

# The Christian Community

## North American Newsletter

Volume 18, Nr. 2, Fall 2010

[www.thechristiancommunity.org](http://www.thechristiancommunity.org)

[www.chicagoseminary.org](http://www.chicagoseminary.org)

### **FROM OUR SPIRITUAL COMPANIONS**

Adam Bittleston



The Angels are nearest to the soul of man. Yet in our age we are very little aware of their presence and their work. This is not only because we are in general so unaware of spiritual beings; it is in the nature of the Angels not to draw attention to themselves. They are the guardians of individual human beings. Through a whole series of its incarnations, they accept the task of watching over a particular soul. But their field of vision is not limited to the thoughts and feelings of this one soul. They do not see physically objects as we do; they look on beings, and the relationship of beings. Into their own souls there sound and sing the voices of the higher

hierarchies, giving them purposefulness and hope. Each night they encounter the soul of the one who is their special concern, and seek to remind him of his own deepest purposes. We are often caught up in problems which are a matter of hours or days; our Angels have always before them years and lifetimes.

In waking life we are likely to achieve some consciousness of the Angel's presence when we try to understand events in our own lives separated from the present by months or years, or when in prayer we ask for help most earnestly. At such moments the Angel tells us that our lives as a whole have a meaning, and that we are being watched over, and protected. What seem to be great misfortunes may indeed befall us, or we may do great wrongs to others; but every event will in the end reveal its positive sense.

For the Angel has both a powerful, far-reaching memory of the past, and a lively relationship to the future. His memory reaches back, indeed, to a universe that existed before anything which we can see on earth or in the sky; a universe in which there was much yearning and grief, in which the Angels shared, when their consciousness was much more like our own present consciousness. When today we meet other human beings, we can sometimes come to know that they have led a childhood in which there were times of acute unhappiness, which influenced them deeply, though they may have grown into strong and happy people, achieving much in the world. Something comparable, on an immensely greater scale, has happened to the Angels.

## ON ANGELS

*Czeslaw Milosz*

All was taken away from you: white dresses,  
wings, even existence.  
Yet I believe you,  
messengers.

There, where the world is turned inside out,  
a heavy fabric embroidered with stars and beasts,  
you stroll, inspecting the trustworthy seams.

Short is your stay here:  
now and then at a matinal hour, if the sky is clear,  
in a melody repeated by a bird,  
or in the smell of apples at close of day  
when the light makes the orchards magic.

They say somebody has invented you  
but to me this does not sound convincing  
for the humans invented themselves as well.

The voice -- no doubt it is a valid proof,  
as it can belong only to radiant creatures,  
weightless and winged (after all, why not?),  
girdled with the lightning.

I have heard that voice many a time when asleep  
and, what is strange, I understood more or less  
an order or an appeal in an unearthly tongue:

day draws near  
another one  
do what you can.



# FUTURENOW! INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Nora Minassian



One of the most important biographical moments in the life of the International Christian Community this year was the FutureNow! Conference in Dortmund at Whitsun. The Conference was held in the Waldorf School and Georg School of Pedagogic Social Center in Dortmund, Germany, from Friday May 21st till

Tuesday May 25th. About 41 countries, 27 languages and over 1,400 attendants with different ages, colors and cultures were represented.

The conference started with a cello concert performed by twenty four cellists from different Christian Communities, followed by the opening words on the "New Presence of Christ" by Rev. Vicke von Behr, the Erzoberlenker of the Christian Community. There were five altars set up, where the Act of Consecration of Man was celebrated in German, English, Romanian, Polish, Portuguese, Japanese, Norwegian, Italian, French, Russian, Georgian, Spanish, Dutch, Hungarian and Estonian. Every morning, there were seven different lectures offered in different languages, each translated in one other language, followed by a colloquy about the lectures. Keynote lecture themes included "Warmth of Heart", "The Freedom of Spirit" and "Seeing Christ?"

After Lunch, there were presentations from the seminaries, Youth Theater, and cultural performances of singing, dancing, reciting and acting from different communities.

Over fifty different workshops were offered in the afternoons, with most varied themes such as: "Sacramental Music in the Sphere of Etheric Christ", "The Formative Power of Love", "Conflict Resolution with the Help of the Gospels", "Globalization and Parousia", "International Folkdance", "The meeting of the Planets in the Cosmos".

Different communities had set up presentations, exhibitions and cafés throughout the center where one would get a little taste and picture of that particular community.

