

First Church of Christ, Scientist

P.O. Box 281
Issaquah, WA 98027

March 25, 2010

Dear Friend,

First Church of Christ, Scientist, Issaquah has been blessed with an opportunity to assist the Christian Science movement through a granting program made possible by the financial gift left to it by Doris DiStefano. As the Issaquah church learned about granting, it began thinking about how to do something that could have a significant impact on the movement. The goal the church began pursuing was how to ensure the future of Chestnut Hill Benevolent Association. This idea was discussed for two years as the church waited for the time to be right to step in with the kind of gift that could bring forth other large gifts and hopefully resolve the BA's financial situation.

The BA made much progress in 2009. They balanced their budget by reducing expenses and eliminating capital projects, while expanding their Christian Science nursing programs to more fully meet the needs of the Field. This expansion was made possible because of the increased availability of BA trained Christian Science nurses. They clearly communicated their financial need to the Field and they completed a thorough investigation of their options with regard to their 24-acre property. After making a site visit and reviewing all that had been accomplished, the Issaquah church's granting committee recommended to the membership that a leadership grant in the amount of \$3 million be given to the BA. The recommendation was passed unanimously by the church membership. We hope other donors will see that retiring the debt is in fact a realistic goal and will join us in this important endeavor.

While righting the problems of the past held an attraction, the primary focus of the Issaquah church was the BA's leadership role in the movement. The BA had realized there was a need for training that would more substantially support Christian Science nurses in meeting the requirements of the *Church Manual* By-law, "Christian Science Nurse." In 2002 the BA adopted the new Christian Science Nursing Arts program in response to the need in the Field.

The BA's leadership in this area includes training Christian Science nurses from throughout the world and partnering with other facilities to teach and mentor the *Christian Science Nursing Arts*. This leadership also extends to health care coverage. Recently the BA achieved a major breakthrough when they were

able to get Christian Science nursing recognized by Tufts Health Plan, a nationally rated HMO, which provides health care coverage for The Mother Church workers. This first-of-its-kind arrangement will benefit the Christian Science Field by establishing a precedent for HMOs to recognize Christian Science care. The BA continues to meet with Medicare, insurance companies, attorneys and The Mother Church as they work for the rights of Christian Scientists. This is of particular significance as the country debates whether universal health care is appropriate and how it should look. We feel that the BA is the Christian Science nursing organization that has the expertise and the willingness to represent Christian Scientists in this debate.

In addition to these leadership functions, the BA served 185 individuals in 2009 who called upon their Christian Science nursing services. This number jumps to 1,400 if you look at the worldwide number of people who have called upon them for not only nursing, but for training, independent living, Rest & Study and questions. The BA explains they receive, "daily calls from patients, family members, Christian Science practitioners and nurses throughout the United States and beyond who contact us as a resource for immediate needs cases, intricate ethical care issues, and referrals."

The Issaquah church has considered the question of what the movement would look like without this resource being available to the field. The goal of the Issaquah church in making the \$3 million leadership grant is to significantly impact the Christian Science movement by never having to answer this question.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Virginia H. Harris". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and legible.

Virginia H. Harris

Manager, First Church of Christ, Scientist, Issaquah