



A Thanksgiving Church

Thanksgiving 2009

Greetings from the Christian Science Society of San Juan Capistrano

Growth and Progress...

Reflecting on the past year, we have so much to be grateful for as a church family. 2009 has been a year of challenges but has also brought much growth to our church.

We have continued our **monthly metaphysical workshops (METS)** and they have been a tremendous help in addressing current topics of concern for us and the world. We began the year focusing on the economy (“Economics 101”) and spent several weeks handling the many related claims facing individuals and the community. Next we spent two months “Embracing Children in Healing Prayer”, resulting in a series of focused prayer requests during our services addressing the current challenges of our Sunday School students and children worldwide. April and May were reserved for metaphysically supporting the Christian Science Movement, addressing several challenges that would limit its forward progress. Next came an inspiring workshop on “Freedom from Time” and the claims of aging, followed by a session focused on “Handling Division.” Our August study took us back to the subject of supply, specifically for our church and its needs, and in September we worked together to discover more about our purpose and practice in “Giving Healing Testimonies” during Wednesday services and in our periodicals. A timely workshop was held in October on a topic of widespread concern, “Eradicating the Claim of Swine Flu”, and the theme of our most recent “MET” was “Personality or Individuality?”, a topic we will continue to explore at our December workshop. These monthly meetings, also available by conference call and Skype, continue to bless all concerned: those who participate, our community and our world.



This year we were humbled and grateful for the opportunity to participate in two projects for **The Mother Church**. We took part in a series of video interviews conducted by TMCYouth.com that are now included on their website as part of their project, “Church Unconfined”, available for all to enjoy. This experience gave us a wonderful opportunity to revisit and re-examine our church and its founding principles as well as to hear the views from many of those who participate in our services.

Expressions of gratitude:

This church says to me...let go of the past that has lost its meaning and go forward looking into the light of God’s love for us all... following the “DO” of loving all mankind and each other, and the “DON’T” of complaining or being critical of ourselves or others. Value the Christ and the inspiration that comes directly from its all-knowing source, GOD. You, this church, are inspiring me by your example to recognize and be grateful for God’s goodness in my life and the lives of others.

I am grateful for the San Juan Capistrano Christian Science Society. My wife and I had dropped our membership at another Christian Science church for about 20 years and we attended church services only from time to time. At SJCS Society we were both attracted to the spontaneous and genuine love that members expressed to everyone even at our first visit. There were and are no small groups or cliques. I noticed that services were natural, genuine, full of energy and creative. Attendees expected healings and unconditional love. I sometimes felt such inspiration that I had to wipe away tears. I would call the SJC Society a church that walks its talk with healing (I have had many), generosity (both within and without the church) and a genuine love of Mrs. Eddy’s discovery. SJC’s innovation and creativity would likely be what Mrs. Eddy would endorse... ..



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Expressions of gratitude...



Growth and Progress

and apply today as she used the best methods of communication and teaching that the turn of the century provided. The Society has a practical freshness that has inspired other churches and individuals, certainly my wife and me.

My husband and I are so very grateful for the love and outreach of this wonderful church! We look forward to Sundays with joy because of the way we are embraced (and our doggie too!) with kindness, love, and consideration. Every week those qualities seek us out as well as all who come.

always
Espe-
playing
of music.
And last
The
love to
the spirit
ence; the “sweet amenities” Mrs.Eddy speaks of.



The music is so uplifting... especially Candi's and her choices What a delight! but not least... graciousness and all. Surely this is of Christian Science.

Our three years with you gave us friends and family, showed us how to be better church members, and set an example for sharing with our community. We love you for what you do, we send unlimited blessings and unconditional love, and we shout your praises from the housetops. Keep that light shining.

What stands out to me is the atmosphere of joy and warmth and inclusiveness. The tone of gladness at SJC rings out like a church bell.

I love being able to share our prayer through “loving our neighbor as ourselves” activities with a diversity of local and world organizations, from the FAM food bank to Homes of Hope's homebuilding over the border in Mexico .

I love the children leading the Scientific Statement of Being and the correlative passage. They are so innocent, and they are proof that, as Isaiah says, “a little child shall lead them.”



I'm grateful for the “Mind-Fullness” demonstrated by each San Juan member who loves church and all that it represents; and for doing the uplifting elevating work that the race deserves.

