

## UPDATE FROM THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATION

*“It shall be the duty of the Committee on Publication to correct in a Christian manner impositions on the public in regard to Christian Science, injustices done Mrs. Eddy or members of this Church by the daily press, by periodicals or circulated literature of any sort.” Church Manual, Article XXXIII, Section 2*

### ***Message from the Manager of Committees on Publication***

Like so many of you, I’ve continued to cherish the theme from this year’s Annual Meeting. I’ve loved reflecting on what church officers and members from around the world shared about how they’ve come to see and understand what it means to be “... the light of the world” and to “Let your light so shine....” The refrain from the hymn we sang together to close Annual Meeting captures it beautifully:

Rise and shine, your light has come,  
God the everlasting sun.  
Christ has given us this light—  
Radiate God’s glory.  
(*Christian Science Hymnal*, No. 589:2)

Singing these powerful words to the lively melody is such a rousing affirmation that we each love to praise God, we love to give the glory to God and His Christ, we love to let the light of Christ shine in our hearts and shine through us, radiating out to lift, comfort, care for, and embrace others. Each Christian Scientist naturally loves to gratefully and humbly bear witness to the healing Christ in a way that allows those around them to feel, see, and be blessed by the Comforter. As one church officer shared from Mrs. Eddy, “Man is the idea of Spirit; he reflects the beatific presence, illuming the universe with light” (*Science and Health*, 266:27–29 (to 1st.)).

This natural, honest, selfless expression is the most immediate and direct correction to impositions on the public in regard to Christian Science. It directly supports the work of Committees on Publication around the world, who remain alert for opportunities to help the public have a clearer sense of Christian Science and the biblical foundation upon which it is built. Committees on Publication remain steadfast and active in correcting impositions on the public regarding our Christianity, our healing practice, our members, and our Founder. It truly is more than a work of a select few; it is necessarily a collective demonstration of our Church – each of you as members has an important role to play.

Whether you are comfortable talking with others about Christian Science in a corrective way, or are cherishing the idea, your local Committee on Publication is a resource and a support. They are glad to share their perspective and experience. They remain ready and are embracing opportunities to connect with members. You are also warmly invited to reach out to them. They love to field your calls. You might also consider inviting them to speak with members of your branch church or society. Wonderful things happen as we cherish the realization that we are joint heirs with Christ, sharing the healing light of the Comforter with humanity.

I’ll share two examples of members and their Committee working together to respond to corrective opportunities as an expression of one worldwide church.

First, a religiously affiliated university reached out to a branch church in Berlin, Germany, seeking to schedule a visit for a group of students who were learning about various religious communities and their beliefs. Two weeks before, the branch members participated in a “Talking about Christian Science” workshop facilitated by the Church Activities department of The Mother Church, and this university request seemed like a natural outcome of the members’ prayerful receptivity. The branch then reached out to the Committee on Publication for Germany for support in preparing for the event, including assistance with responding to questions from the students with accurate information about Christian Science that would help to correct and heal any impositions on thought.

Branch members and the Committee met all together to prepare. As a result of the meeting, the members felt ready to listen for God’s guidance step-by-step, assured that the Christ is always speaking, inspired to share what they love about Christian Science and their community, and prepared to answer questions about what Christian concepts like “sacrament” and “trinity” mean to us.

During the university visit, students asked genuine and thoughtful questions. Though the Committee was present to support, members fielded the questions. Students were interested to know, for instance, what the “science” in Christian Science means, what Christian Science practitioners do, what the cross means to us, whether Mary Baker Eddy’s book is like a Bible to us, how we explain evil if God is all good, whether we have rituals, whether our church takes a political stance, how healing happens, and what we do to support young people.

Afterwards, several members shared how touched they were by the experience. One said, “We truly enjoyed their sincere, earnest and respectful approach of asking questions. They were really interested in what we had to share.”

The second example comes from Massachusetts, where a local newspaper invites community churches to take turns contributing articles to a regular interfaith column. A few members of the local Christian Science branch church take turns writing articles and often reach out to the Massachusetts Committee Office for perspective about offering the public something that we hope will provide readers with a clear sense of Christian Science and our church, and in a way that is approachable and understandable. Recently, a member who serves as her branch’s Assistant Committee on Publication felt led to write an article that would address the needs of her community while also dispelling common misconceptions about Christian Science by attesting to the truths we hold dear.

The Assistant Committee and I (as Manager I also serve as the Committee on Publication for Massachusetts) considered this opportunity together. We both listened for God’s guidance about how the inspiration that was coming to her for the article could be expressed to the public through a local newspaper — a different approach than writing for the Christian Science periodicals. The resulting article unfolded naturally, focused on how God’s love for mankind can help heal division and wash away hatred.

Here are a few excerpts from the brief published article, “In the Spirit: ‘God is Love’ and all-powerful”:

The Bible teaches that “God is love” (1 John 4:8). Not simply that God can be loving, but that love is the very substance and nature of God’s being.

Love is who God is. Elsewhere in the Bible, we read of God's omnipotence (Revelation 19:6), which means that the God who is Love is all-powerful — has the authority and power to overrule hatred, conflict, and division.

