



GOD IN ACTION

by Jim Gordon,
President of ILM

My inner life of meditation has been a very important guiding light in my life from as far back as I can remember. One day when I was 18 and in meditation I had an experience which taught me about service — and which ended up shaping my life in ways I could not have imagined at the time.

In my meditation I was told that I was to go into the world and assist people by sharing with them, answering their questions and giving them guidance, ever-pointing back to each of them as the one who has the answers, not me. I was to assist them in finding the answers for themselves. I was so joyful in hearing this because I felt I was being guided as to my career as well as to my service into the world. I had been looking for what I could do in the world to make a living, serving spirit. Now, I thought, I was being given some direction as to how to do this. I was happy to get this information at this time in my life, because I had just graduated from high school and had started working at a hardware and paint store, which I was not all too thrilled about.

So I began to look at how I could put this inner guidance into action, and how I was to earn a living from this action. When I went back into meditation to get clearer about what I was to do and how, I was told — to my surprise — that I was not to earn my living from this action. This was to be a service action into the world and not a means by which I made my living. If I approached this service action as a means by which to make my living, it would become an action out of my ego and not an action from and supported by Spirit. Spirit did not want me to be with someone in a counseling, and at the same time seeing the person as a way to pay my bills. Spirit did not want me to be saying, “Thank God they made an appointment. Without this appointment I could not afford to pay my rent.” Rather, I was told that this action was to be a Spirit-filled action with no expectations except the freedom to give and receive the loving that would come forward to assist people. So, I was not to charge for these sharings or counselings

but give them freely and with love. I was not to advertise or talk about this action with anyone, but to let God lead the people to me with whom I was to work.

So, I continued my 60 hour, six days a week job at the hardware and paint store. Evenings and Sundays, my day off, I would share with or counsel people that asked for some of my time. I never thought many people would come forward because I was not to go out and advertise or talk about the action. I was to let the people come to me. Much to my surprise, they came. First a few, and then within a short time the numbers began to grow. Soon my evenings and Sundays were very full. And, it was actually nice to be able to share with people in this way of service and then move on with no expectations or attachments.

However, every time I did a counseling, right away the person would want to know how much I charged. I would explain to them why I did not charge for my time, but many would then say they had to give something — and they would send what they called a donation. At first I was happy about this, thinking that I would have this extra money coming in and I would not have to ask for it. However, when I went into meditation and asked about this, I was told that this was not my money and I was not to use it for myself. I was to take the donations people might send and deposit them — and then I was to use the money to help others. I did what Spirit asked me, even though sometimes this was not easy when my bills came in. I found people who could use help in getting their education, paying for surgeries they needed, dental expenses, wheel chairs, etc.

Over the years I have kept this project small and to myself, doing what I could with the limited funds I had received from donations. When Inner Light Ministries was formed in 1986, I kept this action going and made sure the donations sent in have continued to quietly be used in service of others and not to cover ILM expenses. Then recently, at an ILM retreat titled, “To Touch the Heart,” an expansion of this service action came forward. It was in the retreat that Spirit came forward and asked that this ser-

God In Action continues on page 3 ►



PLAYING THE FOOL

by Steven McAfee
ILM Midwest Coordinator

Years ago, there was a woman from Ohio who had a yoga show on national public television. She was a sort of mini-celebrity in our area. Through mutual friends, she and I had just begun to correspond with each another, when she informed me that she would be participating in a week-long conference in Michigan, doing yoga workshops. As it happened, I was doing a one-day workshop as part of that same conference. Since we had never met, we decided we would have lunch on the day I was coming for my workshop. I had a high opinion of her and was hoping that I would impress her as being ‘in her league’ — you know, another poised and enlightened being.

