



School of spiritual science

Goetheanum World Conference 2016

27 September to 1 Oktober 2016

World Conference *Conferencia Mundial* *Welt-Konferenz*

About this special edition

At this year's annual conference of the General Anthroposophical Society the members of the group that is preparing the Goetheanum World Conference spoke about the intentions of this conference. Their contributions are printed here unedited.

Goetheanum World Conference: Content and background

Meeting the requirements of humanity today

The Goetheanum Leadership strives to raise awareness of the fact that the School of Spiritual Science, the Anthroposophical Society and the fields of life form an organic whole: they share the same tasks and strengthen each other.

Now that the anthroposophical initiatives have been growing and developing for almost a century, it is time to make the connection between the School of Spiritual Science, the Society and the fields of practical application more visible and effective. All over the world the fields of practice have merged with the tasks and challenges arising in each place. While the Anthroposophical Society has, through its members, often inspired the founding of institutions, these institutions have usually continued to grow, maintaining only a loose association with the Society. The School of Spiritual Science is often seen as identical with the work on the class lessons which Rudolf Steiner provided as its foundation and as a way of gaining a deeper and more appropriate understanding of the human being for our time. But people often forget that the School of Spiritual Science was intended as a spiritually inspired scientific institution for all aspects of human inquiry.

The Goetheanum Leadership has be-

gun to work on enhancing the mutual relationship between these areas. Three examples illustrate this endeavour:

The Goetheanum Leadership (together with the general secretaries) proposes an annual theme which can be used by anthroposophical branches and groups, or by individuals, to focus their work on particular questions of our time.

The annual theme has become a central aspect of the work within the Goetheanum Leadership. In 2016/2017 the theme is "World Transformation and Self-Knowledge in the Face of Evil" (Anthroposophy Worldwide, 1-2/2016): Our time demands of us that we take hold of and shape our relationship with the world, that we say 'yes' to the reality into which we place ourselves and on the basis of which we act and transform the world, dealing with evil forces around and within us. This changes the way we think about the things we do in a world where violence and destruction are ever-present. We must all ask ourselves today how we can actively deal with

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these forces. The annual theme unites us, and our interest in current issues can become the underlying basis for our anthroposophical work.

Another example is the way the **School of Spiritual Science** is developing. For the Goetheanum Leadership it was an important step to create a picture of the questions and themes that have been researched in the various sections of the School of Spiritual Science since its inception. The outcome of this investigation is now available in book form, providing informative, and occasionally surprising, insights into all sections and their development over the last ninety years. The result of this stocktaking will be published by the Goetheanum Press (Verlag am Goetheanum) in the summer of 2016.

The third example is the **Goetheanum World Conference** which will take place in September 2016. Based on the motto “People seeing people”, the Goetheanum Leadership invites people worldwide who work actively, inspired by anthroposophy, with the challenges of our time. Together we want to gain more clarity and see what steps we can take so that by 2024 – a hundred years after the foundation of the Anthroposophical Society and the School of Spiritual Science – Rudolf Steiner’s spiritual science can stand strongly in the world, inspiring future actions in answer to the needs of humanity and the questions of our time.

We would like to hear your suggestions as to individuals we should invite to this conference in order to represent the many who are active all over the world: people who wish to take an active part in shaping the present and future of the anthroposophical work together with the Goetheanum Leadership.

What should our anthroposophical work look like today if it is to meet the needs of humanity and the demands of our time? This is a question we need to ask again and again. A wealth of experience – gained in almost a century – as well as the immense challenges of our time form the basis for developments that we need to anticipate, understand, accompany and facilitate. | *Constanza Kaliks*

Living with the Foundation Stone Meditation

Self-knowledge and the consciousness soul

With its appeal to the “Human Soul!” to actively work and practise, the Foundation Stone Meditation can help us to gain knowledge of ourselves and our relationship with the world. Alternating between contemplation and action we can, based on the new mood thus created, turn lovingly to the being of the world.

In sharing with you aspects of our preparations for the Goetheanum World Conference I would like to speak of an aspect that we all have lived with for almost ninety years, even through difficult times. It is the threefold appeal to the “Human Soul” that helps us to connect with the Foundation Stone Meditation. For us in the Goetheanum Leadership this meditation, with its three appeals to “Practise Spirit Recalling”, “Practise Spirit Awareness” and “Practise Spirit Beholding”, permeates the work of each single day.

