

STEPPING UP TO THE PLATE

by Jim Gordon,
President of ILM

When I was nine years old I had an accident — I fell against a metal post while playing tag and hit my head. The blow crushed a part of my skull, which left me with a rather large impression of the post in my right forehead, and caused me chronic migraine headaches. The headaches got so bad that I spent two or three days a week in bed in constant pain. Because of this I missed a lot of school, and I also missed out on a lot of events in my youth. Then at the age of eighteen I met a doctor who helped me with my migraines. He found that my jaw was out of alignment due to the accident. He worked on my TMJ, adjusting my bite and jaw alignment, and within hours the headache problem was actually, ‘magically’, solved.

This was great! For the first time in nine years I was able to function normally in my life rather than be bedridden so much of the time. Soon, though, I found out something about myself which surprised me. When something came up in my life that I did not want to participate in or have to do, I would develop a migraine headache and have to go back to bed again. At first I did not give this much thought, except to think that maybe Dr. Kelly had not ‘healed’ me after all, and that I was still going to have to deal with the headaches from time to time — just maybe not as often.

Then one day it happened again at work — something came up that I was suppose to do, but that I did not want to do. I could feel the pressure building up in me — I felt myself ‘creating’ a migraine headache to get out of the situation. I sat there and observed myself actually create the headache! And I remember thinking to myself, “Stop it, you don’t want another headache and to have to be in bed,” and yet I did continue to run the process — and within just a few minutes I had a major migraine headache and went home to bed.

Now, I did not really want to believe that I could create such a thing for myself, hurting myself in order to ‘protect’ myself. So, I began to watch my action-and-reactions, my thoughts and feelings, and for the next few weeks I kept a journal of these events. I particularly observed what was happening before, during, and after my headaches developed. What I discovered was very un-

settling to me — but it also was a salvation for me.


What I found was, if something was happening or going to happen that felt to me like an expectation to have to perform in a certain way, an obligation or ‘have to’ that I experienced as a burden, then I would react by developing a headache so that I simply was not able to do or fulfill whatever was expected of me. This would happen at work when my boss would tell me I was doing something wrong, or that I needed to do things differently. It also happened when friends would expect something from me that I did not want to do, or did not know how to do. Digging deeper, I realized that others’ expectations created fear and resistance in me, and consequently I would build up the ‘internal pressure’ of these headaches.

I began to realize that since I was creating these headaches, I also had the power to stop them as well. I continued to observe my process, doing little to stop or change my actions, just taking note of what stimulated my reaction of creating a headache. In observing all this I began to ponder: what action might I take to bring balance into my life so I could express differently. And I found a key for me. I would create headaches to avoid, to push myself away from situations, people, responsibilities or obligations. So my key was to ‘step up to the plate’ and begin to participate in my life rather than run away from my life experience. I began to listen to what people would say to me and take responsibility for my actions. Rather than go into reaction when someone was critical, or when there was something I had to do, I would make a conscious choice to step forward in willingness, in acceptance, and do whatever was needed. Sometimes the ‘doing’ was to say, “Thank you” for the insight into myself. Sometimes it would be learning how to share myself more clearly, or realizing that there are responsibilities for me to perform in the world and I better begin doing them and fulfilling them rather than continuing to avoid them.

As I moved into this new way of living in the world, I found I did not need my headaches — and I also was pleasantly surprised to find that the creative energy I had tied up in creating headaches to avoid life was now being expressed in productive ways to build my life. Our soul is a creative spirit, a divine creative aspect of God, and the more we can actively express that creative divine spirit by participating in life, the more we can experience the loving, creative, joyful expression that is our soul. ▲

MY MINISTRY OF SERVICE

by Brian Yeakey, ILM Minister

It's been since January 4, 2000 now that I've been working with Jim Gordon and Inner Light Ministries in doing my ministry in service of Spirit in the world. That action of Spirit that Jim has known most all his life has now also been shared with me, and Jim has supported that action in me ever since. That 'action' is what I call my service, or my ministry. And my ministry is to serve the Inner Light, which makes me an Inner Light Minister!

One of the main forms through which my ministry of service is expressed is the action of doing Spiritual counselings. For me, doing Spiritual counselings is simply holding a loving place inside myself, in the Spirit, so that as people open up and share with me I assist them in connecting more with the Spirit inside themselves and in any and all the aspects of their life. It's all Spirit! And all we have to do is wake up to that. So my service is to love people into loving themselves and recognizing the Spirit that is in them, in others, and in all things ... no matter what their life experiences, Spirit is in all of those experiences.