I arrived a little early and wandered around the outside of the building, which had a large patio surrounded by a low, wide brick wall. I was feeling a bit anxious, so I hopped up onto the wall to sit and meditate — and immediately discovered I had sat in an aluminum pie tin filled with milk (one of the local people informed me that there was stray cat in the area who just loved peanut-butter and milk, so pie tins of each were set out for it each day). So, I rushed to a nearby drinking fountain and did my best to wash it out before the yogini (a female yogi) came out to meet me. Luckily, I managed to get cleaned up just before I saw before me my new friend coming out. We greeted each other (I being careful to keep facing her at all times, if you see what I mean). She said she would like to sit and relax in the sun for a few minutes before we headed off to the dining hall, and she started to sit up on the wall. I stopped her and said, in an all-knowing tone of voice, “Be careful, there’s a tin of milk up there.” I scooted it carefully aside and then, in a manly sort of way, helped lift her onto the wall so she could be seated. Still keeping my face toward her, I hoisted myself up onto the wall and promptly discovered that I had just plopped myself down into — the tin full

of peanut-butter. Well, I was not exactly sure what the proper etiquette for this was. Do I remain seated and pretend that I am not sitting in peanut butter and hope that she won’t notice? ... Do I cleverly try to divert her attention momentarily while I extricate myself from this mess? ... Do I? ... In the midst of my deliberation, she looked at the tin, looked me in the eye, and calmly said, “Do you know you’re sitting in a plate of peanut-butter?” As casually as I could, I replied, “Yeah, I know ... it’s for the cat.” “Oh,” she said, “didn’t you want it to have any?” Then we both just started laughing and laughing. And the more we laughed, the more we felt comfortable and connected with each other, until all the tension was gone.

Well, through more incidents like this than I would care to admit, I have learned something: Spirit generally offers me two options with regard to my ego getting out of line: (1) let it go humbly and willingly, or (2) be dramatically humiliated. Either way seems to work. Perhaps Spirit has other ways of working with your ego. But I do know that Spirit does have ways of ‘working on the ego’ for all of us.

So, this being my first article of the new year, I decided not to attempt to convey any profound message to you, just a simple and silly reminder: let’s remember to be able to laugh at ourselves, to be willing to play the fool for God once in a while; to let the joyful innocence shine through all our trappings of self-important vanity and efforts to impress one another. C.S. Lewis once wrote, “If you really get into any kind of touch with Him, you will, in fact, be humble — delightfully humble, feeling the infinite relief of having for once got rid of all the silly nonsense about your own dignity which has made you restless and unhappy all your life.” This year, let our innocence lead us more often, our pride less. And, if (when!) our egos do get the better of us from time to time, let us look one another squarely in the eye and calmly say, “Do you know you’re sitting in a plate of peanut-butter?” ▲

INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES

CALENDAR CLASSES & PROGRAMS: MARCH - JULY, 2001

PRESENTED BY JIM GORDON:

For additional information, call Laura Kesten at 512-894-0992

WEEKLY CLASSES: Jim's weekly Austin class is held **Tuesdays 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm**, ILM Center, Franklin Sq. Bldg., 3724 Jefferson, Ste. 100, Austin, TX.

Each class includes spiritual teaching, practical exercises, group discussion, and meditation. Jim helps participants to become more deeply in touch with the Spirit within.

PRESENTED BY BRIAN YEAKEY:

SPIRITUAL COUNSELINGS: Brian is available for individual counselings at this time. Call 512-306-1056 for an appointment.

Watch For:

JUNE ILM RETREAT

Facilitated by Jim Gordon, Laura Kesten, Steven McAfee and Brian Yeakey

June 1-2

Fri. 7:00 pm-Sat. 8:00 pm
Yarrow, Augusta, MI



More Information To Come!

(Note: please be aware that new programs are often scheduled after the newsletter goes to press, and, in rare instances, published schedules may have to be altered. For current information on any event or series, please call the presenter or contact person listed with the program. Thank you.)

(ILM Calendar continues on pages 4 and 5.)

