

Creation Spirituality Communities Newsletter

Issue 1: December 2007

Life Giving Elements at Jubilee! Community

via positiva

via positiva

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JUBILEE! COMMUNITY

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On the Website...

www.creationspirituality.info

A new short video created by
Shaz Davison, D.Min,
from the
2007 CSC Gathering
in Oakland, CA.



Howard Hanger, founder of *Jubilee* hosted CSC's Mel Bricker and Susan Coppage-Evans in his home on Saturday evening with exceptionally gracious hospitality. The table was laden with the fruits of the earth, wine, and open sharing. Howard shared about his involvement with the alternative celebrations he initiated in a local church and which later formed the independent *Jubilee Community*. At one point someone handed him a copy of Matthew Fox's book *Original Blessing*. Howard read it and said, "Yes, this is it. This is who we are." To learn more about the history of *Jubilee! Community* and Howard's role in establishing it go to

www.jubileecommunity.org.

Jubilee's name is derived from their understanding of Jubilee in the spiritual tradition from which they grew. The name, Jubilee, comes from *the ancient Hebrew celebration of Jubilee, a time of restoration, balance, and freedom — a time in which everyone can find their home*. This is an extraordinary expression of hospitality which expresses the way in which the universe works for the good of each element within it and of the whole.

There are many vital elements in the formation and living of community within *Jubilee!*. The following are

some key elements Mel and Susan noted which might be of interest to others forming or sustaining communities.

Invite the gifts of the community... rather than giving people roles, they invite persons to share their gifts. That is rather than building a structure and looking for people to fill various roles in the structure, their activities are grounded in the gifts of the community which are seeking expression.

Leadership holds the vision and allows... The leadership of *Jubilee* holds the vision, shares it with the community and allows the community to move as individuals feel called. Do you want to see ecologically friendly parks in the Asheville area? Then, see who shares that desire. Get them together and go for it. Teams are formed and currently include: arts, care and compassion ministries, earth, Gandhi, Jubilee!players, spiritual journey, and singers and music makers, among others.

Music in celebration which is appropriate for the community gathered... While there was a variety of music in the Sunday morning, celebration, it all seemed to fit in with the character of the community. The type of rhythm employed as the background for most of the

music is right out of the culture of NC and also is expressive of the jazz music background of Howard Hanger, founder, and those who first gathered with him to form the community.

Education based on images... Their nurture of young people in the community and the way in which they share the vision with one another and new persons is based primarily in images. For example, there is a carved globe of the world hanging above the central



**Jubilee! Community
Founder,
Howard Hanger**

altar which suggests being based in cosmology (it floats as though in space), celebrating the sacredness of mother earth, and ecological concern.

Hospitality... They are very hospitable. The evening with Howard Hanger was a wonderful expression of what it means to welcome strangers into one's abode. The community has had an emphasis on hospitality as a part of its ethos.

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Patience... *Jubilee* has exhibited a great deal of patience in staying with it in forming their community. It has evolved over many years.

Chat and snack... are gatherings held in homes, coffee houses, the *Jubilee! Community* center and other meeting places. They are informal times to visit with individuals and share the vision of *Jubilee!*.

A Concern they articulated several times is a desire to find curriculum for their nurture program with children and youth which is appropriate for a community rooted in a creation centered spirituality.

If any readers of this article know of resources which would help *Jubilee! Community* address their concern for curriculum materials to use in their nurturing of others in a creation centered spiritually, they would welcome your input.



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Learning to lose: A journey into the via negativa

via negativa

“...in fact all four paths are experienced in the body, the emotions and in the mind.”

-Leon Evans

1984 Palo Alto California

I picked myself up off the floor where I'd been dumped by a goon named Philip. I thought to myself “That's not fair TaiChi,” meaning the rough way he'd grabbed me and thrown me down. I was at a TaiChi week- long intensive with my teacher and my teacher's teacher, Master Tung. In our class we had certain etiquette about the martial arts training aspect of TaiChi called Push Hands. Philip seemed clueless about this and had a style that was anything but gentle. As I walked by my teacher I grumbled “He's too rough.” My teacher replied, “Learn to Lose.” At the time I thought it was an unsympathetic remark. I later discovered “Learn to Lose” is an inevitable part of TaiChi.

Learning TaiChi is about reworking one's relationship to the gravity field in which we live, breathe and spend each and every moment. We are

all familiar with using our muscles to push off the earth against gravity- think of springing off the ground to leap across a puddle. Tai Chi has a more sophisticated use of gravity. You actually push into the earth, and use the resultant return energy as your power. This is called internal energy or Chi, as opposed to external brute force which the Chinese call Li.

Any TaiChi practitioner who wishes to enter the authentic TaiChi inevitably goes through an awkward phase where they don't yet know how to use internal energy, yet have to give up the use of external force in order to progress. Everyone has to be willing to lose prior to being able to uncover the hidden power of Chi.

The *Via Negativa* of Creation Spirituality is characterized by unknowing, letting go, negativity, or frustration. TaiChi offers a training

ground where the *Via Negativa* and in fact all four paths are experienced in the body, the emotions and in the mind. Losing to Philip, the “unfairness,” and frustration was an experience of the *Via Negativa*, but an essential part of my learning curve. It was critical to my development that I not resort to force against force, but continue to relax and root despite losing.

