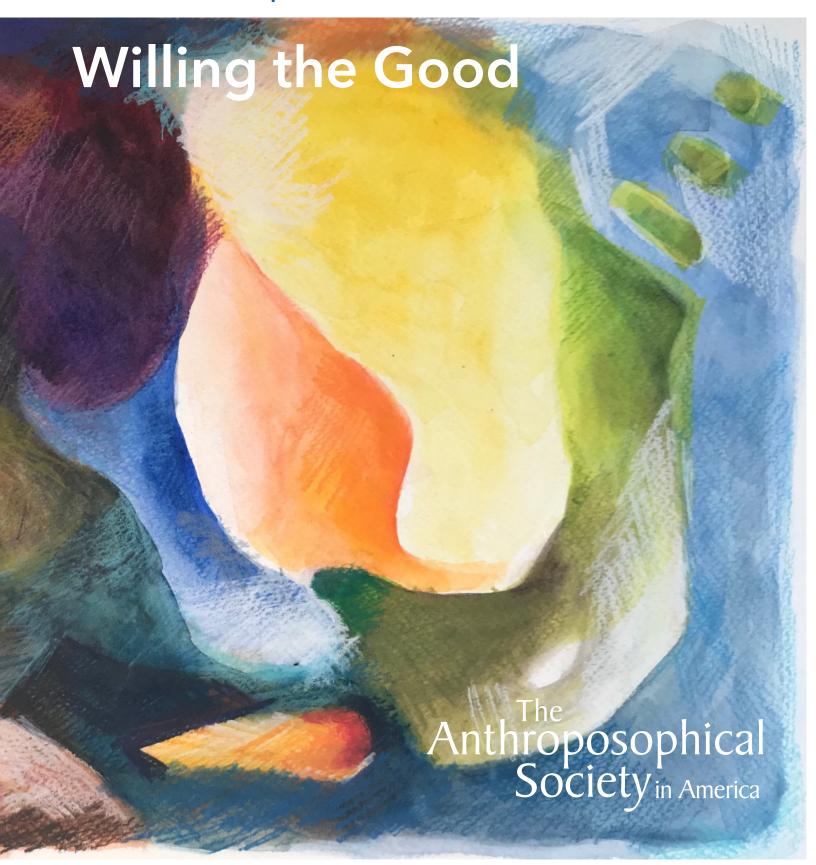
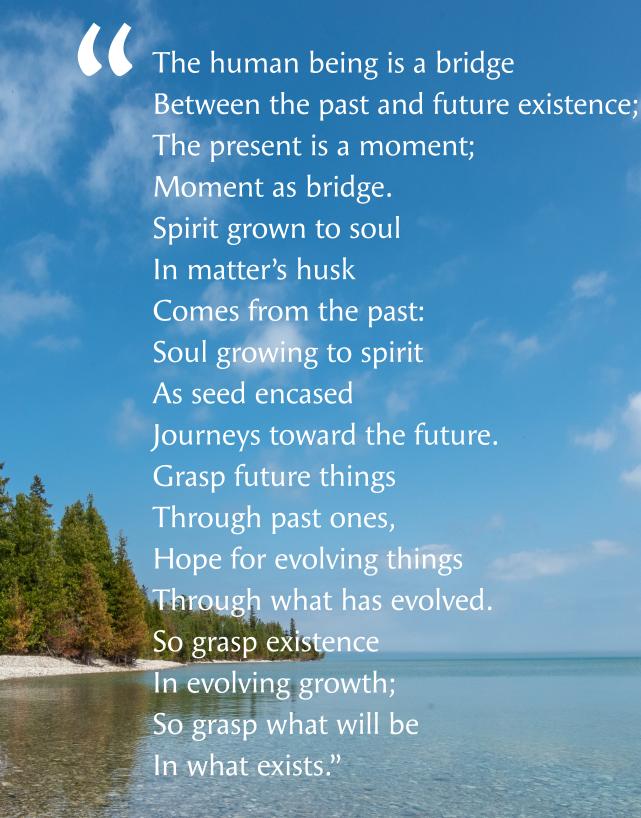
# 2020 Annual Report





Dec 21, 1920 Rudolf Steiner, for Ita Wegman

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# from the general secretary

Dear Members and Friends,

The year 2020 marked the conclusion of my first four-year term and renewal by the Council for an additional three. It also marked a turning point as we look to the next three years in preparation for the centenary of the 1923-24 Christmas Conference. The question is not only what are we preparing by way of celebration of the past, but also what are we putting



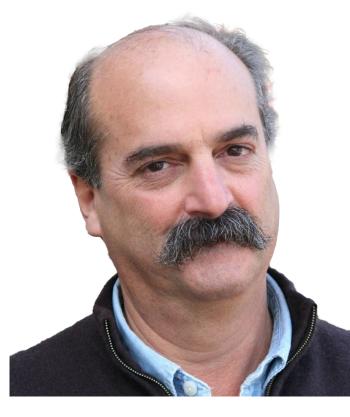
By the force of necessity, and against the judgment of some, we began developing a spiritual understanding of technological activity even as we looked forward to a time of again meeting in person." in place as a renewed foundation for anthroposophy for the next one hundred years? This is a profoundly esoteric question for anyone working with the inspiration and insights of Rudolf Steiner and anthroposophy. In many ways, all the social and political challenges that became visible in 2020 are symptoms of human and ecological

conditions in serious need of care. The Society, anthroposophy, and its practical applications have much to offer by way of healing, but we have a way to go before those offerings are welcomed across an increasingly diverse population.

What also became inspiringly visible this year was a newly emerging community of online participants in our many programs and gatherings. As one of our Council members remarked: we have the Eastern, Central, and Western Regions, and now we have a whole new region that exists online. It was a consciousness-shifting comment and also a complement to the kind of engagement we had hoped to achieve in physical regions but instead found the genius, if I can call it that, of space-based rather than place-based activities. By the force of necessity, and against the judgment of some, we began developing a spiritual understanding of technological activity even as we looked forward to a time of again meeting in person. This may be the under recognized gift of 2020. And whatever else the year brought, our US Society continued to grow in membership.

The cosmopolitan nature of the World Society also became both more visible and also more active. Despite not being able to meet at the Goetheanum throughout 2020, The Circle of Country Representatives, formed from

representatives of all the established Societies worldwide, has been meeting online bi-monthly. We continue building a shared picture of our collective work and challenges while serving as a consulting body for Goetheanum Leadership and the Executive Council, which has changed significantly with Joan Sleigh's departure and the addition of Ueli Hurter to the Council. For the first time the General Section and the School for Spiritual Science along with the work with the Class Lesson are being led collaboratively by Council and Leadership members.



One central theme emerged for me during 2020. Namely, a distinction between anthroposophy as a path of inquiry and understanding, a spiritual science, and anthroposophy considered as a belief system. Put simply, to question a belief system is sometimes experienced as an aggression by the one with the belief. Such interactions tend towards judgment of others, disconnection, or worse, conflict. On the other hand, raising questions and challenges in the context of inquiry rather than belief is actually considered an appropriate part of the discipline and therefore, welcomed. With this distinction in mind, 2020 has been the year to fully understand and explore as precisely as possible what Rudolf Steiner meant by freedom in the spiritual and cultural realms. I would encourage us all to engage in this inquiry with an open mind and a willing heart as a foundation for the future of anthroposophy.

John Bloom, General Secretary (California)

John Bloom



## from the leadership team

Warm greetings and deep gratitude to you, dear ASA members and friends. It is our honor and pleasure to present the Anthroposophical Society's 2020 Annual Report, "Willing the Good." We have gathered updates and glimpses of activities across the country, from friends near and far. We hope you enjoy reading and seeing the highlights of the year.

2020 was a year like no other. There were challenges and gifts and, through it all, we tried diligently to bring inspiration, share insight, and build community around the country and across the globe. We've had many opportunities to learn from one another, support one another, and grow in ways we never imagined.

To begin with, the year was busy and full in the usual ways. In January 2020, we gathered in Fair Oaks, CA with John Bloom (General Secretary) and John Beck (Director of Communications) for our annual planning retreat. There we reviewed the past year, looked forward to the future, and updated our strategic plan and work for the coming year. It is always rich and meaningful to meet face to face to reaffirm our shared goals and vision. Such time brings cohesion and strength to our collaborative efforts.

Then in February, we met together as a General Council in Pasadena, CA. The LA Branch graciously hosted us, and we enjoyed meeting the local community at a potluck dinner and were inspired by a gorgeous performance given by a string trio of local musicians—including a branch member. It is always a gift to meet new people and reconnect with old friends. The time there was engaging and sweet.

Soon after that, everything changed. The plans we made, the assumptions we had about our work and how to achieve our goals, all of that changed in a blink. As a Leadership Team, we came together to support one another and consider the best ways to move forward as an organization, in support of our staff and our members. We sought to bring creativity and communication to the rapidly-changing landscape. Our primary purpose is always to support the practice of anthroposophy in the US and beyond. We focused on reaching out, staying connected, and really being present with our community, albeit online.



