

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN PORTLAND

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www.theosophical.org

A Branch of the Theosophical Society in America

2377 NW Kearney Street

Portland, Oregon 97210

SUNDAY AFTERNOON PUBLIC PROGRAMS – October 2014 – January 2015

Public programs begin promptly at 3:00 P.M. The door is open by 2:00 P.M. for your convenience

Please arrive early so as to avoid disrupting the presentation and others in the audience

Basic Concepts of Theosophy

Group Study. A number of our Sunday programs will be devoted to a basic concept of Theosophy presented in an informal format led by a branch member. As a group, we will study and discuss some of these influential concepts. All levels of interest are welcome.

Group Meditation

You are invited to join in a group meditation led by a branch member on the following dates: October 12, 26, November 2, 9, 23, December 7, January 4, from 2:15 – 2:45 p.m. All levels of interest are welcome.

October 12 Group meditation – 2:15–2:45 p.m.

October 12 **NEW PERSPECTIVES ON MEDITATION** – *Judith Sugg, Ph.D.*

This program will focus on new perspectives on meditation, including current research and uses of meditation and mindfulness practices, and a new process which assists new or experienced meditators in reaching the states of awareness and connection. The program is a combination of lecture and interaction and practice.

Judith Sugg, Ph.D. is interested in the intersection of psychology and yoga and meditation. She has been teaching hatha yoga and meditation for 20 years. In her dissertation, she compared the Yoga Sutras and Sankhya Karikas from a psychological perspective. She is a licensed counselor, trainer, and adjunct instructor. Judy is a long-time member of the Theosophical Society.

October 19 **Basic Concepts of Theosophy–INTRODUCTION TO THEOSOPHY** – Group Study

Dedicated to man's eternal search for the Divine, Theosophy could be described as a synthesis of religion, science, and philosophy. It asserts the fundamental unity of all existence and holds that all things, including both forms and consciousness, are evolving. Topics covered will include a discussion of the Theosophical world view and the objects of the Theosophical Society.

October 26 Group meditation – 2:15–2:45 p.m.

October 26 **PLATO'S BOOK OF THE DEAD** – *Patricia Fulbright*

In Plato's dialog the *Phaedo*, friends join Socrates to spend his last hours before execution by lethal dose of hemlock poison. Together these friends discuss the nature of death and whether the human soul is indestructible and immortal. This presentation examines and elaborates Socrates' art of dying as a process for separating the soul from the body. In the dialogue, Socrates asserts that this art is the practice of philosophy, which "persuades the soul to withdraw from the senses ... and bids the soul to gather itself together by itself" (83 B) in preparation for the mythic journey into the Underworld, the land of the dead.

Patricia Fulbright has taught Greek mythology and literature at Clark College. She is a life long student of Neoplatonic philosophy and ancient Greek literature.

November 2 Group meditation – 2:15–2:45 p.m.

November 2 **Basic Concepts of Theosophy – THE THEOSOPHICAL VIEW OF MAN AND HIS SEVEN FIELDS** – Group Study

Interpenetrating the dense matter of our physical world are other “higher” planes or fields composed of finer grades of matter vibrating at higher frequencies. In the same way, man also has “higher” fields composed of these finer grades of matter interpenetrating his dense physical body. Today’s study group discussion will cover man’s seven fields and his vehicles of expression in them.

November 9 Group meditation – 2:15–2:45 p.m.

November 9 **THE BAHÁ’Í FAITH – FULFILLMENT OF AN ANCIENT PROMISE**
– *Elizabeth Donaldson*

The Baha’i Faith is an independent world religion that began in the mid-1800s in Iran. Baha’is believe that there is only one God and therefore only one religion. All of the world’s divine teachers (Jesus, Muhammad, Buddha, Moses, Abraham, Krishna, etc.) bring essentially the same message – one of unity, love and knowledge of God or the divine. The Prophets of God are the Mediators of God. All the Prophets and Messengers have come from One Holy Spirit and bear the Message of God, fitted to the age in which they appear.

Elizabeth Donaldson is a graduate of Oregon State University. She recently retired and is moving to Portland to be with family. She has been a member of the Baha’i Faith for 31 years.

November 16 **SERVING HUMANITY SUBJECTIVELY** – *Linda Phelps*

We’re all familiar with forms of “objective” service such as protecting watersheds or delivering food to hurricane survivors. “Subjective” service, on the other hand, offers a powerful way to serve the planet through visualization and the power of thought. Unlike political activism or some forms of objective aid, subjective service does not promote particular solutions. We’ll consider specific ways to serve subjectively, from helping a friend or animal in need to aiding the work of the World Economic Forum to working with the planetary etheric body. In all cases, love and understanding are the bases of all true service.

TS member *Linda Phelps* was a political activist for 18 years, helping, in her own small way, to combat racism, oppose the War in Vietnam, and start the women’s movement. These days, she attempts to serve on the “inner planes”.

November 23 Group meditation – 2:15–2:45 p.m.

November 23 **SPIRITUAL CINEMA** – *3 short videos followed by group discussion*

PLEASE JOIN US IN SUPPORTING THE CHIEF JOSEPH/OCKLEY GREEN K-8 SCHOOL BACKPACK PROGRAM, which sends backpacks of nutritional food items home with low-income students to support them on non-school days. Following today’s program, we will accept donations in support of this important program which feeds hungry children in Portland. Thank you!

