

## Golden Age Newsletter - November 2024

Richard Buessing and Carol Pobanz  
November 8, 2024



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*Hello Goldies, Welcome to the new look! It's all the same content with a simpler format. We hope you enjoy!*

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This month's newsletter has the 2nd part of the review for Letters Beyond the Veil, a short testimony from a daughter of TP, testimony from Dr. Ward regarding his uncle, a tribute to some dedicated unheralded workers, and a delicious recipe just right for the wintry season.

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## *This Month's Message*



*Photo credit: Laurent Ladouce*

# The Conjugation of Love

Rewritten with permission from Applied Unificationism  
[appliedunificationism.com/2024/10/20/the-conjugation-of-love/](https://appliedunificationism.com/2024/10/20/the-conjugation-of-love/)



By Laurent Ladouce

“Marriage is a long conversation,” Friedrich Nietzsche said.

But how long, exactly? Can the conversation be eternal? Can lovers conjugate the verbs of their conjugal feelings beyond the veil?

Nietzsche didn’t say, but Elisabeth Seidel provides insights. Her new book, *Letters Beyond the Veil*, is not just another volume about life after death or communicating with the dead. It’s about the languages of conjugal love on earth and in heaven.

“Love is strong as death,” said King Solomon in Song of Songs 8:6. In her Unificationist song of songs, Seidel suggests that love can be *stronger than* death. We learn how Dietrich and Elisabeth declared their nascent love when they were young, how they conversed while on earth, not always with romantic words, and how the quintessence of eternal love is expressed after Dietrich’s ascension in 2016. He is absent in the chores of daily life but remains a spiritual presence with whom the conversation continues on another level.

Before passing, Dietrich told Elisabeth that death is natural, as natural as life is. Those who were truly one in heart on earth continue to communicate with their beloved. Here, “truly one” means naturally one. Special powers, spiritual gifts, or techniques may help establish communication. However, a genuine and blissful communion can only come through natural feelings that connect hearts. The love after is only a prolongation of the love existing before.

Any person with a genuine heart may keep talking to the beloved, provided the couple has a record of saying love on earth and not just making love. Nietzsche said, “When marrying, you should ask yourself this question: do you believe you will enjoy talking with this woman into your old age? Everything else in a marriage is transitory, but most of the time that you’re together will be devoted to conversation.”

Why could Dietrich and Elisabeth keep a lasting love in their marriage, with the promise of living eternally together? The book provides some insights, especially this letter of Elisabeth to Dietrich:

I miss the places where we were together: my Alpine mountains, your Austrian Alps. When we saw mountains, we felt at home. We saw God in our mountains (...). We were sharing our dreams together with our Heavenly Parent. We wanted to be victorious for the sake of our Heavenly Parent.

Here, the couple is depicted in relationship to the Creator and His creation, which is like the shrine of love. Dietrich was a typical Austrian, whereas Elisabeth was born in France, near Mont-Blanc. Nature is omnipresent in their love story. Anyone familiar with European culture remembers how the Alps have constantly inspired modern lovers since the romantic age.

The Swiss writer Jean-Jacques Rousseau invented the romantic description of the landscape. His love stories have nurtured generations of romantic people. Dietrich and Elisabeth are romantic Unificationists, not unlike Reverend Moon, who said, “The ideal married couple referred to in the Unification Church is a couple who can truly manifest the highest forms of art and literature.”

Nature and the natural feelings of love create bonding and human affection, but without the spiritual commitment to God, the natural and human affection may not mature and can even fade away. Elisabeth speaks honestly about the many incidents that affected their married life. She confesses that their couple could have been mediocre without God and spiritual discipline. The secret of Dietrich and Elisabeth lies in the proper balance between romantic love and committed, ethical love. Before Dietrich passed away, she kept promising to continue and said to him:



“Do not worry. I will take care of everything. How do you pay the bills and repair the house? How do you write emails and figure out how to use the computer? How do you keep in touch and spread love around? How do you figure things out without you around? Things left unfinished (...) All the wrongs I will make right. All the pains I will heal. All the miseries, I will make them joys. Because you left me with a reservoir of true love.”



On his side, Dietrich keeps showing signs of affection and tenderness, but from the afterlife, he keeps telling her, “My main mission is to love you.”

