



*The*  
**FOUNDATION STONE**  
*at the*  
**CHRISTMAS CONFERENCE**  
~  
*100 Years*

The Anthroposophical Society in America invites you to join us in observing the exact cosmic time, 100 years later, that Rudolf Steiner began the mystery rite of laying the Foundation Stone for the Anthroposophical Society, by reading the meditation and his accompanying words.

It was 10am Christmas Day, December 25, 1923 and at that moment, the Sun stood at 8 degrees 53 minutes in the constellation of Sagittarius, at the top of his bow. Rudolf Steiner opened the event by giving three strong, incisive, measured raps with a gavel upon the speaker's stand.

Brian Gray and Robert Schiappacasse have calculated the corresponding moment in our time, so that we may join one another in reading the seminal words spoken by Rudolf Steiner as he enacted this deed. The corresponding moment in each time zone:

***Christmas Day December 25, 2023***

Pacific 4:28 PM  
Mountain: 5:28 PM  
Central: 6:28 PM  
Eastern: 7:28 PM

These times allow those of us in North America to celebrate the exact cosmic time of the 100 year commemoration, December 25th, 2023. We are grateful to the Faust Branch for initiating this idea and to Steiner Books for allowing us to reproduce what Rudolf Steiner said at that sacred moment. May the harmony of our hearts radiate into the world that which is truly anthroposophical.

*Star seal by Arvia MacKaye Ege*



The Laying of the  
Foundation Stone of the  
General Anthroposophical Society  
*through Rudolf Steiner*

25 DECEMBER, 10 O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING

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DR STEINER greets those present with the words:

My dear friends!

Let the first words to resound through this room today be those which sum up the essence of what may stand before your souls as the most important findings of recent years.\*

Later there will be more to be said about these words which are, as they stand, a summary. But first let our ears be touched by them, so that out of the signs of the present time we may renew, in keeping with our way of thinking, the ancient word of the Mysteries: 'Know thyself.'

Soul of Man!  
Thou livest in the limbs  
Which bear thee through the world of space

\*In the 1985 German edition, from which this translation is made, the verses spoken here and in the subsequent sessions are given as shown in the shorthand report. See the Note on the Verses.

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In the spirit's ocean-being.  
Practise spirit-recalling  
In depths of soul,  
Where in the wielding will  
Of world-creating  
Thine own I  
Comes to being  
Within God's I.  
And thou wilt truly live  
In the World-Being of Man.

Soul of Man!  
Thou livest in the beat of heart and lung  
Which leads thee through the rhythm of time  
Into the realm of thine own soul's feeling.  
Practise spirit-awareness  
In balance of the soul,  
Where the surging deeds  
Of the world's becoming  
Thine own I  
Unite  
With the World-I.  
And thou wilt truly feel  
In the Soul-Weaving of Man.

Soul of Man!  
Thou livest in the resting head  
Which from the grounds of eternity  
Opens to thee the world-thoughts.  
Practise spirit-beholding  
In stillness of thought,  
Where the eternal aims of Gods  
World-Being's Light  
On thine own I  
Bestow  
For thy free willing.  
And thou wilt truly think  
In the Spirit-Foundations of Man.

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My dear friends! Today when I look back specifically to what it was possible to bring from the spiritual worlds while the terrible storms of war were surging across the earth, I find it all expressed as though in a paradigm in the trio of verses your ears have just heard.\*

For decades it has been possible to perceive this threefoldness of man which enables him in the wholeness of his being of spirit, soul and body to revive for himself once more in a new form the call 'Know thyself'. For decades it has been possible to perceive this threefoldness. But only in the last decade have I myself been able to bring it to full maturity while the storms of war were raging.<sup>38</sup> I sought to indicate how man lives in the physical realm in his system of metabolism and limbs, in his system of heart and rhythm, in his system of thinking and perceiving with his head. Yesterday I indicated how this threefoldness can be rightly taken up when our hearts are enlivened through and through by Anthroposophia.

We may be sure that if man learns to know in his feeling and in his will what he is actually doing when, as the spirits of the universe enliven him, he lets his limbs place him in the world of space, that then — not in a suffering, passive grasping of the universe but in an active grasping of the world in which he fulfils his duties, his tasks, his mission on the earth — that then in this active grasping of the world he will know the being of all-wielding love of man and universe which is one member of the all-world-being.

