



# HOUSTON VISITING CHRISTIAN SCIENCE NURSE SERVICE, INC.

December 2022

## John Randall Dunn and Christmas and Christian Science Nursing

John Randall Dunn was a devoted Christian Science practitioner, teacher, and lecturer in the first half of the 20th century. He wrote hundreds of articles, editorials, and poems in the Christian Science periodicals and served as editor of those publications until shortly before his [passing](#) in 1949. Six of his articles and editorials are about the spiritual significance of Christmas. We happily share excerpts from three of them in this month's newsletter.

In a 1932 *Christian Science Sentinel* article, "Happy Christmas!," John Randall Dunn wrote:

The beloved Leader of the Christian Science movement, Mary Baker Eddy, on Christmas Day, 1909, wrote to her household that she wished them "a *happy Christmas*, a feast of Soul and a famine of sense" (*The First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany*, p. 263). Mrs. Eddy's choice of words is ever arresting and thought-provoking. To wish one "a *happy Christmas*" and "a feast of Soul" would conform to a high standard of felicitous greeting, but is an appropriate Christmas sentiment clothed in the phrase "a famine of sense"? A thoughtful consideration of this question reveals the fact that the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science could not have given a happier or more inspirational Christmas greeting to her followers; but in order to grasp its full significance, the student must strive to understand better Mrs. Eddy's use of the words "happy," "Soul," and "sense."

[To continue reading "Happy Christmas!," please [click here](#).]

One of Mr. Dunn's two Christmas 1945 contributions to the Christian Science periodicals was "No Unhappy Christmas," in which he asked a simple question, followed by his own poetic answer:



Continued ▼

[W]hy confine this joyous celebration to the twenty-fifth of each December?

May each day of all the years  
Be a Christmas.  
Daily may the Christ be born—  
Daily may we clearly see  
Man's relationship to God.  
May our gifts be holy thoughts  
Daily sent to bless and heal;  
So each day of all the years  
Will be Christmas!

The other Christmas 1945 piece Mr. Dunn penned, an [editorial](#) in *The Christian Science Journal* titled "Again Loved Christmas is here," ends with these two spiritually stirring paragraphs:

The Christ is here! The glorious truth that God is Spirit and man is spiritual is being increasingly demonstrated by those who are learning the meaning of the new tongue of Spirit. Truth is nullifying the atom bombs of hate and fear and animality and is revealing the kingdom of harmony promised by the angelic choir above that manger in Bethlehem.

Yes, "again loved Christmas is here," and may we reverently heed the injunction with which our Leader closes this message: "At this immortal hour, all human hate, pride, greed, lust should bow and declare Christ's power, and the reign of Truth and Life divine should make man's being pure and blest."

[Note: The above quote, "again loved Christmas is here," refers to the opening line of Mary Baker Eddy's "Christmas, 1900" article, which can be found in *Miscellany* (256:16–257:22).]

The following description of Mr. Dunn's qualities reminds us of the love that our *Journal*-listed Houston visiting Christian Science nurse Susie Peterson lives and breathes: "Those who had the privilege of knowing Mr. Dunn are well aware of his great love for and loyalty to the Cause established by our Leader, Mary Baker Eddy. His unvarying cheerfulness and loving understanding have been an outstanding example of true friendliness. Through his lectures and editorials he has voiced the message which has brought encouragement, comfort, and healing to countless numbers."

We trust you will be happy to call upon Susie at any time for skilled Christian Science nursing care

or simply a Christian visit. We described both in our [November 2022 newsletter](#).

To close our Christmas “Good News,” please join us in pondering a portion of Mrs. Eddy’s “What Christmas Means to Me” message, found on pages 261–263 of *Miscellany*:

Christmas to me is the reminder of God’s great gift, — His spiritual idea, man and the universe, — a gift which so transcends mortal, material, sensual giving that the merriment, mad ambition, rivalry, and ritual of our common Christmas seem a human mockery in mimicry of the real worship in commemoration of Christ’s coming. I love to observe Christmas in quietude, humility, benevolence, charity, letting good will towards man, eloquent silence, prayer, and praise express my conception of Truth’s appearing.

