



2024 College 50th Reunion Gift Classes of 1974 and 1975

Fundraising Goal: \$250,000

CASE STATEMENT

Principia's reunion classes have always taken delight in leaving a lasting impact on current and future students through a significant gift. In eager anticipation of our 50th Reunion scheduled for June 2024, we, the steering board responsible for the 50th Reunion of the College Classes of 1974 and 1975, engaged in discussions with Principia College leadership to assess present needs. Our deliberations involved the consideration of various gift concepts. After due consideration, we collectively decided to embark on a fundraising endeavor in support of two initiatives: 1) a program designed to guide students in exploring, comprehending, and nurturing their faith in God, and 2) the restoration of the iconic telescope lookout area situated on the bluffs.

Making an Impact

Our gift's primary focus will be the establishment of an endowed fund to support spiritual life on campus. Principia's mission, to serve the Cause of Christian Science, remains a priority across the institution. In alignment with this mission, the College created a program in 2022 aimed at aiding students—both those with a Christian Science background and those from diverse faith traditions—on their spiritual journeys.

During our retreat at the College, we met with Director of Spiritual Life Roger Gordon and gained deeper insights into the program's details. The College's Spiritual Life program is firmly rooted in Christian Science principles and values, notably emphasizing God's all-encompassing and unconditional love for every individual, irrespective of religious affiliations. The program's goal is to bolster students' dedication to Christian Science by offering alternative avenues of spiritual discovery alongside customary Church and Sunday School services. It is designed to serve as a gateway to more extensive and profound exploration, setting Principia apart from other peer institutions in the eyes of potential students who value investment in religious and spiritual growth.

While on campus, our committee discussed how today's college students differ from students in our time and even 20 or 30 years ago, specifically regarding spirituality and religious systems. Many churches have seen a decline in Sunday School attendance, and this is also true in Elsayh. More of today's students come from families with two different faiths, and students from traditional Christian Science families often may not have as much experience with Sunday School. This generation of digital natives tends to not trust institutions and prefers to access information on their phones. Broadly speaking, Gen Z students don't want to be talked at, but they do want to engage in dialogue with their peers. Principia's Spiritual Life program will make an impact by facilitating opportunities for students to discuss and explore God, spirituality, and Christian Science in authentic and relevant ways.



Our conversations with students illuminated their preference for peer-driven discussions over traditional lectures. Roger shared results from a 2022 survey which corroborated this sentiment, highlighting students' keen interest in group discussions and retreats. Part of the Spiritual Life program will make Christian Science practitioners and nurses more available on campus for free, and speakers from The Mother Church are planned too. A big area of focus is creating programming to facilitate peer discussions and gatherings, including the "Faith in Action" series and "Dilemmas and Decisions" seminars. The role of house metaphysical heads may also be re-envisioned with expanded duties.

We firmly believe that this program warrants our support, as it serves as an anchor for Principia's Christian Science mission and helps foster the spiritual growth of its increasingly diverse community. The Spiritual Life program can support students wherever they are on their faith journey—from class-taught Christian Scientists to spiritual-but-not-religious, and everything in between.

How the Spiritual Life Endowed Funds Will Be Used

This newly established fund will provide support for programs and initiatives that the College President identifies as crucial for enhancing spiritual life at Principia College. While the following are current priorities of the program, the intention is to continuously evolve, expand, and modify the program based on the evaluation of each activity's success over time:

- Create multiple opportunities to engage students in spiritual growth through distinct and inspiring programming.
- Organize trips and retreats aimed at nurturing spiritual growth and faith development. This might encompass visits to Boston for insights into The Mother Church, Mary Baker Eddy, and the origins of Christian Science, as well as retreats to Christian Science camps or other locations conducive to spiritual advancement.
- Provide electronic or physical gifts of Christian Science literature, subscriptions, and books, including the Bible and *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, to incoming students.
- Bring inspirational speakers to campus, including officers from The Mother Church, Christian Science lecturers, and other religious leaders.

The world urgently needs graduates with the profound spiritual insight that Principia can offer. Regardless of whether students leave Principia as steadfast Christian Scientists or as leaders equipped with an understanding and appreciation of Christian Science, our class gift guarantees ongoing funding to ensure these exceptional young individuals go forth to bring blessings to the world and contribute to the advancement of the Cause of Christian Science.

Endowing the Initiative

Our class gift has a clear purpose: to ensure the sustained funding of this vital program. We embrace the concept of using the annual earnings from the invested principal to provide the College with the certainty of perpetual funding for the Spiritual Life program. By establishing this gift as an endowed fund, the program will no longer rely solely on annual budgets.

In honor of our 50th Reunion, our classmates, and all current and future students striving to uncover Truth, we are naming this newly endowed fund the "1974 & 1975 50th Reunion Endowed Fund for Spiritual Seekers of Truth." This echoes Mary Baker Eddy's dedication to sincere seekers of Truth:

"In the spirit of Christ's charity,—as one who "hopeth all things, endureth all things," and is joyful to bear consolation to the sorrowing and healing to the sick,—she commits these pages to honest seekers for Truth.

—*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, page xii

Partnering With the Class of 2024

During our retreat, we were thrilled to learn that the Class of 2024 is planning to fundraise for the restoration and enhancement of the telescope lookout area on the bluffs. However, the scope of this project may surpass their fundraising capabilities. Notably, the 50th steering board recognized the significant need for restoration at this iconic location. Consequently, the board voted to allocate up to \$30,000 from our 50th Reunion funds to aid the class in replacing the telescope with more powerful optics, fixing the benches, addressing deteriorating stonework on the platform, and undertaking any additional work necessary to ensure the space's safety and appeal for future students, alumni, and visitors.



The old telescope is cloudy and almost unusable.



The wood on the benches needs replacement.

Fundraising Goal: \$250,000

The 50th Reunion steering board set a goal of \$250,000 for our 50th Reunion gift. Reaching this goal provides the initial seed funds to start growing an endowed fund that will generate enough annual interest to cover a good portion of the annual expenses of the Spiritual Life program and support the Class of 2024 gift. To be clear, the endowed funds may be used to cover any expenses deemed necessary by the College President to support students' understanding and appreciation of Christian Science and/or to build programs that spark opportunities for them to grow in their individual spiritual journey.

Thank you for considering a gift to our 50th Reunion gift, the 1974 & 1975 50th Reunion Endowed Fund for Spiritual Seekers of Truth.

Gratefully submitted,
Steering board for the 50th Reunion of the College Classes of 1974 and 1975

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