The Foundation Stone Meditation reveals something that has been addressed at the 2016 Annual General Meeting by Gerald Häfner: that the threefold organization of the human being is a reality. And yet, the words that Rudolf Steiner poured into the Foundation Stone Meditation in 1923 were the result of thirty years of research and – as he informs us – insights that he wrested from the tempests of war and that he was only gradually able to put into words.

This Foundation Stone Meditation is a work of art, fashioned in a way that allows us to recognize the three levels at which

we participate in the world. As we practise these aspects again and again, imbuing them with life, we learn to experience ourselves as cosmic and human beings within the wider context of the world.

The way we gain self-knowledge has changed in the course of human evolution. It was different in ancient Greece from what it is now, in the age of the consciousness soul, which began in 1413. What self-knowledge meant for the ancient Greeks is fully expressed in the Delphic temple inscription “Know yourself”. Rudolf Steiner explained that the consciousness soul needs us to extend this knowledge and differentiate it according to body, soul and spirit.

The Father ground

The Foundation Stone Meditation introduces a kind of self-knowledge that inspires an ongoing organ-forming process as we become aware of ourselves as threefold beings in the three world dimensions: depth, width and height. First we look at the world of the Father where we experience our limb-nature. As the most

Human Soul!

You live within the limbs
Which bear you through the world
Into the Spirit’s ocean-being:
Practise Spirit Recalling /In depths of soul
Where in the wielding /World-creator-being
Your own I/In the I of God /Comes into being.
And you will truly live
In human world-all being

For the Father-Spirit of the Heights holds sway,
In depths of world begetting life.
Spirit of Strength:
Let ring forth from the heights
What in the depths is echoed,
Speaking:
Out of our Godhead we are born.
This is heard by the spirits of the elements
In East, West, North, South:
May human beings hear it!

Human Soul!

You live within the beat of heart and lung,
Which leads you through the rhythms of time
Into the feeling of your own soul-being:
Practise Spirit Awareness / In balance of soul,
Where the surging deeds / Of Worlds evolving
Unite your own I / With the I of the world.
And you will truly feel
Within the working of the human soul.

For the Christ-will encircling us holds sway,
In world rhythms bestowing grace upon souls.
Spirits of Light:
Let from the East be enkindled,
What through the West takes form,
Speaking:
In Christ death becomes life.
This is heard by the spirits of the elements
In East, West, North, South:
May human beings hear it!

recently developed parts of our physical body our limbs come to us from the cosmos, enabling us to take hold of the earth and engage actively in space. At this level we are enlivened by the cosmic spirits.

We sense how they support and carry us in our limb-existence. It is the all-pervading human love which gives us strength to place ourselves actively into the world and gradually transform the earth. It instils in us the power to keep ourselves upright and live directly in the world of the Father. This is not a process we “own once we have become aware of it”; it is inner activity which leads us gradually to feel at one with and consciously penetrate the world of the Father.

The sphere of the Son

Spirit-Awareness unlocks an entirely different sphere for us: the widths of the surrounding world. Self-experience at this second level takes us to the transition from the inner to the outer world, where subtle interaction takes place between heart and lungs, the transition from airy to fluid processes. Here, we experience ourselves at the boundary between body and outside world: we take in air – the element which refreshes and enlivens us. This process affects the entire organism of fluids and blood. We experience the flowing and weaving of a rhythm that goes back millennia. Rudolf Steiner speaks of aeons. We live and participate in this continu-

ous rhythmic element. The Foundation Stone Meditation takes us to another dimension: we experience that we live in a cosmic rhythm and that we are part of an immense breathing process facilitated by a being that resides in the earth’s periphery. It is the world of the Son, who shapes our destinies, the sphere where we feel ourselves living in this pulse and world rhythm, carried by its grace.

The world of the spirit

The third perspective we can reach as we continue to practise is one that can awaken us to the heights. Here, all depends on our initiative, on whether we are able to connect with the spirit through our own will power. For this we need open our heads, the oldest part of our being into which the past is imprinted and that tends to focus on itself, for the warm heart forces that streams to it from the centre of our being. In doing this the head can become receptive to the world of thoughts, the sphere of cosmic thoughts, which we increasingly learn to see as something that is coming towards us.