And on Easter Sunday, Peter Link led our congregation in a video-taped session where we learned the new hymn “**We are Walking in the Light of God.**” We joined five other churches from around the world in this video which became the closing presentation for Annual Meeting in June. Imagine the thrill of several of our members attending Annual Meeting to see the smiling, singing faces of our San Juan congregation up on the screen in the Mother Church extension. The audience response was electrifying to this inspiring closing to the final session. For many, this special experience comes to mind every time we sing Hymn 460 during our services!

“**Are We Walking the Talk?**”---This question was the focus of our annual **Recommitment Meeting**, this year held in March, giving us the an opportunity to re-examine our effectiveness as a church and bring ourselves closer to our vision and mission: “**to promote unconditional love, spiritual growth, and healing based on the Bible and the writings of Mary Baker Eddy**”. It was also a time to re-acquaint ourselves with some of our remote congregation who traveled to San Juan Capistrano for the weekend.

Our outreach efforts this year included a **Christian Science Lecture** by Tim Myers held in a local Orange County jail facility....a **Reading Room Open House** weekend and celebration of *The Christian Science Monitor 100th anniversary*.... a concert by young Christian Science artist/singer, Alex Cook, who introduced his new CD “The Tree of Life”, with donations from sales going to support Ngochoni Petals of Africa School, outside of Nairobi, Kenya.

For ten years we have supported Ngochoni **Petals of Africa school**, metaphysically and financially, and four of our Sunday School youth and others traveled to Kenya this year, returning with inspiring reports of their experience and fresh ideas for new ways to support the children and teachers at Petals, in prayer and in projects, the most visible being an inspiring photography exhibit in our church lobby documenting the trip to Petals by one of our youth. Curated by one of our members, a professional photographer, the exhibit is a continuing reminder of our connection and commitment to Petals and provides a fund raising opportunity through sales of the photos. This year we established “The Committee of 50”, an opportunity for individuals to make a monthly contribution to Petals School to help meet their monthly teacher salaries. We are in frequent communication with the school in our effort to focus prayer on their



current needs and work with them toward their self-sufficiency. We share this expression of gratitude from Petals School founder: “*Truly friends it has been a wonderful year and we have really seen divine Mind at work at Petals . We have been undergoing many challenges but*



Growth and Progress



Expressions of gratitude...

guidance we have been able to go through them. We want to sincerely thank you all friends for your prayer and support throughout the year and the most recent ones...the funds really helped me the staff salary. We welcome friends' support for now and in the future for salaries, textbooks and our future high school. It is our prayer that divine Love embraces our desires,---
 Much love, Jared Ambugo Ogega



We continue to serve our local Hispanic community with a tutoring/mentoring program in partnership with the community development organization **CREER** ("Believe!"). Four times a year we send **packages to our soldiers** overseas at Camp As Sayliyah in Qatar, and monthly we contribute food **and** needed items to another community partner, **Family Assistance Ministries**. Each Christmas we continue to serve our **annual holiday** dinner to our friends at a local rehabilitation/recovery center. Last May, **Big Sunday** events in our community included some of our congregation participating in service projects. And this December a youth led team will travel south of the border to build a home for a Mexican family as part of the Homes of Hope program, the fifth house our group has built, and a labor of Love that blesses many.



Our tithing recipients this year included: The Christian Science Monitor, our local school district, TwelveAcres, Universal Giving, Healing-Music 365, CREER, Schools of the Heart (Democratic Republic of Congo), and the Boys and Girls Club---local, national and global organizations whose goals and mission we have supported with our prayers and financial contribution.

As we continue to embrace our world community with our healing prayers, we leave in thought these words of Mary Baker Eddy in speaking of her life purpose: **"to impress humanity with the genuine recognition of practical, operative Christian Science"**. Miscellaneous Writings 207:4-6

Expressions of gratitude...