### Thank you, Laura!

Laura Scappaticci joined the Anthroposophical Society in America in October 2016, and was Director of Programs and a member of the Leadership Team. She created and hosted in-person and online events on a variety of transformative topics, and led countless program planning committees, building new forms of working together in service to our common goals. As you've probably heard by now, Laura left her position at the end of May 2021. Laura's tenure transformed the way the ASA brings content to our community, and expanded our connections around the globe. We are grateful for her vision, energy, impact, and deep love for anthroposophy in the world.

There have been some gifts to be sure. We have been working with webinars and online tools for programs and meetings for several years now, and the lessons and ease we have learned have helped us to have a successful and abundant year of engagement in many ways. Hundreds of members and friends have given generously, and have gathered for online webinars, conferences, and meetings small and large. And even though we love seeing each other and you in person, the connections that have been made and maintained have been deep and fruitful.

We believe that anthroposophy changes everything, and given the challenging times we are living through, the work of Rudolf Steiner and the ASA are more relevant and more powerful than ever. The best part of our work is the real connections we get to make with you, our members and friends. We invite your ideas and your feedback, and we would love to hear from you.

It remains an honor to serve our membership and the deeper spiritual purposes of anthroposophy. As a Leadership Team, our work has been collaborative and geographically distributed. And we work in frequent consultation with the General Secretary and the General Council. It's our responsibility to hold the big picture and to implement strategies toward the long-term health and effectiveness of our Society.

We look forward to the coming year with open hearts and open minds. The year 2020 has required new ways of thinking and being together. We are grateful to be on this journey together with you.

Deb Abrahams-Dematte, Director of Development (NH)
 Katherine Thivierge, Director of Operations (MI)

## program highlights

2020 was a year of challenges and gifts. Our community came together in strong numbers online for the first time. We were amazed at the interest and willingness of our community to participate virtually, and we found innovative ways to connect and engage with anthroposophy in a year of great uncertainty.

# GRATITUDE TO OUR HOLY NIGHTS HOSTS

Brian Gray
Mary Stewart Adams
Tess Parker
Abigail Dancey
Maitreya Branch
Chicago Branch
Portland Branch
Sophia Group
Rockford Group
Regional Councils

### MAY HUMAN BEINGS HEAR IT:

HOLY NIGHTS ONLINE

This groundbreaking new form of gathering during the Holy Nights made space online to study, share, and reflect. Hazel Archer-Ginsberg and Angela Foster originated the idea. More than 1,000 people registered and each night was hosted by a different leading group. A fabric of community began to weave through a myriad of voices, each hosting their evening in a unique and inspiring way.

### IF OUR COURAGE IS NOT TO FAIL US

More than 330 people joined together on March 19, 2020 to set aside fear and reaffirm community, connection, meditative practices, and the meaning of our new experiences, led by John Bloom, Angela Foster, and Linda Bergh. This first online community gathering following the start of the pandemic allowed us to "see" each other. The gathering brought strength as "shelter in place" became a term we were all learning to adapt to. The isolation of this time was eased through this online community gathering.

### THE SACRED GATEWAY: CONSCIOUS LIVING, CONSCIOUS DYING, AND THE JOURNEY BEYOND

We had planned for The *Sacred Gateway* to take place in Detroit, MI in April 2020. With closures happening in early March and uncertainty abounding, the committee made a quick pivot towards moving the conference entirely online. This was the first of many events to move to an online format, and the learning curve was steep at the time. Two hundred forty-eight people registered for the event, with many noting the fact that they could not have attended in person.



The speakers and workshop facilitators held a sacred container and safe space for those processing individual and collective grief. Biography work and ritual wove among keynotes and workshops. Participants were guided in a water blessing and created an altar for their loved one across the threshold. A mood of reverence and connection was palpable as we logged on, lit candles, and held tender space for one another.

### Highlights included:

- True Living Is Dying: The Life-Giving Power of Death, keynote discussion and Q & A with Patrick Kennedy
- The Vigil of the Heart with Linda Bergh and Ellen Hufschmid & eurythmy with Cynthia Hoven
- Proactive Grieving: The Sacred Gateway as a Bridge, keynote conversation with Dr. Melinda Toney

### WHITSUN: FIVE GOOD WORDS

### WITH ORLAND BISHOP

By late May, world events continued to confuse, overwhelm, and distress. In the wake of our country's grief over the death of George Floyd, we hosted an online gathering with Orland Bishop. Twelve volunteers from the Sophia Study Group opened our space by sharing their five good words. Then Orland addressed the current crisis in the US in relationship to the Whitsun impulse. We experienced powerful sharings from our community, and as our gathering closed, we were blessed to hear many of our community members beautifully share their own five good words.

### THE TWELVE SENSES

### WEBINAR SERIES

This three-part webinar series was an enriching experience during a time when our physical and social experience in the world was challenged in a new way. We began the series with an overview and practical demonstrations of the twelve senses with Harlan Gilbert, an exploration of the social senses with Joan Sleigh, and insight into how the senses develop in the early years

of life with Jane Swain. Each dynamic presenter enlivened a new aspect of this topic of study and 349 people registered for the webinars. This series was presented in connection with the Threefold Education Foundation, which hosted a conference on the twelve senses later in the year, and also moved online.

#### APPLIED ANTHROPOSOPHY

The idea for a year-long program was initiated by a group of educators at the Atlanta conference in 2019. Planning began in January and it launched as a labor of love in the summer of 2020. No one could have anticipated that the entire world would be "moving online" and a program such as *Applied Anthroposophy* was even more warmly received by the community stuck at home.

The mission is to explore the urgent issues of our time through the lens of Spiritual Science, awakening meaning, inner reflection, and outer action. The curriculum follows the themes of:

### Freedom, Love, Initiative, and Service

Participants could register for just the keynote presentations, called Leading Thoughts. Or, they could deepen their engagement by registering for the full program, including regular discussion groups with a Chrysalis Group and Guide. Sherry Wildfeuer and Alex Tuchman offered two introductory sessions to anthroposophy as a kick-off to Applied Anthroposophy.

More than 250 people took the plunge to join us! In addition to the presentations and discussion groups, full program participants had access to other events hosted by the ASA. They also participated in a daily experience of the Six Basic Exercises hosted by Angela Foster and friends. Leading Thoughts presenters included Patrick Kennedy; Lisa Romero; Carrie Schuchardt; Orland Bishop; John Bloom; Lakshmi Prasanna, MD; Megan Durney; Liz Beaven, EdD; Nathaniel Williams, PhD; Onat Sanchez-Schwartz; and Adam Blanning, MD.



### New Podcasts in 2020

Give More Than You Take ~ Voices From The Biodynamic Association Conference 2019

Healing, Educating, & The Twelve Senses with Dr. Lakshmi Prasanna

Courage, Fear, and a Deep Breath with Dr. David Gershan and Chris & Jerilyn Burke

Creating Pictures Of Peace with Olivia Stokes Dreier of the Karuna Center For Peace Building

The Whole Picture with Waldorfy Podcast host Ashley Renwick

The Great Conjunction - personal practices with Mary Stewart Adams

Against Dystopia with Conner Habib

Spiritual Beings And The Holy Dynamic Between Us with Reverend Patrick Kennedy

A World Without Art with Laura Summer and Matt Sawaya

### WILLING THE GOOD: LOVE, ACTION, HEALING

Our annual conference and AGM happened online with keynotes from Carol Cole and Renata Heberton, Peter Selg, and Harrie Salman. They brought vibrant pictures on acts of service, selflessness, and how to engage with the essential work of "willing the good." The gathering was brought to life with vibrant keynotes, multiple workshops, the first-ever online art dispersal, and an interactive exploratory daily meet-up called The Courage to Co-Create hosted by Jeff Barnum, Angela Foster, and Timothy Kennedy.

More than 300 people attended the event and had access to recordings of all content, double the number able to attend the Atlanta conference in 2019. This was a bright side of our necessary virtual connection. Reminders to take nature breaks, light candles, and connect with folks in the breakout spaces once again brought warmth and balance to the online experience.



You must trust your senses: they will show you nothing false if your intelligence keeps you awake. Keep your eyes fresh and open and joyful, and move with sure steps, yet flexibly, through the fields of a world so richly endowed." – Goethe

#### WRITER'S SALON

A new initiative came from former ASA administrator Jean Yeager in the fall of 2020. A cozy nighttime writers' salon began, where people could share their writing and voices with the community. We had about 25 people sign up to read their original works and over 50 attended. People brought songs, poems, short fiction, and nonfiction essays as the environment of a cozy open mic cafe was created in and around our individual computers and homes.

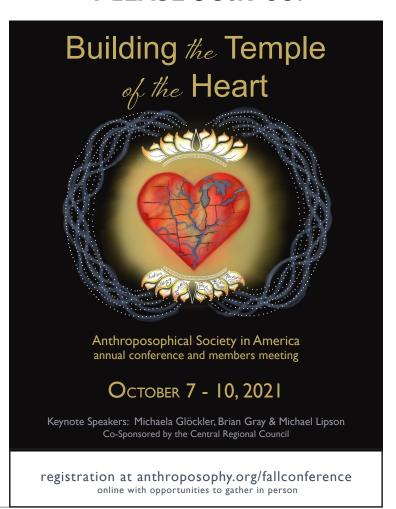
### ASA PODCAST, THE ANTHROPOSOPHER

Our podcast series is going strong, with listeners from all over the world. With about 20,000 listens in the last 12 months, our reach is expanding and we are excited to provide high-quality content at no charge. The podcasts are intimate conversations with guests on a variety of topics.

