

**Christian Science in Metro Chicago
Body Mind Spirit Expo in Northlake, IL
Wrap Up Report 4/5/2023**



SUMMARY

The Christian Science in Metro Chicago joint committee coordinated participation on behalf of the local Christian Science community at the recent Body Mind Spirit Expo. The Expo was a two-day conference held at the Midwest Conference Center in Northlake, IL over the weekend of March 4 & 5, 2023.

Organized by Body Mind Spirit Expo (BMSE), the Ashland Oregon based company sponsors 19 expos each year across the United States that cater to the metaphysical and alternative health communities.

Representing the Christian Science Reading Room, six volunteers served during the 17 exhibit hours on Saturday and Sunday. In addition to the exhibit booth, two Christian Science lectures were given as part of the Expo's presentations.

ACTIVITY LEADING UP TO BMS EXPO

1. Website csmetrochicago.org updated in the weeks leading up to the event along with announcements in several CSMetroChicago e-newsletters

- Lecture sponsorship and booth staffing opportunities explained
- CS presence at Expo explained
- CS resources in Chicago showcased

2. Facebook page for CSMetroChicago updated in the weeks leading up to the event

- Periodic posts between January and March promoting the Expo - both the Reading Room booth and two lectures



3. Lecture Sponsorship

Glen Ellyn Church Lecture Committee co-chairs, Todd and Cynthia Wittenberg, organized the lecture activity & its finances, contacting The Mother Church to “call for the lectures” and coordinating communication between the sponsoring branches, lecturer and Event Coordinator. 15 churches co-sponsored the two lectures - Sandwich, Oak Lawn, Park Ridge, Park Forest, Deerfield, 17th Chicago, Barrington, Crystal Lake, Elmhurst, Glen Ellyn, Glenview, Evanston, Rockford, Naperville and Elgin.

In preparation for the talks on Christian Science being given at the Expo, a metaphysical conference call took place with the lecturer. Approximately 60 people were in attendance with lively conversation and support of the upcoming event.



BOOTH DISPLAY STRATEGY

1. To display and sell the primary textbook of Christian Science, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy
2. To offer free take-aways that
 - a. Provide a listing of the Christian Science Reading Rooms in the area
 - b. Introduce expo attendees to Wednesday Prayer Group Meeting in the area
3. To appear professional, uncluttered, modern
 - a. Simple, clear displays that focus on the practical, healing benefits of *Science and Health*



SALES

Science and Health (\$10 each) 30 copies
\$300 Total Income - Sales were handled in cash and via credit card

CONVERSATIONS

Over 75 (approximately)
17 Exhibit Hours - 4-1/2 conversations per expo hour
6 Staff Workers (from 4 branch churches)



AHAs and Conversations With Seekers

- I wasn't sure why I came to this expo. But now I know. This book is the reason.
- My family really needs this book. We need spirituality. My husband and I will read this book.
- Is this book based on the Bible, then I want it.
- I love that! I'm God's idea! I'm an idea of God!
- I can't believe I'm buying a book! I don't read books!
- I will treasure this book now that I know it is based on the Bible.
- From a worker in the next booth – you folks in your booth are so happy.
- From another exhibitor – I know this book. I think my grandma had the book. I remember things from it. I'll buy it.
- The visitors that had healings of their own to share often attributed to God.
- We felt we were united seekers.
- Time after time we were talking heart to heart with people who were interested in healing.
- After reading briefly from Science and Health a visitor said her mother would really like this; she purchased it for her mother.
- Two young women listened and heard the booth worker share about a healing about a marriage situation. One said, "My mom will want this book. Let me get her to hear about what you are talking about." The mother joined in the conversation and bought Science and Health.