The book is written in an unusual format. It looks like a collage combining various literary genres. The book is partly a well-documented spiritual essay on life after death, with quotes from scholars. The book is also the memoir of Elisabeth but without any chronology. We jump from the present time to the remote past and from there to the future and future perfect. Rather than following a logical and rational order, the author follows the *stream of consciousness*, a typically American storytelling technique. The last part of the book belongs to a special genre called the epistolary novel. It was popular in the classical and pre-romantic French tradition. In the last 40 pages, the author presents the letters she wrote to Dietrich in the Spirit World and the letters she received from him. It is probably the most moving and thrilling part of the book.

The book covers many additional topics, such as the supporting role of a spiritual community and the life of Dietrich and Elisabeth’s children. Another topic is the role of angels. They seem to play an important role in the life of Dietrich and Elisabeth. We are reminded of the lyrics of Abba’s famous song “I Have a Dream”:

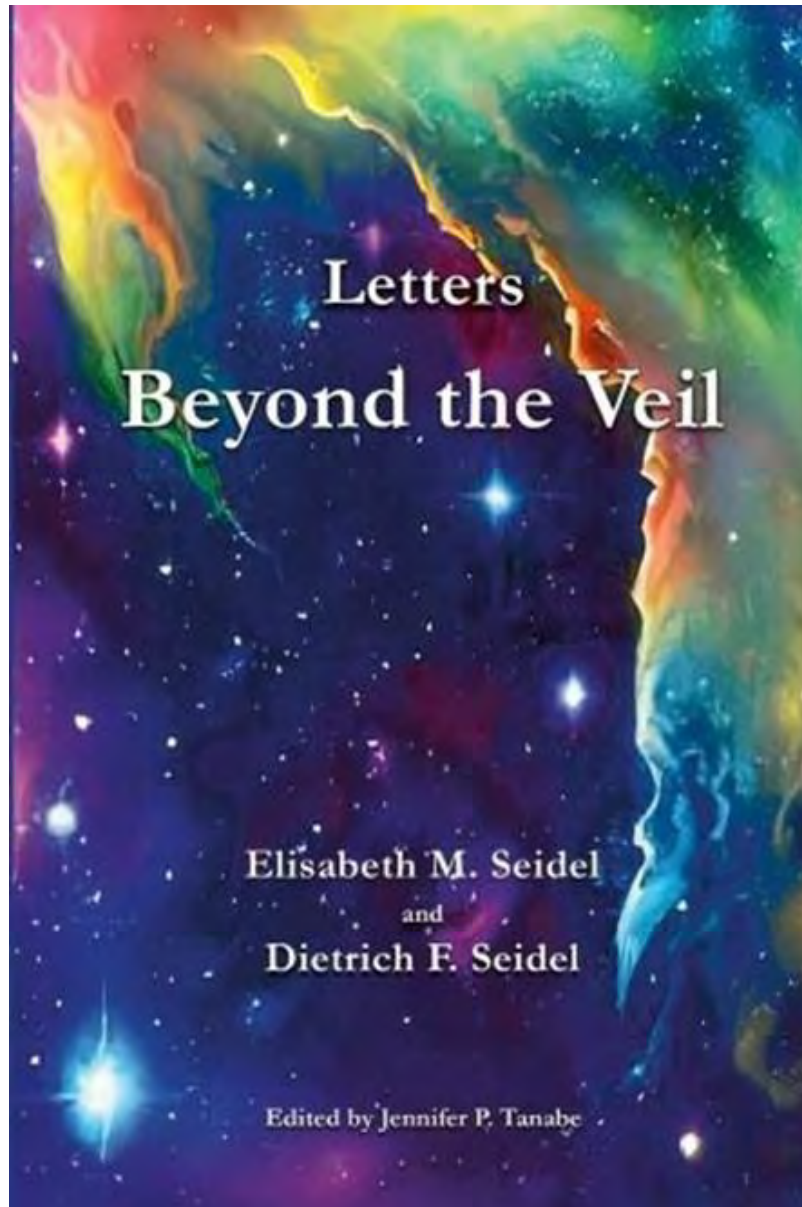
*I believe in angels Something good in everything I see I believe in angels When I know the time is right for me*

*I’ll cross the stream, I Have a Dream.*

Elisabeth’s book will serve the Unificationist community, which already possesses a rich experience of preparing its followers for a noble death and rebirth in the Spirit World. Indeed, Elisabeth almost doesn’t mention the *seonghwa* ceremony or ceremony of ascension. Sometimes, it is useful not to speak too much about rituals. As precious as they are, they are not an absolute guarantee of a smooth transition.