In 2019, we recorded 11 new episodes with guests including Mary Stewart Adams, Nathaniel Williams, Hazel Archer-Ginsberg, Andrea De La Cruz, Joaquin Muñoz, Sergio Gaiti, Paul Chappelle, and Lynn Jericho. Topics included "Biodynamics or Bust! Reflections from the BDA Conference," " Trauma, Resilience and Education," "The World in 2030," and so much more. Listen and subscribe for free at SoundCloud or iTunes or learn more at The Anthroposopher Podcast.

Deb Abrahams-Dematte,
 Director of Development (NH)
 Tess Parker, Assistant Director of Programs (CA)

### PLEASE JOIN US!





# the school for spiritual science

### NORTH AMERICAN COLLEGIUM

2020 represented a continuing transition for the Collegium. We held our meetings online and also continued with the creation and activity of working groups. The beauty of these groups is cross-sectional work. We focused on several topics: the role of the arts in building social and intergenerational spaces, the beginning imagination of a new currency that would actually support social threefolding, and making the work of the General Section of the School for Spiritual Science more understood and visible across the Society, as the section which is common to all. The ideal is that the research in the sections finds its way into practical work of the farmers, teachers, doctors and all other professional fields. One pilot project is to bring together "mini" collegiums in active regions in North America. The current active one is in the Kimberton, PA area.

As the Collegium, we ask ourselves, "What can happen in this group that is not likely to happen elsewhere in anthroposophical organizations?" The Collegium has the unique

### Collegium Members

Frank Agrama Youth Section John Bloom General Secretary, US, General Section Bert Chase General Secretary, Canada, General Section Abigail Dancey Youth Section (on leave) Patricia Dickson Visual Arts Section Bruce Donehower Literary Arts Branko Furst Medical Section (incoming) Meg Gorman Social Science Section (outgoing) Jennifer Greene Natural Science Section Herbert Hagens General Section and Class Holders Kim Hunter General Section (incoming) Rudiger Janisch General Section Gerald Karnow, MD Medical Section (outgoing) Helen Lubin Performing Arts Alex Tuchman Agriculture Section Sherry Wildfeuer Agriculture Section Douglas Wylie Social Science Section

# SECTIONS OF THE SCHOOL FOR SPIRITUAL SCIENCE

General Anthroposophical Section

Mathematics and Astronomy Section

Medical Section

**Natural Science Section** 

Agricultural Section

Pedagogical Section

<u>Youth Section (Section for the Spiritual Striving of Youth)</u>

Social Sciences Section

**Performing Arts Section** 

Visual Arts Section

Literary Arts and Humanities Section

To learn more about the US Sections, please visit <u>rudolfsteiner.org</u>.

To learn more about worldwide activity of the School for Spiritual Science, visit goetheanum.co/de/hochschule.

configuration of having representatives of almost all the professional sections of the School for Spiritual Science. Therefore, we can bring distinct perspectives and research to shared research questions such as: How can anthroposophy address climate change, or public health?

What sits with the General Section of the School for Spiritual Science is taken up as aspects of anthroposophy that are common to all the sections: karma and reincarnation, Christology, the nature of spiritual research, and caring for humanity. This last has become increasingly important during the last year. We have been looking at how to continue this work and deepen it even in the face of the pandemic, and the inability to be in person or to travel.

The School for Spiritual Science has its center at the Goetheanum, and each of the section members is expected to have a close working relationship with their respective section leaders there. In 2020, Joan Sleigh from the Executive Council was our primary liaison. Since her departure, the Collegium has been working with Ueli Hurter from the Executive Council, and Claus-Peter Roeh from the Goetheanum leadership. The Collegium is looking forward to being able to meet in person to support one another and to deepen the work of the General Section in the coming year.

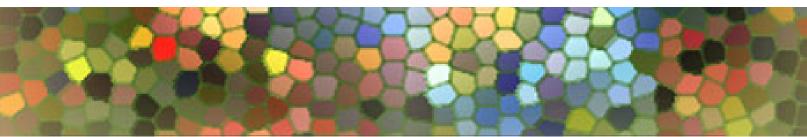
#### THE FIRST CLASS INTENSIVES INITIATIVE

In February 2020, an initiative began at the Threefold Community (Spring Valley/Chestnut Ridge, NY) for class members to intensify their relationship to the class mantras as we approach the centenary of the Michael School on earth. These weekends, twice a year over three years, take place around two festival times. During the All-Souls' Festival in early November, we turn attention to souls we know who have crossed the threshold of death. Less-developed in our circles is the Festival of "Unbornness" which looks toward souls as yet unknown who are on the verge of joining the earth community. For this festival we chose the middle weekend in February, coinciding with Presidents Day.

Our first intensive weekend in February 2020, pre-lockdown, working with the mantras of the first four lessons, was held by Rudiger Janisch (Beaver Run Camphill, PA), Herbert Hagens (NJ), and the Spring Valley (NY) Class Holders: Judith Aventuro, Dorothea Mier, Barbara Renold, and Gerald Karnow, MD. Gino Ver Eecke provided much organizational support. This was the first Threefold Community foray into creating a festival for the unborn. About 55 friends came from as far as Santa Barbara, CA, and Chicago, IL.

Despite the lockdown, the Spring Valley Class Holders decided to continue as initially intended in November 2020 with lessons five, six, and seven. We were allowed by the state of New York to have 26 people in the Threefold Auditorium (which seats 200); everyone came from in-state. Many expressed deep gratitude that the work continued, despite (and because of) the world situation. The weekend was held by the Class Holders joined, gratefully, by Jon McAlice. The intensives continue through November 2022 with plans for a 19-lesson intensive in August 2023 or 2024. All weekends are open to all class members.

- Barbara Renold, Class Holder (NY)



## THE SECRET GIFT OF A PANDEMIC: A RESEARCH EXPERIMENT WITH CLASS LESSONS



Normally, when the annual general meeting (AGM) is face-to-face, Class Holders of the School for Spiritual Science hold a Class Lesson before the conference begins. The pandemic presented a particular challenge in 2020 so we decided to try something different. We wanted to see if we could "hear" Michael on another level since we would not be able to meet in physical space.

A number of us agreed to read the same lesson at the same time in our private spaces on the morning prior to the AGM. We spanned the country and Hawai'i. Class Holders invited their local members to join the reading at home by reading the Lesson

or working with the mantras while the Lesson was being read. Later in the day, Herbert Hagens and Rudiger Janisch spoke (online) to the general membership, on the role of the School of Spiritual Science in the ASA. This conversation included Class Holders who shared their experiences about the meaning of Class work in their lives.

This event led to further exploration of how to work with Class material in a pandemic, knowing that we would not be able to meet in person for the foreseeable future. A small group of Class Holders were willing to begin an experiment to conduct spiritual scientific research during this time of isolation. We agreed on two things: we would read Lesson III on the first day of each month for six months on a rolling schedule (due to all the time zones); and, on Whitsun, we would read Lesson XVII at the same time in our respective places. In both cases, local Class members were invited to participate. We agreed to take notes on our experiences and meet to discuss our findings.

We felt it was important to keep the Class work going at this critical time, and that by reading the same lesson together it would intensify the thought forms that are needed to counteract some of the negative forces present in our modern time. In 2021, we will continue to read together and will meet online to discuss our direct experiences. Stay tuned. We will write more about this as we unpack our observations.

- Helen-Ann Ireland, Class Holder and Chair of the ASA General Council (ME)

# being human & anthroposophy.org

To two printed *being human* issues for 2020 we added a new biweekly email newsletter headed *being more consciously human* which began June 15th, sent to more than 6,000 friends and members; it was welcomed in particular as a connecting link in the time of the pandemic. The first e-news linked to news on the Fellowship Community fire, a new letter from General Secretary John Bloom, the recording of "Five Good Words" with Orland Bishop, videos on the health situation by Michaela Glöckler, MD, a conscious parenting guide from WECAN, an ecological perspective on viruses from Craig Holdrege, activities in the three regions, a poem, "Teaching," about George Floyd, from Molly McMullen-Laird, MD, and a few paragraphs of "Essential Anthroposophy" from the editor. Each of the fifteen e-news offerings in 2020 was similarly full of the energetic life of the anthroposophical movement in our region and the world. You can find past issues at the <u>ASA E-News Links</u> webpage.

