

# THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

MOVEMENT FOR RELIGIOUS RENWAL

A Newsletter for the Eugene, Oregon Area

## Our Work Together Continues to Grow

Quite a few weeks have passed since Reverend Sanford Miller visited Eugene. Including his recent visit to Portland, this makes four visits to Oregon in 2008. It is becoming a regular occurrence to have a priest from the Christian Community visit Oregon. Four visits a year is a good accomplishment.

We are grateful that Sanford likes to travel. He takes his "show on the road" so willingly. We are also grateful that his home congregation is willing to share him. And our gratitude also goes to Reverend Hartmut Junge, who is retired. He fills in while Sanford travels. Can a priest ever really retire?

Chris Guilfoil and Kathy Reardon have taken on a large share of holding the preparations for the many Christian Community events that happen in the short (four day) span of Sanford's visits. We are still earnestly looking for someone in Eugene who would like to help Chris and Kathy, especially with caring for the social aspects of our developing Christian Community.

We are specifically looking for someone who would like to organize a potluck after the Act of Consecration of Man. Another responsibility needing development is calling to check in on people's interests and needs in relation to what Sanford offers when he visits Eugene.

Of course, we are always looking for people to remind and encourage others to come and learn more about a renewed Christianity.

Thank you so very much to everyone who helps make Sanford's time in Eugene go smoothly.

## Encountering the Sacraments

by Sandra Burch

I have only recently come into contact with The Christian Community. With each new encounter I come away with more questions, but also a firm conviction about the value of participating. I offer a few impressions of three sacraments I have encountered.

First is Baptism, usually done when a child is a baby, but it can be done for a child up to the age of sixteen.

This sacrament does not make the child a member of the Christian Community. It stands on its own in a certain sense. What it does do, the part we can barely understand and probably never perceive, is that it helps the child as they move into their life of challenges and decisions. A bit of Christic medicine is there to help them navigate in this fallen world. This assists them in meeting and living their destiny. The element of the

baptism that is much more tangible is the child receiving godparents. For someone not related by blood to freely agree to love and pray for their godchild is strengthening to all involved. I highly recommend this supportive sacrament for your child.

Next is The Act of Consecration of Man. A differing concept than simply: The Mass. That is not unusual for endeavors that Rudolf Steiner helped to midwife into creation. There is something in this sacrament that is at once with

antipathy and sympathy for me. When I contemplate my experience, I feel alternately humbled and impatient. "I must not know what's going on" stands alongside "I can't believe that they are doing that again!" I do notice that my senses are more awake. The sounds are more noticeable and the scents and even the sight of the incense mingling with the light. Taste and touch are also active. What does a golden cup feel like? Is it wine or juice? Is the bread soft? I am very much a novice at participating in this sacrament.

Unbeknownst to me I was raised to distrust ritual. Now, I find myself about as rolled up in it as one can get every time I go to a Sunday service. Something inside me screeches frequent warnings. I choose to continue acknowledging that I have a lot to learn. For me, The Act of Consecration of Man is like a marriage after the honeymoon is over. I love my husband but does he have to act like that? I love Christ, but is this the truest way to interact with His being? Do I ditch the marriage just because it's uncomfortable? I don't know what's going on and I have a lot to learn about being in such a relationship. Why leave when it gets rough? I will be patient with not knowing, ask lots of questions, and learn something new.

The art of painting has been similar for me. The first

"We stand, not at the end,  
but at the beginning  
of Christianity."

~ Christian Morgenstern

couple of years the paintings were pretty dismal. Only the colors (the world of soul) carried me onward. A good teacher and kind fellow painters helped. Now after lots of time, practice, and discomfort, I can mat and frame some of my paintings and be happy with the results.

Distrust of ritual is meaningful if the ritual has become rote or stuck. If one is left with one's own self and the sacrament, there is a chance for developing more deeply one's humanity. If you are curious, I encourage you to come and see what makes you uncomfortable and begin there.

