

## Rudolf Steiner's Fifth Gospel and the Inner Meaning of the Christian Mystery

The focus of our seminar this year is threefold. First, we are proud to welcome Dr. Peter Selg of the Ita Wegman Institute and the Karl König Archive in Dornach to celebrate the publication of his new book on the Fifth Gospel. A doctor and child psychiatrist by training, Peter is a twenty-first century Anthroposophist, whose wide-ranging culture, passionate and generous heart, and impeccable scholarship always cast an insightful, loving light on Steiner's work and mission: in this case, the Fifth Gospel lectures. Our second focus is the initiatory significance of these lectures for our understanding of Anthroposophy, our path to Christ, and our common human future. And, our third focus will be on the question of "how to read Rudolf Steiner."

With great emotion, aware of the "sacred obligation" of what he was about to do, Steiner gave the thirteen lectures known as "The Fifth Gospel" over a four-month period beginning in October 1913. The Christ Event had always stood at the heart of what he had taught. As he himself realized, however, his presentation of it, though based in spiritual research, had always been more theoretical than living. Then, as now, these were sensitive, easily misunderstood matters. But in the dark months leading up to the First World War, he realized the time for reticence was over. The Christian Mystery had to be taken existentially into the heart. In the light of his experiences with the etheric Christ and as Anthroposophy separated from Theosophy, he felt the absolute need to bring the events surrounding the deed of Christ Jesus into actual human experience. Without this, there could be no true understanding: no true "Rosicrucian" Christianity. In these lectures, then, out of his own initiatory experience, Steiner sought to initiate his listeners by giving them a graphic picture of the activity of Christ Jesus—"in concrete detail"—thereby making possible "a much more conscious understanding of the figure of Christ Jesus," and "spiritual insight into the person of Jesus of Nazareth" and to his mother Mary. Doing so, he provided anyone who reads these lectures with a truly initiatory, contemporary text, which our seminar will approach from different perspectives.

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## SteinerBooks Spiritual Research Seminar 2010

Rudolf Steiner's Fifth Gospel  
and the Inner Meaning of  
the Christian Mystery

**MARCH 12- 13**

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New York University  
Washington Square South  
New York City

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# SteinerBooks Spiritual Research Seminar 2010

**FRIDAY MARCH 12**  
**SATURDAY MARCH 13**

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ALSO OF INTEREST: 100 YEARS OF ANTHROPOPHOSOPHY IN AMERICA. A SYMPOSIUM ON SATURDAY, MARCH 6, FROM 10 am to 5 pm.  
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## Friday Evening, March 12

Opening **GENE GOLLOGLY** 7:00

The Fifth Gospel as an Initiation of the Heart

**CHRISTOPHER BAMFORD** 7:10

Break 8:00

Rudolf Steiner's Own View and Experience of the Fifth Gospel

**PETER SELG** 8:15

RECEPTION 9:15

## Saturday, March 13

CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST 8:00

The Path of Jesus Christ According to the Fifth Gospel

**PETER SELG** 9:00

Eurythmy **RACHEL ROSS** 9:45

Break 10:00

The Fifth Gospel as a Source of Healing Impulses

**ROSS RENTEА, MD** 10:15

Break 11:00

Toward a Logos of the Soul **MICHAEL GRUBER** 11:15

LUNCH 12:00

The Fifth Gospel and the Eastern Middle Way

**KWAN-YUK CLAIRE SIT** 1:45

Break 3:00

The Unique Importance of the Fifth Gospel

**PETER SELG** 2:45

Eurythmy **RACHEL ROSS** 3:30

Break 3:45

CLOSING PANEL 4:00-5:00

**CONFERENCE FEE : \$200.** Price includes Friday evening reception, Saturday continental breakfast and lunch. For hotels look online at [www.hotels.com](http://www.hotels.com).

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**Peter Selg: Rudolf Steiner's Own View and Experience of the Fifth Gospel.** For Steiner, to speak of the Fifth Gospel was an inner obligation he owed both to the spiritual world and to human souls. Rosicrucian tradition had spoken of a "spiritual gospel," necessary to understand the Four Gospels, which would need to be revealed when the time was right. With the twentieth century, that time had arrived. "He gave the impression of someone who had climbed Mount Sinai ... someone shattered by unanticipated events, overpowered not so much by what he had beheld as by the voice that spoke to him" (Andrei Bely).

**The Path of Jesus Christ According to the Fifth Gospel.** The Fifth Gospel tells of the experiences of Jesus of Nazareth leading up to the Baptism in the Jordan with the incarnating descent of the Christ, and then of the experiences of Christ Jesus leading up to the Crucifixion: two stories, which in a sense are one. In deeply moving images and profound revelations, the path of Jesus Christ is shown to be one of loneliness, pain, cosmic sadness, unimaginable compassion, unconditional love, and infinite suffering. At the same time, it is filled with hope and joy. To take this Gospel into one's heart gives a new meaning to "the imitation of Christ" and a new understanding of the Beatitudes.