Sounds pretty simple, and it is! But you may ask, how exactly does a counseling go — how do I “hold for people so that they may realize the Spirit?” Here is the format of a typical counseling. First I ‘call in the Light’, asking that God’s Loving, Light and Sound fill, surround, and protect each one of us and allow only that which is for the Highest Good of all concerned to be experienced, and asking further that anything that is not of This Light to be let go of so that His Will is done. And then, for all this, I give thanks. The exact words vary each time — what’s important here is setting a clear intention, that of attuning to the Spirit. So ‘calling in the Light’ is a form of prayer or invocation. From this point on, it’s then up to God what takes place, all I do is stay open and vulnerable to the flow of Spirit as it presents itself so that I may assist as the Loving unfolds. Often the person getting the counseling asks questions or shares what it is that’s taking place for

them that they would like assistance with. Sometimes I just listen quietly. Other times, I share words of encouragement and upliftment as Spirit brings them to a ‘state of mind and heart’ so that they may experience clarity, or forgiveness, or whatever is needed in that moment. This takes place in any form necessary for the person’s upliftment. The intention here is Loving, and also, whatever the Loving will do for that person as they open to receive of it. Spirit brings forward the experience of the Loving and it’s up to each person to open and receive of it ... I just try to assist people in doing that. If I can assist someone in experiencing the Loving of Spirit, I am filled with Joy! And that’s my reward! That’s why I do this work — for the Joy of it! Because of the Joy, I continue doing this service, and people keep asking for it. I am very grateful for this. Which finally brings me to ... gratitude.

Through this expression of service to the “Inner Light” I experience much gratitude for having Spirit in my life. My life is much more fulfilling and worth living. As I do this service, my life continues to get better and better — from the inside out. And so do the lives of those who experience the counselings (so I have heard from their feedback). Knowing all this, from my own experience, I am propelled forward to continue this ministry of service, to keep growing and expanding and experiencing all the blessings of Spirit in my life. It’s easy for me to keep moving forward when I have the actual experiences of the blessings of Spirit through this action so that I may know it for myself. I stress this point because it is my wish that all you who are reading this also find a way to, through your own experience, live and know the blessings of Spirit! And one wonderful way to experience these blessings of Spirit is ... through doing service in any form. I have shared with you an example of my experience of doing service, and now I encourage you to find an expression of service that works for you, so that you may also know this blessing of Spirit in your life! ▲

INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES

CLASSES & PROGRAMS: SEPTEMBER-DECEMBER, 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.
Classes will resume on September 18, 2001.

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

ILM WEEKEND WORKSHOP:

LIVING IN THE HEART OF THE BELOVED

with ILM Ministers: Jim Gordon, Laura Kesten, Steven McAfee, Brian Yeakey

TIME: September 28-30, 2001

Fri. 7 - 10 pm, Sat. 10 am - 6 pm, Sun. 9 am - 12:00 noon

PLACE: ILM Center, Franklin Sq. Bldg., 3724 Jefferson, Ste. 100, Austin, TX

COST: \$35

The staff of INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES invites you to join us in taking another step on the great journey of opening our hearts to Spirit. We have previously offered the To TOUCH THE HEART workshop, where we focused on balancing our physical, emotional, mental and spiritual hearts. Now in our newest workshop, LIVING IN THE HEART OF THE BELOVED, we will explore the spiritual heart in greater depth. Topics include: awakening the loving within, and 'living the loving' as a day-to-day practice. This workshop provides us all a great opportunity to experience the joy, love, and peace that come as our spiritual hearts open more and more. Note: attendance at a To TOUCH THE HEART workshop is *not* a prerequisite.

For further information, call Brian Yeakey at 512-306-1056.

PRESENTED BY BRIAN YEAKEY:

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

The Spiritual counseling sessions, that ILM President and Elder Jim Gordon has provided as a service to individuals over the years, are now available from ILM Minister Brian Yeakey. In this Spirit of service, Jim has asked Brian to continue this action of supporting individuals in their spiritual upliftment and growth. These counseling sessions are offered as a service to assist individuals to awaken to the Spirit of who they are, to recognize the day-to-day reality of Spirit in their lives, to help bring clarity to different life issues, to move through the hardships of life, and to experience Loving and all that Spirit has to offer.