The printed *being human* issues, early 2020 and mid-year, began with a cover and gallery of work by the widely-appreciated Ninetta Sombart (1925-2019), with a brief appreciation by her son Peter Bruckner, who was featured in the second issue as both a poet and a visual artist. The first issue also shared the story of Uriel Pharmacy, the new MC Richards program, the annual Florida conferences, the Salamander Nature Awareness School,



and the 2018 BD Conference. John Bloom contributed the essay "The Alchemy of Gift," Patti Smith and Chris Burke wrote about biography work, and there were reviews of important books: Dan McKanan's Eco-Alchemy: Anthroposophy and the History and Future of Environmentalism; Christopher Schaefer's Re-Imagining America: Mario Betti's Twelve Ways of Seeing the World; Armin Husemann's Form, Life and Consciousness: An *Introduction to Anthroposophic Medicine and the Study* of the Human Being; and Thomas Berry: A Biography, by Mary Evelyn Tucker, John Grim, and Andrew Angyal. We also reported on the prior fall's wonderful conference in Atlanta, on the Central Region's online karma work, and the hugely popular online Holy Nights. This last issue before the pandemic showed the Society's readiness, led by director of programs Laura Scappaticci, for the enforced shift to Zoom for maintaining connections.

# more consciously

Dear Members & Friends,

Welcome to our new e-newsletter! Our plan is to share news with you every other week, usually on Saturday mornings. Along with a few paragraphs each time on essential anthroposophy, there will be notes and notices, and a topic or two. Submissions are welcome, space permitting: we will link to longer ones



As "general secretary" of Bloom is our "country international meetings. He also reflects on the mood and challenge of our times in letters, posted on our blog, with the latest this past week.



"Five Good Words," a wonderful online community gathering friends, illuminated the festival of Whitsun or Pentecost in this year of soul-stirring change. You

#### Rudolf Steiner Fellowship Community has been a model of around the needs of anthroposophic medicine, a biodynamic farm, and more. Fire destroyed a residential building last week;

# thankfully no one was

hurt.

#### TEACHING

From Molly McMullen-Laird, MD, of the Rudolf Steiner Health Center: "I wrote this poem on Saturday, I am not a poem writer. Read half

George Floyd



#### ESSENTIAL ANTHROPOSOPHY

What is essential about anthroposophy? So many thoughts, so many perspectives! Rudolf Steiner is a great holistic researcher, repeatedly inviting us to consider things from many sides in order to see them whole. Properly, anthroposophy helps free us from limited and limiting views. (And see the Craig Holdrege link below.)

The word anthroposophy "should be interpreted as the consciousness of one's humanity," said Steiner in 1923. What should we be conscious of in our humanity? All of it: what we are, how we are, why we are, who we are, where we are, Human ence has an immensity of meaning. Anthroposophy would like to help us see that.



WECAN

Michaela Glöckler, MD, former leader of the Medical Section at the Goetheanum and president of Allianz Eliant, speaks about "herd immunity," highrisk groups, means to enhance wellness, the lungs ("the most social, st communicative



Barnham of the Maine Coast Waldorf School that "certainly none of us would choose digitized instruction over the beauty of face-to-face interaction..." But schools are drawing on their "very potent organ that we have") and human relationships" to



A recent article by Craig Holdrege of the Nature Institute, "Viruses in the Dynamics of Life," gives the ecological perspective to fill out our picture of the pandemic. "We have been struck by the narrow way viruses are typically describedas enemies that attack us. ... Is this an adequate



onies are the "Whitsun roses" of Central Europe. The flowers in this close-up, and the one above, were gracing the front garden of Rudolf Steiner House in Ann Arbor, Michigan, last week

These remind me that Rudolf Steiner encouraged us to try to observe plants sometimes with the will—a dramatic suggestion for these fragrant and turbulent blossoms!

Thank you for reading, and for being part of our community. Your thoughts and suggestions are always welcome.

John Beck Editor, being human editor@anthroposophy.org Anthroposophical Society in America Louis John Aventuro, George Rose, and Roberta Van Schilfgaarde were remembered in the spring, as were Patti Smith, Lora Valsi, John Herrick Moses Jr., John Roger Cunningham, Richard Rettig, and Margaretta Smith Bornhorst in the summer-fall issue. The second issue of the year led with an essay by Paul Gierlach, "Four Domains of a Healthy Culture," and introduced the new online Applied Anthroposophy Course. Dennis Dietzel wrote on "Virtual Presence, Social Distancing," Cynthia Hoven on "Eurythmy as Personal Practice," and Bruce Donehower on "Why Novalis? Why Now?" Two books of new poetry were celebrated: the bilingual firegarden / jardín-de-fuego by Gail Langstroth and Fine Matter by Philip Thatcher. Boyd Collins shared his insights in "The Key to Digital Freedom: Learning to Deal with Discomfort." Fred Dennehy reviewed The Illusion of Separation: Exploring the Cause of Our Current Crises, by Giles Hutchins. Christopher Schaefer offered a timely essay, "Sacramental Conversation: Experiencing Our Humanity." And there were contributions from four sections of the School for Spiritual Science on "The Foundation Stone Meditation as Gift, Friend, Helper, and Key." Back issues of <u>being human</u> are available online with most articles broken out for easy reading on phones and tablets.

Our two websites continue to offer basic information, blog posts, and links, to the Society in the USA and the life and work of Rudolf Steiner and the global initiatives flowing from him. A big new enhancement of rudolfsteiner.org is the availability of its basic pages now in Spanish, an initiative of Lenya Caldarera Bloom. We also continued a presence on Facebook and on Instagram with updates by Tess Parker, Laura Scappaticci, and Deb Abrahams-Dematte.

We hope these communications efforts help provide you with resources you value and sustain community in this turbulent moment. Please email me with suggestions or questions.

– John Beck, editor, being human and Director of Communications (MI)

# anthroposophical prison outreach

Thanks to you, APO continued to serve 1,200 individuals studying anthroposophy from their prison cells through the pandemic. In addition, over 800 prisoners received the introductory packet, which includes meditative exercises and study material. Prisoners experienced extreme and long isolation periods and unexpected moves in 2020. Yet, what came forth from our participants were deep expressions of gratitude, insight, courage, a growing inner strength, and a stronger experience of self. Individuals who had lost hope of finding a path to a meaningful and productive life began to feel uplifted through their studies, and those who were already spiritual seekers broadened their horizons with the work of Rudolf Steiner.

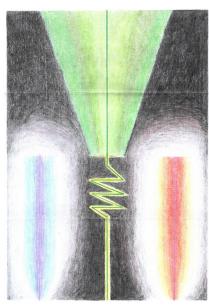
The opportunity to share through *Illuminating Anthroposophy*, the APO newsletter, further deepened the experience for APO participants and ASA members alike. This year we published two issues and included the 52 Calendar of the Soul verses for the year along with art, poetry, and insight.

In my meditations, meaningful insights brought to me are shifting certain preconceptions and perspectives I have held for a long time. I am convinced more than ever in the existence of higher worlds and their residents. I see things, beautiful things all about me. When I see the sun's rays lighting upon a flower blossom or the way the light shimmers off the grass. Or even the life force which helps a bumblebee to fly. In all this I see reflected even more when I look at the people around me and am filled with a united love for them like I never have felt before. It gives me hope for the future evolution of society. Rudolf



eyes and see, really see what is."

Steiner's words on paper are made into reality for me. All I have to do is open my



Artwork by Johnathan

During 2020, every ASA member received a copy of our full-color brochure, along with a request that members share them at their study groups and in their local communities. We received many requests for more brochures and appreciate your help spreading the word about APO.





As a seeker myself, How to Know Higher Worlds brought a change into my life by showing me what I was doing right and what I was doing wrong, as well as what I wasn't doing at all. This book was an amazing asset to my spiritual reservoir, and it came at a time when my seeking was at a standstill. I will read it many more times and recommend it to any and all seekers who have not read it yet."

- Willis, incarcerated in Milton, FL

By year's end, 600 copies of How to Know Higher Worlds plus the APO study guide were mailed to active participants in prison, who had not received it previously. We are grateful for the generous gift that made this possible.

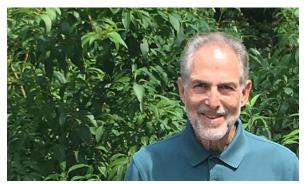
Our 8th annual walkathon, took place over the weekend of September 19-21, 2020, and was a huge success, raising \$34,735! Seventy walkers, runners, and cyclists joined in, representing 18 US states, plus France, China, and Switzerland. Participants gathered pledges and support through personal connections and social media. Several volunteers hiked mountain trails, and one walker and her granddaughter traveled seven miles. Many took to their bicycles in the city to ride together, and our youngest cyclist participated on his first tricycle ride. One branch sponsored their walkers by donating an amount per total hours walked, and a couple in Colorado decided to match all donation amounts they collected for their walk. Thank you to each one of you who supported the efforts of our walkers!

- Kathy Serifin, Program Director Anthroposophical Prison Outreach (MI)

### in memoriam

### IN MEMORY OF FRED JANNEY (3/11/46 - 11/9/20)

Fred was a co-founder of Anthroposophical Prison Outreach (APO) and deeply devoted to anthroposophy. In addition to the national work of APO, in recent years, he and Kathy Serafin presented classes on basic anthroposophy in local prisons and jails.