**The Unique Importance of the Fifth Gospel.** The Fifth Gospel has a special significance because it provides a context for the manifold ways in which Steiner presented the divine, cosmic, and earthly event of the Mystery of Golgotha. These lectures also provide a kind of blueprint for a future Christianity, one of selflessness, community, and love that is able to reintegrate the divine-spiritual and earthly worlds.

**Christopher Bamford: The Fifth Gospel as an Initiation of the Heart.** Usually, we think of history and the evolution of consciousness moving through great personalities. In reality, since the Mystery of Golgotha, the vital pulse of Christ's presence that now makes these possible has been carried humbly, selflessly, and without fanfare in ordinary human hearts. While recognizing that Christ's deed could certainly be understood intellectually, Rudolf Steiner also knew from his own experience that—to fulfill its redemptive, transformative power—the gift of love that Christ IS must be born in human hearts. With the Fifth Gospel, Steiner sought to initiate his listeners' hearts, and so this talk will address what he said as "an initiation of the heart."

**Rachel Ross: Eurythmy.** "Eurythmy is capable of perfection without limits. The human body is a true microcosm, and when speaking through it, the human soul, manifesting its own inner life, can make visible in artistic form all the secrets of the universe" (R. Steiner).

**PETER SELG** is director of the Ita Wegman Institute for Basic Research into Anthroposophy in Switzerland and professor of medicine at the Alanus University of Arts and Social Sciences in Germany. He lectures extensively and is the author of numerous books.

**CHRISTOPHER BAMFORD** is Editor in Chief of SteinerBooks /Lindisfarne Books. He has lectured and written widely on Western esoteric traditions.

**RACHEL ROSS** is an educator, eurythmist, consultant, and author. She has a practice in therapeutic eurythmy and remedial movement therapy. She is codirector of the Waldorf Resource/Remedial Teacher Training Program.

**KWAN-YUK CLAIRE SIT** holds a Ph.D. in mathematics from the City University of New York and is Professor Emerita at La Guardia Community College. She is author of *The Lord's Prayer: An Eastern Perspective*.

**ROSS RENTEА, MD** has been a family physician practicing anthroposophical medicine for nearly 30 years. He is a cofounder of the True Botanica Company for the manufacture of anthroposophical supplements and remedies.

**MICHAEL GRUBER** is an existential analyst in private practice in New York City. He is author of *An Unknown Destiny—Terror, Psychotherapy, and Modern Initiation: Readings in Nietzsche, Heidegger, Steiner*.

**Michael Gruber: The Fifth Gospel: Toward a Logos of the Soul.**

The Fifth Gospel reveals an essential mission of Anthroposophy: to unfold the ongoing experience of the Mystery of Golgotha. One meaning of this today is to prepare souls to receive and participate in Christ's entering the sphere of humanity in etheric form. Anthroposophy can facilitate our connection with the etheric Christ by inspiring us to contest the dehumanizing influences of Lucifer and Ahriman embedded in our astral body or soul. This lecture will consider how psychotherapeutic encounter, when structured by reverence for the other and awareness of the omnipresence of divine love, can animate the purification and transformation of our negative feelings, especially shame and guilt, thereby promoting a sense of self able to begin manifesting "Not I, but Christ in me".

**Kwan-Yuk Claire Sit: The Fifth Gospel and the Eastern Middle Way.**

In the Fifth Gospel, Steiner relates how Jesus went into the wilderness and faced the three temptations by Lucifer and Ahriman. Steiner frequently mentions that we cannot avoid the influences of Lucifer and Ahriman (it is a fact of life), yet we can harness them for our development. In other words, we can harmonize the spirit and material aspects of our existence, which is also an integral part of the Eastern tradition commonly known as the "middle way." We shall explore this tradition through Lao Tzu's *Tao Te Ching* and a Confucian classic, *The Four Books*.

**Ross Rentea, MD: The Fifth Gospel as a Source of Healing Impulses.**

With the content of the Fifth Gospel Rudolf Steiner opens a new healing stream of spiritual health to a humanity that is now ready to take it in. Can the same impulses that lead to spiritual health also lead us to an understanding of how to create new anthroposophical remedies? Addressing the relationship between substances and soul-spiritual states, this lecture will explore how anthroposophical medicine can contribute to spiritual awakening.

Also of Interest: A celebratory symposium in New York City on March 6, considering the achievements, challenges, current applications, and future of Anthroposophy in America. With Theosophical historian Michael Gomes, Open Center co-founder Ralph White, Alliance for Childhood director Joan Almon, author Gary Lamb, conflict transformation leader Olivia Stokes Dreier, and writer and symposium moderator Walter Alexander.

100 YEARS OF ANTHROPOSOLOGY IN AMERICA [WWW.ASNYC.ORG](http://WWW.ASNYC.ORG).