in diverse periodicals, and he was a featured speaker at the 2009 Annual General Meeting of the Anthroposophical Society in America and the keynote speaker at Think Outward’s **Philosophy of Freedom** Intensive last year. Michael will be speaking at the Michaelmas 2011 Symposium in Spring Valley on “Clairvoyance through Annoyance; the Redemptive

Homeopathy of Everyday Troubles”. The latest e-News has an article by Michael entitled: “Adding Self-command to Self-restraint: Reflections on Developing Social Courage”.

Directory of Anthroposophical Initiatives in North Carolina

Branches

The Rudolf Steiner Branch (NC) of the Anthroposophical Society in America

Serving Chapel Hill, Durham, Hillsborough, Pittsboro, Cedar Grove, Mebane and Raleigh

P.O. 16024

Chapel Hill, NC 27516

www.anthroposophync.org

RSBNC Board:

President; Peg Carmody 919-537-8142; mcarmody@nc.rr.com

Vice President: Nancy Willson 919-493-1091; nancywillson@myfrontiermail.com

Recording Secretary: Melanie Maupin 919-384-7338 melmaup@gmail.com

Correspondence Secretary: Joanna Carey 919-403-7060 joannapcarey@gmail.com

Acting Treasurer: Peg Carmody

Newsletter: *The Sophia Sun* sophiasun@peoplepc.com

Other Groups in NC

Asheville: Todd Crowe 828-216-3226; oddwitha_t@hotmail.com

Website: www.azaleamountain.org

Clemmons - Sarah Putnam- 336-972-8243; sputnam01@att.net

Greensboro: Sandy LaGrega – 336-292-7947; sunsan52@aol.com

Wilmington: Anna Bowman - 910-338-0833; 919 792-0959

Alicia Marroquin - 910-874-7200; rosenhart@bluepearlarts.com

Education

Emerson Waldorf School (N-K-12)

www.emersonwaldorf.org

6211 New Jericho Rd.

Chapel Hill, NC 27516

Main Office: 919-967-1858

High School Office: 919-932-1195

Early Childhood office: 919-967-3362

Foundation Year Studies at the Emerson Waldorf School

(sponsored by the Center for Anthroposophy in NH)

Contact: Claire Viadro 919-967-8215; Viadro@mindspring.com

Home Nursery School Association (serving Durham, Chapel Hill and Hillsborough)

(There are currently 6 home nursery programs that utilize Waldorf principles)

Contact: Marie Nordgren 919-544-8748; amnordgren@aol.com

School of Spiritual Psychology

Benson, NC

www.spiritualschool.org

Robert Sardello and Cheryl Sanders-Sardello, Directors

Azalea Mountain Morning Garden (serving Asheville)

Contact: Kate Reese or Maria Allen 828-505-1350; www.azaleamountain.org;

Azalea Mountain School K-4, a Waldorf-inspired school

Medical

Mark Eisen, M.D., anthroposophical family medical practice

(Dr. Eisen has temporarily closed his practice for medical reasons. An announcement will be made when it resumes.); mjepractic@aol.com

Margaretta Bornhorst, R.N. anthroposophical nurse; Rhythmical massage practitioner, 919-824-7337; healingrhythms@gmail.com

Divine Rose - Cory Roth, NC licensed/certified Dr. Hauschka esthetician; offers Dr. Hauschka facial treatments and make-up sessions; contact: 919-933-4748; Divinerose55@gmail.com

Biodynamic Farms

Whitted-Bowers Farm - Demeter certified – specializing in fruits and vegetables; 8707 Art Rd., Cedar Grove, NC 27231; 919-732-5132; Rob and Cheri Bowers, owners

Infinity Farm – uses biodynamic methods; CSA, organic goat milk, grass fed meats; organic eggs; vegetables. Jon Lyerly, director 919-357-7453; jlyerly2@gmail.com; 1600 McDade Store Rd., Cedar Grove, NC

The Arts

Eurythmy - Eve Olive - 919-489-2564; eveolive@frontier.com
Ann Calloway – 919-403-8678 callaway.lonaann@gmail.com

Werbeck Singing - Joanna Carey – 919-403-7060

Lyre Music- Joanna Carey – 919-403-7060
Suzanne Mays – 919-929-1073

School of Choreocosmos, Sophia Grail Circles

Kelly Calegar - www.eastcoastschoolofchoreocosmos.com
Marlene Joyce – mjoyce126@bellsouth.net

Christian Community

A Christian Community priest visits our Congregation bi-monthly. Currently, Rev. Carol Kelly and Rev. Patrick Kennedy are the priests we share with the Washington D.C. parish. **Contact:** Linda Folsom, Steering Committee member, 493-8323. lfolsom@nc.rr.com; Website: www.christiancommunitync.org

Anthroposophical Lending Library

The Phoenix Library, Chapel Hill, NC 27517
Contact: Judy Frey 919-928-8749; damaris12@nc.rr.com

Study Groups:

Child's Needs Study Group – One Saturday a month 10 am-12 pm.; reading *Loving the Stranger: Studies in Adolescence, Empathy and the Human Heart*, compiled by Michael Luxford Please call Lauren Mills Nyland for further information – 968-7721, or mills.lauren@gmail.com

Christian Community Study Group: “Feed the Body, Feed the Soul” - Sundays 11a - 1p at the home of Jim and Mary Beth Mueller, 3105 Whitfield Rd., Chapel Hill. The group will spend the first hour reading and discussing and the second hour sharing a Pot Luck meal. Book: *The Trinity* by Hans Werner-Schroeder. All are welcome. Check the website for further details www.thechristiancommunitync.org or call Mary Beth at 929-9791.

