



# North American Newsletter

Volume 24, No. 1, Spring, 2016

## Holy Week and the Power of Pain



*Sometimes I live in the country. Sometimes I live in the town.  
Sometimes I get a great notion to jump into the river and drown.  
Irene, good night. Irene, good night. Good night Irene.  
Good night, Irene, I'll see you in my dreams. — by Tina d.*

This song of Huddie Ledbetter sings a human soul's pain, born out of love. Pain will now soon come to Christ Jesus.

He's taken in, with every step on his feet on earth, the pain, sickness, hatred, suffering of so many, including the earth herself. He's been forming the cross in his own body, soul, and forces of life since the baptism, carrying that cross and its increasing weight for 3 years. And now it will soon reach the skull called Golgotha. Now the physical pain of the slapping, beating, scourging, the thorns; the soul pain of the hatred, mocking, ridicule; the soul pain of the lostness and soul-shattering of his disciples, the agony

of his mother, it will all reach the power of the point of these nails being driven through his hands and feet, the pain of the weight of his own body, hanging on the cross.

And all this was his great aim, his conscious choice, his free deed of love. All this was the fulfillment of his human/divine task: taking in, gathering, focusing ALL THIS PAIN. Like a magnifying glass can gather the rays of the sun into one single focus, turning gentle sunlight into fire, so pain, gathered and focused by his all-embracing love, turns his suffering, his passion into life-creating, death-overcoming POWER.

That was his GREAT NOTION. Pain, so gathered, turns love into resurrection. Love so focused turns Passion into Easter.

Since that deed, that great notion, Christ's deed of life and death on Golgotha lives and works in our humanity, creating into times to come. And all pain, all suffering can now be baptized —

Painting: Dieric Bouts, Resurrection, c. 1455. Image from Wikimedia Commons.

Christened. The Love of Christ in us can take it and turn it into healing, health-bringing, death-overcoming Power — Grace-full Power.

What an amazing GREAT NOTION to take into our thinking, write deep in our hearts, remember ever anew into our humanity, sing out with our lives.

Rev. Richard Dancey

## Knowing Christ

Towards the end of John's gospel (in Chapter 20), Thomas recognizes the Risen One by touching His wounds. It's not majestic light or profound wisdom that awakens Thomas. For Thomas, the wound is the very doorway to knowing Christ.

Every human soul, each one of us is also a Thomas. For in our time, we are called to know the living Christ, not merely to believe. And like Thomas, we too cannot know the Christ in us, the Christ in others unless we touch the wound. However, even though every human being is wounded, even though every human being is meant to be wounded, not everyone's wounds reveal the Risen One. If the wounds we carry are infected and closed up, full of resentment and bitterness toward the world, then Christ remains un-raised in us. But if our wound is the very thing that has cracked us open to the light, so that from our wound peace, tenderness and love ray out to human beings, then Christ comes alive in us.

Dear friends, this is why the Risen Christ always appears in the gospels and in our lives with wounds and with peace. For the Christ in us is not how wise, light-filled or free from pain we are. The Christ in us appears when peace-filled love, streaming through our brokenness, touches the hearts of others.

Rev. Jonah Evans

### **The Mystery of the Lord's Prayer - August 19 - 21**

A contemplative and artistic/active retreat with Rev. Julia Polter at the Alcyon Center, Seal Cove, Maine

In this year's summer workshop we will have the opportunity to deepen our relationship with the Lord's Prayer. When asked by his friends how to pray, Jesus gave an imagination of two worlds coming together: heaven and earth, sorrow and forgiveness, evil and goodness. The workshop offers a contemplative and artistic approach to this universal and beloved prayer for our times, with time together and alone, in study and conversation. Friday evening through Sunday afternoon, 2 nights, \$330.



