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 20560 Questhaven Rd. Escondido, CA 92029
 760-744-1500 fax 760-744-2591
 email: office@questhaven.org
www.questhaven.org

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Dear Friends and Spiritual Family,

It has been a long time since I have seen the grounds of Questhaven as green as they have been the last several months. Water is spilling over the dam as the frogs sing their Hallelujah Chorus in fine croaking fashion. Singing Springs lives up to its name as musical notes dance down the rocky crevices from each channel the water chooses to take. The immensity of God is captured in the glorious notes of nature.

All this added to the Easter experience we shared this past retreat—how “following His footsteps” led us onward through Lent facing the challenges that polish our souls. We were tested on our resolve and desire to grow Godward. All the while, Christ was there before us to guide us. Then, as our love drew us more closely to Him, so too did His likeness emerge more completely in our beings.

Pranic Healing Clinic: The first Sunday of each month from 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. Led by Mary Clark, Ph.D., in the Academy.

Servers in Action: Second Saturday of the month at 9 a.m.

Holy Horticulture: Every Tuesday 1 - 4 p.m. Meet at the office. Bring gloves and clippers.

Study Groups—Classes Studying The Christward Ministry Teachings

- Monday:** (every) at 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Please call office for location.
- Monday:** (2nd and 4th) at 7:30 p.m. Oceanside
- Tuesday:** (2nd and 4th) at 7:30 p.m. San Marcos
- Thursday:** (1st and 3rd) at 1:30 p.m. Questhaven—Academy Building

Special Programs

The Holy Quest IV—May 20-22. This participatory series is on the theme of *Our Call to God*. Discussions will include practical and inspirational ways of living the life of discipleship. All those who have taken the Holy Quest I-III are invited.

Vernal Art Festival—June 25-26. Art Workshop beginning 9:00 a.m. in Friendship House. For details on this creative day, call the office.

Children’s Camp—July 8-10

Questhaven’s weekend summer camp offers a unique opportunity for spiritually based fellowship and bonding in nature on these holy grounds. We will explore a more conscious relationship with Christ and our responsibilities as Light wielders through such activities as prayer, meditation, hiking, games, swimming, and discussion groups. Please call the office to RSVP or for more information on our camp experience.

Planning Ahead

- The Holy Quest III: October 14-16**
- The Holy Quest I: November 11-13**
- The Holy Quest II: January 20-22, 2006**



2005 Spring/Summer Program

Sunday Services begin at 10:45 a.m.

MAY

- May 1** *Ascension Day: Christ's Great Initiation and Its Meaning to Us*
Rev. Jonathan Wiltshire
- May 8** *God Bless Mothers Everywhere*
Rev. Myrna Triggs
- May 15** *Amazing Grace*
Laurel Rivera
- May 22** *The Unfoldment of Character*
Rev. Elizabeth Wood
- May 29** *More than a Saint: Dr. Albert Schweitzer*
Rev. Susan S. Cary

JUNE

- June 5** *Equilibrium: The Art of Keeping Balance in this Challenging World*
Felice Reynolds
- June 12** *Appreciating Everyday Miracles*
Evelyn Alemanni
- June 19** *A Father's Imprint on Our Life*
Rev. Blake Isaac
- June 26** *Listening—Key to the Creative Life*
Rev. Jonathan Wiltshire

JULY

- July 3** *Dedicated to the Truth: The Founding Fathers and Mothers of Our Country*
Ann Hubbell
- July 10** *The Inner Values of Summer*
Rev. Elizabeth Wood
- July 17** *Enlightenment—The Transformation of Consciousness*
Rev. Phyllis Isaac
- July 24** *How Thought and Feeling Influence Water*
Rev. Susan S. Cary
- July 31** *Global Citizenship and Florence Nightingale: On Earth as it Is in Heaven*
Deva Beck, PhD, RN

Ongoing Activities—All are Invited

Please call the office for further information—760-744-1500.

The Way Within meditation class will continue meeting at noon in the Academy on the first and third Wednesday of each month. The emphasis is on improving our skills and group participation, and is led by Rev. Phyllis Isaac.