"Christ in you."

"And may He fill your spirit."

These few words, heard often in The Act of the Consecration of Man, are like the tiny tip of an iceberg. What is sense perceptible reveals little of what is happening under the surface. We see a bit of it here on earth: the ritual, the forms, the priest and servers. The bulk of the sacrament is alive, vital and taking up space in the spiritual world, so to speak. That is enough of a reason to participate in a sacrament – to have an interaction with something that has such a large component in the spiritual world.

The last sacrament I'd like to share about is: The Sacrament of Consultation. This is the one that could take the place of Confession. But it does not have to be about confessing sins. It is more about laying out the burdens on one's heart for a priest to hear and respond to with the ears and words of the Christ, as far as is possible. There is a simple format. The priest wears vestments. There is a short time for inward reflection and quieting. You may then speak your needs, dilemma or confusions. The priest will speak in response, but not from a place of personality. They bring ideas from a larger perspective, possibly quoting from the words of Christ in the New Testament. There may be a conversing in this same form until one feels complete. Then the priest speaks a verse and you may leave in silence to be with what you have just received. This is distinctly different from pastoral counseling which a priest also does. I highly recommend this sacrament if you are faced with an issue repeatedly and have been working with it in your life. It can be a reinforcement or a strengthener of your resources as you continue to wrangle and wrestle with where you find your self in life.

I encourage you to experience and share the richness that is available to you through these sacraments.

## The Christian Community

"You are the salt of the earth." Matthew 5:13

The The Christian Community is part of an international movement for the renewal of religion, founded in 1922 in Switzerland by the eminent Lutheran theologian and minister Friedrich Rittlemeyer, with the help of Rudolf Steiner, Austrian philosopher, teacher and artist.

The Christian Community is a church centered around the seven sacraments in their renewed form.

The text of our Creed, is a metamorphosis of the Apostle's and Nicene Creeds. Members are not required to sign articles of faith, and are encouraged to form independent judgments in religious matters. Nor do we have any formal written dogma. Each priest has the freedom to teach anything which does not contradict the content of the sacraments whose texts form the "bedrock" of The Christian Community. As a result, the teachings are rich, varied and evolving. They are inspired by traditional Christian theology, the original work of Rudolf Steiner, and by independent research and insights of priests and members. There is room in this modern Christian theology to incorporate such ideas as reincarnation and karma, a truly cosmic conception of Christ, and the role of spiritual beings at all levels of existence.

For more information on the Christian Community and some related subjects we offer the following web sites:

- [www.thechristiancommunity.org](http://www.thechristiancommunity.org)
- For a weekly homily Emailed to you: [homilies@thechristiancommunity.org](mailto:homilies@thechristiancommunity.org) or sign up directly with Reverend Cindy Hinds at [cindy@hindes.name](mailto:cindy@hindes.name)
- [spiritualsciencebiblestudies.org](http://spiritualsciencebiblestudies.org)

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## REVEREND SANFORD MILLER'S NEXT VISIT TO EUGENE WILL BE

February 26 - March 1, 2009

His Cycle of Talks Will Include:

**Kaspar Hauser and the Mystery of our Humanity**  
on Thursday at 7:00pm

**Faith, Hope and Love: Christ and Humanity's Future**  
on Friday at 7:00pm

**Saturday Afternoon Bible Study:**  
**The Temptation of Christ ( Matthew 4:1-11)**  
on Saturday at 2:00pm

COPIES OF THE READING ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST  
FROM CHRIS GUILFOIL: 541-683-4898  
OR C.GUILFOIL@GMAIL.COM

All Talks are in the Art Building  
at The Eugene Waldorf School

**Sunday Morning in the Eurythmy Hall:**  
**Religious Instruction for Children**

9:15am

**Children's Service**

10:00am

**The Act of Consecration of Man**  
10:30am