**The Alcyon Center** is a spiritual life retreat center on Mount Desert Island, Maine, near Acadia National Park. It offers hospitality to those seeking a quiet place of beauty for rest and renewal, spiritual practice, study and community. For further information, contact the Alcyon Center directly: [www.alcyoncenter.org](http://www.alcyoncenter.org)

## **Evil as a Challenge**

### **Reflections on the Conference with Bastiaan Baan**

“Evil is as old as the world. To deny or ignore it is nearly as old as evil itself. Nevertheless, we know – often through bitter experience – that we have to deal with the dark side of life, before it develops from bad to worse. Are there also ways that lead from bad to better?”—*Bastiaan Baan*

On the weekend of March 4 - 6 a conference on *Evil as a Challenge* took place in Los Angeles. Bastiaan Baan, director of the seminary of The Christian Community in North America, led the conference, which was co-sponsored by the Los Angeles Branch of the Anthroposophical Society and the Los Angeles congregation of The Christian Community.

The conference opened on Friday evening with a talk by Bastiaan on “The Origins of Evil.” This talk was rich in Egyptian, Greek, Chinese and Hopi myths, and images of the Kabbalah. Through them, we contemplated the questions: What did God do before the creation? How was the created world born? Where does evil step into the creation? And we recognized that all of these mythologies and wisdom traditions clearly bring out that evil is not an accident, but a necessity.

On the following afternoon Bastiaan spoke about “Learning to Know and Recognize Evil.” This, he pointed out, is our most important task on earth: to penetrate the darkness. He identified several different practical, constructive approaches for recognizing the different forms and faces of evil, and gave particular attention to the role self-knowledge can play in this stage.

In his third talk, on Saturday evening, Bastiaan explored the question “How Can We Work Creatively with Evil?” Overcoming our usual binary, black-and-white thinking was a key motif of this session. Together, we considered Rudolf Steiner’s statement that “by a strange paradox mankind is led to a renewed experience of the Mystery of Golgotha in the fifth epoch through the forces of evil. Through the experience of evil it will be possible for the Christ to appear again, just as He appeared in the fourth post-Atlantean epoch through the experience of death.” (Rudolf Steiner’s lecture of October 25, 1918, in *From Symptom to Reality in Modern History*, CW 185.) Matthäus von Collin’s poem “The Dwarf” was another focus for us, with its hints of how we can work with evil in a “royal” way; accompanied by Margaret Shipman on the piano, Bastiaan sang “The Dwarf” to us in its evocative musical setting by Franz Schubert.

The first three sessions of the conference took place in the Los Angeles Branch’s building. The concluding session was held on Sunday afternoon, at The Christian Community. In his talk “Can Evil Be Redeemed?” Bastiaan continued and deepened themes which had been introduced in the previous talks: How can we come to see the whole? How can we create a new reality with freedom, love, and “angelic patience”? How can we find the help of our heavenly companions in meeting the challenge of evil?

Jane Hipolito

## Connecting to the Spiritual World: Jodi Dill Gives Back

Jodi Dill's life has been wondrously filled with, influenced and guided by the teachings of Rudolf Steiner. It began with her attendance at the Kimberton Waldorf School, where she graduated from high school before going on to fulfill her dream of becoming a children's mental health counselor and administrator. It is also where she met Andy, her husband of 36 years.

While Andy was training to become a Waldorf teacher in Sacramento, CA, the couple began to attend the local Christian Community services. "When we moved back to Pennsylvania, we started attending more regularly, especially after our daughter, Amelia, was born," explained Jodi.

Andy became a Waldorf teacher while Jodi was busy as a mother and starting her own career. All of this was influenced by what she gained during the Act of Consecration of Man and all other aspects of community life within the church. "The Christian Community offered me a way to go deeper in the way I penetrated and connected to the spiritual world," Jodi said.



It was the start of a long journey that has fortified and nourished Jodi and her family. "I really enjoy the close connection with our priest and congregation," Jodi admitted.

Her commitment to The Christian Community led her to fill a Board role for the Devon congregation, along with participating fully in the social life of the church. Later, Jodi was nominated and joined the Regional Board of The Christian Community in North America, while still serving on the Board at the Devon congregation. Clearly, Jodi is dedicated and committed to her faith and supports all efforts to provide a strong foundation for the church, both locally and regionally.