The conference was filled with incredible and surprising moments, such as suddenly running into someone you had met many years ago—so many years that you had forgotten where and when that was. Or sitting together with three or four people each from a different continent who you had only met two days ago and wondering what 'consecration of man' means. Or suddenly meeting someone who looked so familiar with whom you start speaking one language and hear another language in response but somehow you both experience the feeling of understanding and being understood.

After experiencing so many such incredible moments of destiny,

one starts wondering – How are these moments formed? Who makes these moments possible? What are all the forces that have gone into the preparation of such setting and mood where we could experience these unforgettable moments? What actually do such incredibly profound and meaningful moments and days mean for the rest of the world and for the earth? How is it for the earth to experience at the time of Pentecost these celebrations, languages, intense attention of so many earnest people gathered in one place, looking together in one direction and experiencing the Future Now, the new presence of Christ in our midst?

## **FUTURENOW! CONFERENCE**

*Clara Locey, Vancouver, BC*

**W**hat I enjoyed most about taking part in the English Speaking week at the Seminary in Stuttgart was the Bothmer Gymnastics. I love any kind of group game or exercise that has a metaphor for life and so I was delighted to learn that this is what Bothmer Gymnastics is all about.

Frau Bothmer is such a lovely person and it was truly a wonderful experience being taught by her. I enjoyed all the games we played, but there was one in particular that I especially liked. We were divided into groups of three and were given two long wooden sticks for each group. One person was instructed to stand with their eyes closed and their arms stretched out wide at either side. The other two people were told to carefully, and simultaneously, throw the sticks into the waiting hands of the person whose eyes were closed.



The experience of having to catch these long wooden sticks in both hands, without knowing when they would be thrown, was exhilarating. I felt such a rush of accomplishment each time my hands closed around the sticks, and I successfully caught them.

This game helped me to understand that opportunities in life will continue to present themselves, but it is up to me to grab them. It is not possible to know beforehand that this opportunity will come, but if I don't grab on and hold tight, it will pass me by. My karma or destiny will not just fall into my lap. I have to be active and make sure that I catch it when the opportunity is thrown at me.

Alternatively, I have to be careful and aware of my actions when dealing with other people, especially when I am presenting opportunities to them. If I am too forceful or too weak, they will not be able to

catch the opportunity. It seems so obvious now, but there was something about this exercise that helped me to realize this wisdom and be infused by it, much better than if someone had simply explained it to me. I guess that is the magic of Bothmer Gymnastics.'

*Clara was one of the young N.Americans who took part in the international conference FutureNow and who joined others in an English speaking week at the seminary in Stuttgart in May directed by Gisela Wielki and Georg Dreissig.*

## **CHORUS OF THE CLOUDS**

*Nelly Sachs*

We are full of sighs, full of glances  
We are full of laughter  
And at times we bear your faces.  
We are not far from you.  
Who knows how many tears you have shed through our weeping?  
How much longing forms us?  
We are players at dying  
Accustom yourselves to death gently  
You, the unpracticed ones, who learn nothing in the night.  
Many angels are given to you  
But you do not see them.



## SUMMER CAMP 2010 AT ECHO TRAIL

Rev. Carol Kelly

"**S**iyahamba Kukhanyen kwen khos, we are marching in the light of God". The rising of the sun, the paddling of the canoe, the rippling of the water, the chirping of the cicadas, the coming of the day and the night, everywhere we look or listen and even where we do not, there are rhythms, flowing through and around us. These rhythms keep us moving and allow us to rest within them. They are never exhausted and they bring a kind of joy when we go along with them.

Yes, you guessed it: The camp theme this year was "rhythms." The groups were "Pretty Little Metro-Gnomes, Heartbeat, Footstep, Pop-chicks, Wild Moon Horses, Rock the Blue Igloo, Three Little Rhythms and the Big Bad Beat, the Broken Records, and Drumming Indians." We sang, we ate Cream of Wheat and rice pockets, we swam, made rain sticks and bull-roarers, rode unicycles and juggled. We ended each day the way we began, with singing and stories. The days were like peaches, ripe and juicy for the taking.

There were younger campers this year, some just entering first grade, who were brave so many nights in their tents with thunder crashing 'round. Once the oldest girls took the youngest ones on a hike to search for flowers and herbs. They came back to camp and had a tea party from the mint and pine they had gathered. Someone also slipped them some cookies!

The gnomes were particularly delighted this year with entire villages designed for their comfort, including gardens, farm markets, Christian Community chapels, volleyball courts, and elaborate pulley systems to high tree houses. There were stone labyrinths, stone monuments, and a stone "mandala" to the elements.