If you would like a counseling session with Brian, call 512-306-1056 to make an appointment. Sessions last approximately one hour and can be done in person or over the phone. These are tape recorded and the cassette is given to you at the end of the session. Brian is also available to do counselings in person when he is traveling in your area. There is no charge for this service; however, donations are welcome.

INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES CALENDAR

PRESENTED BY LAURA KESTEN:

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

WORKSHOPS

COUPLES: In this workshop, we will explore the differences between men and women - how they think, feel, communicate and relate. Throughout this weekend, we will view John Gray's *MEN ARE FROM MARS, WOMEN ARE FROM VENUS* five videos which are as follows: *Understanding Martians & Venusians, Improving Communication, Giving & Receiving Love, Lasting Intimacy & Fulfillment, The Secrets of Passion*. Gray is insightful, comprehensive and delightfully humorous as he shares his wisdom on the often misunderstood areas of relationships. You and your partner will be surprisingly entertained, and inspired to bring more awareness, understanding, and love into your relationship. Opportunities to apply this new information will be given throughout the program as you and your participate in practical exercises. Registration fee includes lodging, meals, and all workshop supplies.

OCTOBER 12-14 Fri, 7 pm - Sun, 12 noon Pretty Lake, Mattawan, MI \$225/couple

STORIES UNTOLD: The Iroquois say, "Do not judge another until you have walked a mile in his moccasins." For this year-long program, we alter this to, "Do not judge yourself until you have re-walked a mile in your own moccasins." Wearing our own moccasins, this program is offered as an opportunity for us to re-walk our own paths in order to let go of judgments which we have held against ourselves. We will do this through the healing words of our own hearts as we tell our untold stories in written form. There is a story for everything that has happened to us, and within each story lies the key to unlock the memory, emotion, and spiritual blessing for our own healing and expansion. We will meet a total of five times, once every three months, with our final meeting in December of 2002. On the off-months, you and a writing buddy from the group will meet to write and share once per month. Participants will decide on his/her own end product — perhaps an autobiography, or short stories, or poetry, etc. As a group, we will support our projects through to the final stages of editing. The registration fee includes lodging and meals.

2001: DECEMBER 14-15,

2002: MARCH 28-30, JUNE 28-30, SEPTEMBER 27-29, DECEMBER 27-29

Dates Above: Fri, 7:00 pm - Sun, 12:00 noon GilChrist, Three Rivers, MI \$100

A CIRCLE OF WOMEN:

FEEL GOOD NIGHT: With the guidance of a qualified massage therapist, we will learn and receive a few basic and simple massage techniques. We will practice giving and receiving on each other. A great way to end the week!

OCTOBER 19 Fri, 7 pm - 9 pm ILM Center, Austin NC

WHO ARE YOU?: Learn more about Who You Are using a variety of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual age-old 'self-tests' — from Archetypes and Chakras to Enneagrams and Sun Signs. This will be a super fun night.

NOVEMBER 16 Fri, 7 pm - 9 pm ILM Center, Austin NC

COMMUNITY MOVIE NITES: We had such a great turnout last April for the movie, **BROTHER SUN SISTER MOON**, that we decided to offer two more movie nites. We'll make the popcorn, you bring your own non-alcoholic beverage, and we'll see YOU at the movies.

ANGELS, THE MYSTERIOUS MESSENGERS: This incredible film, hosted by Patty Duke, takes us on a magnificent journey exploring the presence of Angels in history, art, science, and medicine. Witness the tears, joys and peace from people sharing their extraordinary experiences with Angels.

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

IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE: In this classic tale, the main character, George Bailey played by James Stewart, feels he is a failure, only to be visited by his guardian angel on Christmas Eve. Perfect for the holiday season.

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

INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES CALENDAR

ILM PRESENTS:

THE HAND OF GOD: We are excitedly sponsoring a special program: **THE HAND OF GOD**, a one-woman play written and performed by actress, singer, and former Miss Minnesota, Cynthia James. Her play is an extraordinary autobiographical musical of Cynthia's personal journey. She shares with the audience her childhood trauma, struggles with relationships, attempts at escaping pain, and finally, coming full-circle, her discovery of healing and forgiveness. Cynthia changes characters many times, adding touches of humor, her original songs and music, and movement, thereby keeping her audiences well entertained. Please call Larua Kesten for a brochure.