He held a Masters Degree in Clinical Psychology from Wichita State University and was certified as a Social Worker in Michigan. He worked for 21 years with the Michigan Department of Corrections. As part of this work, he taught Steiner's six basic exercises as well as classes on evil and death.

As a support for those he served, he published a booklet entitled *Self Development in the Penitentiary*. This booklet features the basic exercises given by Steiner and is included in the introductory packet for everyone who contacts APO asking for more information.

Fred had a strong artistic side and performed as an actor and singer/songwriter. He was very involved in the development of *Enter Light – Voices from Prison*, which brought poetry written by APO participants, and awareness about the program, to a wider audience.

It was Fred's deep wish that APO establish an in-person series of classes in prisons and jails around the US, wherever anthroposophists come forward who are willing to teach. Before Fred became ill, we worked together to develop a rough draft of a curriculum and discussed a possible path forward. If this is something that interests you, please contact me through the APO office at <a href="mailto:prisonoutreach@anthroposophy.org">prisonoutreach@anthroposophy.org</a>.

Fred will be sorely missed by all who knew him. We know that he will continue his work from the other side, inspiring all of us in APO.

- Eileen Bristol, APO Advisory Group (TX)

# council of anthroposophical organizations a committee of the Anthroposophical Society in America



Anthroposophy is given practical expression through organizations, institutions, and initiatives that work with anthroposophical ideas in the context of public life. The Council represents the union of these organizations for the purpose of colleagueship, communication, discussions

of common interest and concern, projects of mutual interest, and active service to the Anthroposophical Society in accordance with the Christmas Foundation Stone meeting of 1923-24.

The scope of the Council of Anthroposophical Organizations' work includes:

- Developing cooperative and mutually supportive activities between the Anthroposophical Society with its School for Spiritual Science, and those organizations and initiatives which bring the practical application of anthroposophy into all spheres of life.
- Fostering collaborative endeavors between these various organizations and initiatives on a national and local level, as well as providing a common meeting space with other like-minded organizations.
- Supporting spiritual scientific research into practical questions and problems.
- Providing collegial support to participants in their own meditative work as they serve in anthroposophical endeavors.
- Reporting on and studying issues, topics, needs, and opportunities arising from our broad constituencies, in order to determine or recommend further possible actions to the appropriate organization(s) or as a collaborative project.
- Serving as a consultative body to member organizations.

The chairing of the CAO is on a rotating basis. The CAO is financed by membership contributions from the various member associations, and its

### CAO Member Organizations

Alliance for Public Waldorf Education

Anthroposophical Society in America [US]

Association of Waldorf Schools of North America

Biodynamic Association

**Camphill Association** 

Center for Biography and Social Art

The Christian Community in North America

**Eurythmy Association of North America** 

Hawthorne Valley Association

LifeWays North America

North American Youth Section

Physicians Association for Anthroposophical Medicine

RSF Social Finance

<u>SteinerBooks</u>

Threefold Educational Foundation

Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America

actions are guided by what would serve to further anthroposophy, the work of the Society, and the inspiration of Rudolf Steiner.

In addition to our meetings, the CAO has offered a few programs in service to all the organizations:

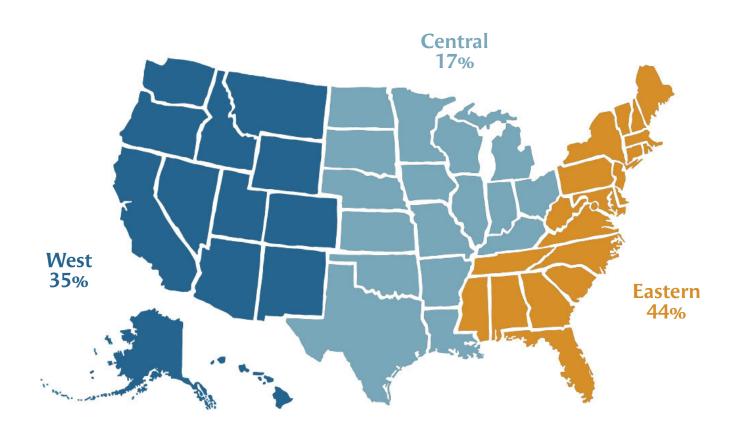
Finding Our Voice—workshops supporting people working in anthroposophical organizations in how to speak about their work to the public as well as answer questions about Rudolf Steiner and anthroposophy. This group has a subset in the CAO that works on press responses and statements, and supporting each other through the stress of it.

Justice, Equity, Inclusion, Diversity, and Race—The CAO has sponsored training with the Racial Equity Institute for up to five members from each organization. We are working on a follow-up to this. The CAO has also hosted an eight-session course: Diversity and Race in Rudolf Steiner's Spiritual Science with Cory Eichman. This course was open to up to four members of each of the organizations, plus members of the World Social Initiative Forum.

Mapping Project—creating an interactive map of all anthroposophical organizations and initiatives in the US.

# work in the regions

### **2020 US MEMBERSHIP BY REGION**



The Western, Central, and Eastern regions were created to enjoy more-than-local activities in our large country. Wherever you live, you can contact your regional council representatives directly to find out what's happening in your part of the country. Visit the <u>ASA Local Groups/Region webpage</u> for local resources, and more. Region representatives are:

Western Region: Christine Burke (as of August 2021, socsciencenews@gmail.com)

Central Region: Hazel Archer Ginsberg (<a href="https://hazel@reverseritual.com">hazel@reverseritual.com</a>)

Eastern Region: Gino Ver Eecke (gfbver@gmail.com)

### FROM THE WESTERN REGION

After the world came to a halt in March of 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic, many of us stepped more fully into the technological world to continue anthroposophical work. This step came with many questions,



reservations, and concerns. It also brought more consciousness to our use of technology as it relates to spiritual science.

One of the first experiences that arose was the uncertainty of the AGM and Fall Conference: Willing the Good: Love, Action, Healing that was to be held in Portland and co-hosted by the Western Regional Council. By May it was evident that it could not be held in person, so the planning committee pivoted and began planning for a virtual conference. The most challenging question was how to design a conference that was as interactive as possible. In the end, over 300 people registered for the conference. For many, this was the first time that they were able to attend the conference and AGM because of the use of this medium.

The WRC hosted a study as a lead up to the conference. Ita Wegman's essay, *The Mystery of the Earth*, was the material for a four-part study. People from three continents joined, bringing a wealth of experience and thought to the questions discussed in the breakout rooms.

In 2020, anthroposophical initiatives throughout the Western Region had to navigate lockdowns and protocols at their locations. For Waldorf schools this was often a very difficult and fluid situation. Many had to move from classroom to distance learning and back again, all the while working to bring the best possible education to their students.

This was also true of the groups and branches in the region, each striving to bring the most authentic anthroposophical experience to the people they

serve. Smaller groups worked mainly with their local communities. The Faust Branch opened their offerings to a wider community using the technological capability of Zoom. And the Front Range Anthroposophical Café grew from a local initiative in the Boulder/Denver area to include the whole country. It has become a meeting space that envelops the world.

Members of the Western Region stepped into the situation shared by the whole world and with heartfelt warmth, reached out to connect with members and friends throughout the region, country, and beyond!

- Micky Leach, Western Region Representative to the General Council (NM)

#### 2020 Western Regional Council:

Sebastian Heycke (CA), Micky Leach (NM), Kirk Mills (CA), Rebecca Soloway (OR), Sandra Stoner (CA)

#### FROM THE CENTRAL REGION

Quite a few years ago the council members of the Central Region found that through using webinars and online studies we could reach more of the members living in our expansive geographic area. Thus, we were poised to



meet the challenge of this pandemic year and develop further our virtual production and online skills. Many members and friends live far from one another and long for connection with other students of Rudolf Steiner. We have members from the Dakotas to Michigan, through Ohio, Kentucky, parts of Tennessee, Alabama, and across to Texas and back north. Our region hosts 25 or more Waldorf schools and initiatives, many biodynamic initiatives, anthroposophic doctors, therapeutic communities, artistic and study groups, and branches.

Throughout 2020, the Central Regional Council continued to host monthly



video study calls on the theme of karma. We worked our way through Steiner's *Manifestations of Karma* lectures, which opened the door to topical and potent conversations. These lectures could have been written today.

We also celebrated festivals and special events with online pageants, inviting members and friends from around the world. We were in the final stages of planning a collaborative conference at Easter-Tide 2020 with the <u>Association for Anthroposophic Psychology</u>, with David Tresemer, Dr. Robert Nelson, and James Dyson. This event was canceled: the first casualty of COVID in the Central Region.

Instead, we rallied and created a Holy Week online event: *The Three Days*. On Good Friday, *Love's Sacrifice*; on Holy Saturday, *Persephone as Queen of the Underworld*; and Easter Sunday, with special guests Craig Wiggins and Lucien Lazar.