- Two visitors that bought the book immediately saw that a healing in Fruitage addressed the very illness they believed they were facing. Each expressed amazement and joy, one declaring it wasn't serendipitous but that it was God's way of showing her that she was meant to read this book.
- A mother and young daughter were introduced to Science and Health. As they were about to leave the booth, the little girl turned quietly to her mother and said she wanted the book. "Is this what you really want?" questioned the mother. "And will you really read it?" "Yes," said the little girl and her mother purchased it.
- One visitor confirmed that divine intelligence had enabled him to figure out and accomplish needed tasks in areas where he has had little or no expertise after I shared a testimony of my own in that regard. The visitor and I affirmed that God had been guiding him just as God had guided me.
- A young woman who was entering a discipleship program, purchased a book and accepted cards about Reading Rooms and the Wednesday evening meetings in order to be in touch with others about healing. She looked forward to going online (on JSH-online which I wrote on the card).
- A young man happened by when we were wrapping up the display. "Is it the last copy?" He asked. "I'll buy it, it must be mine."

Further comments by booth workers

- Often telling about Mary Baker Eddy, her challenges and victories won people's hearts. They related to her and wanted the book.
- Sometimes we'd ask folks what brought them to the expo. This was a nice conversation starter.
- "Can I tell you about this book?" This was another good conversation starter.
- We generally found genuine receptivity. Folks would relax and listen, making remarks in agreement. Sometimes it was clear from the start that they felt what they were hearing was true, something they wanted to hear more about. Some would ask where it came from, about how it originated. One man had heard of Mary Baker Eddy. Many were surprised it had been around so long and was known world-wide.
- I spoke with a woman who commented "I don't like the word god. What is god? People have all kinds of gods, worshipping animals and things." I suggested knowing God as Mind, the creative intelligence, Life and Love that we all express. I opened the book and together we read the definition of Mind from the Glossary. We talked about how our creativity and beauty and caring about others is part of that expression of Mind through us. When I suggested she take the book, she passed, saying that her partner's views meant a lot to her, and she wasn't sure how her wife would take to her bringing home a book. She did, however, concur with many concepts of taking a spiritual view of life instead of being locked into the material picture.
- A woman with whom I spoke was very enthusiastic. She had experienced a remarkable healing of cancer on her own. She got out her wallet, then saw in the title, "With Key to the Scriptures". She asked if the book was based on the Bible. Yes, she was told. She said she was in such a place in her thought now that she didn't want to consider something else. We parted friends.

- We were always embracing visitors in love and respecting their need to focus on other interests. We respected their choice to avert their eyes and avoid being engaged.
- Once I found myself asking a visitor, "Have you already talked to her?" (Indicating my partner in booth.) The woman smiled and showed me the book in her bag, happily pointing to the treasure she had purchased saying, "Yes, and I have one!"
- A booth worker holding one of the handout cards told the visitor that at Wednesday testimony meetings folks meet to testify, to share their gratitude for finding peace and solutions to challenges through prayer. "This card's QR code brings up a list of the Christian Science churches in the area where these meetings take place - they're open to the public, and you can share your healings too..."

Free Distribution

Reading Room Cards	50
Wednesday Prayer Meeting Cards	50
Science & Health Reading Journal	2

Lectures & Results

Two lectures sponsored by 15 branch churches paid for all associated speaker expenses: Sandwich, Oak Lawn, Park Ridge, Park Forest, Deerfield, 17th Chicago, Barrington, Crystal Lake, Elmhurst, Glen Ellyn, Glenview, Evanston, Rockford, Naperville and Elgin..

Approximately 35 participants in total attended the two lectures. 20+ were not familiar with Christian Science. 1 attendee at Saturday's talk visited the nearby Elmhurst church's worship service the following day.

Booth Expenses

Display materials, handouts, inventory	\$ 726.19
Lecture Prep Coordination	<u>\$ 500.00</u>
 Total Expenses	 \$1,226.19

Note: All lecture related expenses were paid by the sponsoring area churches.

Submitted by

Nancy Bachmann, CSMetroChicago Board Member & Event Organizer AND Todd and Cynthia Wittenberg, Glen Ellyn Church Lecture Organizers