Meditations on Wednesday evenings in Chapelito at 7:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome to join in this time of reverent attunement that is led by Jean Michalewicz.

Discipleship requires unselfishness, surrendered obedience, integrity and the ability to sacrifice oneself for the greater good. May it so continue until you stand before the Presence of the One who has given you life, wholly re-created, wholly purified by the fiery baptisms of your own self-conquests.

FAN, *Wellsprings of the Holy Quest*

The choir certainly captured this experience in their presentation of *Parsifal* on Good Friday. It was carried forward through the sunrise service and the Sunday message, all telling us to seek God with all our strength and knowing that each of us find fresh ways to rediscover Christ risen anew in our lives.

The rains that have washed our beautiful surroundings have not only cleansed the land but also helped us to discover this message of Easter in its own way. There are new flowers and vibrant shrubs at every turn. Birds sing in delight at the multitude of bright berries and fresh seeds. The wonder of nature gives us pause in the magnificence of God. The beauty that the Divine paints on the canvas of this earth strikes a yearning within us to discover His creation all the more: desert flowers, mountain peaks, ocean waves, and starlit nights. In so doing, we draw ourselves closer to His presence.

As our vernal retreat approaches, let us remind ourselves that there is no separation between our Creator and us. Our souls are part of the same canvas upon which God paints the trees, the rocks, and the flowers. While we work on conquering ourselves for God, like the rain, we begin the necessary watering and cleansing of our souls. We begin cultivating a rich soil of our being that feeds the seeds of enlightenment in our spiritual journeys, from which budding flowers of attainment can come. Then, just as flowers turn poised toward the sun, we too turn poised toward the Son who is the Living Christ, and we are infilled.

The great and flaming need is to learn to love, to worship, to give oneself to God before all else.

FAN, *Disciplines of the Holy Quest*

As spring flows into summer, may you look upon the Creator's handiwork of nature and discover God's nearness and all-pervading presence. For as you love and worship God completely, His greatness permeates every part of your being. Before you satisfy the needs of your own human nature, allow God to encompass you.

Lovingly in Christ's Name,

Rev. Blake Isaac

The Open Door of Nature

By Rev. Flower A. Newhouse

Taken from *Inspiration Magazine* 4th quarter 1946 (Reprinted from “The Christward Way,” a series of graded weekly lessons devoted to metaphysical and esoteric Christianity.)



Rev. Flower A. Newhouse,
founder of
Questhaven Retreat,
(photo from 1979).

Nature has vast instruction to impart to us. The door to her mysteries is always ajar to those who rightly desire enlightenment. She does not teach through the use of a textbook, for her lessons are written in all living things. Not every inquiring student shall learn from her, for only the reverent and appreciative are initiated into her secrets. Those who do not *see* the loveliness of life as it exists everywhere cannot hope to sense the superphysical aspects of nature. They need to learn to revel in the varied manifestations of beauty, color, and design of endless forms of being. When they can feel exultation from observing a perfect flower, mountain crests, or glorious sunsets, they can prepare to apply for tuition in nature’s university.

The foremost principle that nature stresses in all the areas of this globe is that the sacred flame of life is active everywhere, both in visible and invisible forms. Life is a holy, dynamic power that gives purpose to all the forms it infuses. Nothing is unworthy; all things are distinguished when they possess the godly life element. Realizing this, we cannot but feel a new respect for the most common things—stones, earth, and weeds.

A friend had this prime lesson concerning nature’s evaluation of Life brought home to her quite forcefully one day. She was invited into a laboratory where an acquaintance made daily excursions into the wonders of science. He asked her what she would call the object he held in his hand. “It is a block of wood,” said the puzzled visitor.

The student of science said, “Yes, it appears to be a piece of dead wood, but just look at it through this instrument, and then tell me what you see.”

To the woman’s utter amazement, the magnifying lens disclosed *motion* in the wood, a

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Ministry Moments

By Rev. Blake Isaac

NEW RESIDENCE COMPLETED: On February 12, Blake and Danielle moved into their new home. They come with reverence and gratitude for this wonderful opportunity. Thank you to all who helped make this possible.