We are so grateful to be students of Christian Science and so grateful to Our Father to be regular attendees of Sunday and Wednesday services with you via teleconference. My husband and I live in the Niagara Falls, NY and Ontario region, and there is no way for him to attend church any other way. It is so important to him to be part of church, and to be with all of you every Sunday !!!!! We met for the very first time at church here in our area -- it was his very first time in a Christian Science Church, and he was there, present and accounted for, every single Sunday there after. Two years ago when it wasn't possible for him to go to church any more locally, we were so very blessed to be able attend church with all of you via telephone !!!!! Your services are beautiful, and we learn so much all the time just by listening !!!!! You have all become such

wonderful friends, and you've helped us so very much. We are so grateful, too, for how much we have grown spiritually, and a lot of that has been through inspirations during conversations with friends and mentors that we've met through our association with the Society. What an amazing resource you are, and we are so very grateful to be able to be with all of you as often as you're willing to include us !!!!!

We are also so very grateful for practitioners, and specifically for the wonderful persons who have shared their spiritual gifts with us over the years !!!!!

I'm so grateful for a church that strives to love unconditionally! While this may seem like a goal "too lofty" or "too difficult" to many, this group actually embraces the challenge. In doing so, we each feel the grace the reflection of LOVE brings to our gatherings. This outreach of "And Love is reflected in love" is blessing the world!

I am especially grateful for our monthly Metaphysical Workshops. Specifically focusing with unselfish, consecrated prayer on an area of need is healing and effective and fruit bearing.

Of all the glorious ideas in and out of our Society, we are the most thankful for the FLEXIBILITY we are able to take advantage of as Christian Scientists who love the Manual of TMC. Isn't it wonderful that we, as a family, are learning to appreciate the individuality of everyone in the church? We're thankful for everyone in our our "family".

I'm so grateful for a healing I had this summer. When I wasn't able to come to church, it was so nice to dial in and be part of the service by phone. This is a wonderful blessing -- thank you.

My daughter came from Indiana, prepared to move me to a place where I could receive adequate care, but just before she arrived I had a turn-around and was doing better. Also, my neighbors had been bringing me home-cooked meals, so generously filling my need. I was so grateful my daughter saw no need to move me.

Shortly after she left, I felt an "immediate" healing. I called the practitioner giving me treatments



Expressions of gratitude

and said, "I cannot express what has happened to me – I'm completely different." He said, "I know." With deep gratitude and love to God, Christ Jesus and Mary Baker Eddy,

Many thanks be to my Father, Mother, God and to Mary Baker Eddy for her dedication in giving us this precious gift of Christian Science. I was fortunate to have been raised in this wonderful way of life and have had many wonderful healings through the years. But today I am most grateful for Mrs. Eddy's definition of "church: the structure of Truth and Love....." I see it as not just a building, but as a Principle by which we can love our neighbor as ourself and daily prove that love!

I am grateful for the San Juan Capistrano Society, for all who serve so graciously and unselfishly to keep your services and meetings so freshly inspired and for helping me understand more than ever that church isn't a building or a place or the people inside but a state of consciousness that only is aware of love for God, our only Creator, and for man and all creation as God-created. them whole, complete, perfect, harmonious, individual, glorious, and eternal.



I am so grateful for the inclusiveness and the unconditional love that is demonstrated by the members of this Society. It is such a safe haven.

I am deeply grateful for the blessings of being a member here. The society has offered me the opportunity to practice a fresh, inspired approach to church. I serve, but am also served a wonderful feast of love, joy and comfort to meet my every need. In sharing this spiritual journey with my church family, I feel the healing power of the Christ, even in the face of daunting physical and personal problems. The benefits are boundless.

I am so grateful for our wonderful Society, the teachings of Christian Science, and the Blessings of Christ. In this year of so much change, I am extremely grateful for my family which are the fruits of God's blessings. Yet, none of this could be possible with the greatest Blessing God gave me: my precious wife, who is a constant beacon of light that shineth upon me, reflecting God's love and spirit in our marriage.

I am grateful for this Society for a multitude of reasons. I first heard about the Society when the original "founders" began meeting. At the time, I liked what I was hearing, and thought how wonderful it would be to join a group of individuals who were thinking differently about church. Because of distance, it was something that I never dreamed would actually become a part of my life.

Today, I am grateful for those who had the inspiration and foresight to pray their way through all of the successes and challenges to usher those first thoughts into this world-wide Society.



As a remote member, I am grateful for the use of technology to be able to attend services and meetings. I'm finding that listening from my home frees me from the temptations of seeing people who are reading or putting on the services. I can listen to the message without distractions. I love hearing the subtle messages that come through, such as the train, the stage whispers, or the wonderful golden retriever panting. The occasional use of different music for the hymns leaves me humming or singing the hymn in its "new" setting. Having children as an active part is especially good.

