

Independent Spiritualist Association of the United States of America (“ISA”)

History of a Religion That Supports “Science Philosophy Religion”

The Life of Rev. Amanda Cameron Flower (Founder of the ISA)

Amanda Cameron was born on **October 15, 1863**, in **Owen Sound, Ontario, Canada**, a lakeside community where Spiritualism was already beginning to take shape. The region was alive with séances, healing circles, and trance mediums who traveled from town to town. In this environment, Amanda grew up with an awareness that the world of Spirit was not distant or abstract — it was present, active, and woven into daily life.

Her childhood was not marked by wealth or privilege. Instead, it was shaped by the quiet, steady presence of Spiritualist practices that were becoming common in Canada during the late 1800s. These early experiences formed the foundation of her spiritual identity long before she ever stepped into leadership.

A Young Woman Drawn Toward Spirit

As Amanda grew into adulthood, she became increasingly involved in the Spiritualist circles around her. She listened to trance lecturers, observed healing demonstrations, and learned from the mediums who traveled through Ontario. She was not yet a minister, but she was already a student of Spirit — absorbing, observing, and developing her own understanding of the unseen world.

These early years in Canada shaped her deeply. They gave her a grounding in practical mediumship, healing, and the belief that Spirit communicates directly with those who are willing to listen.

Crossing Into the United States

At **age twenty-seven**, Amanda made a life-changing decision: she left Canada and moved to the United States. Her destination was **Michigan**, a state where Spiritualism was thriving in churches, camp meetings, and independent circles.

Her first known pastorate was in **Owosso, Michigan**, where she became involved with the **National Spiritualist Association**. Here she learned:

- platform etiquette
- church structure
- ministerial responsibilities
- the expectations of organized Spiritualism

But Amanda was not a woman who fit neatly into rigid systems. She valued freedom of thought, direct spirit communication, and the right to explore spiritual truths without restriction. These values would eventually lead her down a different path.

Grand Rapids — The Center of Her Life's Work

Amanda later moved to **Grand Rapids, Michigan**, the city that would become the heart of her ministry. There, she purchased a church building and reopened it as the **First Church of Truth**. This church was not simply a building — it was a spiritual home for those who sought healing, mediumship, and a deeper understanding of Spirit.

Inside the Church of Truth, Amanda taught:

- evidential mediumship
- spiritual healing
- service to humanity
- reincarnation
- independent spiritual thought

Her teachings attracted people who felt confined by the strict doctrines of the National Spiritualist Association. Amanda offered something different — a path guided by Spirit rather than by organizational rules.

Breaking Away and Founding the ISA

By the early 1920s, the differences between Amanda and the National Spiritualist Association had become too great to ignore. The National rejected reincarnation and insisted on doctrinal conformity. Amanda believed in spiritual freedom and the right to explore truths revealed through experience.

In **1924**, she made her defining move: she founded the **Independent Spiritualist Association of the United States of America** — the ISA.

The ISA reflected her deepest values:

- freedom of belief
- direct communication with Spirit
- healing as a sacred ministry
- reincarnation as part of the soul's journey
- service as the highest calling

Amanda served as a guiding force for the ISA and continued her ministry in Grand Rapids for decades.

Her Final Years and Passing

Amanda remained active in her work until her health declined in the late 1930s. She passed from this life on **November 20, 1940**, leaving behind a movement that would continue long after her physical presence was gone.

She was laid to rest in **Oakhill Cemetery in Grand Rapids**, in **Block 11, Plot 89E05**. Her grave marker bears a sunflower and the faint letters “ISA”, a quiet testament to the organization she founded and the legacy she left behind.

Her Legacy

Amanda Cameron Flower left no biological children. Her churches, her ministers, and her students became her family. Her teachings became her inheritance to the world.

She built a movement rooted in:

- healing
- mediumship
- reincarnation
- service
- spiritual independence

And she did it at a time when women leaders were rarely recorded, rarely honored, and rarely remembered. Yet her work endured — not because she sought recognition, but because she lived her truth with unwavering conviction.

The Beliefs and Teachings of Rev. Amanda Cameron Flower

By the time Amanda Cameron Flower settled in Grand Rapids, her ministry had already taken on a distinct shape — one that blended the early influences of Canadian Spiritualism with her own lived experiences, her convictions, and the guidance she believed came directly from Spirit. She was not a theologian in the academic sense. She was a practitioner, a healer, and a woman who trusted what she witnessed with her own eyes and felt in her own soul.

Her teachings grew from experience, not theory. From observation, not dogma. From Spirit, not structure.

Mediumship — The Heart of Her Ministry

For Amanda, mediumship was not a performance or a spectacle. It was a sacred responsibility. She believed that communication with Spirit was a natural part of human existence — not a gift reserved for a chosen few, but a capacity that could be developed with discipline, sincerity, and service.

Inside the Church of Truth, she taught:

- evidential messages
- trance speaking
- spirit guidance
- the continuity of life
- the ethical responsibilities of a medium

She insisted that mediumship must be grounded in integrity. Messages were not entertainment; they were healing tools meant to comfort, uplift, and guide.

Amanda believed that Spirit communication was proof — not of religion, but of **continuity**. Life did not end. It changed form.

Healing — Service as a Sacred Act

Healing was central to Amanda's ministry. She viewed it as an expression of divine love working through human hands. In her church, healing was not an optional practice — it was a core ministry.

She taught that healing required:

- a calm mind
- a compassionate heart
- a willingness to be a channel
- trust in Spirit's intelligence

Her healing services were simple, quiet, and deeply personal. People came to her church not only for messages, but for relief — physical, emotional, and spiritual.

Amanda believed that healing was not a miracle. It was a **natural law**.

Reincarnation — The Soul's Ongoing Journey

One of Amanda's most defining beliefs was reincarnation. At a time when the National Spiritualist Association rejected the idea, she embraced it openly. To her, reincarnation explained:

- the soul's growth
- the purpose of earthly challenges
- the continuity of relationships
- the unfolding of spiritual lessons

She taught that the soul returns to earth not as punishment, but as opportunity — a chance to learn, refine, and evolve. This belief shaped her entire understanding of spiritual development.

Reincarnation, for Amanda, was not a theory. It was a truth revealed through Spirit communication, trance teachings, and her own inner knowing.

Independent Thought — Freedom as a Spiritual Principle

Amanda valued freedom of belief. She encouraged her students to think, question, and explore. She rejected rigid doctrine and resisted any attempt to confine Spiritualism to a fixed set of rules.

Her philosophy was simple:

Truth is discovered through experience, not imposed by authority.

This belief eventually led her to break from the National Spiritualist Association and form the Independent Spiritualist Association. She wanted a movement where ministers could follow Spirit without fear of censure.

Service — The Highest Calling

Above all, Amanda taught service. Service to Spirit. Service to humanity. Service to the community.

She believed that mediumship, healing, and spiritual knowledge meant nothing if they did not uplift others. Her life was a testament to this principle — decades of ministry, teaching, and leadership without seeking personal recognition.