HOLY HORTICULTURE: Every Tuesday from 1 to 4 p.m. Volunteers spruce up the grounds here at Questhaven. Please come and share with us.

EASTER RETREAT: From the holiness of Good Friday Communion through the joyful radiance of Sunday, this year’s Easter experience was marvelous. Special thanks to Laurel Rivera for coordinating this retreat and to all those who participated in this worship.

ROAD HAS BEEN CLOSED: After many delays, work has begun on the two turn-arounds and gates that will border that area of road (south of the main entry gate) that is now closed. The old dirt road will become a trail for hikers and equestrians to enjoy.

WORK SATURDAY FELLOWSHIP: There has been a resurgence of helpers who give their time selflessly every second Saturday of the month. Twenty workers joined in preparations for Easter. A definite rejuvenation of spirit takes place when you work side by side with your sisters and brothers in Christ.

BELL TOWER: Our bell tower is being restabilized. A new post and support beams are being installed to protect it. Thanks to Olav Meum and Ron Huberts for their assistance.

LABYRINTH REPORT: Extended rains delayed construction of our labyrinth, but grading and rockwork should be completed in May. Please look for notices of the dedication in early summer.

HOLY QUEST IV IS COMING: Beginning May 22, we have a new class being taught in our Holy Quest series. This one focuses on *Our Call to God*. It asks each of us to be active and involved in our spiritual paths in new ways and dedication.

CHURCH LIGHTING/SOUND: Finishing touches have been made on the lighting and sound system in the church. The front speakers have been moved to greatly improve the clarity and volume in all areas. The new lights have been reconfigured to give the operator flexibility to individually control each one. Most will be used in evening performances and worship services. Thanks to Janet McGurk for coordinating this process.

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Vernal Retreat 2005

Divine Reality reveals itself in many ways to the receptive heart. When the artist approaches his or her work with the devotion of a priest, God as Beauty speaks. The resulting creation becomes a touchstone that inspires and blesses us with frequencies from higher realms of Reality. Every person who sincerely desires to be filled more completely with the Presence of God will look to the arts for its revelations.

The summer vernal festival is a time for listening and receiving. The founder of Questhaven Retreat, Flower A. Newhouse, made this festival a regular event because she knew that creative receptivity is essential to wholeness of being. When we open to the arts we may encounter a moment of awe, a feeling of our place in eternity, a touch of unearthly peace, or even a message from Higher Sources. To receive the endless gifts that flow from the infinite realm of Inspiration we only need to learn receptivity.

The opportunity to deepen your receptivity awaits you at Questhaven Retreat, where we will be celebrating the Vernal Festival on the weekend of June 25-26. This retreat will begin on Saturday morning with a workshop led by Jonathan Wiltshire. Jonathan is an artist who was led to meet Flower Newhouse in 1975. For the next twenty years, until her death, he had the unique opportunity of illustrating her writings while studying as her student. In 1981, Flower ordained Jonathan as a minister of this work.

We have long awaited the opportunity to have Jonathan present his inspiring art workshop again. The event begins on Saturday morning with a rare glimpse into the nature of spiritual art and receptivity based largely on Jonathan's experiences with Flower. Next, there will be an attunement through the medium of music, and then each person will move into the experience of receptivity by creating a painting of his or her own. Using a particular watercolor technique, both artist and non-artist will explore the way of art as revealer. The workshop concludes with a sharing of the results, which can be most surprising.

Don't miss this unique opportunity to deepen your receptivity to Divine Beauty ever present within and without.

slow moving of the grain that was motion, undeniably. It was no longer a specimen of inert wood but a *living* thing.

With light footsteps, this beholder left that laboratory knowing greater reverence than she ever before had felt. She saw God in every fallen branch and leaf she observed on the campus. When passing a muddy puddle of water, the words of Emerson awakened in her memory: "In the scum of things something always sings."

Another noteworthy disclosure nature invariably imparts to her students is this: everything that lives either possesses Intelligence or is acted upon by Intelligence. However humble they may be on evolution's ladder, vines possess the innate instinct to seek sunlight, and they extend themselves through dark areas until sunlight is reached. This instinctive knowledge is a form of intelligence. Again, no one can look upon a many-faceted diamond with its flashing of many hues without marveling at the Mind which created it.