I was in the room on Fellowship Sunday. Now, that was new! I didn't have my full text with me, and they ran out in the room. One member changed her seat so that she could share her Quarterly with me. A little thing? Not so much when you had been attending a church where people hardly talk to each other. I heard that some think that there is little inspiration during this service. I rejoiced when I heard a member read with a booming voice. I have known the member for a number of years, and know that that member is struggling, with one of the claims being a very soft, weak voice. Not that day! Fellowship Sunday allowed that member, and all others to shine.

Most importantly, I am grateful for the metaphysical emphasis. Imagine praying about problems before taking human action to correct them! (or make them worse).

I am most grateful for the sense of community that this church provides. I love our online congregation as well and feel like I am getting connected with many of those who attend workshops and meetings besides online services.

The simplicity of the services is something that is most inspiring to me. I love each person who reads and offers their inspiration by preparing the Wednesday or the Sunday service. The beauty of the music is the most special part. It truly is the cornerstone of our church without walls that is enjoyed by each member no matter where in the world they are participating in the service.

Thank you dear congregation--I am grateful for each of you and together we are one.





Expressions of gratitude



I am truly grateful for the opportunity to attend the San Juan Capistrano Christian Science Society for Sunday services. I always look forward to be able to help with the 'Hosting' responsibilities which include greeting the wonderful members and guests each week. Due to distance I use SKYPE for the Wednesday evening testimony services - a great blessing. I am so thankful for the 'new' Christian Science Monitor and all the C.S. literature that have such healing articles.

I am so thankful to be raised by a loving Mom - a Christian Scientist, who enrolled me in Sunday School in my childhood. It was many years later before I took the "bull by the horns" and registered for Primary Class Instruction 2 yrs. ago - how grateful I am.

It has been a year of blessings and growth because of Society membership. Reading together for one Sunday service is something that was special in our long happy marriage. The friendships and camaraderie that are so easy in the San Juan Capistrano Society set the church apart as that entity which not only heals the body, it heals the heart. Hearing the list of various worldwide communities every single Wednesday and Sunday expand gratitude not only for the on-line individuals' participation but for their contributions to church without walls. Having our sister and brother in law attending now as a result of a visit--- "they sold their home and moved here just like we did 18 months ago". We are so grateful for the unselfish service that so many offer their brothers and sisters within this precious organization.



My cup is full and running over with gratitude for this church family! Especially this year with a loved one moving on in his experience, the love and support spiritually, from my church

family made the transition so harmonious. I felt wrapped in the arms of divine Love. The joy and excitement I feel coming to church each time is the reflection of love that is expressed by each church member. I really want to give more, as I feel the love that is given.

Knowing that we were moving to the Laguna Niguel area, my husband and I began utilizing the Skype website to listen and participate in the SJC Society services. Following sharing a wonderful healing/ testimony on a Wednesday night, I was contacted by the church to tell me that another Skypee from back East would like to talk with me and ask me some specific questions regarding our healing. At first I was taken aback, but immediately responded that I would love to contact the individual. I telephoned the lady, who was in Buffalo, NY. Amazing. We were attendees of the same church and yet lived 3000 miles apart. A new friendship began that day. That phone call was three months ago and there isn't a day that goes by that my new friend and I don't contact each other; by phone, by email, by Facebook or by Skype. We share new ideas, discuss church services, share new blessings, or just laugh together. It is an incredible gift.

If it weren't for this very 'church without walls" and the truth, love, creative, flexible and open attitude which it offers, I would have no church to attend at this time in my life while handling a claim in my thought that keeps me so often from attending in person. Please know what a valued and great blessing you provide me with each Sunday. I am so happy to have this opportunity to thank you all for providing a way for me to be with you whether or not you know I am there. Even when I cannot be with you each Sunday morning I am with you in my thought and in my heart. Sometimes I don't make it in time to announce to myself and sometimes there is confusion about who I am or where I am from when there are so many others calling in at the same time so you don't know I'm with you. I don't mind for I know and I reap the reward. No matter where I am you are right where I can find you. The service is always full of wonderful surprises along with the tried and true teachings of our Leader and Master. What a gift you all are. How blessed I am. I thank God for His supplying my need and leading me to YOU. For all of you are my church.