Before the week ended, inevitably, Philip wanted to take on the top dog student, my teacher. He received a lesson in loss that I hope he came to enjoy as much as I did.



Leon Evans

WholeBody Psychiatrist

in Boulder, Colorado

Member of

The Gathering Place for Creation Spirituality in Lakewood, CO

Now Available:

7 CD-set of the

Keynote Speakers from
the 2007 CSC Gathering
in Oakland, CA

\$40, plus shipping

Orders:

contact@creationspirituality.info

A Call to the Work of Transformation

via transformativa

Dear Colleague,

After hosting a successful summer event and listening to the wishes and needs of individuals regarding bringing Creation Spirituality to local communities – CSC is calling forth the gifts of the community to advance this mission.

What is your passion and vision for Creation Spirituality? CSC has a way to help you manifest it.

As a result of the ideas expressed thus far, the CSC Board has identified “Circles” of clarity and consensus building. Each circle represents an area of growth and development for Creation Spirituality Communities. Each one will consist of individuals who work together to bring theirs and the community’s vision to fruition. Perhaps the vision you have is not listed – then make a suggestion for another circle and we’ll invite others to participate.

Since we are a national and even international community, it will take some effort to plan conference calls and retreats where we can create together. I will facilitate the initial formation of the circles so please e-mail me with the circle you are willing to serve on and I will get circle members in touch with one another.

So, here are the circles. I trust that everyone wanting to forward Creation Spirituality in our own time will be part of the creative, birthing process!

Circles

- Ordination
- Social Justice
- Formal Education Degree and Continuing Education
- Retreats, conferences and workshops
- Development of Liturgy and ritual
- Support for Developing Communities (Tool Boxes and Teams)
- On-line resources
- Networking
- Intentional Community
- CSC Organizational Health: Leadership & Finance



After visiting Jubilee Community and learning about how their teams work – the incredible leadership, creativity and social action that occurs so organically, I felt encouraged that our “Circles” could be just as effective!

There are 500 of us now on the mailing list – I hope to hear from each one of you about the circle you want to participate in or the one you want to add. Being part of “A New Reformation” isn’t something you can do from the sidelines. Let’s work (and play) together to bring Creation Spirituality to our local communities!

Gratefully,

Susan Coppage Evans

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Vision For

Creation Spirituality Communities

A network of communities ranging from intentional groups to alternative churches, which are grounded in the tenets of Creation Spirituality and revere the sacredness of all creation. Through study, ritual, celebration and action, these communities support justice, compassion, transformation and sustainability for the Universe and for all living beings.



Mission of

Creation Spirituality Communities

To provide training, resources, support, guidance, structure and encouragement for the development of Creation Spirituality communities. To honor the core values of Creation Spirituality. To act as a networking vehicle for individuals who seek to join others in the study and practice of Creation Spirituality. To provide opportunities that honor creation and cultivate the mystic, prophet and artist in all people.

Contributors...

If you have an essay, poetry, art, that you'd like us to consider for future editions of this newsletter, please email us: contact@creationspirituality.info



Events...

If you have an event for the newsletter and/or website, please give us a summary along with the dates/places, any graphics/flyers etc:

contact@creationspirituality.info

CSC Gathering Summer 2008

Details coming soon!

Curves and Colors: CSC's Logo

via creativa

"The poetic image is not subject to an inner thrust"

- Gaston Bachelard,
The Poetics of Space

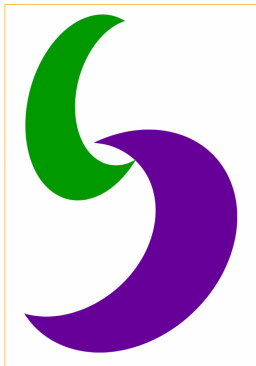
To suggest that all of the things that can be seen in the CSC logo is by deliberate design would be giving too much credit. As images often do, it came unsummoned.

This reflection is somewhat a free association exercise on what I can see within its curves and colors.

The color green: Life, "all verdant (greening) energy" as Hildegard of Bingen expressed. The color of life-giving leaves and grasses, which gift oxygen to the atmosphere in response to their eating of light.

The color purple: Royalty, wholeness. Embracing the spectrum.

Four curved surfaces: Two concaves, two convexes. These remind me of the Four Paths of Creation Spirituality. The first two paths, *Via Positiva* and *Via Negativa* are really paths we encounter and experience. In the first two paths we are recipients, they are the paths coming in, represented by the concaves. The second two paths, *Via Creativa* and *Via Transformativa* are the paths of our giving, our putting forth our unique energy, from deep



within. These paths are represented by the two convex curves.

Each of the curves flows into the others, in spirals and turns. Not one of the curves is first. Not one of them is last. There is no beginning, no end, only the journey.

Moons: "There is no Buddhist moon or Catholic sun." - Deep ecumenism. All faiths are here together. Moons. The cosmos, the new story, the universe story.

The letters C and S: Creation. We begin with creation. The C (creation) leads us to the S (spirituality). An appreciation of creation leads us to spirituality. The S (spirituality)

is incomplete without the C (creation).

The proportions: if you begin in the middle of the C, you can draw a small Golden Rectangle, and then spiral it out such that the whole image has the golden proportion, derived from the Fibonacci sequence.

What can you see?



Matt Henry

is a CSC Board Member