We may be sure that if man understands the miraculous mystery holding sway between lung and heart — expressing inwardly the beat of universal rhythms working across millennia, across the aeons of time to ensoul him with the universe through the rhythms of pulse and blood — we may hope that, grasping this in wisdom with a heart that has become a sense organ, man can experience the divinely given universal images as out of themselves they actively reveal the cosmos. Just as in active

\*At this point, and again in the final words of this meeting at which the Foundation Stone was laid in members' hearts, Rudolf Steiner changed for a moment from the formal mode of address to the more intimate 'Du'. (Tr.)

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movement we grasp the all-wielding love of worlds, so shall we grasp the archetypal images of world existence when we sense in ourselves the mysterious interplay between universal rhythm and heart rhythm, and through this the human rhythm that takes place mysteriously in soul and spirit realms in the interplay between lung and heart.

And when, in feeling, the human being rightly perceives what is revealed in the system of his head, which is at rest on his shoulders even when he walks along, then, feeling himself within the system of his head and pouring warmth of heart into this system of his head, he will experience the ruling, working, weaving thoughts of the universe within his own being.

Thus he becomes the threefoldness of all existence: universal love reigning in human love; universal Imagination reigning in the forms of the human organism; universal thoughts reigning mysteriously below the surface in human thoughts. He will grasp this threefoldness and he will recognize himself as an individually free human being within the reigning work of the gods in the cosmos, as a cosmic human being, an individual human being within the cosmic human being, working for the future of the universe as an individual human being within the cosmic human being. Out of the signs of the present time he will re-enliven the ancient words: 'Know thou thyself!'

The Greeks were still permitted to omit the final word, since for them the human self was not yet as abstract as it is for us now that it has become concentrated in the abstract ego-point or at most in thinking, feeling and willing. For them human nature comprised the totality of spirit, soul and body. Thus the ancient Greeks were permitted to believe that they spoke of the total human being, spirit, soul and body, when they let resound the ancient word of the Sun, the word of Apollo: 'Know thou thyself!'

Today, re-enlivening these words in the right way out of the signs of our times, we have to say: Soul of man, know thou thyself in the weaving existence of spirit, soul and body. When we say this, we have understood what lies at the foundation of all aspects of the being of man. In the substance of the universe

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there works and is and lives the spirit which streams from the heights and reveals itself in the human head; the force of Christ working in the circumference, weaving in the air, encircling the earth, works and lives in the system of our breath; and from the inmost depths of the earth rise up the forces which work in our limbs. When now, at this moment, we unite these three forces, the forces of the heights, the forces of the circumference, the forces of the depths, in a substance that gives form, then in the understanding of our soul we can bring face to face the universal dodecahedron with the human dodecahedron. Out of these three forces: out of the spirit of the heights, out of the force of Christ in the circumference, out of the working of the Father, the creative activity of the Father that streams out of the depths, let us at this moment give form in our souls to the dodecahedral Foundation Stone which we lower into the soil of our souls so that it may remain there a powerful sign in the strong foundations of our soul existence and so that in the future working of the Anthroposophical Society we may stand on this firm Foundation Stone.

Let us ever remain aware of this Foundation Stone for the Anthroposophical Society, formed today. In all that we shall do, in the outer world and here, to further, to develop and to fully unfold the Anthroposophical Society, let us preserve the remembrance of the Foundation Stone which we have today lowered into the soil of our hearts. Let us seek in the threefold being of man, which teaches us love, which teaches us the universal Imagination, which teaches us the universal thoughts; let us seek, in this threefold being, the substance of universal love which we lay as the foundation, let us seek in this threefold being the archetype of the Imagination according to which we shape the universal love within our hearts, let us seek the power of thoughts from the heights which enable us to let shine forth in fitting manner this dodecahedral Imagination which has received its form through love! Then shall we carry away with us from here what we need. Then shall the Foundation Stone shine forth before the eyes of our soul, that Foundation Stone which has received

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its substance from universal love and human love, its picture image, its form, from universal Imagination and human Imagination, and its brilliant radiance from universal thoughts and human thoughts, its brilliant radiance which whenever we recollect this moment can shine towards us with warm light, with light that spurs on our deeds, our thinking, our feeling and our willing.

The proper soil into which we must lower the Foundation Stone of today, the proper soil consists of our hearts in their harmonious collaboration, in their good, love-filled desire to bear together the will of Anthroposophy through the world. This will cast its light on us like a reminder of the light of thought that can ever shine towards us from the dodecahedral Stone of love which today we will lower into our hearts.

Dear friends, let us take this deeply into our souls. With it let us warm our souls, and with it let us enlighten our souls. Let us cherish this warmth of soul and this light of soul which out of good will we have planted in our hearts today.