From a high branch, (a rare branch, a rattlin' branch) there hung an enormous silk-like cloth, for swinging, twirling, climbing, dangling upside down and balancing. This was part of the circus workshop for oldest campers. It was amazing to see how much they could do in such a short time! They learned juggling, some acrobatics, human pyramid building, swinging from the high "rope" and unicycle riding. It looked like so much fun that Rev. Knausenberger tried it but no matter how high he climbed, his feet stayed on the ground! Yes, he is a grounded director and a good "Papa" to all. It was another wonderful season full of camp adventures!



## WOW!

Kimberly Martinson-Sawyer

This was my first year at the Christian Community summer camp. Being one of the few people who had never been to camp before, the first few days I felt as though everyone around my was speaking another language, and I wasn't quite sure what they were talking about. Fair day? Adventure Course? Greasy watermelon? What? However this was not quite as alarming as one might think; because from the very beginning being at camp was like entering the flow of a river, so I lifted up my feet and just had to trust that when the rapids came Carol and Markus and fellow co-workers would be there to guide me, and they were.

Even though many people at camp have known each other for a long time, I had the remarkable experience of belonging without trying. Singing together every morning and evening had the affect not only of opening our vocal chords, but also our hearts. To sit next to a child with whom moments ago I had felt little connection with, or who had been driving me bananas, and then to hear her sweet voice riding the waves of melody along with mine and everyone else's, shed layers

of distance through the simple and true connection of song.

There are so many moments at camp I would love to describe, moments that together created a rich and wholesome tapestry in which the entirety of the human being could be found. Thus, while exhausted from lack of sleep, there was a breathing quality, and of course a rhythm in our days that carried us. At the end of the day when we would have our staff meetings, it seemed as though we could burst out laughing at nothing, and somehow afterwards would have energy to run around the dining hall wrestling with each other, singing and

having dance parties in the walk-in fridge.

Seeing the children's skits and the names they created for themselves, from the Drumming Indians and Wild Moon Horses, to the Pretty Little Metra-Gnomes, all I can say really is: wow! I mean, who are these beings, and where do they come from? And where do they get these crazy ideas? Of course, don't get me wrong, the whining



and complaining of campers is also another one of those experiences where I wondered: does it ever stop? So my Co-Counselor Emily and I started whining right back at our girls; unfortunately this ended up simply being fuel for their fire!

I'm sure camp is not perfect. I know it is not. And never having been to camp before, I simply could not get enough of it! Literally. I took as deep breaths as I could, so that camp would sink down to my gut, and I would be able to draw water from this well once back in D.C. where I live. There was a living substance in the air at camp, and it was not just the fresh air of the woods, but it was the living community of children, adults, gnomes, fairies, insects, songs, stories and church. On Sunday serving at the children's services, I felt so honored to meet these children in a completely different way. It is difficult to describe, but I felt that these brief meetings and the service on Sunday infused the entire camp with its spiritual presence.

There are, however, too many glorious moments at camp to describe them all, and each person was having and creating their own magic with those around them. Not having gone to Waldorf School myself, I also felt blessed to be working with so many amazing Waldorf students and graduates as my peers. I felt as though I got to be a Waldorf Kid, and take responsibility as an adult at the same time. In these days after camp, I am continuing to soak up the memories of camp, and also the mood of camp. Re-calling this mood gives me strength in the world I live in.

*Kimberly Martinson-Sawyer is a eurythmist and early childhood teacher in Washington DC.*

## HUGH THORNTON ORDAINED

**H**ugh Thornton was ordained May 16th, 2010 in Stuttgart, Germany. He is pictured with Liza Marcato, who, as our most recent addition to the North American priest circle, has just transferred to the Taconic Berkshire congregation in Hillsdale, New York. Liza and Hugh had attended the same public high school outside of Boston and were introduced to anthroposophy at that time by a third friend. Hugh will work in Berlin for a while.





## ENERGY SOURCES--WE ARE A NEW SOURCE OF ENERGY Youth Camp 2010



*"I want to tell you how delighted [my husband] and I were to see [our son] spilling over with enthusiasm and joy upon returning from Youth Conference! You made quite a deep impression upon him, and we are sincerely grateful for that! He came back filled with light, and exuded a sense of peace and new maturity." - a mother of a youth conference participant*

This summer, 19 teenagers gathered near York, PA, close to the Susquehanna River, for the annual Summer Youth Conference. There, in Amish country, we attempted to explore the question, "Where do we get our energy?" We did this through conversation, artistic workshops, and presentations by the priests. Each day began with a short vesper service including a sermon and ended with a Close of Day vesper with sermon. For both the morning and evening services, two teenagers served together and helped to prepare the chapel. On the last day, we celebrated the Act of Consecration of Man together as the culminating event of the week.