"The financial support I offer, both present and in the future, allows The Christian Community to continue to bring spiritual insight where it is most needed," Jodi said. "Our world needs all the help it can get and The Christian Community offers a strong religious connection to Christianity. That means a lot to me." Jodi's hope is that the financial support she gives now, and later through a bequest in her will, can allow the Movement to continue to grow, especially in the North American region.

When asked what prompted her to create a will, Jodi shared that a will is important because each individual needs to decide how their money will support future initiatives in the world. "We don't want the state or government to decide this for us," Jodi added emphatically.

Haven't made your will yet? Feeling overwhelmed with the process? Please contact Mary Hirsch, Legacy Coordinator for The Christian Community, to receive a packet that can get you well on your way! Email: [hirschmj@comcast.net](mailto:hirschmj@comcast.net) Phone: 732.232.5159. Any inquiries are confidential.

Photo: Jodi and Andy Dill

## 2016 Youth and Young Adult Trip to Germany

Nine adults and young people traveled to Germany in February 2016 to visit the Christian Community in Germany. The group is very thankful to the people of the North American Congregations who helped us raise over \$5,000 to help fund our trip.

We stayed in the Volksdorf congregation in Hamburg and helped teach religious instruction with Rev. Marcus Knausenberger in the local Waldorf school and visited the seminary in Hamburg. We sang and met together for conversation and marveled at our shared experiences in a European country as we tried to understand our own culture.

We traveled on to Berlin and stayed at the Prenzlauer Berg congregation on the east side of Berlin. We helped the local priest, Rev. Ute Lorenz with a youth conference and confirmation event and sang and served for a baptism. In Berlin we also visited the headquarters of the Christian Community and had an evening conversation and visit to the archives with Rev. Vicke von Behr the Erzoberlenker or Global Executive of The Christian Community.

So many friends, old and new, helped us to see Berlin — Moira Walsh, the intern in Berlin, an old friend, Jasmine Patricia Hoffman and Maren Fritz showed us the town and were so kind, helpful and accommodating.



The group traveled on to Stuttgart to attend the International Youth Conference, “What do you Consecrate?” in connections with the ordinations of new priests. We witnessed the ordination of 8 new priests, which included Rev. Emma Heirman, our Youth Camp leader of 2015. At the youth conference we gathered up a few staff members for this summer’s Midwest Children Camp and entertained the German youth with our high-spirited antics. We were the party of the Nacht Café! On our last night we were the guests of the Seminary in Stuttgart. In the morning we flew back home after our 2 weeks full of memories and gratitude for the gift of a glorious life experience we had just created together and filled with wonder with what might come next!!!

Photo: Trip participants with Rev. Ann Burfeind (Chicago) and Rev. Vicke von Behr (Leadership in Berlin)

## Robbers of Peace and the Good Shepherd in our Life A Contemplation Inspired by John 10:1-21

We may get phone calls from people we don't know. Aided by machines, armies of strangers try to enter our homes, intending to convince us, or sell us something, or even scam us. They are thieves who rob us of our precious time or money, and the peace of our home sanctuary. Yet there is something we can do. We can use our own technology, caller ID, to identify who is trying to enter and simply refuse to engage.

Our own souls have their inner thieves and robbers — thoughts that disturb or distress us, overwhelming emotions that compel us to *do* something, now! Yet some healthy corner of our souls knows that we ought not to listen to them. We can use our own inner process of naming, identifying the thoughts, emotions and compulsions that would try to destroy our inner peace and health.

Christ the Good Shepherd helps us fight the intrusions of thieves and robbers. He is the giver of life and health to the soul, the giver of our joys, the comfort in our sorrows. He gives us our precious allotment of time, our peace and the creativity of love. He leads us to places of inner nourishment and freedom. Through him we can take up our own lives and give them freely.