God In Action continued

by Jim Gordon

vice action be called "To Touch the Heart." In sharing this with the retreatants and then with others, the project started to take on a new vision. Already, ILM ministers Laura Kesten and Tom Beaver had been involved with a service action with several American Indian Tribes. I also had become involved with forming and continuing a project called "United Youth International." In addition, Laura Kesten and Linda Lavender had been collecting and sending toys and clothes to Indian tribes in Montana and the Dakotas. Soon after the "To Touch the Heart" retreat, one of our local ILM members, Mary Yeakey, came forward and started a service project to make items for less fortunate peoples. And there is a new project

that ILM minister Brian Yeakey has started, called Coins for Kids, to continue the Christmas spirit throughout the year. Elsewhere in this newsletter, we will share with you more about our service projects in a section titled "To Touch the Heart."

In 1968, I had no idea what Spirit had in mind for me and my service action, and in some ways I still don't. I do know, however, that service is one of the greatest actions we can perform here on earth, and I am grateful to have the experience of my service and to watch it expand to this new level of action, "To Touch the Heart." I invite each of you to participate with current "To Touch the Heart" service projects, or to create or find your own service action. For me, service is God in Action. I invite you to have God in Action in your daily life.

INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES CALENDAR

PRESENTED BY LAURA KESTEN:

For additional information, call Laura Kesten at 512-894-0992

WOMEN'S "PAMPER" WEEKEND: This is a weekend for "pampering" at the beautiful Alma de Mujer Retreat Center. Included in this weekend: one 30 minute massage, one 30 minute Reiki session, a foot massage from a Sharper Image machine, a footbath, a session on a "chi-machine," and lots more. We'll learn ways to support our minds and bodies through aromatherapy, vitamins and herbs, self-massage, meditation, and humor. And ladies — we cannot forget the facials!!! All activities are at your option. Come and join us on this wonderfully supportive, relaxing, and "pampering" weekend. Teens are welcome.

March 2-4 Alma de Mujer Retreat Center Austin, TX \$95

COUPLES: Join us for this weekend retreat as we view and discuss John Gray's videos, **Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus: Understanding Martians & Venusians, Improving Communication, Giving and Receiving Love; Emotional Needs, and Lasting Intimacy & Fulfillment.** Dr. Gray is insightful, comprehensive and delightfully humorous as he shares his wisdom on how men and women are equal but different. You and your partner will be surprisingly entertained, and inspired to bring more awareness, understanding, and love into your relationship.

May 4-6 Pretty Lake Vacation Camp Mattawan, MI \$225 couple

THE UNFOLDING CREATIVE SPIRIT: This workshop is an uplifting, experiential workshop designed to awaken and embrace the inner and outer creative self. Using art as a medium, we offer a variety of experiences as a means to enhance this process of liberation. This type of workshop is not about being an artist. It is about opening ourselves to the creative possibilities that are inherent within us all, and learning to listen with a "new mind and heart" to the positive and negative judgments we tell ourselves about our own creative potential.

May 20 Sun. 9 am - 5 pm ILM Center \$25

THE WRITER WITHIN: Writing is a tool. It is yet another path to self-discovery and personal healing. It can be a way to find our heart, our truth, and our voice. In **The Writer Within** workshop, we focus on the heart. Thoughts and feelings of the heart often unfold in bits and pieces so, here in this workshop, we give our hearts permission to liberate itself from the critic who lives inside us judging our work and delighting in corrections. Through the new freedom of our unfolding hearts, our truth emerges. A safe and intimate environment is created for both the writer and sharer. Sharing what we write is always optional.

June 30 Sat. 9 am - 5 pm Kalamazoo Area \$15

A CIRCLE OF WOMEN:

CIRCLE OF WOMEN: 'The Sound of Spirit' - This special evening is dedicated to Spirit moving through music. We will participate in an incredible music meditation. What a great way to experience Spirit!

March 16 Fri, 7 pm - 9 pm ILM Center, Austin No Charge

CIRCLE OF WOMEN: A Teepee Gathering. Weather permitting, joyfully join us for an overnight in our 18' Sioux teepee. We will celebrate the evening gathering with great food, drumming, singing, storytelling, ceremony and fire. We are limited to 8 participants.