Service was not a duty for her. It was a joy. A privilege. A sacred path.

A Ministry Built on Experience

Amanda's teachings were shaped by:

- her early exposure to Canadian Spiritualism
- her years in Michigan's Spiritualist communities
- her work as a pastor
- her trance experiences
- her healing practice

- her direct communication with Spirit

She did not build her philosophy from books or borrowed ideas. She built it from life.

Her beliefs formed the foundation of the Church of Truth, the ISA, and the generations of ministers who followed.

The Blavatsky Confusion: A Misunderstanding in Flower's Story

As the years passed after Amanda Cameron Flower's death, stories about her life began to circulate among Independent Spiritualists. Some were accurate, preserved through careful memory and church records. Others were fragments — pieces of oral tradition that blended fact, assumption, and the natural human desire to connect great leaders to other great leaders.

One of the most persistent of these stories was the claim that Amanda Cameron Flower had been a student of **Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky**, the founder of the Theosophical Society.

At first glance, the idea seems intriguing. Two strong women. Two spiritual movements. Two voices speaking about unseen worlds. And one shared belief: **reincarnation**.

But when the story is examined closely, it becomes clear that this connection was never real. It was a misunderstanding — a myth born from a single overlapping idea.

Why the Rumor Began

The root of the confusion lies in one simple fact: Amanda Cameron Flower believed in **reincarnation**.

This belief set her apart from the National Spiritualist Association, which rejected reincarnation entirely. It also made her unusual among many American Spiritualists of her time.

Blavatsky, on the other hand, taught reincarnation loudly and publicly. So later generations looked back and assumed:

"If Flower believed in reincarnation, she must have learned it from Blavatsky."

But this assumption overlooks the reality of their lives, their teachings, and the worlds they lived in.

Why Blavatsky Could Not Have Been Her Teacher

Historically, the connection is impossible.

Blavatsky never lived in Michigan. Blavatsky never lived in Ontario. Blavatsky never taught in the Midwest. Blavatsky never worked with American Spiritualist churches.

Their paths did not cross geographically, socially, or spiritually.

Even more importantly, their philosophies were fundamentally opposed.

Blavatsky:

- rejected mediumship
- criticized Spiritualist séances
- claimed spirits were “astral fragments,” not the dead
- dismissed evidential messages as illusions
- believed mediums were being deceived

Flower:

- built her life on mediumship
- defended evidential messages
- taught trance development
- believed in spirit guides
- founded a movement rooted in communication with the departed

Blavatsky and Flower stood on opposite sides of a philosophical divide. One rejected the very practices that defined the other’s ministry.

A student-teacher relationship between them would have been unthinkable.

The Real Source of the Confusion

The confusion did not come from their teachings. It came from **later generations**, long after Flower’s death.

Independent Spiritualists in the Midwest often blended ideas from:

- Spiritualism
- Spiritism
- Theosophy
- New Thought

- Trance philosophy

Over time, these blended ideas created a kind of spiritual “cross-pollination.” People began to assume connections where none existed.

Reincarnation was the thread that tied Flower and Blavatsky together in people’s minds — but it was only a thread, not a relationship.

Where Flower’s Belief in Reincarnation Actually Came From

Amanda’s belief in reincarnation grew from sources already present in North American Spiritualism:

- **Andrew Jackson Davis**, whose writings on soul progression were widely read
- **Emma Hardinge Britten**, who hinted at reincarnation in early trance lectures
- **Allan Kardec’s Spiritism**, popular in the Midwest and explicitly teaching reincarnation
- **Canadian trance circles**, where Flower first learned mediumship
- **Her own spiritual experiences**, which shaped her more than any book

Reincarnation was not something she borrowed. It was something she recognized as truth.

A Myth That Says More About Her Impact Than Her History

The Blavatsky rumor persisted not because it was true, but because Amanda Cameron Flower was such a powerful figure that people instinctively wanted to connect her to other powerful figures.

It was a way of saying:

“She was important.” “She was influential.” “She stood among giants.”

But the truth is simpler and more meaningful:

Amanda Cameron Flower did not need Blavatsky to shape her. She shaped herself. She shaped her movement. She shaped the ISA. She shaped generations of ministers who followed.

Her power came from her own life, her own experiences, and her own connection to Spirit.

The Voices That Shaped Amanda Cameron Flower

Long before Amanda Cameron Flower founded the Church of Truth or established the Independent Spiritualist Association, she was a young woman shaped by the spiritual currents of her time. She did not emerge from a vacuum. She grew from a landscape rich with ideas, teachers, and movements that were already transforming North American Spiritualism.

These influences did not come from a single source. They came from **books, lectures, traveling mediums, camp meetings, and the trance circles of Canada and Michigan**. They came from the thinkers who questioned, explored, and expanded the boundaries of spiritual understanding.

To understand Amanda, we must understand the voices that helped form her.

Andrew Jackson Davis — The Philosopher of the Spirit World

One of the strongest influences on Amanda's early thinking was **Andrew Jackson Davis**, often called "*the John the Baptist of Modern Spiritualism*." His writings were widely read in both Canada and the American Midwest, and they offered a vision of the spirit world that resonated deeply with seekers like Amanda.

Davis taught:

- the soul progresses through many stages
- spiritual growth continues after death
- healing is a natural law
- the universe is guided by intelligent spiritual forces

He also hinted at ideas that closely resemble reincarnation, describing the soul's ongoing development across vast stretches of time.

For Amanda, Davis provided a philosophical foundation — a way to understand Spirit not as superstition, but as a structured, evolving reality.

Emma Hardinge Britten — The Voice of Early Spiritualism

Another powerful influence was **Emma Hardinge Britten**, one of the most important women in early Spiritualism. Her trance lectures, writings, and organizational work shaped the movement across North America.

Emma taught:

- the Seven Principles of Spiritualism
- the importance of evidential mediumship
- the moral responsibility of mediums

- the continuity of life
- the presence of spirit guides

She also spoke, at times, of the soul's return to earth — not as a fixed doctrine, but as a possibility revealed through trance teachings.

Amanda would have encountered Emma's ideas through books, lectures, and the Spiritualist communities of Ontario and Michigan. Emma's blend of discipline, independence, and spiritual authority offered Amanda a model of what a woman could be in a male-dominated religious landscape.

Allan Kardec and French Spiritism — The Clear Voice of Reincarnation

While Davis and Britten shaped Amanda's understanding of mediumship and spiritual law, **Allan Kardec** provided something different: a clear, structured teaching on **reincarnation**.

Kardec's books — *The Spirits' Book*, *The Mediums' Book*, and others — were extremely popular in the Midwest during Amanda's lifetime. Spiritist groups blended easily with Spiritualist circles, and many ministers read Kardec alongside American Spiritualist texts.

Kardec taught:

- reincarnation is essential for spiritual growth
- the soul returns to learn, repair, and evolve
- earthly life is a classroom for the spirit
- mediumship is a natural human ability

Amanda's acceptance of reincarnation aligns far more closely with Kardec's Spiritism than with Theosophy. His teachings offered her a framework that matched what she observed in trance work and spirit communication.

