



THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

MOVEMENT FOR RELIGIOUS RENEWAL

North American Newsletter

Vol. 21, Nr. 3, Fall 2013

www.thechristiancommunity.org

www.christiancommunityseminary.org

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First Legacy Giving Coordinator

Mary Hirsch

The Christian Community in North American would like to welcome Mary Hirsch as our first Legacy Giving Coordinator. Ms. Hirsch has been hired by The Region to assist our individual communities in the development of their own Legacy Giving Programs.



Ms. Hirsch brings to this new position over 23 years of extensive experience ranging from public relations and marketing to planned giving, major gifts and capital campaign management. She has worked in large non-profit organizations, state universities, two Waldorf schools and a charitable foundation. As the Advancement Director at Kimberton Waldorf School, she launched Waldorf Works – a mission-based sustainable fundraising program that attracted over 500 people to campus over two years. She was Director of Development at the Waldorf School of Princeton, Rutgers University and the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey and Director of Planned Giving at Rider University. Her skills also extend to layout and design and while working at the Girl Scouts, where she was Director of Public and Corporate Relations, she won a statewide competition for newsletter design. Mary spent nearly a decade on the board of the Gift Planning Council of New Jersey where she rose to vice president. She currently offers fundraising consulting services to Waldorf schools.

In her off time, Mary enjoys handwork, especially felting and doll making. This past year, she has taught approximately 150 children how to

make Waldorf dolls, as well as felting, plant dyeing and other nature crafts.

Mary grew up in East Brunswick, NJ, and is a graduate of Rider University. She lives in Pottstown, PA, with her husband, Kevin, and daughter, Annie; she also has two adult sons, Conor and John.

Working with the Spirit of The Christian Community

*Two Orientation Courses about Priesthood in our Time
An Open Course for All Interested in the Work of the Priest*

November 8 - 10, 2013 in Sacramento, CA

3506 Eisenhower Dr. Sacramento, CA 95826

Presenters:

Rev. Bastiaan Baan, Seminary Director
Rev. Cindy Hindes, Los Angeles

Rev. Sanford Miller, Sacramento

November 15 - 17, 2013 in Chicago

2135 W. Wilson Ave. Chicago, IL 60625

Presenters: Rev. Bastiaan Baan, Seminary Director;
Rev. Ann Burfeind, Chicago; Rev. Richard Dancey,
Chicago



Roland Tiller

There is also an East-Coast Course in the planning stages.

Friday 6:30 PM Registration and Light Supper, presentation.

Sunday 3:30 PM Closing Session begins.

Cost: \$75. All meals and accommodation will be provided. If you cannot afford the full amount, other arrangements can be made.

The two and a half day program, sponsored by the Seminary of The Christian Community, will include daily Act of Consecration of Man and Close of Day services. There will be presentations on Elements of Modern Priesthood, Meditation and Prayer, Practical Elements, Hindrances in our Time, the Future, and the Being of The Christian Community. Our time together will also include speech, singing, and Gospel Study. For more information contact Bastiaan Baan at 845-356-0972 or email a.b.baan@gmail.com.

Earth's Future—Lecture Series

by Rev. Bastiaan Baan

At The Christian Community, 15 Margetts Rd., Monsey/Chestnut Ridge, NY. 10952. 7:30pm

In this series of lectures we will look at ideas, images and initiatives concerning the future, focusing on the question: What can we do, and what can I do, to help our earth?

September 17: *Phenomena of Our Present Time*

October 1: *What Do Mythologies Tell Us about the Future of the Earth?*

October 15: *What Does Anthroposophy Tell Us about the Future of the Earth?*

October 29: *The Language of the Apocalypse about the Future of the Earth*

November 5: *Newest Developments and Disturbing Ideas about the Future*

November 26: *Worldwide Initiatives Concerning Our Future*

December 10: *What Can I Do for the Future of Our Earth?*

Sponsored by The Christian Community—Movement For Religious Renewal. Suggested donation: \$10 - \$15 each lecture. For information call 845-356-0972.