Rev. Cindy Hinds

### Movement in our Movement

*Rev. Emma Heirman, who was sent to the Denver congregation after her ordination in Stuttgart, shares some thoughts about finding her way into her new community...*

I arrived in Denver right before Holy Week and after a few days found myself snowed-in. Only two days later, the snow was gone. And so it is with the weather here in Denver, always dramatically changing! All the pieces of my outer life have taken some getting used to – moving to a new place, meeting new people, establishing daily rhythms, trying to understand the clouds in the sky – and they are slowly settling in. My inner life is also working its way together here. It is weaving threads into the inner life of the Denver congregation that has been working for so many years before my arrival. I feel a question in the air around and in me, “What will come?” This question moves through every interaction, preparing the space for the future. In this time of newness, day by day, I seek the ground. Serving at the altar and praying together with the people of the congregation is the ground I stand on now, inwardly and outwardly, and my gratitude for the gift of the sacraments and the people who ask for and support them wells forth.

Photo: Emma Heirman on her Ordination Day with her fiancé Matthias Giles



## From the Christian Community Bookshelf

### *Nature Contemplations Through the Christian Year*

Author: Peter Skaller

This little book offers a treasure trove of reflections and contemplations on images from nature, each connected to a Gospel reading. Based on thirty years of sermons, Rev. Skaller explores the essence of sensory images, including flowers, shells, clouds, and landscapes, delving deeper to help the reader understand them as divine manifestations in our everyday world. They in turn enable us to gain insights, feelings, and intuitions about the purpose of the world and us. This is a book of reverence and wonder, in which we can glimpse the reality of the divine.

Floris Books, 128 pages, paperback, \$14.95 at [www.Steinerbooks.com](http://www.Steinerbooks.com) or local congregational book tables.

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### *Books Available in English from Bastiaan Baan*

Author and Seminary Director Rev. Bastiaan Baan has written several books, some of which have been recently translated into English.

*Lord of the Elements* interweaves Christianity and nature. The four classical elements of earth, water, air, and fire are present in Genesis and continue to be significant throughout Christianity. Different streams of thought, such as the School of Chartres, and Celtic Christianity, have emphasized the elements in different ways.

In this unique book, Bastiaan Baan brings these elements 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. Contents include the elements in the mystery centers, in the Old and New Testaments, in the sacraments. It also includes considerations of the elemental beings in art, science, natural disasters, the role of Christ and the angels, and exercises in 'seeing with other eyes.' Floris Books, paperback, 248 pages, \$19.95.

In *Old and New Mysteries*, Rev. Baan explores the great contemporary interest in the ancient mystery centers, such as prehistoric caves, the pyramids of Egypt, Newgrange in Ireland, and the Externsteine in Germany. The trials and rites that took place there were for a chosen few and are vividly described in this book—from the trials of fire and water to the three-day near-death sleep.

The author suggests that modern-day initiation, however, has a substantially different character. Whereas a "hierophant"—or guide—was needed in ancient times to navigate an inner trial, today it is life itself that brings us the trials we need, which can lead to deeper experiences of the spirit. Floris Books, paperback, 257 pages, \$19.95.

***Ways into Christian Meditation*** Meditation has long been both a path to self-awareness and a way of consciously building a bridge to the spiritual world. Many of the most common techniques arose in Eastern traditions, but this book describes a decades-old approach that originated in Western Christianity.

The author starts by describing the steps needed to make meditation possible, drawing on ideas of Rudolf Steiner. He discusses various forms of meditation, including review of the day, meditations on specific words and images, and meditations for the deceased. Finally he describes a specifically Christian approach, using a few words and sentences from the Gospel of St. John that provide fruitful subjects for meditation. Floris Books, 160 pages, paperback, \$19.95.

These deep and insightful books from an experienced priest of The Christian Community are available online from Steinerbooks.com or at the booktable in Christian Community congregations. A further book about Christian Rosenkretz's *Chymical Wedding* is due out in August 2016.

