

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN PORTLAND

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A Branch of the Theosophical Society in America

2377 NW Kearney Street

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SUNDAY AFTERNOON PUBLIC PROGRAMS – February – May, 2017

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

The door (and library) opens by 2:00 P.M. for your convenience.

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

An informal social hour follows all presentations.

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.

February 5 **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 12 **THE ART OF DYING** – *Christine Maitland, Ph.D.*

How can death be practiced? No one has returned from the experience to guide us, although there are people who report near death experiences. What is death? Is there anything that survives it? These questions have intrigued thinkers of all times. There are many ideas and beliefs about the afterlife, i.e. eternal life in heaven/hell, reincarnation, nothing at the end of physical life. There are guides to practice dying: a practice of separating the soul (mind) from the body; Plato's *Phaedo*, a dialogue about death and rebirth; the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, an account of the 49 days of afterlife to rebirth; Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, who studied the stages of death; and the deaths of some of the meditation masters.

Christine Maitland, Ph.D., taught philosophy classes for a decade including, *The Philosophy of Death and Dying*.

February 19 **MEGALITHS AND THE PREHISTORIC PAST** – *Robert Caldwell, M.Sc.*

Megaliths, or Great Stones, represent the remaining links to prehistoric civilizations. Great Stone Age structures are found world wide, and, while many have been destroyed, there remain thousands of astounding prehistoric structures at which to marvel and contemplate. These megaliths reveal the existence of prehistoric societies with cooperative, coordinated labor forces, inter-cultural trade partners,

and ancestral worship practices predating the earliest known civilizations. Little else is known of these early people.

Robert Caldwell is a member of the Megalithic Portal Society, which works to promote historical and archaeological research of megalithic and prehistoric sites. Robert is a megalithic explorer and invites seekers to appreciate the amazing past as told by extant megaliths and ways to access the prehistoric past through the many megalithic communities and websites.

March 5 **BROTHERHOOD** - *Barbara Hebert*

Unity is the first Object of the Theosophical Society, but it can be difficult to live in harmony with others. In today's program we will explore the meaning of unity (brotherhood/sisterhood) and discuss ways in which we can implement its practice into our lives. Our world today, more than ever, impels us to delve into this topic and its actualization in our daily lives.

Dr. Barbara B. Hebert is the Director of the University Counseling Center at Southeastern Louisiana University and is a Licensed Professional Counselor. Barbara is a third generation theosophist and has served in local, regional, and national offices throughout her thirty-six years of membership in the Theosophical Society in America. She currently serves as Vice President of the TSA.

March 12 **DEVELOPING SPIRITUAL WISDOM** – *a video with Pablo Sender, 54 minutes*

In this video, Pablo Sender explores going beyond concepts to directly experience the spiritual life. He explains that while the teachings help to change our perspective, we must raise our consciousness to a region that is beyond the senses in order to discover the innate wisdom of our spiritual nature. Theosophy teaches that there is just one universal consciousness and that each of us expresses only a fraction of that greater universal Self. We must transcend our physical, emotional, and mental natures in order to directly know that greater life.

March 19 **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.

April 2 **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 9 **PYTHAGORAS** – *Morelle Forster*

Pythagoras, the Adept, was one of the truly great figures of history. Most of us know very little about him, and what we do know about him is usually confined to scattered bits of information -- his philosophy, his ability with numbers and his formulation of 'that theorem', his music, and his birth in Samos. Very few of us have a more comprehensive view of him, e.g. the power of his intellect and heart, his marriage, his school, his educational methods, and his influence on government. Also, not many of us know that the Oracle of Delphi told his young parents, even before they had conceived him, that they would have 'a son who will be useful to all men for all time.' This talk, while only covering a very small portion of his achievements, aims to look more closely at the man and his philosophy, to give him some personality and context, so that we can begin to intuit a little of his greatness. They were certainly turbulent times, and that turbulence resumed after his death, and the little oasis of light he created in its midst was swamped. However, his teachings and his influence very much survived.

Morelle Forster, MA, CQSW, LPC (VA), is a counselor, psychotherapist and author. She emigrated from the UK to the US seven years ago and now practices as a Life Coach. Her interests include connecting with nature (she does not believe a harmonious life can be achieved without a strong connection to the world of nature), studying American Indian philosophy, as well as the lives of great teachers.

April 16 Library closed for Easter Sunday. No public program.

April 30 **OLYMPIAN HERMES: LORD OF FORTUNE, TRAVEL, AND KNOWLEDGE**
– *Patricia Fulbright*

Ancient Greeks honored Hermes as "the friendliest of gods to men and most generous giver." He sometimes offers us good fortune with unexpected rewards and recognition: a bonus or promotion at work, first prize in a game, good luck in love matters. But this mercurial god might instead favor the thief, robber, cheat, or con artist. Hermes conveys messages from the gods to humans and guides travelers, particularly those souls on their journey from earth to the realms of Hades. He is both inventor of the alphabet and musical scales and teacher of hidden wisdom and occult knowledge.

This lecture will explore the character and deeds of Hermes together with his relationship to the Egyptian gods Thoth and Anubis and to the Hindu god Pushan.

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

This is the end of the second half of this season's programs.
The program for next fall will be distributed in late September.

While all of our Sunday programs are free, donations are critical to funding our public program series. The Theosophical Society in Portland is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and your donations are tax deductible. A contribution of \$5.00 is appreciated. Thank you for supporting our programs.

◆◆◆◆◆ **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
Telephone: 503-223-6861

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.

ONLINE PROGRAMS OFFERED BY THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AMERICA

Listed below are just a few of the programs available online. Log on at www.theosophical.org and look for programs on the home page and also under the Programs tab.

Finding the Key in the Ageless Wisdom Tradition with Ed Abdill
Mondays, 7:00-8:00 p.m. Central Time [4:00-5:00 p.m. Pacific Time]

Walking the Theosophical Path Online Group with Pablo Sender
Wednesdays, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Central Time [8:30-9:30 a.m. Pacific Time]

Friday Online Gurdjieff Study Group
Fridays weekly ongoing, 10:00-11:15 a.m. Central Time [8:00-9:15 a.m. Pacific Time]

The Dream Circle: An Online Dream Study Group
Wednesdays, 12:30-1:30 p.m. Central Time [10:30-11:30 a.m. Pacific Time]

Meditation Practices and Perspectives
Sundays weekly, 9:30-10:30 a.m. Central Time [7:30-8:30 a.m. Pacific Time]

The Fourth Way: The Experiential Psychology of Spiritual Transformation
Mondays weekly ongoing, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Central Time [4:30-6:30 p.m. Pacific Time]

The Theosophical Teachings of Sri Madhava Ashish
Mondays weekly ongoing, 9:00-10:00 a.m. Central Time [7:00-8:00 a.m. Pacific Time]

Nisargadatta Advaita Study Group
Mondays weekly, 12:30-1:45 p.m. Central Time [10:30-11:45 a.m. Pacific Time]