Canadian Trance Circles — Her First Teachers

Before books, before pulpits, before organizations, Amanda's earliest influences came from the **local trance mediums and healing circles of Ontario**.

These circles taught her:

- How to sit in silence
- How to listen for Spirit
- how to recognize the shift of consciousness
- how to trust the impressions she received
- how healing energy moves through the hands.

These were not formal teachers. They were community teachers — the kind who passed down wisdom through practice, not doctrine.

This environment shaped Amanda's lifelong belief that **Spirit teaches directly**, and that experience is more important than authority.

Michigan Camp Meetings — The Living Classroom

When Amanda moved to Michigan, she entered a world of **camp meetings**, traveling lecturers, and independent Spiritualist gatherings. These meetings were vibrant, emotional, and deeply experiential.

Here she encountered:

- trance lecturers
- healing demonstrations
- platform mediums
- independent thinkers
- metaphysical experimenters

These gatherings reinforced her belief that Spiritualism was not meant to be rigid or doctrinal. It was meant to be **alive**, evolving, and guided by Spirit rather than by institutions.

Her Own Spiritual Experiences — The Final and Strongest Influence

Above all, Amanda was shaped by **her own experiences**.

She trusted:

- the voices she heard in trance.
- the healing energy she felt moved through her hands.
- the messages that came through her mediumship
- the spiritual truths revealed in her quiet moments of communion.

Her beliefs were not borrowed. They were lived.

This is why she could break from the National. This is why she found the ISA. This is why her teachings endured.

Her influences gave her knowledge. Her experiences gave her conviction.

Her Break from the National and the Birth of the Independent Spiritualist Association

By the time Amanda Cameron Flower settled in Grand Rapids, she had already spent years working within the National Spiritualist Association. She respected the structure she had learned in Owosso, and she valued the discipline of organized Spiritualism. But as her ministry deepened, so did her conviction that Spirit could not be confined by rigid doctrine.

Her church in Grand Rapids — the **First Church of Truth** — became the place where her true philosophy began to take shape. It was here that she taught healing, mediumship, and continuity of life. It was here that she spoke openly about reincarnation. And it was here that she began to feel the widening gap between her beliefs and the expectations of the National.

The Growing Divide

The National Spiritualist Association had strict positions on several issues, but none created more tension for Amanda than their rejection of **reincarnation**. To the National, reincarnation was incompatible with their doctrine. To Amanda, it was a truth revealed through:

- trance teachings
- spirit communication
- her own spiritual experiences
- the philosophical writings she had studied.

She saw reincarnation not as a threat to Spiritualism, but as a natural extension of the soul's journey.

As she continued her work at Grand Rapids, the divide grew sharper. Her sermons reflected her belief in spiritual freedom. Her healing services emphasized the soul's progression across lifetimes. Her students and congregants embraced her teachings — but the National did not.

Pressure and Principle

Over time, Amanda faced increasing pressure to conform. The National expected ministers to uphold its doctrines, and reincarnation was not among them. Amanda was asked, directly and indirectly, to adjust her teachings.

But she could not.

Her ministry was built on experience, not compliance. She believed that Spirit revealed truth through practice, not through organizational decree. To deny reincarnation would have been to deny what she had witnessed again and again in her work.

Amanda was not a rebellious woman by nature. She was steady, thoughtful, and deeply committed to service. But she was also unwavering when it came to spiritual integrity.

And so, the break became inevitable.

Stepping Away from the National

Amanda's decision to leave the National Spiritualist Association was not sudden. It was the result of years of tension, reflection, and spiritual conviction. She did not leave in anger. She left because she could no longer serve two masters:

- the truth she knew.
- and the doctrine she was expected to uphold.

Her departure was quiet but firm. She stepped away from the National and continued her ministry independently through the Church of Truth.

But Spirit had more in store for her.

The Birth of a New Movement

By the early 1920s, Amanda was surrounded by ministers, healers, and students who shared her vision of a more open, experiential Spiritualism. They believed in:

- freedom of belief
- Direct communication with Spirit
- Healing as a sacred ministry
- reincarnation as part of the soul's journey
- service as the highest calling

These were the values that defined Amanda's work — and they became the foundation of something new.

In **1924**, Amanda Cameron Flower founded the **Independent Spiritualist Association of the United States of America** — the ISA.

The ISA: A Home for Independent Seekers

The ISA was not created to oppose the National. It was created to **free** Spiritualism from doctrinal restriction.

Under Amanda's leadership, the ISA embraced:

- mediumship
- healing
- reincarnation
- spiritual independence
- service to humanity

It became a home for those who felt called to follow Spirit without fear of censure. It became a place where ministers could teach what they experienced, not what they were told to believe.

The ISA reflected Amanda's deepest values — and it carried her vision far beyond her lifetime.

A Legacy Born from Conviction

Amanda's break from the National was not an act of rebellion. It was an act of integrity.

Her founding of the ISA was not an act of ambition. It was an act of service.

She created a movement that honored:

- truth
- experience
- healing
- freedom
- Spirit

And she did it with the quiet strength that defined her entire life.

The Early Years of the Independent Spiritualist Association

When Amanda Cameron Flower founded the **Independent Spiritualist Association of the United States of America** in **1924**, she did not create a large institution or a rigid hierarchy. She created a **home** — a spiritual refuge for ministers, healers, and seekers who felt called to follow Spirit without the constraints of doctrinal control.

The ISA began not as a grand organization, but as a **circle of ministers** who shared Amanda's values. It grew from her church, her teachings, and the spiritual independence she embodied.

A Movement Born from Experience

The ISA's earliest members were people who had sat in Amanda's classes, attended her healing services, or been mentored by her in the Church of Truth. They were drawn to her because she offered something rare:

- freedom of belief
- Respect for personal spiritual experience
- acceptance of reincarnation
- emphasis on healing
- integrity in mediumship
- service as a sacred calling

These values became the foundation of the ISA.

The First Ministers

The earliest ISA ministers were not chosen through examinations or formal boards. They were recognized through:

- their demonstrated service
- their healing work
- their mediumship
- their commitment to truth
- their willingness to help others.

Amanda believed that Spirit called ministers — not organizations. The ISA simply affirmed what Spirit had already chosen.

Meetings and Organization

In its early years, the ISA functioned more like a **fellowship** than a formal institution. Meetings were held in:

- The Church of Truth in Grand Rapids
- small independent churches
- private homes
- rented halls

These gatherings included:

- healing services
- trance lectures
- mediumship demonstrations
- discussions of spiritual law
- planning for outreach and service

There was no rigid structure. No heavy bureaucracy. No complex hierarchy.

The ISA was built on **relationships**, not regulation.

A Place for the Unwelcome

One of the ISA's earliest roles was to provide a home for ministers who had been pressured, silenced, or dismissed by the National Spiritualist Association because of their beliefs — especially those who accepted reincarnation.

Amanda welcomed them without judgment. She believed that truth revealed through Spirit should never be suppressed.