Cosmic thoughts are not the kind of thoughts that usually appear in our heads as subjective mental representations. If we are able to open ourselves with inner purity and freedom to the world of the spirit, we will acquire the faculty to discern the cosmic thoughts as living beings that come towards us and that can

become effective in the world through us.

The Foundation Stone of Love

These three levels of being are a living part of our preparations for the Goetheanum World Conference. We hope they will unite us as a conference community – also with those who cannot attend in person but will be with us in spirit – as we work together on the dodecahedron, the stone of love. This way of working together is rooted in our inner constitution. In this sense, each of us contributes to building up the Anthroposophical Society as we each work inwardly on our own stone so that we will in future be able to put these stones together to form a building. Looking at this from the other side we can say – as Rudolf Steiner did when he founded the Anthroposophical Society in 1924 – that by placing the stone of love deep into our souls we will be able to see ourselves more and more as a community that works on developing the ability to become active and effective in the world.

The meditative life is not separate from the world and it is not reserved for those who suffer from being in the world. The meditative life – if it consists in the alternation of contemplation and active participation in the events of the world – can make us more and more able to enter deeply and lovingly into this world and deal with the great challenges of our time. | *Christiane Haid*

Human soul!

You live within the resting head
Which from the grounds of eternity
Unlocks for you world-thoughts:
Practise Spirit Beholding / In stillness of thought
Where the gods’ eternal aims
Bestow the light of cosmic being
On your own I / For free and active willing.
And you will truly think / In depths of human spirit.

For the spirit’s world-thoughts hold sway
In cosmic being, yearning for light.
Spirits of soul:
Let from the depths be entreated
What in the heights will be heard,
Speaking:
In the spirit’s cosmic thoughts the soul awakens.
This is heard by the spirits of the elements
In East, West, North, South:
May human beings hear it!

At the turning point of time

The spirit-light of the world
Entered the stream of earth existence.
Darkness of night / Had held its sway:
Day-radiant light / Shone forth in human souls:
Light / That gives warmth
To simple shepherds’ hearts;
Light / That enlightens
The wise heads of kings.

Light divine,

Christ-sun,
Warm our hearts,
Enlighten our heads,
That good may become
What we
Would found from our hearts
What we
Would guide from our heads
With purpose.

Section work today

Living anthroposophy

There can be no anthroposophy that is not applied in practice. In the Section for Agriculture this becomes apparent in the direct sensory contact with ‘manure’, for instance, where the earthly aspect is deepened by spirit and the “low” matter elevated. Michael School and Rosicrucian school meet and interpenetrate.

We decided to give more concrete examples of the work undertaken by the Goetheanum Leadership as outlined by Constanza Kaliks. I will not speak of the programme and organization of the Goetheanum World Conference, which we will hold in the autumn, but would like to highlight a few threads that are running through our section work.

From my point of view – I came to the section work as a farmer and was originally not so deeply rooted in the Anthroposophical Society or the First Class – I feel one needs to take a new look at the Sections. Maybe it is not even a matter of taking a new look but rather of introducing something entirely new. By introducing something new I mean that we need to think in a new way and then adapt our feelings and actions to this new thinking. This is not an awkward attempt at renewing something that is new anyway; it is about trying to do justice to our situation now, to our generation.

*“There is no such thing as unapplied anthroposophy.”
Anthroposophy is application,
anthroposophy is practice.”*

Anthroposophy is applied practice

When speaking of the School of Spiritual Science, the Society and the fields of life we need to ask: where are the sections? There is a widespread tendency to equate the School of Spiritual Science with the First Class. If we then look at the Society or the fields of life we find that the sections have no place there, either.

If we pursue this picture we arrive at the following situation – and maybe this is how we really think and feel: we have the School of Spiritual Science with the First Class on the one hand (here we also find anthroposophy – or so we often say) and on the other hand we have the fields of life (where anthroposophy – as we also often say – is applied in practice). I think this is wrong. It is a dead end. This is not how things are.

