

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN PORTLAND

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A Branch of the Theosophical Society in America

2377 NW Kearney Street

Portland, Oregon 97210

SUNDAY AFTERNOON PUBLIC PROGRAMS – February – May, 2015

Public programs begin promptly at 3:00 P.M. and generally run an hour or so.

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 branch members. 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 occasional Sundays from 2:15 – 2:45 p.m. (see dates below). All levels of interest are welcome.

February 1 **SUNDAY AFTERNOON AT THE MOVIES - *Groundhog Day***

How best to while away a lazy afternoon in the middle of winter? Join us for a viewing of the movie *Groundhog Day*, an entertaining film that asks the question “How many attempts does it take to figure life out?” Popcorn will be served.

February 8 Group meditation – 2:15–2:45 p.m.

February 8 **Basic Concepts of Theosophy – DHARMA – Group Study**

The concept of Dharma can be defined as duty, sometimes law, sometimes morality, and sometimes righteousness. As Annie Besant says in her book on the subject, “Morality is an individual thing and varies with the dharma of the individual.... Hence, what is right for one is wrong for another. There is nothing absolute in a conditioned universe.” And, as Krishna said in the Bhagavad Gita, “Better is one’s own Dharma, though destitute of merit, than the well executed Dharma of another...” In light of the complexity of the present world situation with many individuals, nations and religions struggling to co-exist, our discussion will address the absolute and relative levels of Dharma, from the perspective of the individual to the state.

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

February 15 **PLATO’S SYMPOSIUM – *Patricia Fulbright***

One evening long ago, old friends at a wine-filled dinner party (an ancient Greek symposium) celebrate their comrade's first prize at the Dionysian Drama Festival of Athens--imagine an Academy Award. After eating, they agree to talk of erotic love and to share stories revealing its secrets: is love always a good thing? is love the same as sexual attraction? does everyone have an ideal love match somewhere? can love carry humans beyond ordinary experience into a transcendent divine state? (cont.)

In his speech, Socrates describes the mysteries of love he learned from his teacher Diotima, wise priestess and prophet. He reveals a path of love reaching from the human sexual impulse to the experience of Divine Beauty itself.

This presentation will focus on highlights and reflections of *The Symposium*.

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

March 1 Group meditation – 2:15–2:45 p.m.

March 1 **Basic Concepts of Theosophy – POWER OF THOUGHT** – Group Study

An early member of the Theosophical Society wrote that thought “is a power possessed by all, but intelligently used as yet by few.” Thought by itself can be used positively or negatively and is one of the ways we generate karma. Today’s group study discussion will center on the nature and effects of thought.

March 8 Group meditation – 2:15–2:45 p.m.

March 8 **LIVE STORYTELLING PROGRAM**

This afternoon you are invited to attend a special storytelling event at the Theosophical Society. Our volunteers will present a variety of stories for your entertainment and enlightenment. Please join us for what promises to be a delightful program.

March 22 Group meditation – 2:15–2:45 p.m.

March 22 **DOGS, PLANTS, AND THE PARANORMAL** – *David Bruce*

The world around us is both ordinary and strange. The mundane aspects of life are well known, but what about those peculiar yet persistent occurrences that violate our sense of what is possible, at least according to the rules of modern science? These phenomena, which have been observed by thousands, have been called the *supernatural*, the *occult*, or the *paranormal*. They have also been called humbug and fabrications by skeptics. Are the skeptics right, or does there exist scientific evidence which validates some of these inexplicable happenings?

David Bruce is a third generation Theosophist. He was active in the Milwaukee Lodge for eighteen years before moving to the TSA national headquarters in 2003 to serve as Director of Education. In 2010 he was promoted to the position of National Secretary, a job that entails working with local lodges and study centers across the country. David also manages the prison program as well as the National Lodge of the TSA. He has given lectures and workshops to many Theosophical groups throughout the United States.

April 5 Library closed for Easter Sunday. No public program.

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

April 12 **Basic Concepts of Theosophy – MEDITATION** – Group Study

It has been said that prayer is when we talk to God, and meditation is when God talks to us. By quieting the “monkey mind,” the lower mind that flits constantly between details and attachments of our daily lives, we can strengthen the higher mind to help us realize our true spiritual being. A steady practice of meditation can increasingly shift our focus from the physical plane to the higher planes to help us achieve this Realization. A discussion of various types and importance of meditation will be beneficial for neophytes and experienced meditators alike.

April 19 **WAKING UP TO THE DREAMTIME** – *Steve Herrington*

Take a look into the Australian Aboriginal experience and ideas of the Dreamtime, an ancient perspective of Reality encompassing not just creation mythology, cultural heritage, healing, community laws, metaphysical cosmology and archetype-rooted geography but the daily experience of the spirituality and magic eternally inherent in the human condition.

Steve Herrington is a local Portland artist, author, and student of multicultural esoteric traditions.

May 3 Group meditation – 2:15–2:45 p.m.

May 3 **GNOSTICISM** – *Steven Marshall*

Steven will present a brief survey of the history of Gnosticism, the aspects of their worldview that are common to all mystical traditions, and an introduction to how it is practiced today as a living tradition. Significant figures of the Theosophical movement who played major roles in the revival and promulgation of Gnosticism will be brought to light.

Steven Marshall, an auxiliary bishop of the Ecclesia Gnostica and rector of the Queen of Heaven Gnostic Church, has been a member of the Theosophical Society since 2001 and an ardent student of H. P. Blavatsky’s writings since 1972. He studied Tarot and Kaballah through the lessons of the Builders of the Adytum (BOTA) for over thirteen years. He attended courses in alchemy, astrology and Kaballah in 1975 and 1976 at the Paracelsus Research Society under the direction of Frater Albertus. A baccalaureate degree in Psychology and a background in Jungian studies have given him a distinctly psychological approach to the occult sciences. He has been published in the Golden Dawn Journal and other periodicals. He has lectured for the Portland Gnostic Society since 1982.

This is the end of the second half of this season’s programs.

The program for next fall will be distributed in late summer.

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.

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

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LOCATION:

2377 N.W. Kearney Street, Portland, Oregon 97210
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LIBRARY HOURS:

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

. 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.