---

**Below is a letter written to us by a grateful client of Houston’s Visiting Christian Science Nurse Service:**

How grateful I am for one very skilled and devoted Christian Science nurse in Houston when I was a busy young mother in the late seventies. My last two children were delivered at home with the assistance of a midwife. Right after each birth, a wonderful visiting Christian Science nurse named Martha came to my aid—all smiles. She efficiently freshened up my surroundings, helped me with the first feedings, and made sure I was comfortable in every way. Because of her absolute conviction of divine Love’s omnipresence, a sweet assurance of God’s protection reigned in my household. With both births, I was able to rest just enough and then bounce back to my duties quickly because of her support. I called her many times during those early years for practical advice in managing the four little ones under six years old.

One day, as I was scurrying around the kitchen preparing supper, the children were all competing for my attention. One was propped up in a baby bouncer seat on the counter, one was trying to climb up on a chair to “help” me cook, one was pushing a doll carriage into my legs, and one was crawling after a toy.

“ . . . the Divine Science of man is woven into one web of consistency without seam or rent. ”

In the middle of all this activity, I realized the door from the kitchen to the garage was open, so I reached over and pulled it shut. Screams of alarm from little Christian instantly told me I’d slammed the door on his hand. When I picked him up, I saw that the tip of his finger had been snapped off. I quickly went to the phone to call a practitioner. Next I called Martha. She arrived in a very short time. We sang hymns as she cleaned and carefully set the

finger tip in place then bandaged the finger. In the next few weeks, the practitioner and Martha and I prayed to know that “the Divine Science of man is woven into one web of consistency without seam or rent” (*Science and Health*, pp. 25–26). I obediently resisted the temptation to check for progress “in matter” when Martha came by weekly to change the bandage.

I am ever grateful to report that the top of the finger reattached itself and that my son has had full use of the finger ever since. A slight line in the skin serves to remind us of Martha’s part in supporting the demonstration of perfect God and His perfect child, always safe and whole.

I know, first-hand, how those who rely on God alone for healing are blessed by the “practical wisdom,” skill, and loving attentiveness of our Christian Science nurses. I so appreciate Mary Baker Eddy’s provision for these visiting angels, who come to our side to witness, with us, the perfect work of all-powerful, ever-present Love.

— SUSAN MINICH

## Financial Assistance Available

Any Christian Scientist relying upon the services of a Christian Science practitioner and/or a *Journal*-listed Christian Science nurse may obtain financial support by applying to the [National Fund for Christian Science Nursing](#) (NFCSN). You may contact The Principle Foundation, which manages this fund, by emailing [info@nfcsn.org](mailto:info@nfcsn.org) or by calling (800) 873-2843.

## Meet the HVCSNS Board

**Sue Merrill**, Acting President — First Church, Bellaire

**Salomon Ngalamulume**, Treasurer — Seventh Church, Houston

**Linda Lindeman**, Corresponding Secretary — Fourth Church, Houston

**Susan Clay**, Recording Secretary — Seventh Church, Houston

**Lynne Clark**, Director — First Church, The Woodlands

**Grace Duffy**, Director — First Church, Durango, Colorado

**Pauline Nesbitt**, Director — Seventh Church, Houston

Members of Houston-area branch churches not currently represented on our board are *welcome* to join us.



## Make a Donation

*Our office is your home – providing care in the comfort of your residence.*

Thank you for your support.

Houston Visiting Christian Science Nurse Service, Inc. is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) organization. All donations are tax-deductible.

Our service is grateful for the financial support from area Christian Science churches and individuals. Their contributions help us pay for our contracted staff and operating expenses.

**BANKING CONTRIBUTIONS:** To set up recurring donations to be deducted electronically from your checking account, please call our service at (713) 304-8384 and leave your name and contact number. Our treasurer will return your call and will be happy to assist you or answer questions.

**CONTRIBUTIONS BY MAIL:** We welcome checks mailed to us at:  
Houston Visiting Christian Science Nurse Service, Inc.  
1834 Columbia Street, Houston, TX 77008-4348

Make a  
Donation

“Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to Thee”  
*Christian Science Hymn 324*