



Seventeenth Church  
of Christ, Scientist

## Annual Report 2014

The Bible is filled with instances of sufficiency in the face of lack, life and healing in the face of death and disease, courage in the face of fear.

The New Testament includes two separate examples where thousands were fed —not just fed but filled — despite very modest available human resources. “When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.” (John 6:12)

Our annual report this year is a little like gathering up the fragments of a spiritual undertaking. Many practical issues are handled over the course of a year, but our only reason for existing is spiritual. Like the Christians before us, we exist to love God and our fellow man, and to fearlessly prove the Truth of Christian Science in daily life.

So here are a few basketsful of fragments from the year just ending:

- \* Our readers just completed their term of service, providing the clear, intelligent voice of Truth uninterrupted in this community. That’s more than 100 services over the course of the year. And we have just begun a new term of inspired, spiritually uplifted reading.
- \* Our Reading Room continues to be our open door and open face to the city, providing five-days-per-week access to the Truth for the thirsty throngs passing by. It’s no small thing to maintain a welcoming open door in a major city with virtually no interruption. In fact, that’s more than 1500 hours of access over the course of the year.
- \* Our Sunday School benefits from a very dedicated staff and is always prepared to provide a loving, welcoming, uplifting experience for everyone who comes. A great number of students can be accommodated, so let’s continue to cherish the concept of Sunday School and its potential.
- \* Seventeenth Church sponsored three lectures on the education level of our building, and cooperated with Second Church Evanston in their sponsorship of two more. During these five events, about 100 copies of *Science and Health* were sold. We also co-sponsored two lectures at the Ultimate Women’s Expo during the summer, and we are co-sponsoring two more at the Body Mind Spirit Expo in February.
- \* We staffed a table at the Parliament of World Religions “Faiths Fest” event in November, and we sponsored a table at the Chicago Prayer Breakfast in December. For the first time in 90 years a Christian Science Church was invited to participate by offering one of the prayers at the breakfast.
- \* As part of the Sacred Spaces Downtown Chicago interfaith activities, we developed and hosted an event that examined the role of Forgiveness in sacred texts.
- \* We participated in staffing booths at the Women’s Expo as well as at the Printer’s Row Lit Fest.

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*Annual Report 2014 continued*

- \* In October 4,400 visitors took tours of the Church building as part of the Chicago Architecture Foundation's Open House weekend. Our Church was one of the ten most visited venues on the tour and many visitors seemed genuinely interested in the purpose of the building – not just the architecture. In fact, one individual who took a tour recently inquired about Christian Science class instruction. She has been attending a Christian Science church in her neighborhood since taking the tour here.
- \* On the First Tuesday of each month during the summer months the Chicago Architecture Foundation offers tours that include Seventeenth Church. Usually about 15 individuals attend.
- \* 250 high school students and 60 adult students received a 45-minute introduction to Christian Science when their classes came to the Church on field trips.
- \* Every week we provide space for three separate groups of Alcoholics Anonymous. That's about 150 meetings per year.
- \* On the first Sunday of each month we offer light refreshments and fellowship for all. This seems to be appreciated by most attendees including guests.
- \* Members serve in various capacities – including on the boards – of the Jointly Maintained Reading Room, The Christian Science Media Committee of Greater Chicago, and the Joint Institutional Committee for Illinois.
- \* This Fall our Church was the subject of an NPR radio program, "Curious City," that was also published on-line. It turned out to be a very fair article that brought numerous visitors to our church in the weeks that followed.
- \* The board has been working closely with the architects and construction company building the Hilton Garden Inn right next door, and with the company refurbishing the Auto Club building. There are easement and other issues that must be handled properly to ensure future progress.
- \* We are engaged in a multi-part metaphysical project that involves all members and covers every activity of Church. It involves reading through *Science and Health* and having frequent discussions; working specifically for services, Reading Room, Sunday School, and lecture; and healing some unhealed problem. This unified metaphysical activity is vital.
- \* We continue to move forward with projects that seem most pressing from a maintenance perspective and mid-summer we changed our HVAC vendor. The new vendor, Air Comfort Inc., has a record of maintaining current equipment with a low ratio of outside-of-contract-costs.

These few basketsful of fragments from the year hint at the vitality and conviction of an intrepid group of Christians moving forward humbly and courageously in one of the great cities of the world.

Respectfully submitted by the Executive Board  
Seventeenth Church of Christ, Scientist - Chicago