The ISA became a sanctuary for:

- independent thinkers
- reincarnationists
- healers
- trance workers
- mediums who value freedom

This openness gave the ISA a unique identity from the very beginning.

The Role of the Church of Truth

During the early years, the **Church of Truth** served as the unofficial headquarters of the ISA. It was where:

- ministers gathered
- decisions were made.
- new workers were trained.
- healing services were held.
- The philosophy of the ISA was shaped.

The church was the heart of the movement, and Amanda was its steady center.

A Philosophy Without Fear

The ISA's early philosophy reflected Amanda's own beliefs:

- **Reincarnation** was accepted as part of the soul's journey.
- **Healing** was a central ministry.
- **Mediumship** was practiced with integrity and purpose.
- **Service** was the highest expression of spiritual life.
- **Freedom of belief** was essential.

Unlike the National, the ISA did not require ministers to sign doctrinal statements. It did not police beliefs. It did not punish exploration.

Amanda believed that Spirit was the true teacher — and the ISA followed that principle.

Growth Through Word of Mouth

The ISA did not grow through advertising or campaigns. It grew through **word of mouth**.

Ministers who resonated with Amanda's teachings brought others. Healing services drew people seeking comfort. Mediumship demonstrations brought seekers who wanted proof of continuity. Camp meetings spread the message across Michigan and neighboring states.

By the late 1920s and early 1930s, the ISA had become a recognized presence in the Midwest — small, but steady, and deeply rooted in Amanda's philosophy.

A Movement Shaped by One Woman's Conviction

The early ISA reflected Amanda herself:

- calm
- steady
- principled
- spiritually grounded
- quietly powerful

She did not seek to build an empire. She sought to build a **spiritual home**.

And in its early years, that is exactly what the ISA became — a home for those who believed that Spirit, not doctrine, should guide the soul's journey.

The Church of Truth — Amanda's Spiritual Home in Grand Rapids

(Updated with correct historical naming timeline)

When Amanda Cameron Flower arrived in **Grand Rapids, Michigan**, she did not come as a founder or a visionary seeking to build a movement. She came as a working minister, a healer, and a woman determined to follow Spirit wherever it led her. What she found in Grand Rapids was not just a city — it was the place where her life's work would take root.

A Church Built by Her Own Hands

In the early 1900s, Amanda purchased a church building in Grand Rapids. It was a modest structure, worn by time, but full of potential. In **1908**, she formally incorporated it under the name:

□ The Spiritualist Temple Society

This was the church's **first official legal name**.

But the people who attended her services, healing circles, and classes rarely used the formal title. To them, it was simply:

□ The Church of Truth (First Spiritualist Church of Truth)

This became the everyday name during Amanda's lifetime — the name spoken from the pulpit, printed on programs, and known throughout the community.

A Different Kind of Church

The Church of Truth was unlike the traditional Spiritualist churches of the time. Amanda shaped it according to her own understanding of Spirit's work.

Inside its walls, she emphasized:

- **Healing** — not as ritual, but as a natural spiritual law
- **Mediumship** — practiced with integrity and purpose
- **Reincarnation** — taught openly, without fear of censure.
- **Service** — the highest expression of spiritual life.
- **Freedom of belief** — each person allowed to grow at their own pace.

Her church was not a place of rigid sermons or formal liturgy. It was a place of **experience** — where people came to feel Spirit, not just hear about it.

Her Teaching Style

Amanda was known for her calm, steady presence. She did not preach with theatrics. She spoke plainly, directly, and with conviction. Her teachings were shaped by:

- her early experiences in Canadian trance circles
- her years of mediumship
- her healing work
- her personal communication with Spirit

She taught her students to trust their own experiences, to sit in silence, to listen, and to allow Spirit to guide them. She believed that every person had the potential to develop spiritually — not just a chosen few.

A Sanctuary for Seekers

The Church of Truth became a refuge for those who felt confined by the strict doctrines of the National Spiritualist Association. People came because they sensed that Amanda offered something different:

- a place where questions were welcomed.
- a place where healing was central.
- a place where reincarnation was not forbidden.
- A place where Spirit was the true teacher.

Her church attracted ministers, healers, and seekers who felt called to a more open, experiential form of Spiritualism.

The Church as a Training Ground

Over time, the Church of Truth became more than a congregation — it became a **training ground**. Amanda mentored:

- developing mediums
- healing practitioners
- future ministers
- independent thinkers

She taught them not only how to serve Spirit, but how to serve people. Her students learned:

- platform ethics
- healing techniques
- trance development
- spiritual counseling
- the responsibilities of ministry

Many of these students would later become the first ministers of the Independent Spiritualist Association.

The Church as the Seed of a Movement

Although Amanda did not set out to create a new organization, the Church of Truth naturally became the birthplace of one. The values she taught there — freedom, healing, reincarnation, service — were the same values that would define the ISA.

The church was the **seed**, and the ISA was the **tree** that grew from it.

The Name Today

The church still stands in Grand Rapids. Today, it is known as:

☐ Spiritualist First Church of Truth

This is the name used by the modern congregation and recognized by the ISA.

There is **no documented date** for when the name shifted from “The Spiritualist Temple Society” to “Spiritualist First Church of Truth.” The change appears to have happened gradually as the church modernized and aligned with ISA naming conventions.

A Quiet but Powerful Ministry

Amanda served the Church of Truth from **1904 to 1939**, nearly thirty-five years of continuous ministry. She did not seek fame. She did not seek recognition. She simply served — day after day, year after year — with a steady devotion that shaped everyone who walked through her doors.

Her church was not large, but its influence was profound. It was the spiritual home where:

- Her philosophy matured
- her teachings deepened
- Her movement began.
- her legacy took form.

Even after her passing in 1940, the church remained a symbol of her work — a living testament to the woman who built it.

The ISA After Amanda’s Passing — Early Leadership and Transition

When Rev. Amanda Cameron Flower passed from this life on **November 20, 1940**, the Independent Spiritualist Association faced its first great test. For sixteen years, she had been its guiding force — the steady presence whose philosophy, discipline, and spiritual conviction shaped every part of the organization. Her passing left a silence that was felt deeply by every minister, healer, and student who had walked through the doors of the Church of Truth.

Yet the ISA did not collapse. It did not scatter. It did not lose its identity.

Instead, it entered a period of **quiet transition**, guided by the very principles Amanda had instilled from the beginning.

A Movement Built to Survive Its Founder

Amanda never built the ISA around herself. She built it around **principles**:

- freedom of belief
- Healing as a sacred ministry
- integrity in mediumship
- reincarnation as part of the soul's journey
- service to humanity
- Spirit as the true teacher

Because the ISA was rooted in values rather than personality, it was able to continue even after the loss of its founder.

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The First Challenge: Leadership Without Amanda

In the early 1940s, the ISA did not have a rigid hierarchy or a complex leadership structure. Amanda had kept the organization simple, relational, and spiritually focused. Her passing created a natural question:

Who would lead now?

There was no single successor named in her lifetime. There was no formal election process in place. There was no written doctrine outlining succession.