We still lack accounts or testimonies of Unificationists’ experiences of contact with the departed ones when the ceremonies are over. As a result, many members of the

Holy Community of Heavenly Parent often turn to non-Unificationist literature and traditions to strengthen their belief that the beloved is certainly doing well.



Elisabeth Seidel's work will be extremely helpful for bereaved Unificationists. Despite their faith and resilience, they often go through a tough and gloomy period once the celebrations and rituals are over. Elisabeth offers a realistic account of the solitude and vacuum experienced by widows. She expresses her feelings of loss, vulnerability, lack, and distress. Yes, death is a hardship, and she does not repress her emotions.

She also educates the reader about coping with this because, as Dietrich said, "death is natural," and death itself is not a tragedy. The book is full of life and reasonable hope, coming from a person who feels gratitude, confesses her weak points, and never complains about her fate.

On a more fundamental level, she pioneers a path that, hopefully, will be followed by many other Unificationists. Her Unificationist convictions are expressed naturally, with deep respect for other traditions. Her book gives precious insights on how to experience an absolute, eternal, unchanging, and unique love.

Most Unificationists hold these to be self-evident truths. Yet, no self-evident truth can be taken for granted.

Elisabeth clearly shows that the Blessing gives us insight and a foretaste of the absoluteness of love. For sure, she and Dietrich experienced complete communion from the start. But this was a sort of conditioned grace, a promise of an absolute and

eternal bond between “you and me.” It takes a whole life of living together and aging together for the two actors to own absolute love and incarnate it until death and beyond.

Victor Hugo had this deep insight on love: “Love is the absolute, the infinite. Yet, life is relative and limited. From there all the secrets and deep anguish of man.”

Elisabeth reminds us about our condition: as humans, we are both completely mortal, finite, immortal, and infinite. Humans can only love on earth as mortals cherishing other mortals, whose life comes and goes and is so ephemeral and fragile. Though religion nurtures our belief in eternal life, only the experience of love, of loving well and living well on earth, may give us hope that the love experienced is indeed absolute, eternal, unique, and unchanging. Unificationists who want to herald these truths will enjoy reading this precious testimony of a sister who made sense of her union. ♦

*Letters Beyond the Veil* by Elisabeth M. Seidel and Dietrich F. Seidel, and edited by Jennifer P. Tanabe, is available to purchase in print and as an ebook for Kindle.

*Laurent Ladouce is a French Unificationist who was awarded an honorary doctorate by Unification Theological Seminary (now HJI) in 2017. A prolific author of Unificationist publications, he also published the book Le Projet Pakxe: une contribution du Laos à l'unité de l'Asie du Sud-Est et à la Paix Mondiale, which describes the rising role of city diplomacy and proposes a plan to make Pakxe, Laos an International City of Peace. He also regularly conducts tribal messiah activity in West Africa.*

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## History Bytes



# The Heart of a Daughter

*By Dr. Su Schroeder*

Ages ago, when I was at UTS, True Father came to visit. We all gathered in Lecture Hall 1 and greeted him as he came in. I was fortunate enough to get a front row seat.

All went well, at first. Father spoke in Korean and Col. Pak interpreted. Then Father stepped away from the mike, stood toe to toe with me and began to speak in English.

Col. Pak stood helpless as he had nothing to interpret and about 90% of the room could no longer hear Father as he had stepped away from his mike.

I had to crane my neck completely upwards to see Father, so my face was exposed. When Father says words that begin with “p” or a “b”, he spits a little. By the time he finished, my glasses were covered in spit, holy spit.

Father left and, of course, everyone wanted to know what he said. I had no idea. True Father had just spent two hours standing on the tips of my shoes and spitting on my face. I remembered nothing. I was holding my glasses and wondering if I could afford a second pair. Of course, I couldn't so I went into the bathroom and sadly washed them.

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## *Testimonies & Tributes*



*Photo credit: Tom Ward*

# Tribute to William Ward

*by Tom Ward*

Approximately 120 miles East of Paris lies the Meuse–Argonne American Military Cemetery. There, some 14,246 American soldiers are buried, all casualties of a 47–Day Battle which lasted from September 26 until November 11, 1918, the day commemorated for many years as Armistice Day and now known as Veterans’ Day. In addition to the soldiers buried at Meuse–Argonne, the remains of another 12,000 Americans who died in that final campaign of “President Woodrow Wilson’s War to end all Wars” were returned to the US. One of the 12,000 repatriated war dead was my great–uncle, William Ward. William became a casualty in the opening American offensive against the battle–honed German troops.