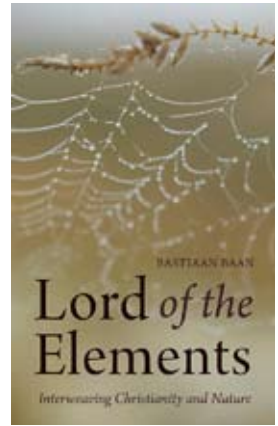
Bastiaan Baan has been a Christian Community priest in the Netherlands since 1981. He is the author of a series of books on religion and spirituality; his book Lord of the Elements: Interweaving Christianity and Nature was published in English translation this year. In 2013, Bastiaan and his wife moved to Spring Valley, where he teaches at the Seminary of the Christian Community.



Lord of the Elements

Interweaving Christianity and Nature

In this unique book, Bastiaan Baan, an experienced spiritual thinker, brings the four classical elements of earth, water, air, and fire together with ideas from Rudolf Steiner's Anthroposophy. He considers, in particular, how elemental beings—nature spirits—relate to the four elements, and explores the role of elemental beings in our world.



This is a fascinating and original work on the connections between Christianity and the natural world.

Available at Steinerbooks.org

Seeing Water With New Eyes

A scientific, artistic and religious way of seeing this element for life.

An Open Course with lectures, observations, experiments, discussion, singing and eurythmy.



Water phenomena as Footprints of the Spirit
- Jennifer Greene, director Water Research
Institute of Blue Hill, Maine.

Water's nature in the Gospels and in the Sacraments - Bastiaan Baan, director Seminary of the Christian Community, Spring Valley.

Date: Thursday October 31, 7.30 pm through Sunday November 3, 2.00 pm. At The Christian Community, 15 Margetts Rd, Monsey/Chestnut Ridge, NY 10952.
Cost: \$250

For more information and to register contact Bastiaan Baan at 845-356-0972 or email a.b.baan@gmail.com Detailed information will be sent to you after registration.

Delegates Meeting 2013

The Future Initiatives Group of North America will be shaping the delegates meeting once again, continuing the work that was started in Chicago last year. The theme will, therefore, definitely be: The Future of the Christian Community and how we, as a whole movement, can work to awaken the heartfelt spiritual enthusiasm, creative insight and practical will to help this future become a reality. A further, more detailed description of the work of this weekend will be sent out to all congregations this September.

This year's meeting will be hosted by the Devon, Pennsylvania, Community at Camphill Village-Kimberton Hills, 1601 Pughtown Rd, Phoenixville, PA 19460. The Conference begins Thursday, October 17 (check-in from 4-6 pm) to Saturday, October 19 (ending at 9 pm). (The Treasurers will have their meeting beforehand on Thursday at 1 PM.) Please mark your calendars now so you can be sure to attend.

Parables of the New Advent

Conference of The Christian Community with the Reverends Craig Wiggins and Susan Locey

November 23-24, 2013 at The Christian Community in Vancouver, BC, 5050 East Hastings St. Burnaby V5B 1P6



Christ, Roland Tiller

On Saturday, November 23, 10:00 am The Act of Consecration of Man; 11:00 Talk with discussion: "What does the Christ say about His Return?" After potluck lunch and artistic work:

3:30-5:00 pm "The Kingdom of Heaven is like..." Then 5:15-5:30 pm Vesper Service with address.

On Sunday, November 24, 10:30 am, The Act of Consecration of Man, then shared refreshments.

Noon - 1:30 "When the Son of Man comes in His Glory." For more information call Susan Locey, 604-415-0600.

Attending the 40 Years of Christian Community Camp Reunion, and Camp

Sonny Knausenberger Holtz

On a cold, wintry July evening in Johannesburg, my three children ages 13, 11, and 9 and I boarded a plane that touched down on a hot summer's evening in Philadelphia. The rolling, forested hills and green late summer fields of Amish Country in Pennsylvania were a stark contrast to the dry, dusty, rocky, thorny winter we had just left behind in South Africa. Although it was my first time at this particular camp site, we nonetheless stepped into an immediately familiar dining hall, with the same kinds of bowls and cups we knew from past camps, and an assembly hall already hung with wall hangings from previous camp years. We bedded down in Scout tents on wooden platforms scattered throughout a lush forest, complete with obligatory spiders hanging around. Cicadas sang us to sleep after a full day ending with a Close of Day service.