Can we separate anthroposophy as such from applied anthroposophy? We can, but that is abstract thinking. If one is actively involved one needs to say in my view, “There is no such thing as unapplied anthroposophy.” Anthroposophy is application, anthroposophy is practice. Should we not say: The field of life is where we work and that falls within the sphere of the Section? Then the section is no longer nowhere, but it clearly belongs somewhere: it is active and effective, creative even, in the sphere where anthroposophy is put into practice, where it lives and is not merely applied. Then we need to ask whether the School of Spiritual Science

as such is also an area of practice? This is not so easy to answer, but I would like to open up this question.

For esoterics, practitioners and the socially active

I can give you a concrete example from the Section for Agriculture. How is what we do there anthroposophy, if anthroposophy is practice? If we take the spiritual substance, the substance that give us our impulses: for our Section this substance has been condensed in the “Agriculture Course” (GA 327) – given to us by Rudolf Steiner as the result of his spiritual research. As farm-

ers we are lucky in that we only have one book. We are also in the fortunate – or maybe unfortunate – position that the shorthand notes of the course no longer exist. Whether this is lucky or not – the fact is that we have a book and this book is the same for

each of us, whether we are esoterics, practitioners or social workers. It’s all in this book. And the book does not specify which part of it is for the practitioner and which part contains guidelines for inner development. It is all the same.

When Rudolf Steiner spoke to the farmers – in those days most farmers were aristocrats, counts or barons in other words – he said at one point, “It will be good for you to connect personally with the fertilizer you work with.” Just take this in carefully! Does he imply a social aspect? Is he asking the count to get off his horse and study the manure rather than let the farm hand deal with it? Or is it a practical statement that indicates that the manure will turn into good fertilizer? Or does the “personal connection” refer to something esoteric? We can choose! But we can also try to read all three aspects into this sentence.

From waste to fertilizer

To us, fertilizer is manure, and manure is waste. The milk we receive from the cows we sell on to you, the consumers. It is Demeter milk – for which we should charge an extra Cent per litre, as Eduard Willareth suggested, and use this levy to support the Goetheanum. The milk leaves the farm – which is good, what would we do, after all, with so much milk?

We also have cow pats. Economically speaking, the cow pats are waste. Nobody wants them. You wouldn’t buy a cow pat even if I wrapped it up nicely. No, we farmers hold on to them. We also have straw – another

waste product that is left once we have sold the corn to people who like eating bread. (Maybe we can levy a charge on grain sales too?) But nobody wants the straw either. We farmers can hold on to it. And what do we do? We put the two waste products together – the cow pats and the straw – and turn them into heaps of manure. And if we look after these heaps well, they will transform into valuable fertilizer. And then Rudolf Steiner goes and says, “Connect personally with the fertilizer.” What does he mean? He means: Smell it. Organic matter has the tendency to develop its own smell. It stinks, in other words. The participants of the Agriculture Course were noble people, which is why Steiner put it to them politely. Now imagine them putting their noses to the manure in order to establish a personal relationship with it. So: I have the manure on the one hand, which emits a more or less pungent odour – from which I can derive its quality or stage of maturity. On the other hand I have personally connected with this process. This is not a purely objective or measurable perception, but the whole person is connected with this process. The actual farmer on his actual farm with his manure and the smell of this particular manure. He may be a student of anthroposophy. He may even be a class member. And this person smells what is going on organically.

Nitrogen and sulphur

What smells most pungently are the processes involving nitrogen and sulphur. We smell into the spirituality of our farms, as it were, because nitrogen carries the astral-sentient spirituality. This is what we learn from smelling and this we unite into the cosmos of ideas that we farmers know from the “Agriculture Course”.

Nitrogen is the crucial substance in farming. The moment when human beings discovered that plants need to absorb nitrogen and began producing nitrogen synthetically marked the birth of industrial farming. It is the reason why the farmers asked Rudolf Steiner to speak to them. They did not say, however, “Let’s ignore the nitrogen and do something ‘spiritual’ instead, without nitrogen. No. Rudolf Steiner told them how they could – with their own noses, by establishing a personal relationship – learn to smell the forces of nitrogen. This is an area where not only quantity counts but quality also. A farmer must be able to smell when the nitrogen concentration is at its best and act accordingly. The action taken differs from one farmer to the next which means that every farmer must draw his own conclusions from Rudolf Steiner’s “Spiritual-Scientific Guidelines for Successful Farming” (the original title of the Agriculture Course).