Clemmons Study Group – first and third Sundays of the month from 6-8 pm. This Study Group meets September through May, at the home of Sarah Putnam, 7719 Whitehorse Dr, Clemmons, NC. The group is reading Meditations on the Tarot. Call 336-972-8243 for information.

Death, Dying and Dessert – a conversation group that meets the third Monday of the month from 7-9 pm to share experiences and concerns, ask questions and become active in our community in our relationship to death and dying; meets at the home of Jenny Bingham, 208 Murray St., Hillsborough; contact Jenny at jennybingham@yahoo.com or call 214-4304.

The Goethean Conversation Study Group – Sundays 3-5 PM. Marjorie Spock, in her book *Group Moral Artistry*, suggested substituting Goethean conversation for reading or lecturing, which many felt to be an outmoded form of Anthroposophical group life. We are currently applying these principles to the book *Learning to Experience the Etheric World: Empathy, the After-Image and a New Social Ethic* by Baruch Urieli and Hans Mueller-Wiedemann It meets at the home of Martha and Dirk Kelder in Chapel Hill. For more information please call 919-942-2112.

Greensboro Study Group - Sunday nights, 7 pm. Currently reading *The Fifth Gospel* by Rudolf Steiner. Contact Sandy LaGrega at (336) 292-7947 or Judy Boyd (336) 454-2451.

Ita Wegman Study Group – Wednesdays 11:30-1:00 at the home of Kathleen Wright. Currently reading: *Rudolf Steiner's Mission and Ita Wegman* by Margareta and Erich Kirchner-Bockholt. We shall read works by Dr. Wegman and about her. Call Kathleen Wright if interested at 309-9622 or 672-0149 or email: sophiasun@peoplepc.com

Reading to the Dead Group – third Thursday of the month, 7:00-9:00 pm. We are reading *Studies in Therapeutics* by Rudolf Steiner. We meet at the home of Joanna Carey at 112 Solterra Way in Durham. Any questions can be directed to Joanna Carey: 919-403-7060. Please RSVP that you will be attending.

Rose Cross Study Group – Wednesdays, 7:30 pm, at the home of Judy Frey, Currently reading *Karma of Untruthfulness Vol. I*. Newcomers are welcome! Please give call Judy at 928-8749 before attending the first time.

The Socially Resilient Child Study Group – Thursdays 8:45-9:45 a.m. in the second classroom in the Nursery School Building at EWS; to discuss “How can we support our children in social situations?” Contact Lauren Nyland at 968-7721 or mills.Lauren@gmail.com

Wilmington: Roscroix Stream Study group, Tuesdays 6:30-8:00 pm: at the home of Alicia Marroquin Southport, NC. Book: Isis, Mary, Sophia: Her Mission and Ours by Rudolf Steiner. For more information call Alicia at 910-363-4311 or email: rosenhart@bluepearlarts.com

Editor's Note; Please keep the information about your Study Group Current. Email Kathleen Wright at sophiasun@peoplepc.com to update your information. If you have a Study group that is not listed above, please let me know. We are happy to list any groups in the Southeast.



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Of the Anthroposophical Society in America

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Chapel Hill, NC 27516

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The Sophia Sun

Editor.....Kathleen Wright

Calendar.....Linda Folsom

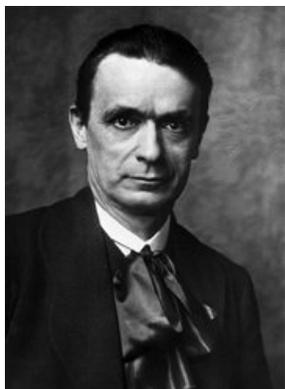
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Submitting articles, letters, announcements and ads:

Please send UNFORMATTED text as a Microsoft Word document to sophiasun@peoplepc.com. Articles should not exceed 3 pages in length, and preferably should be 1-2 pages long.

Ads for goods and services: Dues-paying members of the Rudolf Steiner Branch are entitled to one free ad per year (quarter of a page). Please contact the editor for rates if you are not a member and wish to place an ad.

If you have any questions, please contact: **Kathleen Wright, at 919-309-9622 or 919-672-0149 or email her at sophiasun@peoplepc.com**



Anthroposophy, which means “the wisdom of man”, is a spiritual philosophy and path to self-knowledge, which “leads the spiritual in the human being to the spiritual in the universe”, according to its teacher, Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925). **Rudolf Steiner** was a brilliant “Renaissance man” from Austria who was a philosopher, scientist, artist, playwright, architect, social activist, teacher and meditator, who had a direct perception of the spiritual worlds. Anthroposophy, which is also known as Spiritual Science, teaches, among other things, the laws of reincarnation and Karma. It has a Christ-centered view of world evolution. Steiner founded the School of Spiritual Science, as well as the General Anthroposophical Society, which he described as “a union of people who desire to further the life of the soul – both in the individual and in human society – on the basis of true knowledge of the spiritual world”. In addition to giving over 6,000 lectures, most of which have been made into books, he helped to found many initiatives that are still thriving today including: the Waldorf School movement, anthroposophical medicine,

biodynamic farming, and Eurythmy. Based on his indications, hundreds of initiatives have developed such as: the Curative education movement, the Camp Hill Villages for the handicapped, Weleda remedies, Dr. Hauschka cosmetics, WALA, True Botanica, Astrosophy, Rhythmical Massage, the Alliance for Childhood, The Christian Community, Anthroposophic Prison Outreach, Lazure painting, Demeter, advancements in architecture, science, social and economic reform (The Threefold Social Order, community banks), mathematics and painting. In addition, there are many publishing houses and libraries dedicated to his works throughout the world. For more information, check the national website at www.anthroposophy.org or our local website at www.anthroposophyNC.org