This may seem almost naïve when we hear so much about war, hatred, and division in the news these days, weighing down our spirits and adversely affecting our mental and physical health.

But what if it's true that we are the children of the one God who is omnipotent love? When we are willing to open our hearts to a deeper and fuller perspective, we get glimpses of our innate innocence and can find opportunities to help those in need, contributing to the healing of mental burdens that seem to be so prevalent these days....

...In my own life, I've been coming to see that each of us can make a difference in our neighborhood when we make a conscious choice to love even in the face of hatred, anger, and divisiveness, and see that this uplifted, powerful divine thought, even when held in the silence of our hearts, ripples out to bless and heal others.

Our own efforts are a good start at breaking through hatred and division, but as we recognize more fully the love that comes from the God of all creation — the God who is love — it makes all the difference.

With gratitude,



Scott C. Shivers, C.S.B.  
Manager, Christian Science Committees on Publication

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### ***Inspiration and updates from your Committee on Publication***

#### **Metaphysical inspiration guiding the Committee work:**

Mrs. Eddy states in our *Church Manual*, Article 33, "It shall be the duty of the Committee on Publication to correct in a Christian manner impositions on the public in regard to Christian Science,..." This corrective work always begins with prayer, with heartfelt communion with God, turning to Him for guidance and lifting thought to see the perfect man as made in the image and likeness of God. Starting from this premise, the only correct premise, allows branch church members to correct impositions in their own thought and listen for God's unfoldment of spiritual uplift and healing. This work is done with Christly love for our fellow-man, knowing that God is always at the helm, guiding our metaphysical work, which as a result brings healing and blessings to all.

There are many unique opportunities "to correct in a Christian manner impositions on the public in regard to Christian Science." Perhaps there is an imposition online, FaceBook, or in the news media. Perhaps we may overhear a conversation regarding a misstatement about Christian Science. I've found that true corrective work begins with correcting my own thought first. This is where healing takes place. Then, perhaps I am led to take practical steps in correcting in a loving manner, the imposition that has presented itself. Every Christian Scientist has the opportunity to do this corrective work. For example, one church

member found herself correcting the imposition that says, Christian Science is Scientology, while at the post office, mailing flyers for an upcoming Christian Science lecture. As she stood at the counter, speaking with the attendant who kept saying, “oh, I’ve heard of Scientology,” she prayed quietly to know what was the right thing to do. She saw this as an opportunity to clarify this misconception about Christian Science. She told the attendant that Christian Science is not the same thing as Scientology and she explained a little about Christian Science, that it is based on the Bible and Founded by Mary Baker Eddy. This church member even invited the attendant to the lecture. As she turned to leave, she saw that there were others in the post office who had most likely heard their conversation. She quietly gave gratitude to God for this corrective opportunity.

When these occasions to correct impositions on the public in regard to Christian Science arise, they are opportunities to express the Golden Rule; to have sincere love and gratitude for one another. They are opportunities to quietly turn to God in steadfast and humble prayer to show us how to go, how to see the true man, as did Jesus. Mrs. Eddy states in *Science and Health*, p. 476:32, “Jesus beheld in Science the perfect man, who appeared to him where sinning mortal man appears to mortals. In this perfect man the Saviour saw God’s own likeness, and this correct view of man healed the sick.” As we strive in our daily prayerful work to demonstrate Christly Love for one another and have the “correct view of man,” impositions may be lifted off the public thought and will bring a clearer understanding of the Comforter to the receptive thought.

### **Branch church/society visits and talks:**

It is always a joy to have the occasion to visit Missouri branch churches and societies, whether it is for a Committee on Publication church talk or attending a church service or lecture. I welcome the opportunity to meet with your branch church or society to share spiritual inspirations and insights with one another pertaining to Church, specific to the *Manual-By-Law*, Article 33, Committee on Publication. If your branch church or society is interested in having the Committee on Publication visit with your members, feel free to reach out and we can consider some possible dates and what this might look like. These visits allow us to come together and share gratitude for the continuous unfoldment of good and the demonstration of divine Love being expressed.

### **Assistant Committees:**

As always, I am thankful for the continuous, steadfast, and uplifting metaphysical support of each branch church/society’s Assistant Committee (ACOM). Assistant Committees play an important role in the *Manual*-based activity of the Committee on Publication. ACOMs provide an opportunity to support the Committee work both practically and metaphysically.

Communication between branch church ACOMs and the Committee on Publication enables both the Committee and the branch church/society to be aware of any impositions on the public that may arise in their jurisdiction. This communication allows Assistant Committees and the Committee on Publication to work closely together in a “Christian manner” to correct misconceptions regarding Christian Science. This role is appointed by the Committee on Publication as needed.

With love and gratitude,  
Susan Frank, C.S.B.  
Missouri Committee on Publication

***Contact COM:***

Susan Frank

Christian Science Committee on Publication for Missouri

167 Lamp and Lantern Village, Box 185

Chesterfield, MO 63017

[missouri@compub.org](mailto:missouri@compub.org)

Mobile: 314-503-8042

***Administrative Assistant:***

Allison Eggers

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

Mobile: 617-435-2884