April 27-28 Fri, 7 pm - Sat, 11:00 am Dripping Springs, TX Donation

CIRCLE OF WOMEN: Movie & Popcorn Nite - Join us as we view the film '*Brother Sun Sister Moon*' — a moving story of a young Francis of Assisi as he renounces material possessions to seek his own path.

May 25 Fri, 7 pm - 9:30 pm ILM Center, Austin NC

THE CIRCLE OF TEENS: *The Circle of Teens*, offered to girls between the ages of 13-17, is designed to be both fun and experiential, and is focused on supporting and honoring teen girls during these important and crucial years of transition. Some of the activities include writing, sharing, guided visualization, arts, and games. Through these processes, the teens learn to support and be supported by others in the group, creating connectedness and belonging.

July 12 Thurs., 9 am - 4 pm Kalamazoo Area Donation

INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES CALENDAR

PRESENTED BY STEVEN R. MCAFEE:

For additional information, call Steven at 219-485-2167

TUESDAY CLASSES: Classes are held from 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm at Unity Church, 3232 Crescent Ave., Ft. Wayne, IN. We focus on spiritual development, both personally and as a community. Classes include prayer, meditation, singing, lecture, and group discussion. Donation.

SUNDAY SERVICES: Steven periodically conducts worship services as a guest minister for various churches and spiritual groups in the Ft. Wayne area. Please call for a current schedule.

Mar. 25 and Apr. 15	11:00 am	Brigade of Light,
May 6	11:00 am	Temple of Light & Love

COMMUNITY NIGHTS: The Ft. Wayne ILM "community" comes together for potlucks, music nights, video nights, and outings. Most of these events are also suitable for children. They are usually scheduled spontaneously as an inspiration arises within the group. Please call Steven for details.

MYSTICAL CHRIST WORKSHOP: Although you need not have participated in previous programs to attend, this program is part of our on-going series exploring the mystical teachings at the heart of the Jewish/Christian tradition. You will learn chants, meditation techniques, prayers, and other practices for deepening your inner life. A beautiful sense of community is developing within this group, and you are invited to come be a part of it.

Mar. 3: Workshop	11:00 am - 4:00 pm	Richland, MI	Donation
May 25-28: Retreat	7:30 pm Fri. - 1:00 pm Mon.	GilChrist, Three Rivers, MI	\$150

Please note, on Sat., July 7th, there will be a meeting of the Mystical Christ study group (without Steven) at the home of Jack and Paula Ann Roach (in Richland) for discussion and meditation. You are most welcome. Please contact Paula Ann for details at 616-629-4258.

FREEDOM RETREAT: This weekend Jews around the world will be celebrating Passover, when God delivered the Jewish people from slavery into freedom. In that same spirit, we will focus on moving away from that which enslaves us spiritually (such as fears, old habit patterns, ego, etc.) into that which gives us a greater sense of freedom (faith, choice, and joy). Friday night we will celebrate with a time of candlelit fellowship, rest, and renewal. Saturday we will share in a symbolic Passover dinner and move into an evening of prayer, meditation, singing, and sharing. Sunday we will create a simple practice to keep this sense of freedom alive in our everyday world.

Apr. 6-8	Fri. 7:30 pm - Sun. 12:00 pm	GilChrist	\$125
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FAMILY LIFE SERIES: We have begun a series of monthly family meetings in Ft. Wayne. Participation is open to anyone with school-aged children or teens. The focus is on sharing our faith with the next generation. What do we believe, and why do we practice what we practice? Youth and adult alike have the opportunity to participate in experiential activities and to share their personal experiences, questions, and insights. The location of the gatherings alternates between some of our homes and various public sites in the area. Donations accepted. If you are interested in getting involved, please call Steven for more details.