Within the parentheses of these contemplative, prayerful services, the rest of the day's silliness, social time, games, swimming, singing, canoeing and conversation took place. Creative writing and water-color painting groups were led by two people in their twenties who both had attended youth conferences as teenagers: Gabriella Mello and Emma Heirman, and Rev. Marcus Knausenberger (also a former participant!) led a group into the woods to do nature sculpture, constructing a standing-stone path you see below.

Rev. Carol Kelly led us all in a youth conference choir, which, for the first time ever, was dominated by the tenors...we only need to find the right venue for this choir to show what it can do!

You can find photos and more to come at our youth web site: [www.ccyouth.homestead.com](http://www.ccyouth.homestead.com). It was an epic week and we can't wait till next year...so look out for the winter conference just after Christmas!

## WHITSUN IN NEW YORK CITY

*Michael Vode*

Probably in several of our North American congregations, the question has come up as to how to celebrate the three day festival of Whitsun, coping with the fact that, unlike in several European countries, both Monday and Tuesday are regular workdays. In New York City, we have developed a way to carry the experience of Whitsun through the three days in the form of a conference, as it proved possible even on workdays. For the past two years we followed this format.

On Whit-Sunday Rev. Erk Ludwig introduced the theme of the conference with a lecture that followed a break for lunch after the Act of Consecration of Man. On Monday and Tuesday the Act of Consecration was celebrated early enough for those who wished to attend before work.

On both days we gathered again at 6:00 PM in our chapel for an artistic session (eurythmy guided by Brigida Balczun) and a subsequent unfolding and exploring of the theme, with time allotted for conversation. After a short Close-of-Day Service we shared a light pot-luck supper.

This year's celebration began with a talk on "Snatching the Fire: Prometheus", with conversations on "Receiving the Fire" on Monday and on "Tending the Fire" on Tuesday.

The conferences had a particular resonance with all participants who experienced them as a most fitting way to observe the Festival. These celebrations were highlights in the course of 2009 and 2010.



Prometheus Snatches the Fire

## TWO CONFERENCES IN THE TORONTO AREA

**M**ichaelmas Conference  
**Kaspar Hauser: Innocence and Royalty**  
October 1 - 3, 2010  
The Christian Community  
901 Rutherford Road, Vaughan, Ontario  
610 293 6484  
dhafner1964@hotmail.com



**T**he Spiritual Reality of Money  
November 12-14, 2010  
The Christian Community  
901 Rutherford Road, Vaughan,  
Ontario  
610 293 6484  
dhafner1964@hotmail.com

### "A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY..."

Susan Locey

**P**lanning for the fifth North-South Conference, to be hosted by The Christian Community in Vancouver, is beginning to fall into shape. The theme is "Living Gold!" The dates will be July 21st to 29th 2012, and the venue is Shawnigan Lake School on Vancouver Island, located halfway between Victoria and Duncan. There is room in the dormitories at this boarding school for 200+ people, and camp-grounds are located around the island. We cannot yet give information on the costs.

The theme allows us to develop seven major aspects of gold, stretching from Occult History and the creation of light and gold to the distant future of the New Jerusalem and its ground of transparent gold. In between the distant past and the distant future are:

- the histories of ancient cultures and their views
  - of conquistadores and prospectors
  - the medical value
  - the "gold standard" in economics and the creative social forming around new thinking, such as begun by the Templars
  - uses in artistic and sacred offerings
  - the moral qualities of "a heart of gold" or a "golden period"
- the participation of human beings in the alchemy of creating a new, "living gold."



There will be many opportunities for workshops at the conference. If you would like to be responsible for an artistic or active workshop or study group that takes up some aspect of the theme, please send your ideas and proposals to [LivingGold2012@gmail.com](mailto:LivingGold2012@gmail.com)

The two main languages will be English and Spanish, and the talks will be translated so participants from North and South can share the content. The Act of Consecration of Man (in different languages) and a Close of Day Service, both with sermons, will be celebrated each day.

A concurrent Youth Conference and children's day camp will make this a family-oriented experience.

## **OPEN COURSES AT THE CHICAGO SEMINARY 2010**

[chicagoseminary.org](http://chicagoseminary.org)

In Spring Valley, NY, 15 Margetts Rd. Monsey, NY, Oct. 18 – 22, at 10:00 AM. **Goethe's Tale: Thinking in Images.** Daniel Hafner  
It is often called "The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily," but Goethe himself inscribed it simply THE TALE. It can offer us a schooling in picture language. More, we ourselves can join in the events it reveals.