On the following day, Cynthia facilitates a powerful workshop, **WHAT WILL SET YOU FREE?** (Healing the Wounds of Trauma and Abuse) which offers an integrative experience assisting us in opening our hearts, surrendering the blame, guilt, shame, and rage, and finally, moving on with our lives in a new space where we can choose to live in joy and liberation. Location for both events: Kalamazoo Valley Community College.

SEPTEMBER 14	7:30 pm - 9:00 pm	Kalamazoo, MI	\$15/\$20 door
SEPTEMBER 15	10:00 am - 4:00 pm	Kalamazoo, MI	\$45

Cynthia is also available for private counseling sessions on Monday, September 16th.
Please contact Laura Kesten for more information.

YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN ILM

**Have you been taking advantage of ILM's programs lately —
our classes, workshops and retreats?**

If so, you are cordially invited to become a Member of Inner Light Ministries. Becoming a member of ILM is a powerful way to affirm your affinity with us and the work we are doing in the world. So, if this sounds good to you, please fill out the form below:

PLEASE CONSIDER ME A MEMBER OF INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES:

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Address: _____

Mail to : ILM, PO Box 1086, Dripping Springs, TX 78620

There are no "strings attached" to ILM membership: you do not have to give up any other memberships you may hold, neither will you ever be solicited for money by ILM.

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 awakening, 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. The following are presently scheduled:

SEPT. 23, OCT. 7, NOV. 18, & DEC. 9 11:00 am Brigade of Light

MEDITATIONS: Group meditations are held in conjunction with certain inter-faith holy days. Each session has a specific focus to assist us in working with the spiritual energies and symbols of that particular holy day. The sessions begin with a guided inner process and move into a time of silent contemplation. The gatherings are held from 8:00-9:00 pm, in our home at 6228 Lombard Place, Ft. Wayne. There is no fee. Please arrive between 7:45-8:00 pm, as we begin promptly at 8:00 pm.

SEPT. 17	Rosh HaShannah	Focus: setting our priorities
SEPT. 26	Yom Kippur	Focus: reviewing our lives and embracing forgiveness
NOV. 1	All Saints Day	Focus: honoring holy men & women from all traditions
NOV. 20	Thanksgiving	Focus: expressing gratitude for our many blessings
DEC. 9	Hanukkah & Advent	Focus: re-dedicating our inner temples and preparing for the birth of the Christ within
DEC. 30	New Year's	Focus: setting our intentions for the year and a world peace prayer

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 sometimes scheduled spontaneously as an inspiration arises within the group.

OCT. 27	Harvest gathering	6:00 pm	6228 Lombard Pl.	Ft. Wayne
DEC. 11	ILM Christmas gathering	7:00 pm	6228 Lombard Pl.	Ft. Wayne

MYSTICAL CHRIST STUDY GROUP: This is an continuing series exploring the mystical teachings at the heart of the Jewish/Christian tradition. We learn chants, meditation techniques, prayers, and other practices for deepening our inner life.

SHABBAT **OCT. 5-6, NOV. 16-17, and DEC. 7-8** 6228 Lombard Pl. Donation
(registration is limited to on-going students of the "Mystical Christ" series only; advance registration required)

WORKSHOP **OCT. 6** Sat. 12:00 pm - 5:00 pm 6228 Lombard Pl. Donation
(registration for the workshop is open to all; no previous participation is required)

MEETING **NOV. 3** Sat. 11:00 am - 4:00 pm Richland, MI Donation
Focus: Group discussion and meditation (in Jack & Paula Roach's home)
Call 616-629-4258 for directions and information.

The study group will meet (without Steven) for a discussion of the "Mystical Kabbalah" tape series and to meditate together. All are welcome.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT:

As part of the World Day of Prayer, Steven will be joining with other spiritual leaders in the Ft. Wayne area in a community prayer service.

SEPT. 13	7 - 9 pm	Unity Christ Church	Ft. Wayne, IN	No charge
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INNER LIGHT MINISTRIES CALENDAR

PRESENTED BY STEVEN R. MCAFEE: FAMILY PROGRAMS

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

FAMILY PROGRAMS: This fall we will be offering a new series of monthly family programs in Ft. Wayne. Participation is open to all; no prior involvement is necessary. Children and teens will learn simple concentration, prayer, and meditation practices that can be done at home. We will also be exploring together the literal, symbolic, and hidden levels of meaning in the parables of Jesus. If you are interested in getting involved, please call Steven for more details. Donations will be accepted.