Mar. 18	10:00 am-1:00 pm	(potluck lunch at 12:00)
Apr. 14	5:00-8:00 pm	(potluck dinner at 6:00 pm)

SING UNTO THE LORD WORKSHOP: This workshop is designed to introduce music and singing as methods for touching the soul. It will include periods of devotional chanting, instruction in



simple vocal and rhythmic techniques, (fun ones!), and meditating with music. You need not have any musical experience or skill to enjoy and benefit from this program. Everyone will be free to participate at their level of comfort. Those of you who have heard them will be delighted to know that Lisa and Larry Heral, two dear friends and wonderful fellow musicians from Ft. Wayne, will be assisting me in the program.

July 14	10:00 am - 4:00 pm	Unitarian Meeting House, Ft. Wayne, IN	\$35
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To Touch The Heart

ILM Service Projects

ILM EVENTS

IF ANY OF THESE ILM EVENTS INTEREST YOU, PLEASE CALL YOUR LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE AND JOIN IN.

INNER LIGHT HAPPENINGS

Over The Past
Few Months

Express Yourself Through Service

Welcome to our new column aptly called “To Touch The Heart”. In this column we will be sharing with you the latest happenings with ILM service projects. We hope to inspire you to look at service as a vital aspect and expression in your life, and to realize how being of service to others, in any form, can bring upliftment and joy. Whether you choose to get involved with something we share in the newsletter, or with any other service of your choosing, we encourage you to consider involving yourself in some form of service. If you haven’t already, we suggest you to go to the front page and read Jim’s article on service in his life. This will give you a wonderful look at how this action started and at how we are expanding it into “To Touch The Heart.”

Soon after the “To Touch the Heart” retreat in Austin in the spring of 2000, one of our Austin ILM members,



Mary Yeakey, came forward and started a service project to make items for less fortunate peoples. Every

Thursday night a group of people that have been getting together at the Austin ILM Center to enjoy each others’ company and the Spirit that is present. In doing so, they have produced hundreds of sweaters, blankets, hats, stuffed animals, and other items by knitting, crocheting, sewing, and myriad other forms of seamstressing! Within a few months the ILM service project Mary had formed created hundreds of items. At the back of the ILM center in Austin were stuffed-animals, dolls, sweaters, hats, and blankets. The group’s initial intention was to make these items for the service project for Linda Lavender’s Pine Ridge Reservation Christmas project (see below). This soon

To Touch The Heart continues on next page ▶

Texas Happenings

In mid-December ILM held its annual Austin Christmas party, this year at the home of Jim Gordon and Brian Yeakey. The house was filled with ILM members and friends, and filled as well with lots of ‘Inner Light Christmas cheer’.

In early December, ILM ministers Tom Beaver and Laura Kesten, their daughter Cally, and ILM board member Carolyn Dailey flew to Great Falls, Montana, and then drove over 200 miles to tiny Harlem (pop. 882), to attend the Cherish Our Indian Children pow-wow at the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation. Attend? Make that participate in! Laura and Tom were honored to attend a ceremonial sweat lodge as a precursor to the pow-wow, then during the pow-wow the ILM quartet ran the concessions stand and participated in several ‘honoring ceremonies’.



It was an experience they will never forget (see the “To Touch The Heart” section for a description of ILM’s involvement with COIC).

In mid-January, Laura Kesten brought singer-songwriter-actress Cynthia James to the Austin ILM Center to perform her one-woman play, “The Hand of God,” and then to put on her workshop entitled, “What Will Set You Free: Healing the Wounds of Trauma and Abuse.” The full-house-crowd at the play was moved as well as entertained, and the well-attended workshop was deep and profound. Laura hopes to bring Ms. James to Michigan in the near future.

Also in mid-January, a group of Austin-area ILM members attended a get-together at Jim and Brian’s house, and then went on together and attended a most fascinating concert: Mystical Arts of Tibet performed

Happenings continues on next page ▶

To Touch The Heart continued

expanded to include making stuffed animals for the COIC Christmas project (again, see below). And they are continuing to expand with new and evolving projects. Since Christmas they've been making cards and heart sachets for an area nursing home for Valentine's Day. They're planning an Easter project as well. And before you know it, it will be time to work on next Christmas!