In May 2020, we hosted an online pageant for Ascension, *Like an Evening Vapor After the Sunset*, with friends Dennis Dietzel (former General Council Chair) and Geoff Norris. Our Michaelmas Festival, *Wisdom Born of Courage*, featured folks from various sections and groups of the ASA: Michael Holdredge (Pedagogical Section), Stephan Ambrose (Youth Section), Dr. Molly McMullen-Laird and Dr. Quentin McMullen (Medical Section), Barbara Richardson (eurythmy), Doug Wylie (Social Science Section), Rand Carter (biodynamic agriculture), and Dorothy Hinkle-Uhlig (threefolding).

In October, we celebrated All Souls with a pageant called *Soul to Soul*, with special guest Carol Kelly. In December, we offered the program *Unwrapping our Cosmic Gift: Thoughts on the Christmas Conference*.

We have been blessed to cultivate a regular group of members and friends as well as collaborators for our special events and celebrations worldwide. We will continue to create festival pageants together, weaving leading thoughts, songs, sounds, and images to deepen our understanding of the seasons,

karma, and what it means to be a human being. We have begun a new theme: "The Mysteries of the Holy Grail". All are welcome.

Presentations and recordings are available at: <a href="www.rudolfsteiner.org/central-region">www.rudolfsteiner.org/central-region</a>.

– Marianne Fieber, Central Region Representative to the General Council (2016 –2021) (IL)

#### 2020 Central Regional Council:

Hazel Archer-Ginsberg (IL), Lisa Dalton (TX)), Marianne Fieber (IL), Alberto Loya (MI)

#### FROM THE EASTERN REGION

The Eastern Region Holding Group continues to meet monthly online to study, plan, and listen to the needs within the Eastern Region, which covers the areas of the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, and Southeast. In our study, we work with Rudolf Steiner's *Letters to Members*, which keeps inspiring us to tend to

the spiritual life in our region.



Please visit the updated <u>Eastern Region</u> webpage on the ASA website. There you will find the minutes of our meetings, mission statement, and short bios.

We held our *Eastern Region Video Newsletter* in February 2021, which was well attended. About 50 people joined in the Zoom call to hear from Tari Steinrueck about events and developments at the Rudolf Steiner Fellowship Community in Chestnut Ridge, NY, and a report by Alex Tuchman on the workings of the North American Agricultural Section. He also shared a beautiful slideshow on the work of the Spikenard Farm Honeybee Sanctuary in Virginia.

Our focus in the near future will be to invite people from branches and groups within

our region, to share how they are working. We also wish to learn if there are any bridges being built with the School of Spiritual Science or with the anthroposophical movement in general, a theme encouraged by the ASA General Council.

The Mid-Atlantic area held an in-person gathering in Spring Valley, NY, in November 2020, continuing with the work started at the AGM in Atlanta, GA, around the theme of conversation. How can we become more receptive to impulses from the spiritual world when we come together? The next meeting, in November 2021, will be hosted by the NYC Branch.

- Gino Ver Eecke, Eastern Region Representative to the General Council (NY)

#### **Eastern Region Holding Group:**

Angela Foster (GA), Cathy Green (TN), Sheena Ifkovitch (PA), Dave Mansur (MD), Gino Ver Eecke (NY)



## rudolf steiner house, ann arbor, mi



After a very busy January and February 2020, when we hosted multiple retreats for meditation, healing, and spiritual growth, and had many overnight guests in the House, beginning in March we had to cancel all the wonderful events we had booked for the rest of the year. Usually bustling and engaged, it became the quietest time in the Rudolf Steiner House we can ever remember.

Most of our staff began to work from home, except for one person who continued to come into the office: answering the phone, opening mail, and trying to keep a bit of normalcy for our members. A whole, large office/conference space was occupied by one person for almost four months! Staff returned slowly beginning in June 2020, with distancing and masks, of course, and now, a whole year later, we are almost back to normal. Events and branch activities are beginning again, along with full in-person office function.

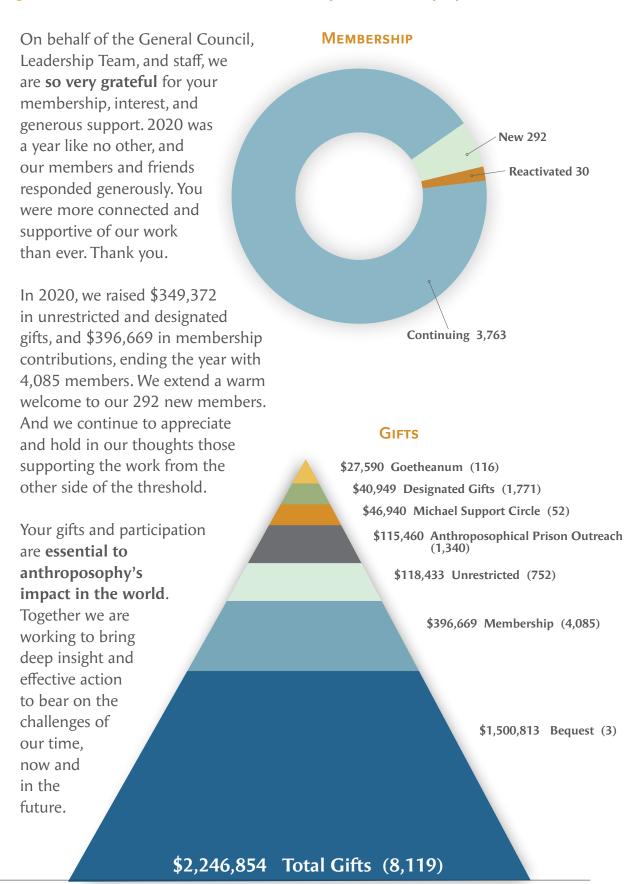
During the slow period, RS House had a full new heating/cooling system installed: a new boiler (a quarter the size of the old one), new heating ducts, and air-conditioning throughout the building. It was a huge project that took almost three months to complete. We are now able to control the temperature very comfortably on three large floors, with three distinct zones; every room can be comfortable independent of every other room. We had other repairs and maintenance done as well, since it was easy to work on projects without having to consider guests coming and going.

We are grateful that the RS House only experienced minimal disruption, no illness among our staff, and much very conspicuous support from our members and community. We are eager to welcome back groups for all manner of events: retreats, conferences, trainings, and meetings. And RS House is also an affordable and comfortable place for you to stay when visiting the area. We invite you all to come and visit. Email <u>Cynthia</u>, call at 734-662-9355, or visit the <u>Rudolf Steiner House webpage</u> for more information.

- Cynthia Chelius, Rudolf Steiner House Manager (MI)



## thank you for membership & support



#### MICHAEL SUPPORT CIRCLE

Thank you to our Michael Support Circle members! Together you have contributed nearly \$47,000 in 2020, and we are grateful. You are leaders in sustaining and generous support.

The Michael Support Circle is our major donor group and a critical component of the Society's resource development efforts. The Circle began in 2009 as an initiative of Ernst Katz and Torin Finser and includes individuals and organizations who commit \$500, \$1000, or more as an annual recurring, unrestricted gift for five or more years in addition to a person's annual membership contribution.

In 2020 we were grateful to welcome 10 new individuals and the folks at Carah Medical Arts into our circle. Thank you for helping us to build sustainability and bring the gifts of anthroposophy more fully into our world today.

Are you the next Michael Support Circle member? Visit anthroposophy.org/msc or contact Deb Abrahams-Dematte to learn more.

We extend gratitude to all our Michael Support Circle members, including these generous organizations:

Anthroposophical Society of Cape Ann

**Anthroposophy NYC** 

Association of Waldorf Schools in North America

Bay Area Center for Waldorf
Teacher Training

**Biodynamic Association** 

The Camphill School

Carah Medical Arts

Cedarwood Waldorf School

Council of Anthroposophical Organizations

Gradalis Waldorf Consulting & Services

**Great Lakes Branch** 

House of Peace

RSF Social Finance

<u>Rudolf Steiner Fellowship</u> Foundation



visionary. She crossed the threshold in June 2020, leaving a generous gift to the Society. We are deeply grateful.

Legacy gifts such as this build a bridge between the past and the future, bringing anthroposophy more fully into the world.

We invite you to join the Legacy Circle by making a bequest or other planned gift to the Anthroposophical Society in America. If you have already made provisions for the ASA in your will, or would like to learn more, please email <u>Deb Abrahams-Dematte</u>, Director of Development or call (603) 801-6584.

We are strengthened and blessed by the efforts of all people who strive to bring beauty and meaning to the world, inspired by the work of Rudolf Steiner. And we remain connected in deep and meaningful ways with those across the threshold who share our intentions and love.