In Chicago, 2135 W. Wilson Ave. Nov. 4 – 6 **'The Heart and Blood Circulation in Relation to the Seven Life Processes, the Mystery of Golgotha and the Christian Mysteries.'** James A. Dyson, MD  
Visiting from the U.K

In Vancouver, B.C. Nov. 12 - 14, 5050 East Hastings St. Burnaby  
**The Potential Priesthood of all Human Beings: Work as an Act of Worship.** Richard Dancey and Susan Locey

In Spring Valley, NY, 15 Margetts Rd. Monsey NY, Nov. 19 - 21  
**The Little Apocalypse: When the waters rise..... they will see...**  
An exploration into the picture language and signs of our times as individuals and humanity as a whole cross stormy seas and face a rising tide in many spheres of life. Gisela Wielki

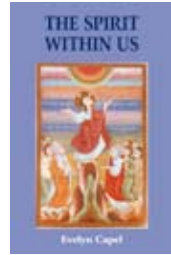
In Chicago Dec. 6 – 10 at 9:45 AM. **The Heavenly Hierarchies.**  
Richard Dancey

For more information, the daily schedule and to register, please contact: Rev. Gisela Wielki P.O. BOX 25603 Chicago, IL 60625 Tel./Fax 773-472-7041 e-mail:[info@chicagoseminary.org](mailto:info@chicagoseminary.org)

## THE SPIRIT WITHIN US

*Evelyn Francis Capel*

Floris Books, \$17.95, 160 pages



Many today find themselves in seemingly impossible situations. How often do we feel a lack of wisdom to make decisions? How often do we feel overwhelmed by life's experiences? How often do we ask: If only I could be wiser or more courageous in the face of events, people, problems, and decisions? Usually, we must find our strength from within. However, this doesn't happen quickly or by simply wishing for it. Evelyn Capel insists, however, that each of us does indeed have an inner source of strength—the Christ spirit. By developing an active inner life, the spirit within can be discovered and brought into consciousness. Doing so requires thought and care.

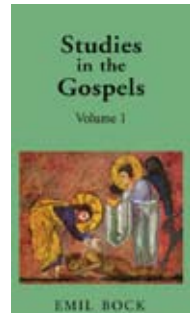
In this inspiring book Capel offers practical and compassionate advice. She considers the rhythm of the day, as well as issues of concentration and meditation, helping the reader cultivate a richer inner life.

*Evelyn Francis Capel was born in 1911 at Stow-on-the-Wold in the Cotswold Hills. She earned a degree in history at Somerville College, Oxford, and then studied at The Christian Community seminary in Stuttgart. She was ordained in 1939 and has written several books.*

## STUDIES IN THE GOSPELS, VOL. 1

*Emil Bock, Translated by Val Jones*

Floris Books \$40.00 448 pages



In the course of his pioneering work in The Christian Community, Emil Bock made many studies of various aspects of the Gospels. Bringing his broad knowledge of the history of that time together with his deep insights in Anthroposophy, he offers fresh views of familiar stories in the New Testament.

Volume 1 looks in particular at the relationship of the New Testament to the Old, as well as Matthew and the Sermon on the Mount, Judas and Peter. He concludes with Simon of Cyrene and Joseph of Arimathea.

*Emil Bock (1895-1959) was born in Wuppertal, Germany, in 1895. He studied German and modern languages at the University of Bonn. In 1916, he met the famous evangelical preacher, Friedrich Rittelmeyer, in Berlin. He studied Protestant theology in Berlin and later attended priest courses with Rudolf Steiner in Stuttgart and Dornach. With Rittelmeyer, Bock helped establish the Christian Community (the movement for religious renewal) in 1922 and soon became its leader, a position he held until his death. Bock's many books include Genesis; Moses; Kings and Prophets; Caesars and Apostles, The Three Years; Saint Paul; and The Childhood of Jesus.*



Guardian of the Threshold, Arild Rosenkrantz

## **ANGEL WINGS**

*Peter Härtling*

**D**o all angels have wings?  
I ask  
my angel.  
Yes, he answers.  
Yet not all  
can fly.  
And why not?  
I ask.  
Think, so that I fly,  
he begged.

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**Christian Community Summer Camps for Children**

**West Coast-** contact Sanford Miller, 916-965-9111. Visit the web site at [www.camptam.com](http://www.camptam.com)

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