Austin, Texas ILM ministers Laura Kesten and Tom Beaver had been involved in a service action with the American Indian Tribes of Montana and Wyoming. ILM has been sponsoring and supporting the Indian-run organization "Cherish Our Indian Children (COIC)" on it's "Native American Youth Leadership Project." This project is designed to preserve and pass on Native American spiritual traditions by having tribal elders mentor youth leaders. Tom and Laura were on Montana's Fort Belknap Indian Reservation the first week of December attending a pow wow put on by COIC and some of these youth leaders. Tom plans to go back in March to attend a large gathering of all elder-mentors and youth leaders.

Laura Kesten (with Daughter Cally) has for the last few Christmases collected Beanie Babies from ILM members and local Austin, Texas merchants for COIC to distribute to the Indian children in Montana and Wyoming. This project started three years ago ... this December over 1200 Beanies were collected.

Austin ILM member Linda Lavender has for several Christmases been collecting clothing and blankets and other mainly-winter items from our local Austin ILM group, to send to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. Winters are long and fierce up there, and many reservation members have no heat other than from wood stoves.

Austin ILM ministers Brian Yeakey and Jim Gordon recently started a new project called "Coins for Kids," to continue the Christmas spirit throughout the year. They will take all of the loose change accumulated from day to day, throughout the year, and save it to buy gifts for children at Christmas time. At Christmas the money accumulated will be used to purchase gifts from the gift requests made by children that are on local Christmas gift/wish trees put up each December at Christmas time by the Salvation Army, Starbucks, and other organizations. In sharing this service project at Jim's Tuesday night Austin class, it was found that others thought it was such a great idea, they wanted to participate too. This way we can all be thinking of Christmas all year long, remembering that every time we receive change (coins), it will be saved for this special service as a way to share our loving. Already (in mid-January) we've saved over \$500 and we're looking forward to going shopping!

If you want to participate in Coins For Kids, you can call Brian at 512-306-1056. To participate in other projects, call Laura or Tom at 512-894-0992. ▲

Happenings continued

by Tibetan lamas from the Drepung Loseling Monastery in Northern India. The music, song and dance were unlike anything any of the concert-goers had ever heard or seen before.

MIDWEST HAPPENINGS

In late Autumn, Fort Wayne "ILM members" held a "ILM Community Night." First the group went to a movie called, "Keeping the Faith," a comedy about rabbi and a priest who had been best friends since childhood. Afterward, we went to Border's bookstore for a discussion over hot chai and espresso. We found that some people, who seldom speak up in our regular ILM classes, interacted much more freely with others, sharing their thoughts and insights too. So, a couple months later, instead of one of our regular classes, we went over to Border's again for a discussion night, and the same thing happened: everyone shared and we all had a wonderful time.

In late December was the annual Midwest ILM Christmas party. Most of our regular local ILM folks were there, along with most of our families, even the McAfee's daughter and her boyfriend from Florida! We held the party on the first night of Hanukkah. We prayed for peace in the world and in our families this year, and then lit Hanukkah candles. Steven McAfee spoke briefly about the Hanukkah tradition. And we partied! ▲





WHEN THE FOG LIFTS

by Laura Kesten-Beaver,
ILM Minister

In January, ILM brought Cynthia James to Austin to perform her one-woman play, **In the Hand of God**, and to facilitate her follow-up workshop, *What Will Set You Free? Healing the Wounds of Trauma and Abuse*. Cynthia is a professional singer-songwriter-actress (who also has a degree in counseling) who has lived a life of personal healing. Both the play and the workshop were wonderful. One experience during the workshop was especially profound and healing for me.

At one point toward the end of the workshop Cynthia led us in a guided meditation. I closed my eyes, and experienced many emotions rise and fall as they actively expressed themselves — sharing with each other, arguing with each other, working at understanding each other and sharing with me missing pieces of information and feelings from which I had long ago disconnected.

