



January 2025

Greetings Fellow Branch Members!  
Happy New Year! Here is what's new!

## Remembering Joyce Merritt

Joyce Merritt volunteered inside prisons and on the Executive Committee in the service of Christian Science for many years. Barb Weiser served with her at Santiam Correctional Facility (SCF) for a couple years. Joyce was the chair of the Executive Committee beginning in 2015 and worked on a revision of the Committee Bylaws and other projects during her term. As a Reading Room librarian, Joyce happily opened the Salem Reading Room "back room" (items that could be donated) to the previously incarcerated. She also actively supported post release mentoring, including working directly with someone who had some tough post release requirements. Barb remembers visiting the Salem Reading Room once a month to purchase full texts for use in SCF the following month. For a little bit more about her life and a nice picture see the link included here. We are grateful for every minute she spent in the Christian Science field. <https://www.keizertimes.com/2024/11/07/obituary-joyce-ann-andrick-merritt-1943-2024/>

### ***CURRENT STATS***

- 5 in-person volunteers hold regular Christian Science Bible Study sessions at 2 state facilities.
- 4 Corresponding Chaplains are writing letters to 7 AICs.
- 22 AICs & 18 facility Chaplains receive the weekly Bible Lesson and related articles from the periodicals. 9 RCMs continue to receive the weekly articles.
- 34 subscriptions to the Christian Science Monitor and 41 to the Christian Science Sentinel are sent to Chaplains, libraries, and AICs.

# POETRY, ART, AND A NOTE OF GRATITUDE FROM AICS AT CRCI

## I'm Free

Here I sit in awe, thinking of how God blessed me from above.  
My Lord, my Lord, thank you for allowing me to show my love as you do from above.  
I fear nothing anymore, because you don't keep score.  
You came to free me from the sin I live, you opened new ways to my life.  
I'm free but it was paid at a huge price, no money could put value on my freedom or my health,  
You gave me Christian Science because you seen I was done living in defiance.  
So here I sit waiting to show your glory to all who seek,  
I'm free, I'm free, what a blessing, not luck because of your unfolding Love.

## By WB



## ***REPORTS FROM IN-PERSON SESSIONS***

**The lesson** on Mind talked about angel thoughts. An AIC told us about a time when he was released from custody at night. He had no transportation, no money and no place to go. He said it was cold and dark and he ended up sleeping behind a church. In the morning, he woke up when a church member opened the door and saw him. He apologized profusely and said he'd leave right away. Instead, the church member welcomed him into the church and gave him food, then took him to the jail to get his knapsack, then to buy a few things that he needed and let him use his phone to call his sister. This church member was certainly an angel to the AIC!

We talked about how in Christian Science we view "repenting" as getting our thinking back on track, rather than groveling in front of an angry god. They seemed to perk up knowing that God loves them. We shared ideas about angel thoughts that guide and protect us. There was a lot of laughter and support for each other. It was a meaningful session.

**An AIC** commented that God helps us change our priorities. God speaks to us in many ways and we always have what we need.

Shortly after being released one night, he was homeless and had nothing to eat. He was sleeping in an alley, woke up at 2:30 am, and saw an abandoned shopping cart that had a couple of grocery bags in it that contained meat and bread. He felt that it was God's provision.

**The lesson** on Atonement was a challenging one, but they understood the concepts and seemed to be in agreement. We talked about how we connect with God through Christ, how we have an "indissoluble link" with God, and about what spiritual sense is. One AIC said, "I love how the readings start in one place and then bring you full circle."

**The concept** that spirit is real and that matter is unreal was new to some of the AICs, but they seemed to enjoy thinking about it. One AIC made the connection between this week's lesson on Matter and last week's on Substance. He is reading deeply on his own time and starting to understand Christian Science. Our session was filled with new ideas and lots of inspiration.

**One man** who comes regularly said that his niece had a stomach ailment that was causing her terrific pain and that she was going to have to have surgery. He asked his brother if he could pray for her, and he gratefully said yes. The AIC prayed and the little girl quickly got better and didn't need surgery.

**We tackled** some difficult questions about fear and how to get rid of it through understanding God. They also asked us if evil was real. We talked about how God is speaking to us in a way we can understand.



## ***IN PERSON SESSIONS CONT'D***

They shared some healings. One of the AICs said that he was with some friends and one of them was stealing gas. Though he was not involved, he was arrested. He said that night, while he was in custody, he got on his knees and prayed his heart out. The next day he was released.

One of the guys said that he writes letters to God and keeps them. He said that he had struggles with addiction and after praying and reading the Bible his health has improved as shown in a recent blood test that he had to take.