Introductory meeting:	SEPT. 23: 2 - 4 pm	6228 Lombard Pl.	Ft. Wayne
Regular monthly meetings:	OCT. 7, NOV. 4, DEC. 2: 2 - 4 pm (1st. Sunday of every month)	3232 Crescent Ave. Unity Christ Church	Ft. Wayne

SPIRITUAL RENEWAL RETREAT: Though the calendar says that New Year's Day is January 1, for many of us, with the onset of our new back-to-school-and-work activities, our "new year" feels as if it actually begins in the fall. Come join us for the weekend at GilChrist to begin a new year of spiritual renewal. Make a new start by planting the seeds you want to grow in your garden. We'll look at our lives and begin to weed out those activities and patterns that choke out the flowers of our enthusiasm and creativity. Remember, it's your garden.

SEPT. 14-16 Fri. 7:30 pm - Sun. 12 noon GilChrist Three Rivers, MI \$125

APPLIED SPIRITUAL COMMITMENT PROGRAM: This new program is open to any who feel called to integrate more spiritual focus and practice into their everyday life. Have you been:

- thinking about meditating, praying, studying, but never getting around to it?
- wanting to create more space for the Divine Presence in your world?
- sensing that it is time to make your spiritual life a higher priority?
- considering making a serious commitment to your spiritual growth?
- having an intuitive feeling that something important is about to happen?

If so, this program may be part of the next step on your spiritual journey. If you are inspired to consider this program, please plan to join us at the orientation luncheon from 11:00 am - 2:00 pm on Saturday, September 8th in Ft. Wayne. There is no charge for the orientation, and there will be no registration at the door. ***To attend the orientation, you must make advance reservations with Steven (219-485-2167), no later than August 31st.***

SEPT. 8 11:00 am - 2:00 pm Hilton Hotel Ft. Wayne No charge

The meetings for the remainder of this year will take place from 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm on the third Sunday of every month: Oct. 21, Nov. 18, and Dec. 16.

ADVANCED NOTICE:

SILENT RETREAT

All spiritual traditions speak of the importance of cultivating inner awareness, of developing enhanced sensitivity to the subtle movements of the Divine Spirit within us. Practicing outer silence in a supportive community can assist us in quieting the mind and calming the heart so that we can become more awake to the "still, small voice" of our own soul. There are so few quiet places in our everyday world — the shops that blare incessant loud music, the noise of our cities, and the babble of electronic entertainment — drown out the sweet sounds of God's Spirit. Take a weekend away to slow down, to listen again to the gentle rhythms of life.

JAN. 18-20 Fri. 7:30 pm - Sun. 12:00 pm GilChrist Three Rivers, MI \$125

(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.)