This friendship was created because of the idea "church without walls". We immediately felt like family members that had never been introduced but knew we belonged together. So much of our shared experiences and knowledge were formed by our similar love of Christian Science, the writings of Mary Baker Eddy and the teachings of Christ Jesus. I know that both of our husbands are grateful for this new found teamwork because our "lives are big with blessings" as a direct result.

We are both so grateful for the outreach of the San Juan Capistrano Christian Science Society and the wonderful opportunity for us to share our little church even though many miles separate us. Thank you San Juan Capistrano.



From her new friend...

My husband and I thank God every day for the wonderful friends we've made through SJC Society, and especially, our new friend!!!!!! .She's always ready with a joke or a wonderful metaphysical thought or a telephone hug !!!!!!



Expressions of gratitude



I am deeply grateful for having 3 ½ years at this society. During this time I was able to meet so many giving, thoughtful and loving members.

As most of you know, my family and I have recently moved to No. VA. as my husband landed a position within the government that was cut out for him. We are all very grateful for this and our family has moved here and are all adjusting well.

God is our Father/Mother and career planner as we had had a great family business that during the last 15 months was unable to support us. Through diligent prayer, he was lead to apply for position and get it over 5,000 plus applicants. On top of that our family business is returning to it's normal business and our eldest son has taken on that responsibility and doing a fantastic job. This has given our son revenue to continue going to school to pursue new endeavors and alleviate my husband so he can do what is needed here.

We also in a very short amount of time were able to find a wonderful family that is leasing our home in San Clemente. Every detail was handled and between family and friends it was a blessing for both families for this to happen in such a short amount of time.

I hope this reaches you and all members of this precious society at my most favorite time of year, Thanksgiving! We will be thinking of you all as we will be visiting our beloved "Mother Church" in Boston for the Thanksgiving Service.

We are continually being blessed and look forward to more....



Why I joined the SJC Society

A few years ago, I attended a Sunday service at the Society. At the time, I really needed some loving; and the love I felt when sitting in the room, listening to the Bible lesson, was so tangible that I just wept the whole time. Fast forward to a few months ago: I realized that the branch church of which my husband and I had been members for over 30 years—and where I did continue to feel loved—was simply

no longer where I belonged. I looked into other branches in the area, but they were even less so. So I decided to try San Juan, figuring I could participate online when the drive wasn't feasible. And you know what? When I attended that Sunday service via Skype, I felt just as much love as I had during that service years before. I think I even shed a few tears again.

As a confirmation that this was indeed where I belonged, I had a physical healing during that service. I shared it during a Wednesday testimony meeting, and want to now put it in writing.

Over a year ago, a corn had developed between two of my toes. It was quite uncomfortable, and whenever I went hiking I had to wrap my toes in such a way to relieve the pressure. I'd given myself some prayer treatment, but more like a "band-aid" just to "get me through." Then, as I was listening to that first Skype service, I felt impelled to reach down to my foot (I was barefoot—a fun part of going to church online!) and rub off the corn. Just like that. I didn't do anything special or different than what I'd done dozens of times before when washing my feet. But this time, it came off.



The concept that our inseparability from divine Love actually separates us from anything not good is one that I've loved and prayed with for many years. This experience with the corn being removed is another example of how true that concept is. And it said to me, "San Juan Society is where I now belong."

Sundays when I'm driving to church and
 see people walking their dogs,
 Why am I in my church clothes
 rather than in casual togs?
 What's the answer to this
 dilemma, I asked my friend
 Who looked puzzled,
 could that be the direction he might tend?
 But with stern resolve, animal magnetism is
 what it's called, he spoke
 But some Sundays I'd rather have the
 animal on a leash and that's no joke.
 But continue to the intersection
 A left hand turn will take you to your destination.
 And if it's dogs you're missin'
 CSS has all shapes and sizes,
 eager for kissin'
 Any momentary thought as to
 why I am here
 Is quickly dismissed, surrounded
 by friends I hold dear!
 To miss fruitful time spent each week
 Temptation, never again to think or speak!!!!
 Appreciation for this warm, supportive fellowship
 Put my car on auto pilot, easily it can make the trip!!
 -Kay Teel