The camp bell rang for breakfast, and then a day full of familiar camp activities, like morning and evening assemblies, punctuated with a circle of chairs at which we gathered to share as much as we could. There were some familiar faces from the years I attended camp in the 1980s and 90s, and lots of new faces.



It was great to hear from others and connect with people who feel the importance of the Christian Community Camp experiences as a strong thread in their lives.

Gisela Wielki shared a little about the very beginnings of the CC Camp in Germany, and what a profound impact this had on her life - life saving, she even called it, and how it led her to light that flame for North America.

Sarah Hearn stated simply, during one round that camp is nothing less than a form of “general therapy” for its participants, and this struck me as profoundly true.

Only a week later, during the actual children’s camp, I watched as over the course of a couple of days a ‘picky eater’ overcame that difficulty and began to eat everything that was offered, and a child new to camp who was determined not to fall under the spell of the songs, began to mouth the words in evening assembly.



We were treated to 6 TED style talks, which each offered a fascinating insight into some of the varied directions and passions that our separate lives have taken and been filled with. Speakers shared their visions and inspirations for society and the future through personal experiences that touched everyone present.

We had a wonderful afternoon on the Susquehanna River nearby, paddling in canoes and kayaks, building a sand castle, and splashing in the muddy water, catching up and socialising.

It was a delight to me to experience the fullness of circles within my life through a return to the camp after 20 years of a completely different, new life in South Africa. There was a feeling of gratitude and delight in seeing familiar faces again; and yet to have been carried to this place by the steps I have taken in my life.

For me this was a mini family reunion, as well as a Camp Reunion and a return to ‘my’ camp with my children. A very special moment for me was when I sat in the children’s service on Sunday morning in the chapel. Created in a transformed Girl Scout building, my brother and sister and our children attended the Children’s Service exactly as we used to do so many years ago before our lives scattered us across the globe.

And the singing that has always been part of camp, and particularly now so beautifully led by Carol Kelly, lifted my soul. I have been humming melodies out loud and in my head ever since my return from the Camp Re-

union, and the Camp. It is as if I were allowed to be inside a magic bubble for a few weeks. Last night I sang an evening camp song to my 9 year old son at bedtime, and tears started running down his face. "That song makes me feel so sad. I miss camp" he said. And I know the magic has truly been passed on to another generation...

So... What is Camp Magic?

Marcus Knausenberger

When you hear talk of summer camp, a pretty standard slideshow begins to play in the minds of most Americans: campfires, roasting S'mores, canoeing, sleeping in tents or rustic cabins, fending off marauding raccoons and generally living somewhat closer to nature than our hectic lives allow in the normal course of things. The Christian Community Children's Camp has all of these things too and yet none of them really encapsulates 'camp'. For the past 40 years, children have come to camp every summer for two

and a half weeks in the woods complete with all of the classical elements of camp. It remains one of the strongest and most formative expressions of the children's work within the Christian Community. So, what makes Christian Community Camp what it is? This is a difficult question to answer, but we had a unique chance this year when our camp season began with a 40 Year Anniversary Reunion. This gave us a host of ex-staffers and ex-campers from four decades of camp, all of whom love camp dearly and all of whom now



carry with them the benefit of hindsight. In the course of the reunion as we came to hear from one another in conversation, though TED type talks, where we are in our lives and what role camp has played and still plays, the consensus-derived expression that came into being was "camp magic".

So what is it?

To start with, it is nothing – nothing tangible, that is. Yet is it in everything that happens at camp to some degree. One of the clearest expressions of camp magic begins with the naming of the theme. This year, our theme

was 'the night sky'. On the first day of camp during our first full camp gathering, the junior staff reveals to the campers the theme that will be part of every day for the remainder of camp. From that moment, like the ripples on a still pond after a pebble has broken through its surface, the imaginations of the children and staff are given a window through which an



outpouring of creative energies, sometimes silly, sometimes sublime, flow. True to tradition, the first fruits born out of the theme arrive on skit day, three days after the beginning of camp, with a play the senior staff created and wrote together called 'The Silver Petalled Star Flower' about a simple gardener's lad who embarks on a