You may ask: what has the School of Spiritual Science got to do with manure and its olfactory qualities? But does this process not clearly belong to the School of Spiritual Science? This is not ‘applied’ but original, living anthroposophy!

The two sources of the Section

In my view – and maybe this is a bit of a bold statement – this way of working may be a source of anthroposophy that is related to the source of anthroposophy unlocked by Rudolf Steiner. The two sources relate to one another. Between them, a dimension, a quality, extends that I would call a section. A section is therefore not simply a bit of spirit and a bit of practice being mixed together, but the mutual fertilization of two sources.

I will illustrate this with another example from farming: a seed – perhaps a spirit-seed also – is not viable by itself. It needs fertile soil. Nothing will grow if the seed is not sown onto fertile soil. And without seeds being sown, nothing but weeds will grow on fertile soil. It needs both to create a new life cycle that will generate a new seed.

It is therefore not so much a matter of “finding the idea in the reality”, but of losing the idea in the reality in order to rediscover the reality, permeated by ideas or by the spirit. This is how I see the School of Spiritual Science and its Sections.

Back to the whole

How do we get back to the whole from the individual cognitive experience? When the Sections here organize conferences today, it is no longer as it used to be in the past when people came here from their “fields of practice” in order to be inspired by spiritual knowledge. Now we come here from our places of work, bringing with us our experiences in order to imbue them with the spirit. When of the 700 or so participants, who come to our annual conference from the so-called periphery (which is their centre), twenty or thirty come as contributors, then they come to the Goetheanum, which for them is the periphery, not only in order to speak of their work, but in order to “spiritualize” their experience. They cleanse the manure experiences, or the seeming waste products of our civilization, by penetrating them and by forming a personal relationship with them, in order to speak of them at the Goetheanum. This means that the spirit substance that emanated from here in the first place returns to the Goetheanum where it receives a new foundation.

This breathing between losing the spirit substance in the practical work, in the reality, which will adapt itself to the insights of the spiritually seeking farmer, who then brings his spiritual insights back to the Goetheanum; this breathing between the two poles could be what brings life to the sections. In the wider context this is the meeting and mutual penetrating of the School of Michael and the Rosicrucian School. This seeking and active engagement with our times is a stream that lives within the Goetheanum Leadership. And in this stream we would like to work with all those who will join us for the Michaelmas Conference. | *Ueli Hurter on behalf of the preparation group*

*The task of the Anthroposophical Society***Practising mutual awareness**

Fostering the life of the soul is one of the Anthroposophical Society's central tasks. There are many ways to practise this, all of which take the individual striving for knowledge as seriously as the idea of destiny and the consonance between individual and generally human endeavours.

Rudolf Steiner's book "How to Know Higher Worlds" (GA 10) has a section on "Inner Peace" where the student of the spirit is asked to find the strength to view himself as he would view a stranger. This is a very important and difficult exercise. At the forthcoming Goetheanum World Conference we, as the anthroposophical movement, would like to look at ourselves in this way, from the wider angle. We could also say, from the point of view of the spirit of our time. What do we see if we do this?

Michael is, as we know, the spirit of our time. Are we able to look at the evolving anthroposophical society from his angle? And can forces arise from this that can show us the way forward? In the next seven years we will have the opportunity, and the task, to see the Christmas Conference, an event that concerned the whole of humanity, with new eyes; and to recall, with a hundred years' hindsight, the "beginning of the cosmic turning point of time", of which Rudolf Steiner spoke on 1 January 1924, in such a way that what has been achieved since then can be the first step of this beginning and form the basis for the further steps that will be necessary to consolidate this beginning more and more. The question is: will we be able to look at ourselves from this perspective and, as a result, develop, as a Society or movement, the kind of self-knowledge from which directive forces can arise?

Nurturing the soul life

The first section of the Founding By-laws specifies that the Society should be a community of people who wish to foster the life of soul in the individual and in the human society on the basis of true knowledge of the spiritual world. The question we can ask again is again

is what this nurturing of the soul life entails.