Instead, leadership emerged from the ministers who had worked closest with her — those who understood her philosophy, her expectations, and her vision for the ISA.

A Council of Ministers

Among the ministers who stepped forward during this transition was **Rev. Harry M. Hilborn**, one of Amanda's longtime students, and a steady presence within the ISA even during her lifetime. Hilborn had already served on the ISA board for many years before her passing, and his deep understanding of Amanda's teachings made him a natural stabilizing force in the years that followed. His service would eventually span **six decades**, including **forty years as President**, but in these early years he was simply

one of the devoted ministers working to preserve the spirit and integrity of the organization she founded.

In the years immediately following her death, the ISA functioned through a **council-style leadership**, made up of:

- senior ministers
- experienced healers
- trusted students of Amanda
- those who had served with her at the Church of Truth

This council did not replace Amanda. No one could.

Instead, they **preserved her teachings**, maintained the structure she had created, and ensured that the ISA remained true to its founding principles.

Continuing Her Work

The ISA's early post-Flower years were marked by:

- **regular meetings** held at the Church of Truth
- **healing services** continuing in her tradition.
- **mediumship development circles** led by her students.
- **ministerial training** based on her teachings
- **annual gatherings** to maintain unity and purpose.

The organization remained small, steady, and deeply rooted in Amanda's philosophy.

The first Spiritualist Church of Truth as the Anchor

After Amanda's passing, the **First Spiritualist Church of Truth** continued to serve as the heart of the ISA. It was:

- the meeting place
- the training center
- The spiritual home
- the living reminder of her work

Her presence was felt in every service, every healing circle, every class. Her teachings were repeated, honored, and preserved.

Preserving Her Philosophy

One of the ISA's greatest priorities after Amanda's death was to protect the core of her teachings:

- reincarnation
- healing
- service
- freedom of belief
- evidential mediumship
- spiritual independence

These principles were not debated. They were accepted as the foundation of the ISA's identity.

A Quiet, Steady Transition

The ISA did not experience upheaval or division after Amanda's passing. Instead, it entered a period of **quiet continuity**.

Her ministers stepped forward. Her students carried her teachings. Her church remained the center. Her philosophy remained intact.

The ISA survived because it was built on Spirit — not on personality.

The Legacy of the Early Post-Flower Years

The first years after Amanda's death established a pattern that would define the ISA for generations:

- leadership shared, not centralized
- teachings preserved, not altered
- healing and mediumship kept at the center.
- reincarnation upheld as truth
- Independence protected as a spiritual right

These early years ensured that the ISA did not fade with its founder. Instead, it continued — steady, faithful, and true to the woman who created it.

Her Passing, Her Burial, and the Quiet Legacy of Her Gravesite

By the late 1930s, Rev. Amanda Cameron Flower had given nearly four decades of her life to Spiritualism — teaching, healing, counseling, and building the Independent Spiritualist Association from the ground up. She was in her seventies, still active, still serving, still guiding her church in Grand Rapids. Her body had grown frail, but her spirit remained steady and luminous.

Her Final Years

Amanda continued to serve the Church of Truth until **1939**, the year before her passing. Even as her health declined, she remained devoted to her congregation. She preached when she could, counseled when she was able, and maintained her quiet presence in the church she had built with her own hands.

Her final months were marked by:

- declining physical strength
- increasing reliance on her trusted ministers
- a peaceful acceptance of the transition she knew was coming.

She had lived her life in service to Spirit. She faced death with the same calm certainty.

Her Passing — November 20, 1940

On **November 20, 1940**, Rev. Amanda Cameron Flower passed from this life. There was no drama, no fear, no struggle. She slipped quietly into Spirit — the very world she had spent her life teaching others to trust.

Her passing was deeply felt across the ISA, the Church of Truth, and the many ministers she had trained. But there was also a sense of peace, because Amanda had always taught:

“There is no death — only transition.”

Her own transition became a living example of that truth.

Her Burial — A Simple Resting Place

Amanda was laid to rest in **Grand Rapids, Michigan**, the city where she had lived, served, and built her ministry. Her burial was simple, dignified, and in keeping with her character. She had never sought grandeur in life, and she did not seek it in death.

Her grave is marked by:

- a modest headstone
- her name (Amanda Cameron Flower)
- her dates (1863-1940)
- and the quiet presence of the woman who shaped a movement.

There is no elaborate monument. No towering structure. Just a peaceful resting place for a woman who lived a life of service.

The Condition of Her Gravesite

Over the decades, Amanda's gravesite has remained:

- **quiet**
- **unassuming**
- **largely unknown to the public**
- **visited mostly by ISA ministers and historians.**

It is not a tourist site. It is not widely advertised. It is a place of **pilgrimage** for those who honor her work.

Some ISA members have visited to pay respects, clean the stone, or leave flowers. Others have spoken of feeling a sense of peace or presence when standing at her grave — not because she lingers there, but because her life's work continues to ripple through generations.

A Legacy That Lives Beyond Stone

Amanda's grave is simple, but her legacy is not.

Her true monument is:

- the ISA she founded.
- the ministers she trained.
- the churches she inspired.
- the teachings she preserved.
- the philosophy she lived.
- the spiritual independence she protected.

Her resting place is quiet, but her influence is not. Her body lies in Grand Rapids, but her work lives in every ISA church, every healing service, every mediumship circle, every minister who carries her teachings forward.

A Life Completed, A Work Continued

Amanda's passing did not end her mission. It completed it.

She left behind:

- a movement built on freedom
- a church built on truth
- A philosophy built on experience
- a legacy built on service

Her gravesite is a reminder of her humanity. Her work is a reminder of her greatness.

Rev. Harry M. Hilborn — The Young Minister Who Grew into a Legacy

When people speak of the Independent Spiritualist Association after the passing of Rev. Amanda Cameron Flower, one name rises again and again: **Rev. Harry M. Hilborn**. But his story does not begin with leadership, nor does it begin in the ISA boardroom. His story begins in Chicago — in a working-class neighborhood, in a family of four boys, and in a city whose spiritual landscape was just beginning to take shape.

Harry M. Hilborn was **born and raised in Chicago**, the youngest of four brothers. He never married and had no children of his own, but he devoted his life to ministry, service, and the work of Spirit. From a young age, he showed a sensitivity to spiritual things, a seriousness about truth, and a natural ability to connect with people. These qualities would shape his entire life.

The Youngest Ordained Spiritualist Minister in Illinois

Harry's calling came early. So early, in fact, that he became:

□ **The youngest ordained Spiritualist minister in the state of Illinois.**

This distinction reflected his dedication, discipline, and unmistakable spiritual maturity. His ordination opened the door to a lifetime of service — a path that would eventually lead him to Amanda Cameron Flower.

His First Church — Spiritualist Church of Austin, Chicago (1934)

In **1934**, Harry founded his first congregation in Chicago's **Austin neighborhood**. The earliest name associated with this church is believed to be:

□ **The First Spiritualist Church of Austin**

This small congregation was the beginning of his ministry — a place where he preached, healed, counseled, and developed the spiritual gifts that would define his life's work.