THE WAY OF THE DISCIPLE

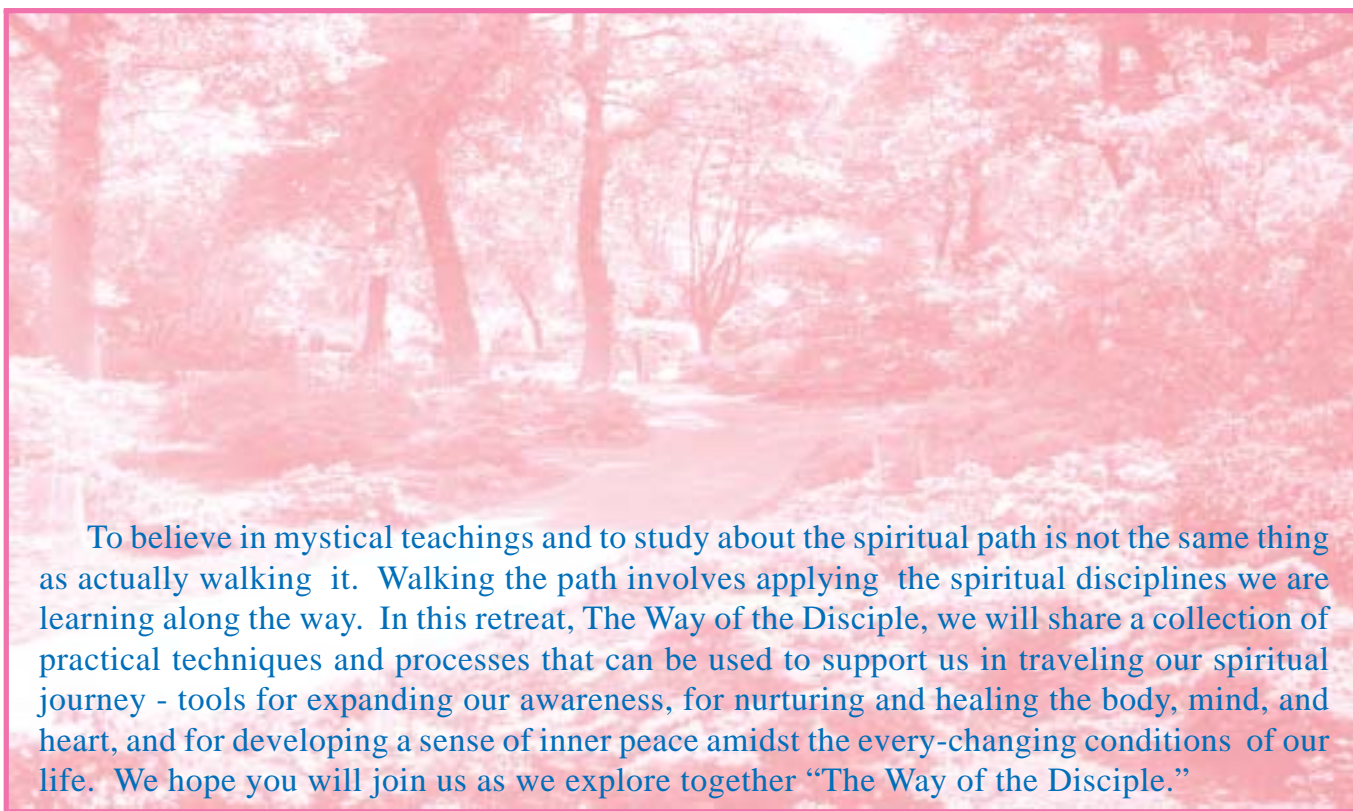
with ILM's Jim Gordon, Brian Yeakey, Laura Kesten, and Steven McAfee

DATE: Friday, November 9 - Sunday, November 11, 2001

TIME: FRIDAY, 7:30 PM - 12:30 PM, SUNDAY

PLACE: Seasons at the Fetzer Institute Kalamazoo, MI

COST: \$100



To believe in mystical teachings and to study about the spiritual path is not the same thing as actually walking it. Walking the path involves applying the spiritual disciplines we are learning along the way. In this retreat, The Way of the Disciple, we will share a collection of practical techniques and processes that can be used to support us in traveling our spiritual journey - tools for expanding our awareness, for nurturing and healing the body, mind, and heart, and for developing a sense of inner peace amidst the every-changing conditions of our life. We hope you will join us as we explore together "The Way of the Disciple."

For registration contact: Steven McAfee, ILM Midwest Coordinator—Phone: 219-485-2167, Fax: 219-486-9747.

ILM REGISTRATION FORM:

Please send check (payable to ILM) along with this registration form to:
STEVEN MCAFEE, 6228 LOMBARD PLACE, FORT WAYNE, IN 46815

(Please print)

THE WAY OF THE DISCIPLE

NAME(S):

ADDRESS & ZIP CODE:

DAYTIME PHONE:

EVENING PHONE:

NEW TAPE

Practicing Meditation — Connecting With The Divine

NEW TAPE

A NEW TAPE BY STEVEN MCAFEE

This tape is a seminar by ILM minister Steven McAfee on Meditation: including information on what meditation is, suggestions on how to practice meditation, and also including a short guided meditation. Steven's talk was part of an ILM weekend retreat called "In the Heart of Hearts," and so in the talk Steven makes mention of various 'hearts': the physical heart, and also the emotional heart, mental heart, and our spiritual heart.

Meditation And The Healing Process

BY BRIAN YEAKY

A seminar by ILM Minister Brian Yeakey; beginning with a short meditation followed by a talk on the spiritual healing process and the role meditation plays in that process.

TAPES BY JIM GORDON:

Three Meditations

Starry Sky Meditation, A Healing Meditation and Balancing The Consciousness Meditation

In my walk on the spiritual path the one thing I have found most significant has been the practice of spiritual techniques of meditation to help to awaken my inner consciousness. It is the practicing of these spiritual techniques on a regular basis that has helped me to have inner experiences, enabling me to know myself more fully as a living spirit, not just a body, in the world.

– Jim Gordon

Focusing On Christ

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.

A Soul's Journey

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.