I would like to refer to a point Rudolf Steiner made three times during World War I. He first spoke of it at the inauguration of an anthroposophical branch on 15 June 1915, then again on 10 October 1916 and the third time on 9 October 1918. As the events of the world war unfolded he addressed the same issue three times. He first said that, as the Anthroposophical Society, we have the task to live in our time in such a way that future forces can always come into being and that a direction becomes apparent. Rudolf Steiner basically gave us the task to be awake to our time, but also to ask where this journey will take us.

We live in a particular cultural era, but how are we going to move on to the next one? Rudolf Steiner mentions three characteristic qualities that we will need: the first is brotherliness or being there for one another. Am I approachable? Am I available to others? The consciousness soul is inclined to say 'no' to these questions; to say, 'I have nothing to do with

you; I need to look after myself. You are there, I am here'. It is a great cultural challenge to live in the age of the consciousness soul in such a way that a transformation

can take place within the soul which allows me to say, 'Yes, it matters to me how you feel!' We need to deepen our awareness of one another, because nothing will move without that. There is no future if we don't practise mutual awareness.

Seeing the divine in the other

Rudolf Steiner's second reference concerns our inner attitude: Can I perceive and meet others in ways that enable me to see the divine in each of them? This is a wonderful appeal to each single one of us. Does my attitude make it possible

"Can I perceive and meet others in ways that enable me to see the divine in each of them?"



that each encounter can be a sacrament? Rudolf Steiner spoke of this in his lecture on the work of the angel in the astral body (9 October 1918) and in his cycle on finding the Christ (GA 182).

The third question is: do we not feel the need today to find meaning in our lives? For this to happen, we have to deepen our search for knowledge because the meaning of life does not just reveal itself to us. The karmic tasks that are coming towards us need us to develop a particular attitude to knowledge because without that we won't be able to perceive them. They are not revealed to us; we have to discover them.

The joy of nurturing the soul life

These are the three qualities that the members of the Anthroposophical Soci-



Photo: Sebastian Jüngel

ety need to cultivate according to Rudolf Steiner. The soul life is nurtured through these qualities. They are aspects of this nurturing. Rudolf Steiner said in 1916 and in 1918 that these qualities were not only important for the future but that we needed them also for the present. Our time requires of us an attitude that contains these qualities. And it is deeply satisfying to work on developing them. If we succeed, we will together create a culture that is not only important within the Anthroposophical Society. We can regard our Society as a kind of cultural testing ground on which we develop the kind of culture that today's civilization is missing so sorely.

When I hear people say, 'You anthroposophists seem to argue a lot', I think: that's true; but so do siblings. And it is ok, because one needs to find out what one

wants to achieve together. A degree of friction is ok. As long as we are there for the other when he needs us. We need this culture of being there for one another in the sections, too, and in the fields of life.

I have worked in anthroposophical institutions for much of my life. Such institutions are only healthy when a culture as the one described permeates them. And such a culture is of course also important for the School of Spiritual Science. It creates a strong basis. This way of nurturing the soul life is what makes the practice of spiritual science possible. Without it there can be no spiritual science. We need this kind of culture in order to overcome the challenges of the soul life.

The individual in the universal

During the Christmas Conference of 1923/1924, Rudolf Steiner explained that our Society needs to combine the greatest possible transparency with true and genuine esotericism. And he added that this can only be achieved within the human heart. I am convinced that it is a distinguishing feature of the modern Michaelic approach that esotericism and exotericism are two sides of the same coin, that the two are no longer separated.

It also means that the individual and the universal are two sides of the same coin. What lives in the very depths of the individual soul is at the same time universally human. In other words: What is most particular to the individual is also most particularly universal. This is a key, an important Michaelic mystery of our time. It means that we can find universal values within ourselves, such as the three qualities I just mentioned, which apply and can be practised anywhere in the world.

I would like to end with the 'rhythm' that reflects the three elements of practice so appropriately in the Foundation Stone Meditation that a new "we" can arise from them: "Practise Spirit Recalling", "Practise Spirit Awareness", "Practise Spirit Beholding" - "that good may become what we would find from our hearts, what we would guide from our heads, with purpose." | *Paul Mackay*

Funding

The budget of the Goetheanum World Conference 2016 would be fully covered, including meals, if participants contributed CHF 360 each on average.