The overall experience I had during the first part of this meditation was feeling as if I was walking in a fog, squinting, trying to see, trying to focus on something concrete, and having the unnerving feeling of an impending abyss, of not being able to see what was before me with each step I took. I felt unclear, somewhat confused, as I tried to make sense of things. I tried to put words on indistinguishable objects; I thought that if I could label them then maybe there would be less confusion and doubt of the unknown. I felt my head swirl in the fog.

Then, about half way through the meditation, I suddenly broke free of all the fog and saw who I really was, as I was in the beginning, in God's light. I experienced everything with clarity. I was amazed at how crystal clear and sparkly everything was. I saw, in my mind's eye, better than 20/20; and I felt it — I felt the clarity, the truth, the exactness and perfection of that moment. In my mind's eye, I saw myself in the middle of a round natural pool of water and I saw myself rise above the surface. And as I rose from the water, I saw that I had been given golden wings. I watched as angels encircled me, drumming and dancing and chanting words which described my true self. I felt love surrounding, filling

and protecting me, and I began to laugh in pure joy. The angels lifted their arms and wings, and I began to sing with the angels and their voices blended together with mine so that I could not tell what was their voice and what was mine. I laughed. I cried. My body felt so light and free of pain. I danced inside my mind and my heart filled with gratitude. Yes, I felt so much gratitude — for letting go of all that no longer served me and for allowing Spirit to fill me with pure white light.

The workshop came to an end, the participants shared in hugs and farewells, I locked the doors to the ILM Center, and began the drive home. The city of Austin was blanketed with a thick fog. I felt the familiarity of the fog, as if I had just stepped from the beginning of the guided meditation into the Texas night. I found myself squinting, trying to see in front of me, trying to identify indistinguishable objects masked in a haze. I felt tense and uncertain — and then the most incredible thing happened. In an instant — I drove right out of it! I felt the car birth from fog into clarity. I began to laugh and kept repeating, “Oh, wow! Oh, wow!” I looked at the bright street lights lighting the road, at the distinct red brake lights from the cars in front of me, I saw buildings crystal clear with their sharp edges, I saw blades of grass, individual tree branches, a black and white cat along side the road. I marveled at the absolute perfection and clarity in which I was witnessing, on ‘the other side of fog’.

And then I asked myself, “So how is this like Spirit?” And the answer came back, “In Spirit, there is clarity, and in clarity, one experiences truth, and truth is living in Spirit.” And then I asked, “So, can it be this simple — to be in fog and then just whoosh out of it into clarity? And the answer came back — crystal clear, “Absolutely! All you have to do is choose to live in Spirit each moment of every day. When you live in Spirit, you live in the clarity of your truth. Without Spirit, we are like a mole who cannot see and who tries to find his way beneath piles of dirt. We can only meet with Spirit when we stay focused on Spirit and not on the physical, emotional, and mental aspects of this world. Focus on Spirit and all else lines up, all negativity falls away, and all answers are given ... and thus clarity, by Spirit, is granted.” ▲

SOUL TRAVEL EXPERIENCES



by Brian Yeakey,
ILM Minister

I would like to share with you a little bit more about myself and my life experiences. I would say that I had a pretty normal childhood. I played alot, I had some good friends, I did well in school. There was nothing extraordinary, no great wealth or talents and no great poverty or handicaps. I went through grade school pretty much experiencing what everybody else was and I went on to college just because that was the thing to do. I went through college having all the experiences that my life offered, although not really feeling a sense of fulfillment.

Then, in December of 1988, something inside of me shifted. I suddenly felt different and I didn't know what to make of it. I was coming up on my college graduation and realized that I really didn't know what I wanted to do with my life. I started looking through books on meditation and spirituality, trying to find meaning and direction, but it didn't really make sense to me — until I found this particular book on how to have an 'out-of-body experience'.

