

Metaphysics institute marks 30 years in Dallas

05:17 PM CDT on Friday, May 20, 2005

By FRANK TREJO / The Dallas Morning News

For Annita Riddick, belief in the creator is not a matter of faith, but a fact of vision and research.

"Every day the creator is making his way known through the patterns we see all around us and that our religions are based on," Ms. Riddick said. "It is proof that that science and religion do agree."

Ms. Riddick is among about 150 members of the Dallas branch of the Institute of Divine Metaphysical Research, a nonprofit, nondenominational organization that teaches that proof of the creator's existence is in the designs of life and nature.

Members consider the organization a school, rather than a church. It's a place where they go to learn about the patterns and truths that they say were revealed to their founder, Henry Clifford Kinley, more than 70 years ago in Ohio.

The institute was formally established in 1958 in Los Angeles, where it still has its headquarters. It has about 180 branches worldwide with a total membership of between 7,000 and 9,000.

In Dallas, members are preparing for a celebration May 28 and 29 marking the 30th anniversary of the local group. As many as 500 people from across the United States are expected.

Meetings at the institute are like a Bible class, said Mala Rhodes, a Dallas resident who has been with the organization for 17 years.

"It is a classroom setting where members explain certain topics and certain concepts," she said.

Central to the class are charts that reflect the "truths" purportedly revealed to Dr. Kinley in a vision. According to followers, the charts demonstrate how creation mirrors the creator and how patterns in the world are repeated throughout creation.

"We believe, for example, that the tabernacle pattern that is mentioned in the Bible is an example of the creator, that the creator is one entity, not a trinity as many religions believe," Ms. Rhodes said.

As a student of biology, Ms. Rhodes said, she was attracted to the group because of its attempts to relate the physical systems of the body to the patterns God created.

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Mala Rhodes speaks during a lecture at the Institute of Divine Metaphysical Research. She is one of about 150 members of the Dallas group, which meets at a shopping center in Mesquite.

"The ultimate aim is to be saved before you die," Ms. Rhodes said. "And that is done through knowledge and understanding of the creator ... to understand why things happen the way they happen."

Group members acknowledge that some of their ideas are difficult for others to accept. They refer, for example, to the messiah as Yahshua, not Jesus. And the proper name for God is Yahweh.

Michael Wheeler, a member for 22 years, said that like most people, he was initially skeptical.

"I was steeped in the traditions of the Christian church," said Mr. Wheeler, who grew up a Southern Baptist. "But there were just too many coincidences for it not to merit some looking into it some more."

Mr. Wheeler said he is not discouraged that after 30 years, the group still has only about 150 members in Dallas.

"Noah preached for 120 years, and still only eight people were in that ark," he said.

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DETAILS: Classes and lectures of the Institute of Divine Metaphysical Research take place at 11 a.m. Sundays, 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays and 7:30 p.m. Fridays at 800 Big Town Shopping Center, Suite 928, in Mesquite. For more information visit www.idmr.net.

Online at: <http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/dn/religion/stories/052105DN-connections.c8e24490.html>