quest through the stars to heal an ailing princess. This in turn was followed by group skits in which each group reveals to the rest of camp the name that will be theirs for the duration of camp. Group names such as 'the Buttermoons, the Mini-Meteors, the Middle Dipper, the Twilight Dreamers and the Star Shippers speak to the imaginative wellsprings that we will visit often over the course of camp. On some of the clear, star filled nights at camp, one could even see the dark outlines of groups of children and staff who had brought their sleeping bags and mats out onto the upper playing field to gaze at and sleep under the shimmering blanket of stars. Constellations above, constellations below.



Other expressions of camp magic are found in the fervor that surrounds our three camp gnomes: Floxli-Woxli, Tompte and Kini Kini. Camp gnomes are in essence camp magic applied to the sometimes mundane tasks of peeling muddy socks and underwear off of the floor of the tent or the bottom of your suitcase. Tents are a challenge to keep clean even under the best of circumstances. Add periods of rain, wet bathing suits, mud from the paths, grass from the playing fields and, well, you get the picture. Every four days, these gnomes make the rounds and choose for themselves a dwelling place with a particular group for the next 3 days. The three tidiest, most artistic and cozy sites are awarded their respective gnome. To tip the scales in their favor, some groups go beyond just cleaning and build gnome homes that lure and entice. In recent years this has taken on a life of its own. There have



been entire wooded sections of campsites transformed into neat gnome-sized villages complete with lean-tos, gardens with fences and rows of sprouted greens, mossy and sandy paths, rock-lined ponds, tree houses with intricately built steps and ladders, stadiums, playgrounds, gardens and in occasionally, in a less subtle plug at winning points, gnome chapels complete with little pews and an altar.

The Scavenger Hunt and Fair Day likewise are major camp events that are called into being seemingly out of nothing but collaborative imagination. In the same vein, craft projects – this year lanterns, dream catchers, a gigantic sundial, a catapult, colorful tapestries, tie-die – seemed to appear in rich abundance across the sprawling 600 acre scout camp that we occupy for 3 weeks in August. This is the most healing and wonderful part of camp – that the chasm between what can be imagined and what manifests is brought into a very close, sometimes holy union with one another. New paths between the imagined and the 'real' are trodden every summer by many, many feet at the Christian Community Children's Camp. We all, staffers and children learn that it is good, very, very good, to walk this path together – with one another and for one another. And the bridge between the two is camp magic.



Christian Community Website

Our Christian Community website (www.thechristiancommunity.org) continues to expand. We now have a calendar of events (www.thechristiancommunity.org/events) for North America, and a blog with thoughtful articles by various authors (www.thechristiancommunity.org/blog).

On the homepage under Quick Links you can subscribe to receive this newsletter in your inbox in electronic form. You can also subscribe to weekly homilies (sermons), one page contemplations of the week's gospel reading. Past homilies are gradually being archived under cynthiahindes.blogspot.com.

There are also links to the Seminary www.christiancommunityseminary.org. and to East Coast Youth Work's own website, <http://ccyouth.homestead.com/> Children's summer camps also have their page <http://www.thechristiancommunity.org/children-youth/camps/>

You can also find contact information for all of the standing communities and their affiliates. There are essays, and a reading list and a picture gallery under Features, where these Newsletters are also archived.

Saint Paul Retreat, Taconic-Berkshire Congregation, July 29 – August 2, 2013

Karen Emerson

Nine participants from the northeastern region of the Christian Community enjoyed five days together, working towards understanding the life of Saint Paul, and his role and context in the beginnings of Christianity. Priests from the Christian Community, Julia Polter from Boston, MA, and Franziska Hesse from Hillsdale, NY, led the retreat.

Our days began with the Act of Consecration of Man. Morning study sessions were lecture format. We followed Saint Paul's journeys as Christianity spread though the ancient world. Time to grapple with the essence of change from the external Law of Moses, to the new internal Law of Christ within was appreciated. Eurythmy taught by Franz Eilers, helped us to go from strangers to friends and then to a more cohesive group. The food was communally prepared with dietary needs being met for individual participants. We enjoyed much lovely fresh garden bounty from local gardens. An early afternoon break allowed for rest, reflection and recreation.