Soul vs Ego

In this tape Jim speaks of the differences between the Soul and the ego and how a person can gain more awareness of Self as a Soul.

Angels

In this tape Jim shares his experiences of angels, describing guardian angels, archangels, healing angels and much more.

Guardian Angels

In this tape Jim Gordon discusses guardian angels and their relationships to you, your High Self and your Basic Self.

Abundance I

In this tape Jim shares simple techniques one can use to create and manifest greater abundance in one's life.

Abundance II

In this tape Jim continues his sharing of ways to create and manifest greater abundance in one's life.

To Order: Each tape is **\$8.95** (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 2-4 weeks for delivery.

WHAT IF I RUIN IT?

by Laura Kesten-Beaver,
ILM Minister

Some years ago I found a greeting card which I really liked, of a Native American Woman sitting next to a piece of pottery. Even though I have had limited experience in painting, I have a bit of an artistic bent, and I thought it would be fun to paint the woman and her pot in watercolor. So I bought a large sheet of watercolor paper, watercolor paints, brushes, a paint tray for mixing colors, an easel, and began my project. I was enjoying the process both externally and internally. Externally, I was delighted that my painting was taking a similar form to that of my greeting card. Internally, I was enjoying the process — the relationship between my creative self and my heart was awakening, and I felt incredibly peaceful.

I painted for a whole evening. Then I cleaned the brushes and promised myself that I would continue the next day. But then the next day came — and went — and I did not paint. “Just too busy,” I told myself — although I was not really that busy. In fact, over the next several days, I tip-toed quickly past the unfinished work many times. Soon, I decided that I needed the space to do something else. The painting was rolled up, the paints and brushes were put in the closet, the easel was taken down, and it all disappeared from my sight. Again I promised myself that I would finish — someday. But somehow I felt a little relieved that the painting was ‘out of sight, out of mind’.

Some months passed when, in the process of looking for something or other, I stumbled across the rolled up painting again. And this time I got out the easel, set it up, unrolled the painting, and placed it on the easel once again. I really liked what I had already done, and, I thought, maybe now was the time to finish it. I started to rummage through the closet to find the paints and brushes, but instead, found the something-or-other that I had originally gone looking for. Again, I felt a funny feeling of relief and stopped looking for the paints and brushes. And so the painting again sat on the easel.

Then, this past Mother’s Day, my daughter told me, “Mom, you can’t do anything today except ‘creative stuff’.” And ... I found myself in front of the painting once again. I studied my unfinished work, wondering why in the world it had taken me so long to get back to finishing it.

I located the paints and brushes in the closet, mixed one of the colors with water, dipped my brush in the

paint ... and let out an anxious sigh. I held my next breath and as I brushed the first stroke against the paper, I said to myself, “Well, here goes nothing!” I felt nervous, doubtful, defeated before I even began. I thought, “I didn’t feel any of this when I began so long ago — why now?”

As I continued to paint, I began listening to my inner voice as it shared with me answers to my question. In the beginning, I had no real attachment to the outcome, but as the painting progressed that first day, I saw that I was painting pretty well, and I began to focus on the product — and an expectation, an attachment, was formed. I had forgotten the incredible process of painting and how it had awakened my heart, and more importantly, I avoided finishing the painting because I was afraid I might “ruin it.” Therefore, if I didn’t finish it, it wouldn’t be ruined, and I wouldn’t feel like I failed.

This revelation encouraged me to ask myself more questions. “How often have I done this in my life? How often had I been willing to commit, willing to begin, but then unwilling to continue just because the outcome ‘might not be perfect’?” Somehow it seemed easier to ‘quit while I was ahead,’ than to ‘mess up’ and have to deal with the feelings of being a failure. And how often had I heard that message as a child: “Now look what you’ve done — you should have quit while you were ahead?” I continued to paint. More questions developed. “What if I do fail? What if I ruin this painting? What if the last stroke is the stroke that ruins it? Would I then fulfill the belief system that I should have quit while I was ahead — That if I keep going I would eventually mess up, ruin things?”