## **Camp Tamarack High Sierra Summer Camp**

2016 Camp Dates: June 26 - July 10

Camp Tamarack has been offering a quality wilderness experience for children 9-14 years old since 1971. Many of our participants come from the Waldorf community throughout the West. Camp Tamarack is surrounded by granite peaks and tall pine trees. Children experience the outdoors by swimming in nearby lakes and streams, and hiking to stunning sites while forming life-long friendships.

With a healthy rhythm of the day, we cultivate a wholesome and joyful community. Morning and evening gatherings greet and conclude each day with story and song. During the day, children are involved in group projects and activities under the guidance of their counselors. Activities include: arts and crafts, drama, horseback riding, archery, games, dancing, hiking, fishing, swimming, canoeing, overnight camp-outs and campfires.

The camp is sponsored by The Christian Community. On Sunday mornings we offer a non-denominational Sunday Service for children, and then join together in the afternoon for all-camp skits and games. Acceptance is the same for everyone without regard to race, national origin, religion, gender, or handicap.

This year our camp will be directed by Rev. Craig Wiggins from San Francisco (484) 557-8086 or [craig@wiggins.nl](mailto:craig@wiggins.nl) along with Hans Walser from Sebastopol (650) 995-3414 and Carrie Ashby from Los Angeles (323) 482-8086 or [carrieashby123@gmail.com](mailto:carrieashby123@gmail.com). visit <http://camptamccsummercamp.com/>





## Midwest Youth and Children's Camps

### *Midwest Youth Camp, July 27 - August 4*

This past summer 35 of us piled into vans and drove to a neighborhood of Detroit called Brightmoor. *Make it Bright* was a one-week service trip and one-week camping experience in Northern Michigan. We worked together with the community to clear land and help create an urban farming space out of the blight of Detroit.

This year we will return to the Namekogen River of Northern WI for a 70-mile canoe trip over 7 nights. We sing and converse as we paddle and create camp as we move.



### *Midwest Children's Camp, August 4 - 19*

The young people of the Midwest are creators of a two-week summer camp for children ages 8-13. The youth and young adults volunteer 2+ weeks to care for and guide the young children. Summer camp is a beloved space and time for many.

The community comes together to cook and sometimes grow the food for the camp, to hear and tell stories, create projects and spend almost 2 hours a day singing together in groups 100 strong.

Join us at Camp Decorah for singing, games, campfires, the Sunday service for children as well as canoeing, swimming, archery, and more singing.

For more information, please visit: [www.chicagochristiancommunity.org](http://www.chicagochristiancommunity.org)

## **East Coast Children's Camp is Moving to Maine!**

We are very excited to announce our move to the Belgrade Lakes area of Maine! This camp has 300 acres of woods, a huge lake with a sandy beach and is only about an hour north of LL Bean.

We will have all of the wonderful activities, from swimming and kayaking to crafts, singing, sports, and storytelling.

Camp runs from August 4 - 20. For more information, please visit our website: [www.ccsommerncamp.org](http://www.ccsommerncamp.org)

Rev. Carol Kelly

**The Christ Impulse and the Roman Empire —  
Summer Conference with Rev. Inken Contreras**  
The Christian Community, 5050 Hastings Street, Burnaby BC V5B1P6  
August 18 - 22, 2016

From the cross on Golgotha, the Christ Impulse works through the panorama of outward history, steering the course of future human evolution. It reveals itself through individual humans and through human deeds. With this in mind we will chart the course of the Roman Empire—

- through its mysterious spiritual origins that trace back to the fall of Troy,
- its unparalleled expansion and subsequent fall,
- its personalities like Constantine the Great, who conquered Rome under the banner of Christ,
- and Julian the Apostate, who rejected Christendom yet sought to understand the cosmic Christ.