Later we gathered to draw from nature, with Julia Polter's enthusiasm and insightful teaching. The artistic expression enabled freedom to us and hopefully to the elemental beings behind the plants.

After supper we gathered for study sessions. We worked artistically with passages from the Epistles of Paul. Group process helped us find meaning in the passages we studied. Here are two poems examples of our individual efforts.



I.
I ask of thee
What law is this
Here in my heart
That compels me thus to you?
What faith is this
That tells me true
That I will be with you?
For when we cross , how can

I not
Feel the penetration
That radiates light for
World resurrection.

II.
You who know the law
Will bear up in faith the Cross
For Resurrection.

Close of day Service completed our daily experience. The week was rich, full, uplifting joyful, and insightful.

The Mystery of the Heart

Cordelia Lane

It was late August - a perfect time to be in Downeast Maine, on magical Mount Desert Island. Seventeen people gathered for three days to explore the Mystery of the Heart - a topic ably led by Revs. Julia Polter and Patrick Kennedy of the Christian Community with artistic exercises offered by Meaghan Witri.

The gathering place was The Alcyon Center, a spiritual life center in Seal Cove. This charming, woodsy, calm venue is a place where silence, devotion and prayer are as alive as the chattering of the kingfishers and the laughing of the loons.

A parable, a poem and a picture were the three anchors which held us steady, to which we returned time and again in our journey to gain a greater understanding of the heart.



The *Parable* was that of the Good Samaritan, Luke 10. Our study of it was slow and methodical. By looking at each word and scene, we were able to reveal the ever deepening layers of meaning and begin to understand it in a whole new way. "Wisdom begins in wonder" (Socrates). This approach to studying the parable was absolutely wonder-filled, and by the third day we were all the wiser for it.

The *Poem* was a verse given by Rudolf Steiner to an associate, Johanna

Muecke, in 1924. As a prelude, before even looking at the poem, we each had a very thought-provoking question to ponder while wandering along the trails or sitting by the cove. A few examples of these questions are: What is the most spiritual of all materials? What is the source? What does the sun do? What lives spiritually in the sense that reveals the most materially? (More than one of us said, "Yikes!" when we chose our question....) After sharing a number of very thoughtful answers, we began to study the verse and found that all paths lead to the heart:

Within the heart
lives a part of us
that contains material
that is the most spiritual
of all;
that of all other parts
lives spiritually
in such a way
that most reveals itself materially.



For this reason
the heart
is the sun
within the human cosmos;
For this reason
when we are in the heart
we are in our being's
deepest wellspring.

The *Picture* was developed through a series of theater exercises led by Meaghan Witri. The first day she began with a few simple, playful, warm-up activities using tennis balls and handclapping. Things became a bit more challenging when we began doing human sculptures (another "Yikes" or two was heard among the group). Late in Day Two, we received our final assignment: to form a series of pictures - or tableaux - of the beginning, middle and ending scenes of the parable with groups of four to five people. On Day Three, we presented our tableaux. None of us was prepared for the power and poignancy of the portrayal of these pictures. It was a surprise to us all how stirring they were and how different each of the "same" scenes could be. Our hearts were moved - deeply.

The weather was perfect. The food was healthy, wholesome, plentiful and delicious. The community that formed was heart-filled. The outer and the inner were resonating, and each one took away a deeper understanding of the mystery of the human heart.

Rev. Erk Ludwig Retires

Rev. Erk Ludwig is retiring after 45 years of congregational work. He was ordained in 1968 in Stuttgart by then Erzoberlenker Rudolf Frieling. He started in San Francisco in 1972. In the early 80's he worked for a few years in Berlin, returning to serve the congregation in New York City, where he has worked since the mid 80's. His farewell gathering took place in New York on September 8. He will relocate to San Francisco in late October. Our gratitude and best wishes for a well-earned, peaceful retirement!



Rev. Arie Boogert

† Sept 4, 2013

Rev. Arie Boogert crossed the threshold in Holland on September 4, 2013, following an operation for a lower aortic stent. Although the operation was successful, heart instability followed. He was 80.