A New Identity — The Evangelical Spiritual Church

As his ministry grew, Harry refined the identity and mission of his congregation. He eventually renamed it:

□ **The Evangelical Spiritual Church**

This name reflected his belief that Spiritualism was not only a philosophy but a living, active ministry of healing, truth, and service. Under this name, the church became a spiritual home for generations of Chicagoans seeking comfort, guidance, and connection with Spirit.

The Move to Cicero — 1975

In **1975**, the Evangelical Spiritual Church moved from Chicago to **Cicero, Illinois**, where it continues to serve the community to this day. The move marked a new chapter in the church's life — one that expanded its reach and solidified its presence in the western suburbs.

Meeting Amanda — A Student Drawn to a Teacher (in 1924)

Harry's path eventually led him to **Rev. Amanda Cameron Flower**, whose teachings resonated deeply with his own spiritual convictions. He became one of her students — not in a formal classroom, but through:

- her sermons
- her healing services
- her philosophy
- her example
- her unwavering commitment to spiritual independence

Amanda recognized in Harry a seriousness of purpose, a steadiness of character, and a devotion to Spirit that mirrored her own. He became one of the ministers she trusted — not because he sought leadership, but because he lived the principles she taught.

A Lifetime of Service to the ISA

Harry did not suddenly rise to leadership after Amanda's passing. His service began **long before** she left this world.

He served on the ISA board for **decades**, contributing to:

- ministerial training
- organizational stability
- preservation of Amanda's teachings
- the growth of independent churches
- the protection of reincarnation as a core belief

Over time, his dedication, wisdom, and steady presence led him into greater responsibility.

Forty Years as ISA President

Rev. Hilborn eventually became President of the ISA — a role he held for an extraordinary:

☐ **40 years**

His total service to the ISA spanned:

☐ **60 years**

This was not the service of a man seeking power. It was the service of a man who believed in the work, the mission, and the truth of the movement Amanda had founded.

A Successor in Spirit, Not in Title

Harry was never “appointed” as Amanda’s successor. He did not inherit her position. He did not step into her shoes.

Instead, he grew into leadership through:

- years of service
- years of loyalty
- years of spiritual maturity
- years of living the principles she taught

He became a successor **in spirit**, because he carried forward:

- her teachings
- her philosophy
- her commitment to healing
- her belief in reincarnation
- her dedication to spiritual independence

He honored her not by replacing her, but by continuing the work she began.

A Life Given to Spirit

Rev. Harry M. Hilborn lived a life of quiet devotion. He never married. He had no children. His church and the ISA were his family. His ministry was his life’s purpose.

Through his decades of service, he ensured that Amanda’s vision did not fade. He became one of the most influential figures in the history of the ISA — not because he sought leadership, but because he embodied it.

Rev. Harry M. Hilborn — His Final Years, His Passing, and the Continuation of His Work

By the 1990s, Rev. Harry M. Hilborn had already lived one of the longest and most devoted ministerial lives in American Spiritualism. He had founded his first church in 1934, guided the Evangelical Spiritual Church for more than six decades, and served the Independent Spiritualist Association for sixty years — forty of those years as its President. His life was marked by quiet strength, unwavering dedication, and a deep loyalty to the teachings of Rev. Amanda Cameron Flower.

Though he never married and had no children, his life was full. His church was his family. His congregation was his community. His ministry was his purpose. And the ISA was the spiritual home where he poured his heart for more than half a century.

The Final Years of His Ministry

In the 1990s, Rev. Hilborn continued to preach and serve, even as age began to slow him. His sermons remained steady. His healing work remained strong. His presence remained a source of comfort to those who had known him for decades.

He had moved the Evangelical Spiritual Church to **Cicero, Illinois in 1975**, marking a new chapter for the congregation. Even in his later years, he remained committed to ensuring the church's stability and spiritual integrity.

His Passing — October 1997

In **October 1997**, Rev. Harry M. Hilborn passed from this life. His transition was peaceful, dignified, and in keeping with the life he had lived — a life of service, humility, and devotion to Spirit.

His passing marked the end of an era. He had been:

- the youngest ordained Spiritualist minister in Illinois
- a founder of churches
- a healer
- a teacher
- a guardian of Amanda Flower's philosophy
- a leader who guided the ISA for forty years

But his work did not end with his death. It continued through the hands of the minister he had prepared.

The Passing of the Pastorate

At the time of his transition, the pastorate of the Evangelical Spiritual Church was passed to:

Rev. Mahala D. Bacon

This was not a sudden decision. It was the natural continuation of a spiritual lineage.

Rev. Bacon had been:

- a student of the church
- a developing minister
- a dedicated worker
- a trusted presence
- someone who understood the philosophy and the heart of the church
- Long standing member of the ISA

Her succession represented continuity, not change — the next step in a line of ministers who carried forward the teachings of Spiritualism with integrity and devotion.

A Legacy That Lives Through Others

Rev. Hilborn left no biological children, but he left a spiritual family. He left:

- a church
- a congregation
- a philosophy
- a lineage
- a legacy of service
- a foundation for future generations

His work lives on through the ministers he trained, the ISA he helped shape, and the church he entrusted to Rev. Mahala D. Bacon.

A Successor in Spirit

Rev. Bacon did not replace him. She continued him.

She stepped into the pastorate not as an outsider, but as someone who had been shaped by the same values, the same teachings, and the same spiritual commitment that defined Rev. Hilborn's life.

Through her, his work continued. Through her, his church lived on. Through her, the lineage remained unbroken.

Rev. Mahala D. Bacon — Continuing the Lineage of Flower and Hilborn

When Rev. Harry M. Hilborn passed in **October 1997**, the Evangelical Spiritual Church and the Independent Spiritualist Association entered a new chapter — one shaped by the hands of a minister who had been prepared through years of service, study, and spiritual dedication. That minister was **Rev. Mahala D. Bacon**, who would become not only the next pastor of the Evangelical Spiritual Church, but one of the most influential leaders in the modern history of the ISA.

Her succession was not accidental. It was not sudden. It was the continuation of a spiritual lineage that began with **Rev. Amanda Cameron Flower**, was carried forward by **Rev. Harry M. Hilborn**, and now lived through **Rev. Mahala D. Bacon**.

A Life of Service Within the ISA

Rev. Bacon's work within the Independent Spiritualist Association spans decades and includes a wide range of leadership roles. She has served in:

- **multiple board positions**
- **ministerial leadership roles**
- **educational and developmental committees**
- **organizational planning and modernization efforts**

Her service reflects the same values that shaped the ISA from its earliest days:

- freedom of belief
- healing as a sacred ministry
- evidential mediumship
- reincarnation as spiritual truth
- service to humanity
- integrity in leadership

The Second Longest-Serving President in ISA History

In the long history of the Independent Spiritualist Association, only two presidents have served for extended eras:

1. **Rev. Harry M. Hilborn** — the longest-serving president (40 years)
2. **Rev. Mahala D. Bacon** — the second longest-serving president to date

Her presidency represents stability, continuity, and a deep commitment to the teachings of the ISA's founders. Under her leadership, the ISA has remained true to its roots while also adapting to the needs of a changing world.