Just a few months before, he, at the age of 18, kissed his mother, his two brothers, his sister and his nieces and nephews farewell. His mother was just a child when the civil war was fought in the United States. Now it was one of her own children whom she sent off to war.

In late September 2018, William Ward was no longer a newly inducted soldier marching over the Smithfield Street Bridge in Pittsburgh to board a train to Philadelphia and then ship off to France. He was no longer playing cards in the hull of the ship that brought him to France.

He stood on a multi–front battlefield honed with trenches and barbed wire and emptied of flora and fauna. He must have been able to smell the aftereffects of cannon fire, and hear the first makeshift American combat planes that “softened” the enemy lines from above.

Ward’s commanding officer at some point ordered everyone to ready for the offensive and troops formed rows of attack lines with the front rows facing almost certain death.

William Ward may have nervously looked into the sky, witnessing the same steady sun that had shined upon him since his birth as he awaited the inevitable order to begin the offensive. He may have noticed how the sun pierced through the wispy clouds that reliably changed their forms every few moments as they patiently crawled across the skyline, even in times of war. William clutched his M–1 rifle, and lined up awaiting the order to commence the offensive.

The enemy forces before him were far fewer but very well–armed. As it was said, any one of them who “did not have a machine gun had a cannon.”

Suddenly the order came from Ward’s commanding officer and the charge was launched. A German commander surely responded by calling out “Feuer!” In the Americans’ charge, bullets struck not only William’s body but many of those who had joined him in the offensive. He, like them, became a “man down.” Gravely wounded, he could still gaze at the sun and the horizon, while the battle persisted, but the beauty of nature was interrupted by the piercing pain that he felt in his legs that were no longer legs.

In a moment of respite after that clash, he was hoisted onto a stretcher, and carried to a staging ground for the wounded. An American doctor, one could imagine, may have looked at the French nurse assisting him and shook his head. With that gesture, Ward would have understood that he was never again to see his home, his family,



his mother, his siblings, or his youngest nephew, the infant Thomas, who was to be my father. Hopefully the staging ground medical personnel had something to give him to assuage his pain in those moments. He would cling to life for an entire week. Hopefully he uttered a prayer of repentance and offered his life for God and country before his final moment.

Approximately two years later, William Ward would finally be laid to rest in the Redemptorix Cemetery on the North Side of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, not far from where he had spent his entire childhood and adolescence. Some members of his family questioned what was actually in the sealed coffin dispatched from France but, collectively, they chose to treat it as his remains. There was a medallion that would follow, still standing at his gravesite, honoring his service.



My father later inherited the prayer book that was on William's person at the moment of his death. It was kept in the top drawer in my parents' bedroom. I frequently took it out and held it.

When I met our Church in Paris some 50 years later and finally came to understand the significance of its teachings and its Founders, I thought right away of William Ward and realized my debt to the young person for whom there is not a single photo and whom I knew only by his prayer book.

Nevertheless, hardly a day goes by when I do not think of him.

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## *Heavenly Happy Heart*

by Cristine Libon

"Good Morning, 'R' san!" She looks at me and smiles happily. R san, wife and mother of six or seven, had a stroke with consequential brain damage many years ago. She happily cooks in the church kitchen nearly every day.



“Good Morning, Mr I!” He smiles and returns my greeting. Thin Mr. I’s heart was shattered years ago when his precious son drowned in a lake. Mr. I faithfully cleans the Fellowship Hall and stairs to the chapel.



Mr. K is cleaning the second level, though he walks a bit twisted because of his back problem.



It was a heavenly morning ... my heart is moved by loving emotion for these people. This seems like a slice of the Heavenly Kingdom.

## *Health & Recipes*



*Photo credit: Carol Pobanz*

# Holiday Keeper

*Submitted by Carol Pobanz*


Okay, so my friend Scott (the husband of a childhood friend) called me the other day to say, "I made a Sour Cream Pumpkin Coffee Cake today and I'm giving half to you and half to Marcia (another of our mutual friends)."