Thank you to these current and past members of our

Legacy Circle

Erika V. Asten\*
Betty Baldwin
J. Leonard Benson\*

Susannah Berlin\*
Hiram Anthony Bingham\*

Mrs. Hiram A. Bingham

Virginia Blutau\*

Iana Questara Boyce\*

Marion Bruce\*

Helen Ann Dinklage\*

Irmgard Dodegge\*

Raymond Elliot\*

Lotte K. Emde\*

Hazel Ferguson\*

Marie S. Fetzer\*

Linda C. Folsom\*

Susanna Gaertner

Gerda Gaertner\*

Ruth H. Geiger\*

Ray German

Harriet S. Gilliam\*

Chuck Ginsberg

Hazel Archer-Ginsberg

Agnes B. Granberg\*

Alice Groh

Bruce L. Henry\*

Ruth Heuscher\*

Christine Huston

Ernst Katz\*

Cecilia Leigh

Anna Lord\*

Seymour Lubin\*

William H. Manning

Barbara Martin

Beverly Martin

**Gregg Martens\*** 

Helvi McClelland

Ellen McDermott

Robert McDermott

Robert McDermon

Robert S. Miller\*

Ralph Neuman\*

Martin Novom

Carolyn Oates

Mary Lee Plumb-Mentjes

Norman Pritchard\*

Paul Riesen\*

Mary Rubach\*

Margaret Runyon

Ray Schlieben\*

Lillian C. Scott\*

Fairchild Smith\*

Patti Smith\*

Doris E. Stitzer\*

Gertrude O. Teutsch\*

Katherine Thivierge

Catherina Vanden Broek

Randall Wadsworth

Pamela Whitman

Thomas Wilkinson

Anonymous (21)

(\*indicates past legacy gift)

# THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT!

#### **GRANTS**

We are grateful to the **Rudolf Steiner Charitable Trust** for their grant of \$12,000 to the Anthroposophical Prison Outreach in 2020. This generous gift helps bring anthroposophical materials and hope to individuals who are striving for self-improvement while in prison.

We are grateful for the on-going and generous support of this wonderful organization. Their generous grants over the years allow us to reach more people and leverage our resources to make a bigger impact in the world.

## **SPECIAL GIFTS**

The Society also welcomes designated gifts toward the following groups and activities: Anthroposophical Prison Outreach, the Goetheanum, the School for Spiritual Science and its Sections, the Henry Barnes Fund for Anthroposophical Research, Rudolf Steiner House, regional programs, and the Eurythmy and Speech & Drama Associations.

It's easy to make a gift to the Society. Just visit <a href="www.anthroposophy.org/makeagift">www.anthroposophy.org/makeagift</a>, use a remittance envelope from <a href="being human">being human</a>, or give us a call at 734-662-9355. If you have questions or need further information about giving opportunities including the Michael Support Circle and legacy/planned giving, please be in touch at <a href="deb@arthroposophy.org">deb@arthroposophy.org</a>.

Deb Abrahams-Dematte,
 Director of Development (NH)





# treasurer's report

The year 2020 was so unique that it seems almost unfair to try to characterize it simply in financial terms. Yet we have a responsibility to do just that - to distill the economic data from the far-reaching social context of pandemic, elections, protests, and environmental crises. Despite great uncertainty early in the year, 2020 was a positive period for the ASA in terms of income and expenses. Thanks to your generosity, we are well-positioned to maintain a positive financial outlook for 2021 and beyond.

## **ASA BEQUEST POLICY**

The ASA Bequest Policy directs that all bequest contributions received be placed in the Bequest Fund. Up to 12% of the total Bequest Fund balance on September 30 of the previous year may be used for operating expenses and other expenses as directed by the General Council. An annual budget surplus, as occurred in 2020, will be added to the Bequest Fund balance.

Adopted by the General Council February 2020, revised October 12, 2020

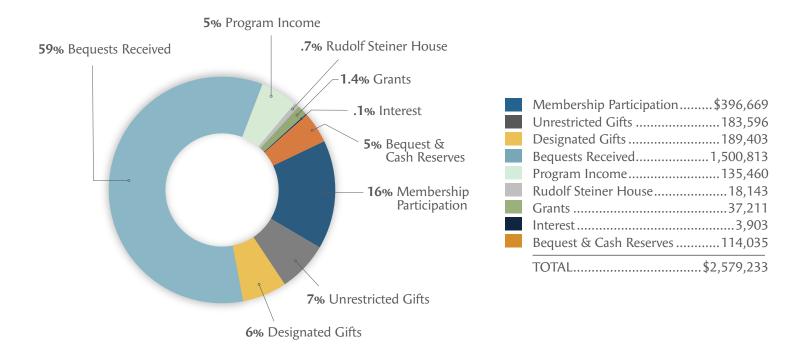
Planned annual allocations from the bequest fund support increased capacity in service to our mission. Our 2020 budget called for the use of \$180,000 of bequest reserves, as indicated in our bequest fund policy. This increased our operating budget to \$889,500, well beyond typical levels of operating income. Actual income exceeded our budget by \$39,000, and actual expenses were \$61,000 under budget—due in large part to cancellation of travel. The net result was positive net income of \$93,000. This flowed back into the Society's bequest fund. In addition, we received two generous bequests in 2020, leaving a bequest fund balance of \$1.6 million at the end of 2020.

Behind the dry numbers of any financial report are living actions, decisions, and priorities. I would like to highlight three items of interest that best illustrate the financial life of the ASA in 2020 – the Spring Appeal, online programming, and Steiner House renovations.

## THE SPRING APPEAL

In March of 2020, the whole country was asked to stay home as part of an effort to slow the spread of a pandemic that we were all just getting to know. Financial insecurity was woven into the fabric of living as we were all uncertain of how we would move forward in our economic lives under these unprecedented social restrictions. In response to this, and at the sound suggestion of Director of Development, Deb Abrahams-Dematte, the

## RESOURCES AND SUPPORT



decision was made to suspend our annual Spring Appeal – it just didn't seem like the right time to be asking our members for money. Even so, members stepped up and made \$27,098 in unrestricted gifts from January 1 through the summer solstice, in comparison to \$13,981 in gifts during the same period in 2019. We are truly moved and deeply grateful by our members' generosity and affirmation of the relevance of the Society to their lives.

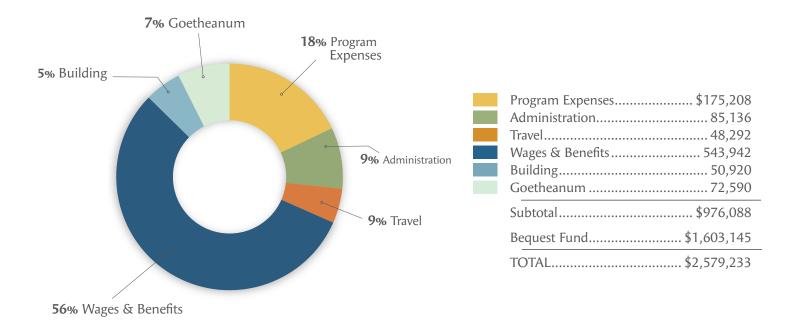
#### **ONLINE PROGRAMMING**

In 2020, the whole world scrambled to create ways of connecting online in the face of pandemic-related social restrictions. Interestingly, due to the initiative of Director of Programs, Laura Scappaticci, the ASA was ahead of the curve, as we had already been providing large-scale online content to our members. Expanded online programming was received enthusiastically by the membership, resulting in unbudgeted revenue exceeding \$60,000.

#### STEINER HOUSE RENOVATIONS

Like so many homeowners across the country, the ASA took advantage of the 2020 shut down to make essential repairs. In particular, the ancient heating system was completely replaced. We paid for these repairs primarily from Board-designated funds previously set aside by the General Council

#### **EXPENSES**



for the Steiner House, and general cash reserves. We also received insurance funds for damage from leaking boiler pipes. This major renovation was completed ahead of schedule and on budget due in great part to the skillful management of Director of Operations, Katherine Thivierge. The completion of this project was an essential part of protecting the value of the Steiner House, the ASA's only real estate holding.

2020 was a year when the membership stepped up to support each other and the ASA in new and innovative ways. The membership's generosity, engagement, and trust is reflected in strong

financial performance that positions us well for future projects. We continue to work toward our goal of tending the wellspring of anthroposophy at the national, international, and local level.

Dave Mansur,
 General Council Treasurer (MA)



# from the general council

As I cast my thoughts back over the work of the General Council in 2020, several main themes come to mind. What is it that truly binds us together? What is our shared imagination for the active, collaborative working together of all the various, manifest activities of the anthroposophical movement in the United States? What are the needs of the membership, and what needs to be done to meet them? What are the times asking of us?

The Council was able to meet in Pasadena in February of 2020, just prior to the pandemic. The gathering with the greater Los Angeles anthroposophical community members was notable for its warmth, humor, and depth of inquiry. The pandemic struck with a vengeance in March, curtailing any further in-person meetings for the year, so the Council had to make do with online meetings. Fortunately, we had all worked together for some time, and were able to continue to hold and strengthen the deep collegial relationships that we all share.

One of the strongest threads that holds the fabric of the General Council together is the work that we do together as our anthroposophical study. We began the year with an exploration of bridging anthroposophy and social justice, and then turned to the study of Rudolf Steiner's lecture cycle *Universal Spirituality and Human Physicality*, taking up a new lecture each month right through the year. Perhaps just one quote from Lecture 12 will give an indication of the relevance of these lectures for our work as a Council.



The feeling of love, which is devotion to something uncompelled by the past, and freedom, which is to act out of something not predetermined, are only possible because the past dies in us entirely, becoming appearance, and the future arises anew, in entirely germinal form."