Carrying the Lineage Forward

Rev. Bacon's ministry is not separate from the past — it is woven directly into the lineage of the ISA:

- **From Amanda Cameron Flower**, she carries the principles of healing, reincarnation, and spiritual independence.
- **From Rev. Hilborn**, she carries the discipline of service, the responsibility of leadership, and the commitment to maintaining the integrity of the church and the ISA.

This lineage is not symbolic. It is lived.

Rev. Bacon continues the “cord of responsibility” — the unbroken thread of teaching, service, and spiritual philosophy passed from teacher to student, generation to generation.

Modernizing the Work — Technology and the New Era

While honoring the past, Rev. Bacon has also guided the ISA and the Evangelical Spiritual Church into the modern age. Her leadership includes:

- integrating **technology** into spiritual education
- using **digital tools** for teaching, outreach, and historical preservation
- creating **online resources** for ministers and students
- modernizing communication while preserving spiritual depth
- ensuring that the ISA remains accessible to new generations

This balance — honoring tradition while embracing innovation — reflects the heart of her ministry.

A Bridge Between Eras

Rev. Mahala D. Bacon stands at a unique point in ISA history:

- She is connected to the **founding generation** through Rev. Hilborn.

- She leads the **modern generation** through her presidency and teaching.
- She prepares the **future generation** through her curriculum, workshops, and spiritual education.

She is the bridge between the ISA's past and its future.

A Ministry Rooted in Service

Like Flower and Hilborn before her, Rev. Bacon's ministry is grounded in:

- healing
- teaching
- spiritual development
- ethical mediumship
- community service
- historical preservation
- leadership through example

Her work ensures that the ISA remains not only a historical organization, but a living, breathing spiritual movement.

The Lineage Continues

The story of the ISA is not a story of institutions — it is a story of people. People who serve. People who teach. People who carry the light forward.

Rev. Mahala D. Bacon stands in that lineage:

Flower → Hilborn → Bacon

A line of teachers. A line of healers. A line of spiritual leaders who have shaped the ISA across more than a century.

Her chapter is still being written — through every class she teaches, every minister she trains, every church she supports, and every step she takes to preserve the legacy entrusted to her.

The Evolution of ISA Teachings Into the 21st Century

The Independent Spiritualist Association began in 1924 as a small circle of ministers gathered around the teachings of Rev. Amanda Cameron Flower. Over the decades, those teachings were carried forward by Rev. Harry M. Hilborn and later by Rev.

Mahala D. Bacon, forming an unbroken lineage of philosophy, service, and spiritual responsibility.

As the world changed — socially, technologically, and culturally — the ISA's teachings did not fade. Instead, they **evolved**, expanding into new forms while remaining rooted in the principles that shaped the movement from the beginning.

The Core Teachings Remain Unchanged

Even as the ISA entered the 21st century, its foundational beliefs remained steady:

- **Reincarnation** as a natural law of spiritual growth
- **Healing** as a sacred ministry
- **Evidential mediumship** as proof of continuity
- **Service** as the highest expression of spiritual life
- **Freedom of belief** as a spiritual right
- **Spirit communication** as a natural and accessible experience

These teachings are the backbone of the ISA — unchanged, unbroken, and carried forward through generations.

A Philosophy That Adapts Without Losing Its Soul

While the core remained the same, the ISA's approach to teaching and ministry evolved to meet the needs of a modern world. The 21st century brought:

- new forms of communication
- new expectations for accessibility
- new generations seeking spiritual understanding
- new tools for education and outreach

The ISA adapted — not by altering its beliefs, but by expanding the ways those beliefs could be shared.

Technology as a Tool for Spiritual Education

Under the leadership of Rev. Mahala D. Bacon, the ISA entered a new era of modernization. Technology became a tool for:

- **teaching classes online**
- **sharing historical materials**
- **preserving archives digitally**
- **connecting ministers across states**
- **supporting students who cannot travel**
- **creating accessible training materials**

This modernization did not replace tradition — it strengthened it.

Technology allowed the ISA to:

- reach more people
- preserve more history
- train more ministers
- support more churches

All while maintaining the spiritual depth and integrity of its teachings.

Continuing the Lineage Into the Modern Age

The lineage of the ISA is not symbolic — it is lived through the work of its ministers.

- **Flower** established the philosophy.
- **Hilborn** preserved and stabilized it for sixty years.
- **Bacon** carried it into the modern age, ensuring it remains relevant, accessible, and spiritually grounded.

This lineage is the “cord of responsibility” — the unbroken thread that ties the ISA’s past to its present and future.

Teaching for a New Generation

The 21st century brought a new kind of seeker:

- people searching for meaning beyond traditional religion
- individuals seeking healing and personal transformation
- students wanting structured spiritual education
- communities looking for ethical, grounded mediumship
- younger generations drawn to spirituality but not dogma

The ISA’s teachings — especially reincarnation, healing, and spiritual independence — resonate strongly with modern spiritual seekers.

Rev. Bacon’s leadership has ensured that:

- classes are accessible
- teachings are clear
- history is preserved
- ministers are well-trained
- the philosophy remains authentic

A Movement Rooted in the Past, Growing Into the Future

The ISA's evolution into the 21st century is a story of balance:

- honoring tradition
- embracing innovation
- preserving lineage
- expanding accessibility
- maintaining integrity
- welcoming new generations

The teachings of Flower and Hilborn live on — not as relics of the past, but as living principles carried forward through Rev. Mahala D. Bacon and the ministers she trains.

The ISA Today

Today, the ISA stands as:

- one of the oldest independent Spiritualist organizations in the United States
- a movement grounded in healing, reincarnation, and evidential mediumship
- a lineage-based tradition carried through three generations of leadership
- a modern spiritual community supported by technology and education
- a living testament to the work of its founders

The teachings have not weakened with time — they have deepened.

The movement has not faded — it has matured.

The lineage has not broken — it continues.

The Strength of Our Story: Love, Service, and Community,

Built by Many Hands, Guided by One Love

A Testament to the Members Who Gave Their All

A Century of Service; Every Minister, Every Worker, Every Soul Who Carried the Light

The story of the Independent Spiritualist Association is not the story of one person, one church, or one generation. It is the story of **thousands** — known and unknown, named and unnamed — who gave their time, their hands, their hearts, and their lives to a movement built on healing, truth, and spiritual freedom.

From its founding in 1924 to the present day, the ISA has been shaped by a living tapestry of service. Every thread matters. Every contribution counts. Every soul who ever stepped forward in any capacity has helped carry the lineage from Amanda Cameron Flower's first circle to the modern ISA of today.

The Ministers Who Carried the Philosophy

This book has spoken of the ISA:

But the ISA was never built by simply by leaders alone.