Well, thank you, Scott! That cake could win a prize at a baking contest. I plan on making it for Thanksgiving. I tried to google the recipe he gave me so I could post it here but I couldn't find it anywhere (I believe it is a vintage recipe), so I'm simply posting a photo of the recipe he sent to me, which was given to him by his next-door neighbor. THIS IS A HOLIDAY KEEPER!

YIELD: 10-12 SERVINGS

## Sour cream pumpkin coffee cake

Prep Time	Cook Time	Total Time
20 minutes	1 hour	1 hour 20 minutes



### Ingredients

- 1/2 cup butter
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 3 eggs
- 2 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1-3/4 cups (16-ounce can) Libby's solid pack pumpkin
- 1 slightly beaten egg
- 1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
- 1 cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 1/2 cup butter
- 2 teaspoons of cinnamon
- 1 cup of chopped walnuts

### Instructions

1. Cream butter, 3/4 cup of sugar, and vanilla in a mixer bowl. Add 3 eggs, beating well.
2. Combine flour, baking powder, and baking soda.
3. Add the dry ingredients to the butter mixture alternately with sour cream.
4. Combine pumpkin, beaten egg, 1/3 cup sugar, and pie spice.
5. Spoon half the batter into a 13 x 9 x 2-inch baking dish; spread into corners.
6. Sprinkle half the streusel over the batter. Spread the pumpkin mixture over the streusel.
7. Carefully spread the remaining batter over the pumpkin mixture. Sprinkle the remaining streusel over top.
8. Bake in slow oven (325 F) for 50-60 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
9. To make the streusel (using the last four ingredients listed): Cut 1 cup of firmly packed brown sugar, 1/2 cup of butter, and 2 teaspoons of cinnamon together until blended. Stir in 1 cup of chopped nuts.

**Nutrition Information: Yield: 12 Serving Size: 1**

Amount Per Serving: Calories: 452 Total Fat: 27g Saturated Fat: 13g Trans Fat: 1g Unsaturated Fat: 12g  
 Cholesterol: 114mg Sodium: 307mg Carbohydrates: 47g Fiber: 2g Sugar: 29g Protein: 7g

*Click-Americana offers approximate nutrition information as a general reference only, and we make no warranties regarding its accuracy. Please make any necessary calculations based on the actual ingredients used in your recipe, and consult with a qualified healthcare professional if you have dietary concerns.*

1 - 1/2 Batter  
 2 - 1/2 Streusel  
 3 - 1 Pumpkin  
 4 - 1/2 Batter  
 5 - 1/2 Streusel

## Bulletin Board



*Photo credit: Carol Pobanz*

The Golden Age Newsletter began as a small Clifton Senior newsletter about 3 years ago.

### ARTICLE GUIDELINES

**Purpose:** The Golden Age newsletter has been created as a means to keep our elder community connected to one another. Articles are not in any way meant to proselytize or push a point of view.

It is a place to share God's Love – what is positive in our life as a result of finding our Heavenly Parent and True Parents.

**Motto:** “This is the Dawning of our New Age” – We are always in the process of redefining ourselves as we grow older and as we add experiences to our lives. Therefore, we must consider how God can use us even when we may be decreasing in our physical capabilities.

The e-newsletter is broken down into eight sections:

1. A Featured Message of Inspiration – Helping others to feel hope and inspiration for the establishment of CIG.
2. “Unification Thoughts” – any educational article on the "Fifth Realm of Heart" – Grandparents' heart
3. History Byte – A short article on a positive memory, a funny or affectionate story about experiences in the church with True Parents or with brothers and sisters or an article about the development/experience of helping to develop one of True Parents' providential projects or events.
4. Arts and Culture – A sharing about one's talents, hobbies or interests and how this relates to sharing God's love (to family, community, nation or world).
5. Tributes and Testimonies– a personal testimony of one or more life learning experiences or a Tribute to a spouse, friend, or leader
6. Health – An article that relates to health (physical or mental), possibly providing a link to an article you think might be interesting or important to other seniors.
7. I Love being a Grandparent – stories about grandparenting or about things to do with grandchildren
8. Recipe – Preferably a healthy recipe along with 2–3 paragraphs about what makes it a good or memorable recipe.
9. Book Review – report on a book that inspires thoughts toward a world of peace
10. Bulletin board – reports on personal activities, or request help on a project

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*Did someone forward this to you? Subscribe to the Golden Age  
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