Today’s Spiritual Cinema offerings are three stories on human connections:

Mr. Mergler’s Gift – This special documentary looks at the relationship between a dedicated piano teacher and his prodigal student. The love and devotion between these two people makes its own kind of beautiful music.

Full Circle – This sweet story of “love from afar” set in an Irish village affirms the validity of our inner feelings and the courage it takes to act upon them.

Passengers – A subway car in New York, where no one will look anyone else in the eye, is the last place on earth you’d expect a real human connection to take place!

November 30 Library closed for Thanksgiving Holiday. No public program.

December 7 Group meditation – 2:15–2:45 p.m.

December 7 **Basic Concepts of Theosophy – KARMA** – Group Study

A study of karma would suggest that nothing happens by chance. Join us for a group discussion of how Theosophy explains karma as the impersonal law of cause and effect in our individual lives as well as at such broader levels as family karma and national karma.

December 14 Library open, no public program.

December 21 Library closed for Christmas Holiday. No public program.

December 28 Library closed for New Year's Holiday. No public program.

January 4 Group meditation – 2:15–2:45 p.m.

January 4 **Basic Concepts of Theosophy – REINCARNATION** – Group Study

Theosophy tells us that reincarnation is the means for the evolution of consciousness, with the ultimate flowering of each individual into a perfected being who graduates from the school of human life. Why don't we remember our past lives? How do our past lives affect us today? Our group discussion will cover these and other questions.

January 11 **ZOROASTRIANISM** – *Leslie Rainey*

Zoroastrianism, the ancient fire religion which originated in Persia, envisions the great battle between good and evil. Today's lecture will focus on the main tenets and history of Zoroastrianism, which became a source for many Christian, Jewish, and Islamic traditions and customs. Zoroastrianism is still practiced in Iran and India today.

Leslie Rainey is the Librarian of the Portland lodge and a student of Theosophy.

January 18 **WAGNER AND BUDDHISM** – *Paul Schofield*

PLEASE NOTE: THIS IS A SPECIAL LONGER PROGRAM running from 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m

Opera composer Richard Wagner first encountered Buddhism in 1854 at the age of 41, and continued reading as many books on Buddhism and Hinduism as he could during the rest of his life. In 1856 he sketched the outline for a Buddhist opera titled *Die Sieger* (The Victors), an opera about the Buddha himself and his founding of the Order of *Bhikkhunis* (female monks). Wagner incorporated Buddhist and Hindu ideas into his later operas, from *Tristan und Isolde* through *The Ring of the Nibelung* and his final, greatest opera, *Parsifal*.

In this program, Paul Schofield will explain the basics of Buddhist teachings on karma, rebirth, and the path to enlightenment as portrayed in Wagner's last operas. Subjects will also include Wagner's use of the Grail legends as well as his use of the Germanic and Norse myths and sagas. The program will allow time for a generous question and answer session at the end, permitting audience members to ask questions about Buddhism, Wagner's ideas on religion and art, his music dramas, the Grail legends, Teutonic mythology, and how all of these topics relate to theosophy.

Paul Schofield is the author of *The Redeemer Reborn: Parsifal as the Fifth Opera of Wagner's Ring* (Amadeus Press, 2007), as well as many articles on the subject of Wagner and Buddhism. He spent nine years as a Zen Buddhist monk, and returned to lay life in order to write and lecture on this subject.

This is the end of the first half of this season's programs.

The program for next spring will be distributed in January.

A contribution of \$5.00 is appreciated. An informal social hour follows all presentations.

Your donations are critical to funding our Sunday public program series.

We turn no one away for lack of funds, yet ask that you be as generous as you can be with your donations. Thank you.

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LOCATION:

2377 N.W. Kearney Street, Portland, Oregon 97210
Telephone: 503-223-6861

LIBRARY HOURS:

Fridays 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. (beginning September 5, 2014)
Sundays 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. (beginning September 7, 2014)
(but closed from 3:00 - 4:00 p.m. during Sunday public programs)
The library will be closed on Sundays following major holidays.

◇ ◇ ◇ ◇ ◇ **We welcome book donations.** ◇ ◇ ◇ ◇ ◇
We have new and used books for sale. Please check with our librarian.

The Theosophical World View

The Theosophical Society, while reserving for each member full freedom to interpret those teachings known as theosophy, is dedicated to preserving and realizing the ageless wisdom, which embodies both a world view and a vision of human self-transformation.

This tradition is founded upon certain *fundamental propositions*:

Every existent being – from atom to galaxy – is rooted in the same universal, life-creating Reality. This Reality is all-pervasive, but it can never be summed up in its parts, since it transcends all its expressions. It reveals itself in the purposeful, ordered, and meaningful processes of nature as well as in the deepest recesses of the mind and spirit.

Recognition of the unique value of every living being expresses itself in reverence for life, compassion for all, sympathy with the need of all individuals to find truth for themselves, and respect for all religious traditions. The ways in which these ideals become realities in individual life are both the privileged choice and the responsible act of every human being.

Central to the concerns of theosophy is the *desire to promote understanding and brotherhood* among people of all races, nationalities, philosophies, and religions. Therefore, all people, whatever their race, creed, sex, caste, or color, are invited to participate equally in the life and work of the Society. *The Theosophical Society imposes no dogmas*, but points toward the source of unity beyond all differences. *Devotion to truth, love for all living beings, and commitment to a life of active altruism* are the marks of the true theosophist.