I began doing the meditations as described in the book and experienced 'movements of energies' I was unaware of before. After about a month of doing these meditations very intently every day, I had my first out-of-body experience. It was awesome! Now I knew that there was more to life than just this physical existence. Nobody could tell me otherwise, because I had had the experience for myself. I no longer wished for or needed to believe or not believe — I knew! And in that knowing, I have continued having inner experience after inner experience, going on twelve years now. And it keeps getting better and better!

These 'out-of-body' experiences gave me a different perspective on life and sense of what is meaningful to me. They have taught me that what really matters in life is not just the physical experiences, but who we are as spiritual beings. And these experiences have shown me that there really is a greater reality, one that we can know for ourselves — and that we can know now, before physical death. All we have to do is "Seek first the Kingdom of God." And as we seek, that which is to be made known to us

will be revealed in His timing and according to His Will. Our awakening will come through our experiences as we seek, and eventually, our seeking will lead us to the Greater Experience, that which is in the Spirit. It is this Greater Experience that I am referring to when I speak of out-of-body experiences.

I would like to be very clear to you about what I mean, and do not mean, when I say "out-of-body" experiences. Quite often this term is also referred to as "astral travel." This is not the kind of travel that I am referring to. What is known as "astral travel" takes place on the level of the imagination, also known as the astral realm. What I'm talking about is spiritual traveling in the 'Soul Body', wherein one can travel throughout all the nonphysical realms of God's creation (including the astral realm). This is known as Soul traveling. It is in these Soul traveling experiences that the 'Greater Truths' are revealed as one transcends the lower realms of God's creation, and journeys into the higher realms of pure Spirit. It is these kinds of experiences that I am talking about.

All it took for me to have these experiences was my willingness and sincere desire to know the Greater Truths and to do the practices that it takes to realize them. These practices I am referring to are meditation and prayer, also referred to as active meditation or spiritual exercises. It was and is through these practices that I awoken to the Greater Truths and experiences of God and Spirit.

There are many types of meditation practices that serve many different purposes, and I chose to focus on learning the ones that were going to move me towards the Greater knowing and experience of God. Many of those types of meditations can be found on the cassette tapes by Jim Gordon that ILM puts out. (Yes, that's a promo for ILM study materials, but why not use them if they work, I do!) There are, of course, other organizations that I know of that teach these types of meditation practices as well.

To me, what matters most though, is that we put to use what we learn, from whatever the source, and continue to practice awakening ourselves in these Greater experiences of God and Spirit. That's what I did, and am continuing to do. You can do the same. Learn how to do these meditations, have the willingness and sincere desire to know God, and you too can enjoy the experiences of Soul traveling! ▲

INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES NEWSLETTER

ABOUT ILM

INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES (ILM) is a nonprofit outreach organization founded in the fundamental principles of ancient esoteric Christianity. It is dedicated to the development and balancing of the fourfold nature of the individual. Towards this goal, it provides education and services concerned with the integration of the spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical aspects of the self, and also provides publications and materials that aid in this process.

Among its fundamental tenets is that we truly are “temples of the Holy Spirit.” As we seek and express this presence within, we find the peace, love, power, and wisdom we all so earnestly desire. The many services of ILM are geared towards this path of individual unfoldment—such as meditation, study, and prayer on an individual and group basis.

Service to humanity and the planet is ILM’s second major emphasis, and ILM encourages

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In this seminar Jim talks about one’s relationship with the Christ and the symbolisms around the birth of Jesus the Christ. The seminar concludes with a meditation.

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In this talk Jim discusses the symbols of the Exodus and other symbols of the Bible as well. Jim shows how the Bible can be seen not as a collection of unrelated stories but as the story of one Soul’s journey towards the awakening of its own divinity.

To Order: These tapes are **\$8.95** each. (Please include **\$3** per order for shipping and handling.) Checks may be made payable to **Inner Light Ministries** and sent to: Inner Light Ministries, P.O. Box 164332, Austin, Texas 78716-4332. Please include your name, address and phone number. *Allow 4-6 weeks for delivery.*

individual service, in any of a wide variety of possible forms, as a vital aspect of our daily experience.

Please write or phone for more information about ILM.

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