On registration, please enter an amount that reflects your financial means.

We also ask all members and institutions for a financial contribution so that the Goetheanum World Conference 2016 can become a reality and we can set up a fund to support members from further afield.

Please use one of the following accounts for your donations

Reference:

World Conference 2016

Donations from Germany in Euros (tax-deductible)

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The programme of the Goetheanum World Conference

Cultivating humanity

Organizing for people from all over the world to get together and develop new impulses for the School of Spiritual Science, the Anthroposophical Society and the fields of life, and look for ways of shaping the future together, is certainly a challenge for everyone involved.

As a first step during the conference, which will take place from 27 September to 1 October 2016, we will develop a shared vision and set up initiatives that can form the foundation for the work we intend to do in the seven years leading up to, and beyond, the years 2023/2024. We approach this goal in a global situation that seems to grow more dramatic every day. Wars and conflicts are a daily reality in many parts of the world; the fear of hunger, poverty and acts of terrorism fill many people with the greatest concern. The refugee question seems unsolvable. People all over the world face the challenge of having to develop new social forms and a culture of humanness that can bridge the chasms carved by differences of nationality, language, religion etc.

People from all over the world

The first day will allow conference members to arrive and gain clarity as regards the question that brings us together. At 3 p.m. the preparation group, supported by other members of the Goetheanum Leadership, will introduce the intentions of the Goetheanum World Conference. This will be followed by a World Café – a form of dialogue in which people share, in small groups, their views on the suggested topic and the questions they themselves have brought along. People from different regions of the world, speaking different languages, will meet face to face during this session.

What thoughts does the question raised by the World Conference evoke in a young Waldorf teacher who has only just come across anthroposophy? How is the same question received by the author or lecturer who has studied Rudolf Steiner's work for many years? How does it affect

the person running a chain of shops that sell biodynamic products? What are the burning questions of the social carer who works with traumatized children in war zones?

“The Way of Life”, a work by the Czech composer Alois Hába, will be performed on the first evening. When Hába wrote this orchestral fantasy in the 1930s, he was inspired by the “Representative of Humanity”. His work, which speaks of the conflict between the Ahrimanic and Luciferic powers and the human search for a balance between them, will resound for the first time at the Goetheanum, following an introduction into its musical dimensions by Stefan Hasler, the leader of the Performing Arts Section.

Being aware of the tasks ahead

The following mornings will be devoted to the three appeals to the Human Soul in the Foundation Stone Meditation. The Goetheanum Eurythmy Ensemble will introduce the motto of the day with a demonstration. This will be followed, on each day, by two introductory talks. Using the three exercises of the Foundation Stone Meditation as living tools during the conference will help us to consider the question, “Are we sufficiently aware of and clear about the background we all share for us to recognize what is needed in the world and develop the will to find solutions? Can we, by practising spirit-recalling, invoke the forces of the past and, with them, take hold of the future?”

The appeal to practise spirit-awareness confronts us with the question whether we are able to recognize the qualities we and others have and whether we can work together effectively, acknowledging each other's differences. Spirit-awareness can

therefore help us to practise new social competences.

The request to practise spirit-beholding lets us ask whether we have a shared awareness of the spiritual situation of our time, of the global situation in general and of our mission in it. What solutions do we see that can help us to transform the needs of our time?

We hope that, when the final day of the conference arrives, we will be able to condense the outcome of our work – in the sense of the fourth verse of the Foundation Stone Meditation – into strong impulses that will inspire us in the next seven years.

The work groups which follow after the presentations provide space and time for us to discuss the impulses and questions mentioned earlier.

The sections of the School of Spiritual Science

Each day, in the first part of the afternoon, we will get to know the longer-term issues and concerns of the various sections of the School of Spiritual Science in subject-specific groups. The section leaders and other coworkers will present topics, projects and research questions and discuss them with the participants.

In the second half of the afternoon, the conference members can share the impulses they brought with them in the plenary sessions in the Main Auditorium.

In the evenings the theme introduced on the first day with Alois Hába's composition – how to approach the two forces of evil and cultivate humanity – will be deepened through drama and eurythmy. | *On behalf of the preparation group: Christiane Haid, Ueli Hurter, Constanza Kaliks, Paul Mackay*

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