I smiled and thought, “I might” ... but then it occurred to me that I also might pick a different belief system! I could choose to believe that my painting is just fine, and accept the painting for all of its originality ... and even its imperfections. I thought of the anecdote about a Navajo artist or artisan deliberately putting an imperfection into each project, to remind himself that “Only God is perfect.” I closed my eyes, took a few deep breaths, and consciously released my attachment and fear about the outcome. I told myself, “By doing this painting I am expressing my creativity, and having fun, and the painting will be just fine when it is finished — period.” I started painting again, and as if by magic, the enjoyment I originally felt about the creative process returned: once again I felt the relationship between my creative self and my heart awaken, and I again felt incredibly peaceful ... and in the creative flow of life. ▲

MEDITATION—THE DIVINE REMEDY

by Steven McAfee
ILM Midwest Coordinator

When you hear the word “meditation,” what comes to mind? According to Webster’s Dictionary, “meditate” comes from the Latin word “meditatus,” which means, “to remedy.” Remedy? Now that’s a surprise. So what does remedy mean? “A treatment that relieves a disease; something that corrects or counteracts.” Hmmm, that’s intriguing. Is there something about meditation that “relieves” us, that “corrects and counteracts?” Let’s go through the steps we might take when we sit down to meditate, and see.

The meditation process usually begins with relaxation, perhaps by focusing on the breath moving in and out of our body. Once we feel relaxed and centered, we move to practicing concentration: bringing the attention to a single point of focus and holding it there for a period of time, the longer the better. For instance, think of a bright, red apple. There, you just did it, if only for a brief second. Of course, concentration is more ‘meditational’ if the object you think of is inspirational (unless apples happen to inspire you of course). There are two general types of objects upon which to concentrate in meditation.

- (1) a light or image: the meditator can inwardly picture a candle flame, a radiant sun, a beautiful star, the face of a beloved spiritual teacher, or the like.
- (2) a sound or mantra: the meditator can repeat, or chant, a sound or short phrase over and over. Chanting is often done verbally for several minutes, then continued inwardly for a time, and finally followed by a period of silent, attentive listening within. A chant can be a single syllable or sound, or it can be longer, such as a short inspirational verse.

For some people it is easier to use visual images, rather than sound; for some, the other way around. We all work differently, so it’s important to trust our own process. As we try to concentrate, we discover that the mind wants to run after a thousand different things — other sounds, images, movements, thoughts, feelings, memories ... the list of distractions is endless. When we realize our attention has drifted, it is important that we gently return it once again to the point of focus, without

regrets or self-recriminations. Just concentrate, again and again. How many times do we do this? As many times as the mind wanders off. This is the “discipline” part of a meditation practice.

Over time, as our concentration improves and we learn to steadily hold the object of concentration in our mind, we automatically move into the next phase: contemplation. When our attention becomes absorbed in that upon which we are concentrating, then we are said to be contemplating upon the object. We pass beyond focusing upon our subject to experiencing it at a much deeper level than our everyday consciousness allows. This is hard to describe in words, and really just has to be experienced. As the mind becomes fully engaged in contemplation, it no longer demands our constant attention in the way it normally does. However, the mind has not become empty or passive; on the contrary, it has become more actively engaged than ever, just in a truly ‘concentrated’ manner. At the instant that this happens, the mind has become somewhat free from its normal scattered entanglements, and we find ourselves beginning to ascend into ‘spiritual dimensions’. This is actually the beginning of real inner meditation, the threshold to the inner kingdom of God, which saints and mystics in every age speak of with great devotion and awe.

When we touch into this stage of our journey, we find that we are not who we thought we were. We experience a dawning realization that our fulfillment in life is actually to complete our spiritual journey and return back home to God. And every time we meditate, we become more and more aware that we are not our minds, but rather ‘souls’, made in the image of the living God, who is Spirit. So, returning again to Webster, this is how meditation “corrects” that which is mistaken in us — by clearing away our old awareness of our complicated and entangled illusions about ourselves and others. Through meditation we see things with new ever-clearer eyes and, as our meditation progresses further, we also find a new divine heart of compassion awakened in us. Ultimately, our meditation “remedies” the very pain of our own ‘broken-ness’, our separation from God. Meditation is an ongoing courtship with the divine. And when practiced with sincerity and devotion, it becomes, a wedding with the Beloved — the one whose touch makes everything within us whole again. ▲

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 indivi-

¥ NEW TAPE BY STEVEN MCAFEE ¥

Practicing Meditation — Connecting With The Divine

“Meditation is a type of transcendence — it is where your awareness transcends or exceeds its normal limits or goes in a different place. You’re aware of much more than you used to be aware of. Meditation is a paradox. The paradox is you start by confining your attention to this little point and by doing that you get this vast awareness, as opposed to trying to be aware of everything and being aware of next to nothing.”



Please see page 9 for more information about this tape.

dual 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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