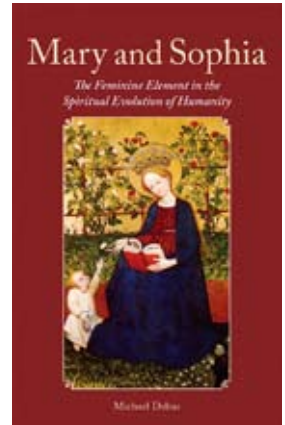


Arie was born in Java in 1933 and was ordained by Emil Bock in his mid-twenties in 1959 in Stuttgart, Germany. He worked in Holland, and for many years also in both Denver and Boston. He was the founder this North American Newsletter publication, and also the author of several books on the souls' path after death, and our relationship to those who have died. He retired in 2004 after 45 years working as a priest and subsequently moved back to Holland. He is survived by his wife Christiane.

Mary and Sophia

The Feminine Element in the Spiritual Evolution of Humanity,
by Michael Debus

Sophia, the Wisdom of God, has spoken to human beings at many different times and places since primeval times. Her origin in God places her alongside the Logos in cosmic significance while at the same time raising deep questions concerning her role in human evolution. Michael Debus discusses archetypes of the feminine and Sophia's relationship to Mary, Jesus and the Holy Spirit, and most importantly, Sophia's significance for modern, seeking human souls. Written from an anthroposophic perspective, his sources include the Old and New Testaments, the writings of the early church fathers, as well as those of the Orthodox Church (especially Vladimir Solovyov), the Christian mystic Jakob Böhme, and many others.



Available shortly from Steinerbooks.org

Marriage Equality in The Christian Community

Karin Mortensen

On the occasion of the United States Supreme Court ruling upholding Marriage Equality, Rev. Craig Wiggins offered a talk and conversation in San Francisco on the subject of marriage equality in the Christian Community.

We began with establishing some general facts:

Marriage had been a social and economic contract since long before it became a liturgical act.

The practice that clergypersons legally perform the civil union is the exception practically everywhere except the United States and some other English-speaking countries.

The common practice in the Christian Community is that the civil, legal marriage takes place before the Marriage Sacrament is performed.

The Christian Community Marriage Sacrament begins with the acknowledgment that the couple has already made their marriage commitment.

The Christian Community marriage liturgy is written specifically for a man and a woman.

The Christian Community marriage liturgy nowhere mentions the bringing forth and nurturing of children. (There is, however, the question to be explored of children in the spiritual world possibly bringing together the parents they need.)

When any two people marry in a religious setting, the primary intention is to acknowledge the spiritual commitment to share community of life and to liturgically bless that union. The question then becomes: How can we in the Christian Community acknowledge and bless the commitment of two men or two women?

Same-gender love is probably as old as mankind; what is new for us is seeking to establish civil and liturgical acknowledgement of the union.

A few years ago a committee of priests was formed at the initiative of the Circle of Seven to study this question and to develop a spiritually true and loving response to this new impulse of the late twentieth century. Since then another group of LGBT priests and lay people have worked together to deepen their understanding of what such a ceremony actually does for the soul and spirit of the couple involved and what this means for a particular community.

Here is where we stand today: Christian Community priests are committed not to change the wording of the sacraments in any way; hence the Marriage Sacrament per se does not address the needs of same gender couples. There are, however, other venues for the acknowledgement and blessing of their union. In particular the Close of Day liturgy is flexible and amenable to becoming a vehicle for acknowledgement and blessing. In this case there are vestments and candles, gospel reading, often an address by the priest, and the Lord's Prayer—but with the freedom to add other elements as well.

The preparation for a same-gender blessing ceremony would have many similarities to the preparation for the sacrament. The couple, the priest and at some point the witnesses would examine the destiny questions related to their marriage, would try to experience what kind of angelic being connects to their 'community of life'.

Sacraments are real. Blessings are real. The right and loving response to Marriage Equality is undoubtedly a work in progress, both within society at large and within the realm of the Christian Community sacraments.

This article is based upon an open conversation held at the San Francisco Christian Community on July 7, 2013, and developed in emails over the ensuing days.