



# HOUSTON VISITING CHRISTIAN SCIENCE NURSE SERVICE, INC.

November 2022

## Cherishing our Houston Visiting Christian Science Nurse Service

### A letter written by one grateful Houstonian

“Motives and acts are not rightly valued before they are understood. It is well to wait till those whom you would benefit are ready for the blessing, . . . ” reads *Science and Health With Key to the Scriptures* (238:1–3).

Rightly valuing and understanding the reasons for having a Visiting Christian Science Nurse Service in Houston may seem obvious to longtime students of Christian Science.

But maybe it’s time to take another look.

One dictionary defines “value” as “worth in usefulness or importance to the possessor.”

We can ask ourselves: How useful is the Visiting Christian Science Nurse Service to Houston? How much importance do we place upon this service?

Here are some of the many ways the Houston nurse service demonstrates its “usefulness” and “importance” to all who are “ready for the blessing.”

Our VCSN:

- “has a demonstrable knowledge of Christian Science practice,” “thoroughly understands the practical wisdom necessary in a sick room,” and “can take proper care of the sick” (*Manual of The Mother Church* 49:11).



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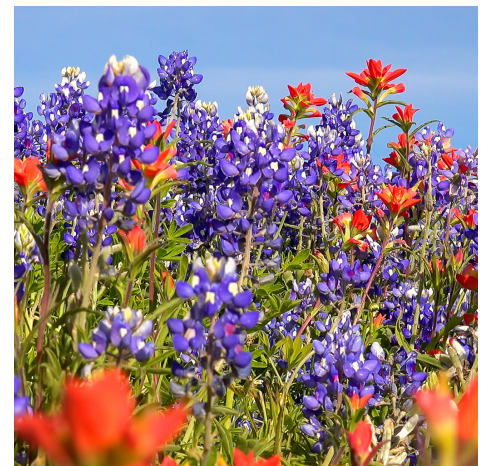
- is prepared, ready, and willing to come to your side at a moment's notice, giving you the ability to practice Christian Science (with the support of a Christian Science practitioner of your choice) in the peaceful surroundings of your own home without having to travel to a care facility or depend upon medical services for support.
- expresses the comforting presence of the Christ and works with the tenderness and love so needed and appreciated. "Like as a mother, God comforteth His children; / Comfort is calm, that bids all tumult cease; / Comfort is hope and courage for endeavor, / Comfort is love, whose home abides in peace" (*Christian Science Hymnal* 174:1).
- gladly responds to requests to come for a "Christian visit"—to read the Bible Lesson and Christian Science periodicals aloud to you and help you with small household tasks—even when you don't need skilled Christian Science nursing care.
- is "cheerful, orderly, punctual, patient, full of faith,—receptive to Truth and Love" (SH 395:19), qualities that are the basis for the metaphysical healing that Christ Jesus practiced more than 2,000 years ago and that his faithful follower, Mary Baker Eddy, discovered, explained to the world, and practiced.

"Metaphysical healing, or Christian Science," Mrs. Eddy wrote, "is a demand of the times. Every man and every woman would desire and demand it, if he and she knew its infinite value and firm basis" (*Miscellaneous Writings* 1883–1896, 232:21–24).

There's that word "value" again!

This November newsletter is an appeal to support our Houston Visiting Christian Science Nurse Service. The regular monthly contributions made by branch churches make up only 50% of its budget. For many months, funds have been declining rather than maintaining or increasing. Hence this request for any and all "love offerings"—big or small, regular or occasional, metaphysical or financial (or both!).

Surely all of us "desire" and "demand" that the Houston Visiting Christian Science Nurse Service prosper and continue to bless! We can be reassured that, as Mrs. Eddy makes clear, it is "the deific law" that "supply invariably meets demand" (MW 45:16).



If you have any questions on how you can support the service, please don't hesitate to visit our [website](#) or contact Sue Merrill at 281-808-3731 or [sue@doesprayerheal.com](mailto:sue@doesprayerheal.com).

Now, we're happy to share the testimony of a Houstonian who has long treasured our city's Visiting Christian Science Nurse Service. Here's her story:

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## **Christian Science Nursing Helps Bring Healing**

I'd like to share my appreciation for the Houston Visiting Christian Science Nurse Service by telling you what it has meant to me over the years.

My first remembrance of my family's interaction with the Christian Science nursing service was when I was a senior in high school and came down with the measles. Having been raised in the Christian Science Sunday School, I knew nothing of the belief that this disease is more severe when contracted after early childhood, but I sensed that my mother was fearful.

Since she worked full time outside the home, my mother wasn't able to be with me during the day. Back then, Houston had two Christian Science visiting nurses, Martha Gifford and Edna McCants. For two weeks, one or the other of them was with me when my mother couldn't be there. It felt like I always had a guardian angel at my side! Also, I had a wonderful Christian Science practitioner praying for me.

Martha and Edna brought with them unlimited kindness and joy and comfort. I always felt loved and cared for when they were on the scene. Not only did they give the needed practical care, but they also provided that even-more-important spiritual uplift to the sick room. They radiated God's love, and I could feel it so tangibly. Yes, I was always happy to see Martha or Edna!

Later, after they retired, Mary Roadman was Houston's visiting Christian Science nurse. She continued the wonderfully uplifting support that this service had come to mean to me. I always felt that the Christ went before Mary when she entered a room, so clear was her thought.

Once, when I injured my back playing golf and was taken off the golf course unable to move, my brothers called Mary because they knew she would know just what to do! Her gentle presence calmed my husband and allayed the fears of my mother and father-in-law. I remember she arrived on a Sunday afternoon as soon as she got home from the airport after a trip. She brought a sense of levity to the sick room—which was my downstairs library! Her presence that evening meant so much to me—as did the prayers of a dedicated Christian Science practitioner. After a couple of days, Mary was instrumental in helping my husband and brothers properly lift me off the sofa and carry me upstairs to my bed. All the while, her unflinching joy lifted my spirits immeasurably. I was scheduled to fly to Disneyland with my son and a dear friend and her two children at week's end. I did not want to miss out! With Mary's steadfast assistance and the

prayers of the practitioner, I was able to thoroughly enjoy that entire trip.

Lastly, I would like to share how much I value and truly appreciate all that Susie Petersen, Houston's current visiting Christian Science nurse, did for me in a time of real crisis in my life. Susie came to help me when I was considered very ill. This was shortly after the nurse service initiated "friendly visits," whereby the nurse stops by to read the Lesson or the periodicals, to bring a meal or to just help out in little ways that don't require skilled Christian Science nursing care. These "Christian visits," as they are now called, are for the purpose of simply expressing love, whether in the home, in a Christian Science care facility, or even in a hospital. Susie was a real rock to me, and I will forever be grateful for her steadfastness, practical assistance, and the loving spiritual thought she brought to the sick room. She helped me in so many ways and demonstrated, for all to see, what Christian Science—living the Christ—is all about. Susie was, and of course still is, an example of true Christian Scientist.

Needless to say—but I'll say it once more anyway!—I am extremely grateful for the Houston Visiting Christian Science Nurse Service!

— HEATHER BOWEN

## 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

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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*