A third revelation the spirit of nature imparts is that much in the physical realm receives impetus and development through directing Intelligences from the superphysical side of existence. The trees we see, the sweep of the terrain, and the weather we enjoy are all acted upon by higher-dimensional Minds, which work under unchangeable laws to keep the earth inhabited. In fact, all living things in nature are touched by Intelligences whose missions revolve around their growth, development, and awakenment.

In admiration of the forms we behold, we want to remember to salute those God-commissioned beings who dwell on planes invisible to our physical perception. By saluting them and appreciating their ministrations we shall draw into a closer bond of acquaintanceship by these busy servers.

Go to National Parks, not alone to see the outer beauty that they hold, but also to sense the inner presences that guard and permeate the locality. You will gain much more from your pilgrimages by including a spiritual awareness of the loving Minds that make the nature shrines places of peace.

Just as you find a different variety of trees, shrubs, or flowers in various areas, so do you come in contact with nature beings whose appearance, emanation, and service differ from range to range. Let your inner faculties of intuition and perception identify the invisible powers enveloping the places you visit.

One forest will be charged with healing energies which are especially invigorating to the etheric body. Another mountain fastness will possess a strong current of reverence for

God. Lake regions are usually attuned to radiations of peace. The open desert country quickens keenness of mind. These contrasting vibrations are largely due to the type of beings which ensoul the various territories.

Because Mt. Lassen in Northern California is a volcanic site, the nature spirits there are fire and earth beings. Zion National Park contains great stately Angels of power, whereas not many miles away, Bryce Canyon National Park is inhabited by presences which are particularly gentle and loving. At Mt. Rainier the whole country is dominated by the superior force of the advanced being known as the Lord of the Mountain. The radiations of this national forest are very powerful, spiritually. Yet hosts of human beings are not aware of them because of their own insensitiveness to high currents.

There are those who, knowing of the superphysical aspect of nature, appeal to God's spirit in these Intelligences to help mankind. As do the Native American Indians, we too should pray for the particular weather that is needed in our community. We address our prayers to the Eternal God Spirit in this way:

"Infinite and Absolute Spirit, bless our region, and every community on earth which needs it, with showers of rain. Empower the Angels of Rain to replace the Angels of Calm during this period of necessity. For Thy answer we give thanks and praise in Christ's Name. Amen."

Those who realize they may ask for nature's assistance see evidence of its responsiveness on every hand. One farmer prayed for rains and a good crop. He was answered with the best crop he had ever grown in his twenty-two years of farming.

Nature tells us that we can learn more of God by observing Him through His handiwork. She promises to initiate us into the wonders of life when we appreciate life around *everywhere*—when our veneration for the Supreme Spirit includes the visible and invisible regions of being. She speaks to us in realization of this kind: "Look about and profit by all you see. Whatever of good you find represented, you can become. Your character can be as strong as yonder stalwart pine. The light of day and the peace of night can radiate from your heart. Bless everything you behold and be prepared to receive my message."

True understanding of the wonders of nature is evidenced by Elizabeth Barrett Browning in her words:

"Every common bush afire with God, but only he who sees takes off his shoes."

where people and nature interact, such as gardening and landscaping, there is a constant opportunity for co-creative partnership.

Over the years, the angels in my garden have caused specific tools and equipment to appear just when they're needed. They have moved pots of plants to planting holes. They have caused seeds to appear in the mail, without my having ordered them. Sometimes I would think about wanting a particular plant, and within minutes, someone would bring it to me without my having to say a word.

Once, during a segment of *Good Morning America*, the interviewer asked if I talk to my plants. Talk? It's a monologue. The plants (or perhaps the nature beings which care for them) are so busy giving me instructions that there's no time for conversation.

Gardening can be a form of meditation. While doing repetitive tasks, the mind can be stilled to receive guidance. It's important to listen, regardless of whether the message makes sense or not. Once I was pulling weeds along a wire fence anchored into the ground to keep rabbits out, when the thought came to me, "Leave the grass alone, or the rabbits will come in." That seemed silly, so I kept pulling, only to pull up the fence with the next clump of grass, creating a hole through which rabbits could enter the garden.

