



THE HEART'S SPRING OF HOPE! *Epiphany Retrospect and Easter Message*

On the first day of Spring 2018 it snowed. On the second day of Spring 2018 it *really* snowed! The Vernal Equinox arrived in Hershey and much of the Northeast USA in stark contrast to the Winter thaw blessing Corps de Michael's Epiphany Festival on 25th January 2018.

On that sunny Sunday in January friends and members arrived at Stonehaven from several regions of Pennsylvania including: Chambersburg (Franklin County), Harrisburg (Dauphin County), Hershey (Dauphin County), Lancaster (Lancaster County), and Hamburg (near Reading, Berks County). Additionally, member Mark

Peura journeyed from New York. Members in Baltimore and Virginia sent regrets. Originally scheduled during the Thirteen Holy Nights 2017-2018, the Epiphany Festival was rescheduled three times due to snow, Winter weather advisories, or extreme record breaking cold in the Capital Region!

Many heartfelt thanks to dedicated friends and members who exhibited Michaelic Will by persevering the several cancellations and reschedules until the Epiphany Festival consecrated a Michaelic Triumph. Overcoming external hindrances, the community cultivated bonds of soul-to-soul as spirit-seed for the coming season of rebirth. On that glorious sunny day in late January the festival opened with an Epiphany verse by Rudolf Steiner calling on the ***faithful heart*** to find and experience the ***Spirit-Sun deep in the ground of the human soul....***Through inner work inspired by community life, the ***heart's spring of hope beholds the Sun; his coming glory in Epiphany's light of blessing.***

After three cancellations many souls would have succumbed to hindrances by abandoning festival plans until next year. However, we were encouraged to soldier-on when at least one member was heard to say that Christmas and Epiphany would not fully arrive until we celebrated together in Corps de Michael community. The Epiphany Festival included an enlivened all age performance of the Oberufer Shepherds' Play, piano accompaniment, caroling, processions, festival potluck, and additional after-dinner caroling followed by refreshments and dessert. A Three Kings' Procession was also planned. A unique festival highlight occurred in the afternoon when Stonehaven's new organic partners, the Kreider Farm Family of Hershey, joined us in the Michael Room for community caroling.

Remarkably, the afternoon caroling united members of the Mennonite faith with members of the Michael stream in the lazured Michael Room of the Widow Logan House at Stonehaven Farms (Founded 1737). Dressed in their Sunday best, our Mennonite friends joined us in carols proclaiming the newborn King, the Prince of Peace, the Key of David, the Holy Night, and Christ the Lord! In twenty-seven years of Corps de Michael and Commonwealth Center for Anthroposophy events this was the first time that a sister spiritual stream was so prominently represented, participating with joyful and harmonious voices in the Epiphany Festival.

To welcome the ten Mennonites to the circle of Michaelites assembled, we referenced a common destiny: Stonehaven's original proprietary grant from William Penn's *Holy Experiment*. As we passed around a copy of the sheepskin deed of 1737, signed by Penn's son and conveying two hundred acres

to Thomas Logan, we noted that the lazured Michael Room features the original plaster and colonial woodwork of Thomas Logan's early 19th century descendants, the Widow Logan and her heirs. Indeed, pacifist Mennonites and Amish sought refuge in the *Holy Experiment* when certain European powers decided to conscript all young men for military service. Previously, pacifists were exempted from the military. Rather than abandon their pacifist principles, Mennonites and Amish immigrated to the *Holy Experiment*. Penn envisioned a 'Peaceable Kingdom' by preparing peace treaties with the Native Susquehannocks, whom he considered the owners of central and eastern Pennsylvania, as well as all the lands surrounding Chesapeake Bay. By the time of his arrival, however, the Lenni Lenape (Delawares) were no longer a subject tribe of the Susquehannocks and thus free to enter into treaties with 'Brother Onas' as Penn was fondly known by the indigenous peoples.

In 1682, Penn extended his hand in brotherhood to the Native Americans at Shackamaxon (near Philadelphia) promising to live with them in peace and friendship for as long as the ***Sun would shine and the Moon rise***. Remarkably, during the early years of the *Holy Experiment*, no forts or garrisons were built in Pennsylvania and no blood was shed between the colonists and the Native Americans. The various peoples often mingled without need of soldiers, muskets, bows, arrows, or tomahawks.* The Rosicrucian principle of Freedom, successfully unfurled in the *Holy Experiment* as the seed of a nation would later inspire the thirteen original colonies to enjoin the cause of American Freedom.

Historic references to Stonehaven's founding as a grant from the *Holy Experiment* were balanced by the youthful joy of the future generation, who participated with wonder and enthusiasm in the morning production of the Shepherds' Play. Ian Alaric Barlup and Quorra Lee Barlup enlivened both play and processions as "Little Lambs", while Olivia 'Livvy' Marie Stephens served as "Angel-in-Traning". We recalled a Corps de Michael co-founder, Hilde-Maria 'Little Rose' Frey, whose handmade costumes brought color and imagination to the performance. All joined in the play's many carols graciously accompanied by Chris Brigouleix's spirited piano playing. The festival potluck featured June Oriel Lang's homemade organic pumpkin signature soup, Indian dishes, a special salad by David Stephens, special cheese from Isis Natura Barlup, and a wide array of additional community offerings.

Lively conversation flowed during the potluck which might well have continued the rest of the afternoon but for the arrival of our Mennonite friends. We quickly cleared the table and returned to the Michael Room for warm welcomes beneath a painting of Michael by Ymelda Hamann-Mentelberg, a pupil of Rudolf Steiner. A cappella caroling ensued with the Kreider Family. Finally, the all age assembly adjourned to the Dining Room for herbal tea, warm apple cider, holiday cookies, and refreshments.

As the festival drew to a close, Ian and Quorra Lee took turns ringing the Stonehaven bell cast at Philadelphia in 1860. As the wonderful tones emanated throughout the Widow Logan House, across the farm and Hershey countryside, an outer expression of community life rang out far and wide. Together, we had prepared the invisible seeds of the coming glory of the Sun—the Spring and Easter season of rebirth, renewal, and resurrection born in the spirit-depths of Winter.

***La Communaute' du Corps de Michael vous souhaite
un Jour des Rameaux Triomphant et de Joyeuses Paques!***

(Corps de Michael and Friends wish you a Triumphant Palm Sunday & Joyous Easter!)



Oberufer Shepherds' Play 2018

Cast

Starsinger

Angel

Mary

Joseph

Rufinus

Servilus

Titus

Gallus

Huckle

Muckle

Crispen

Little Lamb

Little Lamb

Angel in Training

Pianist

June Oriel Lang

Muriel Brigouleix

Sheri Stephens

David Stephens

Isis Natura Barlup

David Lenker

Isis Natura Barlup

David Lenker

Rebecca Kesler

Adrien Barlup

Christian 'Chris' Brigouleix

Quorra Lee Barlup

Ian Alaric Barlup

Olivia 'Livvy' Marie Stephens

Christian 'Chris' Brigouleix

*Deep in the ground of the human soul
Of Victory assured
The Spirit-Sun is living
All through the Winter of the inner life.
The faithful heart divines it.
Now, the heart's spring of hope beholds
The Sun
His coming glory
In Epiphany's light of blessing.
Token of highest life;
In Winter's deepest night.*

--Rudolf Steiner

*William Penn Tercentenary Committee, Remember William Penn (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical Commission, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1944) p. 140.

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