There are many details for the actual activities and actions supported by the General Council in 2020 that you will read about in all the other reports in this Annual Report. I would encourage everyone wishing even more details to visit the <u>Society website</u>, login, and then access all the minutes to the Council meetings.

In this report, I would like to highlight the fact that the General Council has strongly vested trust and confidence in the Leadership Team, our superb

General Secretary, and the staff. We ask them to lead the way, through their daily interaction with the membership and the wider issues in our culture, in enabling the future to arise anew. The Council strives to encourage, reflect, support, and enable their work, the work of the several committees it has established, and the efforts of local, regional, and international anthroposophical initiatives.

We are all looking forward to the time when it will again be possible to meet in person in our meetings and conferences and workshops and look forward to seeing you there.

– Dave Alsop, General Council Chair (2017–2020) (CA)





## THE GENERAL COUNCIL

The General Council of the Anthroposophical Society in America carries the spiritual mission of the Society, and they are the board of directors of the non-profit organization, with responsibility for its legal and financial wellbeing.

The Council strives to represent the Anthroposophical Society in the world, support the work of the School for Spiritual Science and the Sections, and cultivate a deep relationship to anthroposophy among members and initiatives. It is the intent and purpose of the General Council to serve as a connection to the incarnation of anthroposophy in our time.

Council members chosen by a regional council serve annual terms and atlarge members serve 3 year terms. Both are limited to six years' consecutive service.

# THANK YOU CURRENT GENERAL COUNCIL

John Bloom

General Secretary (CA)

Helen-Ann Ireland

Chair, member-at-large (ME)

**Dave Mansur** 

Treasurer, member-at-large (MA)

**Nathaniel Williams** 

Secretary, member-at-large (NY)

Dave Alsop

member-at-large (CA)

**Hazel Archer-Ginsberg** 

Central Region Representative (IL)

Micky Leach

Western Region Representative (NM)

**Hannah Schwartz** 

member-at-large (VT)

Gino ver Eecke

Eastern Region Representative (NY)

**Deb Abrahams-Dematte** 

Director of Development, ex officio

John Beck

Director of Communications, ex officio

Laura Scappaticci

Director of Programs, ex officio (through May 2021)

Katherine Thivierge

Director of Operations, ex officio



# welcome





## **NEW GENERAL COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Gino ver Eecke joined the General Council in January 2021, chosen by the Eastern Region Holding Group to be the Eastern Region representative. Gino met anthroposophy in his birth town of Roeselare, Belgium at the age of 16. After working for a year on a biodynamic farm in Switzerland, he moved to New York to study eurythmy, and received his diploma from Eurythmy Spring Valley in 1994. For 8 years he performed with the Threefold Mystery Drama Group, Chestnut Ridge, NY and serves as the President and Treasurer of the Eurythmy Association in North America.

Hazel Archer-Ginsberg joined the Council recently as the central region representative. She studied philosophy and comparative religion at San Francisco State University, and there met Spiritual Science through fate and the discovery of Owen Barfield. She began to work independently with the basic books, and later became a Waldorf parent and active member of the Anthroposophical Society. Hazel is a trans-denominational minister, essayist, lecturer, performer, and poet. She writes and curates Reverse Ritual, a blog about understanding anthroposophy through the rhythms of the year and she recently launched the 1 Think Speech podcast. Hazel's been the Cultural Events and Festivals Coordinator for the Rudolf Steiner Branch in Chicago for over 10 years. She is also a member of the Central Regional Council, the School for Spiritual Science, and the Esoteric Youth Circle.

# thank you





### **DEPARTING GENERAL COUNCIL MEMBERS**

# Thank you, Dwight

Thank you to departing Council member Dwight Ebaugh for his many years of service. Dwight joined the Council in 2015, and served as Secretary and Treasurer during his tenure. In addition, he is a long-term member of the Finance Committee. We are grateful for his expertise, care, and leadership in bringing healthy business practices, and serving the movement with devotion and care.

## Thank you, Marianne

Thank you to departing Council member Marianne Fieber for her thoughtful care of the Anthroposophical Society as the Central Region representative to the General Council. Marianne joined the Council in 2016, and has served as Co-Secretary for the past several years. She is a long-time member of the Central Regional Council. Marianne also has creatively woven music, history, and experience together at the last several AGMs through well-attended "Songtrails" in New Orleans and Atlanta. She wrote and directed A Confluence of Karma, the pageant celebrating the life of Inge Elsas that was performed at the 2018 annual general meeting. We appreciate Marianne's creativity, deep insight, and loving heart.



## **Finance Committee**

Dave Alsop
Dwight Ebaugh
Dave Mansur
Jack Michael
Katherine Thivierge

# **Development Committee**

Torin Finser
Ray German
Joyce Reilly
Margaret Runyon
Deb Abrahams-Dematte
John Bloom

# **Human Resources Committee**

Marianne Fieber Micky Leach Jack Michael Katherine Thivierge

# **Applied Anthroposophy Planning Group**

Linda Bergh Chris Burke Anne de Wild Angela Foster Tess Parker Laura Scappaticci Jordan Walker

# **APO Advisory Group**

Eileen Bristol Fred Janney Rick Ruffin Kathy Serafin

# AGM 2020 Planning Group

Angela Foster
Timothy Kennedy
Micky Leach
Patricia Lynch
Tess Parker
Laura Scappaticci

# Council of Anthroposophical Organizations

Deb Abrahams-Dematte Cynthia Aldinger **Beverly Amico** John Bloom Kathleen Bowen Charlie Burkam Thea Maria Carlson David Gershan Raphael Guzman Susan Howard Martin Ping Elizabeth Sanders Laura Scappaticci Eric Silber Sea-Anna Vasilis Craig Wiggins

# current leadership & staff

John Bloom, General Secretary

## **Leadership Team**

Deb Abrahams-Dematte, Director of Development Katherine Thivierge, Director of Operations

John Beck, Director of Communications and Editor, *being human* Tess Parker, Assistant Director of Programs Kathy Serafin, Program Director, Anthroposophical Prison Outreach

Diana Carlen, Development Assistant Cynthia Chelius, Administrative Assistant and Manager, Rudolf Steiner House Eddie Ledermann, Accountant Linda Leonard, Bookkeeper Julie Pangborn, Housekeeper



# statement on diversity, equity, and inclusion

The Anthroposophical Society in America [US] is open to every human being and supports fulfilling their potential and search for meaning. The Anthroposophical Society stands with those seeking spiritual and cultural freedom, equity and equality in rights, and interrelationship in economics. The Anthroposophical Society in America stands against any individual activities or organizations that deny or disparages the dignity and humanity of any human being or group of human beings. As a holistic researcher of human origins, consciousness, and future evolution, Rudolf Steiner (1861-

1925), founder of anthroposophy, dealt with questions of individuality, diversity, and race in his talks and writings in the early 20th century. We recognize that some published passages characterize race and other group identities in ways that readers will find offensive. We fully empathize with that response and are working to assure that none of our current or future activities are based on or reflect those characterizations. Throughout his life, Steiner spoke about the growing social and spiritual importance of diversity in communities of the future. A very clear statement of this view is in Lecture I of his series The Universal Human (1909):

[We] must cast aside the division into races. [We] must seek to unite people of all races and nations, and to bridge the divisions and differences between various groups of people.

We affirm these principles of common humanity. We explicitly reject any theory that can be construed to be part of Rudolf Steiner's work that characterizes or judges any individual human being or group of human beings as superior or inferior based on racial, gender, ethnic, or other group identity. Membership in the Anthroposophical Society is open to everyone who sees the value of anthroposophy without regard to gender, national origin, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, or religion. In addition, the Society encourages a wide range of artistic, scientific, and economic perspectives and practices.

Updated and adopted by the General Council on June 14, 2020

# we welcome your feedback!

For questions or further information about this annual report, please contact Deb Abrahams-Dematte (deb@anthroposophy.org). For further information about the Anthroposophical Society, or if you have any questions or ideas to share, please contact:

Steiner House information: Cynthia Chelius, cynthia@anthroposophy.org

Communications: John Beck, editor@anthroposophy.org

Development: Deb Abrahams-Dematte, deb@anthroposophy.org

Finance: Katherine Thivierge, katherine@anthroposophy.org

Treasurer: Dave Mansur, treasurer@anthroposophy.org

General Secretary: John Bloom, john.bloom@anthroposophy.org

General Council: generalcouncil@anthroposophy.org

Anthroposophical Society in America 1923 Geddes Ave, Ann Arbor, MI 48104 734-662-9355 / info@anthroposophy.org

www.anthroposophy.org / www.rudolfsteiner.org

#### **Editor:**

Deb Abrahams-Dematte

## **Design/Layout:**

Kim Govoni

#### Cover:

Patricia Homan Lynch

## Photos & Artwork:

Deb Abrahams-Dematte, Shannon Baer, Javier Allegue Barrios, John Beck, Dwight Ebaugh, Cayetano Gil, Helen-Ann Ireland, Dave Mansur, Jose Antonio Morales, Zosia Nowak, Tess Parker, Laura Summer.