"There is no power for your vision until you perform it on earth for people to see." This means you can think, but nothing happens until you do something. And so it is in the garden. You can read the seed catalogs, but nothing happens until you put a shovel in the ground. That's when the angels know you're serious, and they start watching to see when you'll be ready for help.

Just as the garden angels aid and direct plant growth, there are numerous angels of many different orders, serving every aspect of truth, beauty, and joy. If your passions lie in other areas—perhaps painting, writing, music, healing, or teaching—remember that there are angels who are ready to give you the same type of encouragement and help as the angels of nature do for those of us who work with plants.

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On most Sundays, Questhaven's altar flowers come from Evelyn's garden.

I must confess that I was quite excited and a bit nervous to meet the woman Petra spoke about so enthusiastically. We arrived at the nice little office building, the air full of aromatic smells and little rabbits running around the parking lot. Surprisingly, we were told that Flower wanted to greet us on the telephone. I will never forget the sound of her voice when she spoke to me for the first time. It was a welcome from the shores of eternity! And when I finally met her the next day, I looked into her eyes and was convinced that I was meeting someone who really was an authorized messenger of the Christ.

This was the beginning of a wonderful, very close friendship and a deep spiritual relationship, too personal to talk about. It was also the beginning of a very creative relationship between Questhaven and Aquamarin Publishing House. Petra and I started to translate Flower's books, and since that time many thousands of her words have touched the hearts of readers in the German-speaking countries. I still feel honored to be her European publisher and I look forward to start next year in presenting her "Collected Works" to the public.

Flower has returned to the higher realms she came from, but the work goes on and the love between us has never diminished. We will meet again and continue to work together as we all climb the upward path.



Gifts from the Garden Angels

by Evelyn Alemanni

It is from May 1 to November 31 that the efforts of the nature beings are felt most strongly. Flower Newhouse told us about the many types of angels who work with nature—with the plants, the soil, the weather, and the animals. Here, I'll refer to them as "garden angels."

Garden angels are very anxious to work with us; they're just waiting for an invitation. Flower told us that they look for two things before assisting a human: gratitude and appreciation.

When I moved to Elfin Forest nearly 20 years ago, I knew very little about nature beings or garden angels, but I did have a great deal of gratitude and appreciation. It wasn't long before some wonderful things started happening to let me know that an amazing amount of help was coming my way.

It has been said that nature beings shift energy all the time, moving it from one level to another and then into form, or from one form to another. It's an energy dynamic that is as much a part of the nature being's way of life as breathing is to us. In those areas of endeavor



Meet Blake and Danielle Isaac

by Rev. Susan Cary

Questhaven welcomes its newest residents, Blake and Danielle Isaac, onto these sacred grounds. Along with their family of three children (Bryce, Nicolle, and Summer) and two pets, they moved into their beautiful new home in February. These two young people seem born to serve here at the Christward Ministry—both have grandparents and parents who have long been dedicated servers of this Work.



Blake, the son of Dr. Stephen and Rev. Phyllis Isaac, spent much of his childhood and youth here at Questhaven. He tells an amusing story about his birth. In those days the husbands didn't attend their wives at delivery, nor was there a means of determining the gender of the unborn child. Instead, fathers sat in a waiting room until a nurse appeared with the infant. Flower had suggested that a girl would be coming into the family. For Stephen this amounted to a fact. When he was greeted with a baby boy, he thought there had been a mistake and sent him back.

Blake was named after his father's favorite poet, William Blake. His second name, Grail, stands for the Holy Grail, a significant name for this ordained minister who now serves our Lord as director of the Christward Ministry.

He remembers fondly his earlier years when he and his cousin Damon Bleth produced home movies. Using Indiana Jones-type plots, they cast members of their families in the various roles. Because both he and Damon shared the same middle name, Grail, they called their films *Grail Pictures*. Seeing these reminds the viewer of the exaggerated melodramas depicted in the early silent films. They provide plenty of laughs.