We plant it, my dear friends, at a moment when human memory that truly understands the universe looks back to the point in human evolution, at the turning point of time, when out of the darkness of night and out of the darkness of human moral feeling, shooting like light from heaven, was born the divine being who had become the Christ, the spirit being who had entered into humankind.

We can best bring strength to that warmth of soul and that light of soul which we need, if we enliven them with the warmth and the light that shone forth at the turning point of time as the Light of Christ in the darkness of the universe. In our hearts, in our thoughts and in our will let us bring to life that original consecrated night of Christmas which took place two thousand years ago, so that it may help us when we carry forth into the world what shines towards us through the light of thought of that dodecahedral Foundation Stone of love which is shaped in accordance with the universe and has been laid into the human realm.

So let the feelings of our heart be turned back towards the original consecrated night of Christmas in ancient Palestine.

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At the turning of the time  
The Spirit-Light of the world  
Entered the stream of earthly being.  
Darkness of night  
Had held its sway,  
Day-radiant light  
Streamed into souls of men.  
Light that gives warmth  
To simple shepherds' hearts,  
Light that enlightens  
The wise heads of kings.

Light Divine  
Christ-Sun!  
Warm thou our hearts,  
Enlighten thou our heads,  
That good may become  
What we from our hearts would found  
What we from our heads would direct  
In conscious  
Willing.

This turning of our feelings back to the original consecrated night of Christmas can give us the strength for the warming of our hearts and the enlightening of our heads which we need if we are to practise rightly, working anthroposophically, what can arise from the knowledge of the threefold human being coming to harmony in unity.

So let us once more gather before our souls all that follows from a true understanding of the words 'Know thou thyself in spirit, soul and body'. Let us gather it as it works in the cosmos so that to our Stone, which we have now laid in the soil of our hearts, there may speak from everywhere into human existence and into human life and into human work everything that the universe has to say to this human existence and to this human life and to this human work.

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Soul of Man!  
Thou livest in the limbs  
Which bear thee through the world of space  
In the spirit's ocean-being.  
Practise spirit-recalling  
In depths of soul,  
Where in the wielding will  
Of world-creating  
Thine own I  
Comes to being  
Within God's I.  
And thou wilt truly live  
In the World-Being of Man.

For the Father-Spirit of the heights holds sway  
In depths of worlds begetting being:  
Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones!  
Let there ring out from the heights  
What in the depths is echoed  
And in the echo of the depths  
The secret of the heights, resounding  
Speaks:  
Ex Deo nascimur.  
The spirits of the elements hear it  
In East, West, North, South:  
May human beings hear it.

Soul of Man!  
Thou livest in the beat of heart and lung  
Which leads thee through the rhythm of time  
Into the realm of thine own soul's feeling.  
Practise spirit-awareness  
In balance of the soul,  
Where the surging deeds  
Of the world's becoming  
Thine own I  
Unite  
With the World-I.  
And thou wilt truly feel  
In the Soul-Weaving of Man.

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For the Christ-Will in the encircling round holds sway  
In the rhythms of the worlds, bestowing grace on the soul:  
Through the spirits: Kyriotetes, Dynamis, Exusiai,  
Let there be fired, ye spirits, from the East  
What through the West is formed,  
And the fire of the East,  
As it receives form from the West  
Speaks:  
In Christo morimur.  
The spirits of the elements hear it  
In East, West, North, South:  
May human beings hear it.

Soul of Man!  
Thou livest in the resting head  
Which from the grounds of eternity  
Opens to thee the world-thoughts.  
Practise spirit-beholding  
In stillness of thought,  
Where the eternal aims of Gods  
World-Being's Light  
On thine own I  
Bestow  
For thy free willing.  
And thou wilt truly think  
In the Spirit-Foundations of Man.

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For the world-thoughts of the Spirit hold sway  
In the being of worlds, craving for light:  
Archai, Archangeloi, Angeloi!  
Let there be prayed from the depths  
What in the heights will be granted,  
And when it is rightly understood  
How it rings forth from Archai, Archangeloi, Angeloi,  
When from the depths is prayed  
What in the heights can be answered,  
Then speaks it through the world:  
Per Spiritum Sanctum reviviscimus.  
The spirits of the elements hear it  
In East, West, North, South:  
May human beings hear it.

My dear friends, hear it as it resounds in your own hearts!  
Then will you found here a true community of human beings for  
Anthroposophia; and then will you carry the spirit that rules in  
the shining light of thoughts around the dodecahedral Stone of  
love out into the world wherever it should give of its light and  
of its warmth for the progress of human souls, for the progress  
of the universe.

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