We are so grateful for the ongoing in-person sessions and all the growth these AICs are experiencing!



## ***WE NEED YOU!***

We currently have two openings on the Executive Committee (EC). If you would like to contribute to Institutional Services (IS) by serving on the EC, please contact the Secretary at [csiscoregon@gmail.com](mailto:csiscoregon@gmail.com) or visit <https://csiscoregon.com/join-us> to download our Volunteer Application. The EC meets once a month on Zoom to review IS activities. Meetings last about an hour.

## ***SENTINEL SUBSCRIPTION REQUEST***

We've started 7 of the 10 *Christian Science Sentinel* subscriptions recently requested by one of the facility chaplains. Support from YOU will help us with the remaining 3. A grant from The Mother Church will cover 40% of the subscriptions cost. Can you help us with the other 60%? on an annual basis?

## ***PRAYER REQUEST***

The Department of Corrections (ODOC) made a change to the mail rules that affects our weekly Bible Lesson mailings. Mail is an important lifeline for AICs and the rule **further** restricts what they can receive from friends, family, and organizations like ours. We are **complying** with **the** changes ODOC **has** adopted and would appreciate prayers from the field to support our continued outreach to AICs. If you would like to learn more about the proposed rule change, please visit <https://www.oregon.gov/doc/contact-inmate/Pages/letters.aspx>.

# Financials Summary

We found a wonderful volunteer to review our last two fiscal years of financial data!

Fiscal year ending Sept 30, 2024

Balance

Three CD's at \$25K each = \$75,000  
\$4117.54

Money Market = \$24,273.33

Checking account = \$5,686.49

Total assets = \$104,960.05

Revenues and Expenses

Donations = \$17,139.54 including grant of

Operating Expenses = \$25,880.09

Investment income = \$6262.82

Net income = -\$2477.73

Please consider the standard per capita to be \$2.75. We consider the sending of the Bible Lesson, *Christian Science Sentinel*, and *Christian Science Monitor* to each facility to be a significant outreach for our Oregon Christian Science community. Thank you for supporting that effort!

## ***OTHER WAYS TO DONATE***

THANK YOU for your metaphysical and financial support for this important work!

Individuals may donate directly to this committee by using a credit/debit card and the "donate now" button at <https://csiscoregon.com/> or by sending contributions to:

Christian Science Committee for Institutional Service

PO Box 1233

Wilsonville, OR 97070

### **Excerpt from Mary Baker Eddy's 1880 Christmas Sermon**

"Mary's spiritual conception of being, — that God is the only Father of man, — is reinstated, and again the shepherds shout, 'for unto us a child is born', a new idea hath appeared! And we have seen the star in the east, the divine Science that guides thereto, The Truth has dawned upon us — that Spirit is the only Life, Substance and Intelligence of man; and just as it came to the waiting wise men of old, it comes to the waiting heart today, a Prince of peace, healing the sick, casting out error raising the dead, lifting our sense of life from matter to Spirit; — and of the increase of His government there shall be no end. But this babe of Christian Science, the age layeth again in a manger, wrapped in swaddling clothes, nursed in obscurity, for the Herods of today decreeth its death. But fear ye not little flock, this son of God, this offspring of Principle abideth forever."



## *Abbreviations:*

**AIC** = Adult-in-custody – does not imply guilt or innocence

**CSCIS in OR** = Christian Science Committee for Institutional Service  
in the State of Oregon

**CSPS** = Christian Science Publishing Society

**DOC** = Oregon Department of Corrections

**RCM** = Returning Community Member

**TPF** = The Principle Foundation



## *Interested in Helping?*

We can always use more volunteers and there are many ways you can help. There are guidelines and mentors for every position. It is very rewarding and enlightening work. To volunteer, please contact us at [csiscoregon@gmail.com](mailto:csiscoregon@gmail.com) and/or download the Volunteer Application from our website: <https://csisoregon.com>.

- Serve on the Executive Committee
- Serve inside a prison, jail, transition center, or other institution
- Write letters to AICs
- Serve on an Angel Team to help support a Returning Community Member (RCM)
- Perform our annual financial review

## **Contact Us**

The Christian Science Committee  
for Institutional Service in the State of Oregon

PO Box 1233

Wilsonville, OR 97070

[csiscoregon@gmail.com](mailto:csiscoregon@gmail.com)

[www.csisoregon.com](http://www.csisoregon.com)

**Executive Committee:** Diahana Barnes (Medford), Barb Weiser (Wilsonville), Dave Myers (Beaverton)

Have questions about our work or any of our open positions? Feel free to contact the Secretary, Terri Griffin