It was built by:

- pastors
- associate ministers
- healing ministers
- missionary ministers
- student ministers
- ordained workers
- church founders
- traveling teachers
- camp workers
- platform mediums
- spiritual healers
- development circle leaders

Every minister who ever stood behind a pulpit, offered a healing prayer, or delivered a message from Spirit has shaped the ISA's identity.

The Board Members Who Carried Responsibility

The ISA's strength has always depended on those who served behind the scenes:

- presidents
- vice presidents
- secretaries
- treasurers
- trustees
- committee chairs
- parliamentarians
- credentialing officers
- education directors
- outreach coordinators

These individuals carried the weight of governance, policy, and continuity. They protected the philosophy. They preserved the lineage. They ensured the ISA remained independent, ethical, and spiritually grounded.

The Workers Who Served Without Title

Some of the greatest contributions to the ISA came from those who never held office:

- the ushers who opened the doors
- the readers who shared the lessons
- the musicians who lifted the vibration
- the healers who stood in the healing line
- the mediums who served the platform
- the cooks who prepared fellowship meals
- the caretakers who cleaned the churches
- the volunteers who set up chairs
- the drivers who brought elders to service
- the quiet helpers who asked for nothing in return

Their service is woven into the fabric of the ISA just as deeply as any president or founder.

The Churches That Carried the Flame

From the earliest ISA churches in Michigan and Illinois to the modern congregations of today, each church has been a beacon of healing and truth.

Every pastor, every board, every congregation — large or small — has carried the flame forward.

Some churches lasted decades. Some lasted only a few years. All of them mattered.

The Outreach Workers and Community Leaders

The ISA has always been more than Sunday services. It has been:

- hospital visitors
- prayer workers
- grief counselors
- spiritual teachers
- community supporters
- charity organizers
- youth mentors
- public speakers
- advocates for healing and hope

These workers brought Spiritualism into the world — into homes, hospitals, workplaces, and communities.

The Students Who Became the Future

Every student who ever sat in a class, circle, workshop, or training session became part of the lineage. Some became ministers. Some became healers. Some became lifelong supporters. All became part of the ISA's living history.

The Lineage That Continues

The ISA's story is not finished. It continues through:

- every minister ordained
- every church opened
- every healing offered
- every message delivered
- every student trained
- every board member elected
- every volunteer who steps forward
- every soul who finds truth in its philosophy

The lineage is alive. The cord of responsibility remains unbroken.

A Blessing for All Who Served

To every minister, every board member, every worker, every volunteer, every student, every church leader, every healer, every medium, every teacher, every helper, every supporter — whether remembered by name or known only to Spirit:

This book honors you. This lineage includes you. This history belongs to you.

Your service is the reason the ISA stands today. Your devotion is the reason the philosophy survived. Your hands carried the work forward. Your heart kept the movement alive.

The Story Continues

As the ISA moves into its next century, it does so with gratitude for every soul who ever served — and with hope for every soul who will serve in the years to come.

The work continues. The lineage continues. The light continues.

And Spirit continues to guide the way.



Amanda **Cameron** Flower was buried in **Oakhill Cemetery** in **Grand Rapids, Michigan** in **1940**. Her exact burial location is:

□ **Oakhill Cemetery — Block 11, Plot 89E-05**

Grand Rapids, Kent County, Michigan

This is the same location confirmed by ISA historical research and by the cemetery sexton who guided earlier investigators to her stone.

Additional details you may find useful

- Her grave marker includes a **sunflower carving** with the small letters “**ISA**” at the bottom.
- The area around her plot has historically been **overgrown** with ivy, weeds, and day lilies, making the stone easy to miss unless you know the block and plot number.
- She was interred there after her p

passing on **November 20, 1940**.

Independent Spiritualist Association of the [United States](#) of America

The Independent Spiritualist Association of the [United States](#) of America was founded in 1924 by **Amanda Cameron Flower** (1863-1940), a medium with the **National Spiritualist Association of Churches** (NSAC). Flower absorbed some theosophical emphases, including a belief in **reincarnation**, an idea not consistent with NSAC belief. She also protested the NSAC rule against its mediums teaching or doing mediumistic work in non-NSAC churches.

Togetherness with Independence

In 1924, Amanda Flower felt the need of an organization that would promote Spiritualism and let churches group together for protection and strength, yet still give the individual churches the freedom to worship in their way.

Amanda Flower believed that mediums could teach and do public mediumship work outside of the member charters and in the public domain. She supported Theosophical teachings which included a belief in reincarnation that was not consistent with the NSAC (National Spiritualist Association of Churches).

With these thoughts in mind, she became the founder of the *Independent Spiritualist Association of the United States of America* (aka, ISA).

The organization has grown in membership in several states and world-wide recognition. It still maintains the purpose for which it was founded - ***Togetherness with Independence***.

Woman Pastor Passes at 77

Rev. Amanda Flower Was Nationally Promi- nent Spiritualist

Rev. Amanda C. Flower, 77, of 56 Reno-st., S. W., nationally prominent as a spiritualist worker for many years, died Wednesday morning at the O'Keefe sanitarium after an illness of several months.

Mrs. Flower was pastor of the Church of Truth on Shelby-st., S. W., since she founded it 35



REV. AMANDA C. FLOWER.

years ago. She also was founder of 40 other spiritualist churches in Michigan, Indiana, Florida, New York, Illinois, West Virginia, Oklahoma and Ohio. She was founder of the Independent Spiritualist association, a national organization, and was president of the association.

She also was a member of Daisy Chain and a former chaplain of that organization.

Surviving are a son, Fay Coffman of Grand Rapids; two sisters, Miss Blanche Cameron of Elgin, Ill., and Mrs. Frances McPhee of Belding; a brother, Judd Cameron of Traverse City, and four grandchildren.

The body will lie in state at the Anton Egebeen chapel at 125 Jefferson-av., S. E., until Friday morning, when it will be taken to the Church of Truth. Funeral services will be held there at 2 p. m. The national board of the Independent Spiritualist association will officiate.

Bearers will be Curtis Rutledge, E. J. Fox, Homer Ward, Fred

Declaration of Principles

1. We believe in Infinite Intelligence.
2. We believe that the phenomena of nature, both physical and spiritual, are the expression of Infinite Intelligence.
3. We affirm that the correct understanding of such Expression and living in accordance therewith constitutes true religion.
4. We affirm that the existence and personal identity of the individual continue after the change called death.
5. We affirm that the communication with the so-called dead is a fact scientifically proven by the phenomena of Spiritualism.
6. We believe that the highest morality is contained in the Golden Rule, "Whatsoever you would, that others should do unto you, do you likewise unto them.
7. We affirm the moral responsibility of the individual and that he makes his own happiness or unhappiness as he obeys or disobeys nature's physical and spiritual laws.
8. We affirm that the doorway to reformation is never closed against any soul here or hereafter.
9. We affirm that the precepts of Prophecy contained in the Bible are scientifically proven by Mediumship.

Principles 1-6 adopted in Chicago, Illinois, 1899
Principles 7-8 adopted in Rochester, New York
Principle 9 adopted in St. Louis, Missouri, 1944