**Thursday, August 18<sup>th</sup>**

7:30 pm “Rome’s Spiritual Origin, Early Kings and the Values of the Roman Republic”

**Friday, August 19<sup>th</sup>**

10:00 am “Expansion and Contraction—the Roman Empire and the Mission of the Jewish People”

2:00 pm Artistic Workshop

4:00 pm “Personal Glory—the Caesars and the Dangers of Forced Initiation”

**Saturday, August 20<sup>th</sup>**

10:00 am The Act of Consecration of Man

11:30 am “Constantine the Great—under the Banner of Christ”

2:30 pm Artistic Workshop

4:00 pm “Christendom’s Opponent—the Eminence of Julian the Apostate”

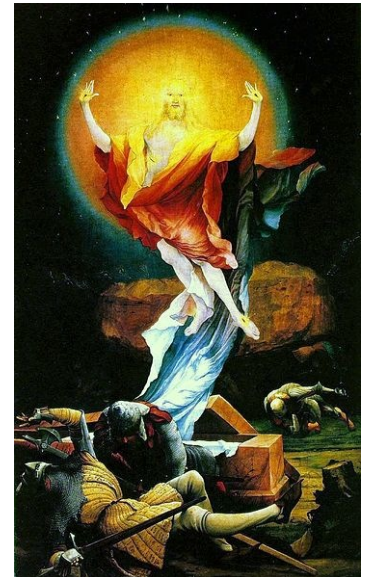
**Sunday, August 21<sup>st</sup>**

10:30 am The Act of Consecration of Man

12:30 pm “Rome’s Fall and Persistence into Modern Times”

**Monday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>**

10:00 am “The Mystery of Golgotha as the Interaction of Human and Cosmic Forces”



Suggested Donation for whole conference \$100  
(\$20 per lecture)

Artistic Workshops will be announced at the beginning of the conference.

To register or for more information, contact Rev. Susan Locey at [susan.locey@gmail.com](mailto:susan.locey@gmail.com)

Painting: Matthias Grünewald, from the Isenheim Altarpiece, c. 1512-16. Image from Wikimedia Commons.

# 6TH INTER-AMERICAN CONGRESS

## 23d TO 31st JULY 2016

*Take heart!  
I have overcome the world!*

*John 16,33*

An encounter to contemplate the trials our time has to offer in the light of the New Coming of Christ

	Saturday 23	Sunday 24	Monday 25	Tuesday 26	Wednesday 27	Thursday 28	Friday 29	Saturday 30	Sunday 31
7:00	OPTIONAL COFFEE								
7:45	PRACTICE OF THE SONGS THE SERVICE								
8:00	ACT OF CONSECRATION OF MAN								
9:00	BREAKFAST								
10:15	In search of the true guide of the soul Joao Torunsky	In search of what is true in our virtual world. Patrick Kennedy	In search of the meaning of food - ¿How do we relate with the earth to receive what she has to give?.. Diego Vergelin	In search of doors towards an inner life and to the world. Who watches over them? Who invades them?.. Helena Otterspeer	In search of the subtle life which sustains the world. Bastiaan Baan	In search of the light in the darkest darkness. Forgiveness as a way in Colombia. Silvia Macedo.	In search of the mild individuality. Oliver Steinrueck	"I became We . . . Where are We now? What happens when We become I again?" looking back, looking now, looking ahead. Craig Wiggins	
11:45	Inscription to the Congress	WORKSHOPS							
13:00	LUNCH								
15:00	Rehearsal "CANTICLE TO THE SUN"								
16:00	SNACK								
16:45	WORKSHOPS								
18:30	SUPPER								
20:00	Welcome! Take heart 2016 Telma Dave	Community presentations	Community presentations	Community presentations	Challenges for the Christian Community in the world offers to the Community of Christians Anand Mandaiker, lenker, member of the Circle of Seven. Anand Mandaiker	Community presentations	Community presentations	Community presentations	Community presentations
	CLOSE OF DAY								

**Who:** adults and young people of the Americas

**Languages:** spanish, english, portuguese.

**Where:** "Franciscan Residence"

Villa Carlos Paz, Córdoba, Argentina

**Information**

[info@confiad2016.org](mailto:info@confiad2016.org)