Danielle spent most of her youth in Mission Viejo. Her parents, Annibelle and Daryl Carlson, were then and continue to be dedicated servers of this work. The family, Danielle, her parents and three siblings, used to take many trips to Questhaven in their camping trailer, coming for retreats and other events. Danielle recalls the bit of hassle getting all the family "spit spot" for Sunday services in the confines of that tent trailer.



Her mother recalls how very neat and organized Danielle was even as a child. She would arrange her dolls in an orderly fashion. This penchant for careful arrangement shows up today in her housekeeping. In giving us a tour of the new home she showed us her pantry, including beautifully displayed rows of cans all with their labels happily turned outward for easy viewing.

She and Blake recollect bygone years as children at Questhaven. They knew one another in junior bell choir. She was a bit older than he, which put her out of his range of interest. Girls weren't yet appealing. She was likewise indifferent to him. Both laugh at their former lack of interest in one another and are grateful for their very happy marriage. This is truly a union of their devotion to Christ complemented by their love for one another and their children. They support and pray for one another in following the path of discipleship together.

As young adults, Blake and Danielle re-met in the Questhaven Youth Group. By then each had had other romantic interests. When they opened deeply to one another, they came to a special moment of realization—knowing that they were meant to join their lives in following God's Plan.

College studies prepared Blake for his current position as teacher-principal in the Rancho Santa Fe Schools. Teaching the kids is his love but the experience of being a principal continually expands and sharpens his skills and capabilities as an administrator—an advantage in his role as Questhaven's director. He looks forward to spending more time with the wonderful people gathered in this Ministry.

Danielle graduated as a dental assistant and currently works several days a week with a local dentist. She balances family care, work, teaching Sunday School, helping with retreat activities and creating the attractive monthly bulletin board posted at the upper end of the walkway to the church entrance.

Originally named Myra, she felt this name didn't fit her so she changed it several years ago. Why did she choose *Danielle*? Because Daniel, who faced the lions in the Biblical story, embodied courage and was steadfast, qualities she admired. Therefore she selected the feminine form of that name.

We salute these two young people who devote themselves to this work, doing it with such obvious joy and dedication, and look forward to many years of their enthusiastic leadership.

Angels in Europe

by Rev. Peter Michel

The Lords of Karma are incredibly clever in bringing people together!

I went to a lecture in Bonn given by Germany's leading spiritual healer. She talked about the various ways of practicing spiritual healing, and at the end she spoke about the "Healing Angels," a part of her talk I found extremely interesting. To illustrate her talk, she showed a book with angel paintings. These were the first paintings of angels that made a deep impression on me. The book she showed around was *Rediscovering the Angels* by Flower A. Newhouse. Unfortunately, this healer could not remember where she had gotten the book, so I decided to write to the address mentioned on the copyright page.

Soon I got a copy of the book from Questhaven together with a list of other books from Flower. I bought them all! After I had read them, I decided that I wanted to meet this remarkable woman, even if I'd have to fly to California.

This was quite a decision, because in 1980 I had never even seen the inside of an airplane, and I hated traveling! But life makes its own plans. Meanwhile, I had married my first wife Petra, and after being married for one year she received an offer from her company, Siemens, to go for six months to California to improve her English and to study at the University. She left Munich in January 1982, and after a short stay at a little hotel she ended up at the house of George and Cathleen Chambers, who were friends of Flower.

As Petra had also read Flower's books, she was, of course, rather curious to meet her in person. The first opportunity came at Easter, as together with the Chambers' she went to Questhaven to take part in the Easter Retreat. After the Sunday Service she sat down and wrote a letter to me. When I got it five days later—I was shocked. It was a sixteen-page letter, and before I had never received a love letter from her with more than four pages! This Easter Retreat and the meeting with Flower must have really been something outstanding. I knew the time had come to fly to California.

To create a little surprise, Petra's sister, Annette and I told Petra that Annette would come to visit her. When I came through the gate at the San Francisco Airport, Petra was shocked! Even with a terrible jet lag (what else could I expect on my first flight ever?) we decided to go to Questhaven the next day.