

An Open Letter to the Church

When I read in the January *Messenger* the vision statement for the Swedenborgian Church proposed by General Council, I was disheartened. The words sounded so much like those employed by school boards, colleges, hospitals and other public institutions. To me, it felt like there was no real and compelling *vision* to this vision statement.

Yet consider our present situation. We are immersed in a world that is in flux, rapidly changing, with old ways dying all around us and new ways only slowly emerging. Problems on a global scale confront us at every turn. We are in desperate need of a new world, a new way of doing things, a new way of being human on this planet.

And this “new way,” in its essence, is a new level of human consciousness, of deep spiritual awareness and connection, such that we can live as brother and sister with one another and with all beings on the earth. We remain richly diverse but with the capacity to see through all the differences of our many stories, our many truths, to the one truth that unites us, the one Love we incarnate and the one Wisdom of loving to guide our lives.

We call this the New Church, and no, as Swedenborgians we’re not “it,” but we’re definitely part of it. So the central question is what then are we to do? How are we to live amidst the dying of the old, so as to nurture and foster the rising of the new? What is

our contribution, our commitment, our sacrifice, that the New Jerusalem might emerge amongst us?

The General Council’s vision statement for the Church simply does not and cannot answer these questions. Lovely words about ourselves ultimately do nothing and move no one. And we surely need to move—out into the world that has such need of us, that we might help to scatter the darkness by what we know and how we live.

Now is surely our time. In three more years, it will be the bicentenni-

It is a movement, a “Way,” as it was when it first began, connected by a common commitment and a shared hope.

al of General Convention, the Swedenborgian Church in North America, two hundred years of Swedenborgians quietly coming together, a tiny group with a little-known faith of huge implications. Two hundred years of wandering in this wilderness, largely unheard and unknown, is long enough. It is time we came together to discern a true vision, one that can set us moving toward the Promised Land of all our dreams.

With that in mind, I would like to offer the following “dream” for the church we all love. This came out of the work done last year by the presi-

dent’s visioning team, of which I was a member. To be clear, this “dream” does not represent the team’s final work or thinking on the subject of vision. I wrote this as a personal reflection on all of our discussions. It contains thoughts and ideas that speak to my heart, and I offer it here in the hope that it might stimulate a conversation amongst us about a new vision and mission for our future.

We Dream of a Church . . .

We dream of a church that can name and own its identity and purpose in the world, as the bearer of a new revelation of the Spirit for all humanity, manifested in the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. This church honors the writings and the Bible which those writings elucidate, as central to its life and work. It worships the Spirit, manifested in the life and teachings of Jesus, as divine-human Lord, incarnation of the Spirit’s love and wisdom.

We dream of a church that honors this same love and wisdom present in other writings, sacred and secular, Christian and non-Christian, and present also in Creation. These, too, guide and inspire the church, as does the deep awareness of the spiritual realm in which the church lives, all the angels of the Lord’s Providence who watch over and share in its journey.

We dream of a church that does the ongoing work of making this revelation accessible and compelling to the world as it is. This church proclaims the power of this revelation to transform and

[Continues on page 40](#)

The Editor's Desk



This month the *Messenger* offers a variety of personal views and reflections, all of them heartfelt and engaging. In [“An Open Letter to the Church”](#) (page 30), Rev. John Maine offers with great passion his dream of a newly energized Swedenborgian Church.

In his [“Letter from the President”](#) (page 32), President Ken Turley presents his views on the value of conquering difficult tasks in our natural and spiritual lives. As always, his unique perspective from the woods of Maine offers interesting insights.

Rev. Hunter Roberts, in [“Atheism: The New Fundamentalism?”](#) (page 34), writes from her home in Budapest about the similarities in intransigent positions taken in the name of science or religion in an account of a lively discussion.

Emily Woofenden shares the joy and rewards of her lifelong engagement with the Fryeburg New Church Assembly in Maine from her perspective of the transition from child to teenager to adult in [“Camp Years”](#) (page 36).

Robert McCluskey reaches back to

Contents

An Open Letter to the Church	29
The Editor's Desk	30
Letter from the President	31
The Holy City Descends on the SPLATz in LaPorte	32
Atheism: The New Fundamentalism?	34
Swedenborg's Ages	35
Camp Years	36
Book Review: A Journey	38
Osteopathy and Swedenborg	38
I Remember Cal	39
2014 Annual Convention Registration Form	41
Passages	43
Express Yourself	44

IMPORTANT NOTICE!

The Central Office of the Swedenborgian Church is moving on April 1, 2014

The new address is
50 Quincy Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts
02138

The phone number and email address will remain the same, and the fax number is now the same as the voice phone number

Phone: 617.969.4240
Email address:
manager@swedenborg.org

his student days at the Swedenborgian School of Religion for a remembrance of Rev. Cal Turley in [“I Remember Cal”](#) (page 39), and Paula Hilbert offers her perspective on communication after a major life change in [“Express Yourself”](#) (page 44).

Read them all and enjoy!

—Herb Ziegler

The Hillside Community Church (Swedenborgian) in El Cerito, California, invites readers of the *Messenger* to visit their new website, which showcases the church's involvement in the community with church-related and community programs: www.hillsideswedenborg.org

Church Calendar

- April 12: General Council Spring conference-call meeting
- April 25–26: SHS Board of Trustees meeting • Burlingame, CA
- July 2–6: 2014 Annual Convention St. Louis, MO
- August 2–17: FNCA Summer Camp Session • Fryeburg, ME

2014 Annual Convention

In St. Louis, Missouri
Wednesday, 7/2–Sunday, July 6

Make plans now to attend the 2014 Annual Convention in St. Louis. The registration form on [pages 41–42](#) contains pertinent information regarding your arrival and stay at the convention. Check with your association to see if financial assistance for attendance is available.

Contact Renée Hellenbrecht, operations manager, at Central Office for more details: 617-969-4240 or manager@swedenborg.org.

the Messenger

© The Swedenborgian Church of North America
 Published monthly except July and August by the Communications Support Unit of the Swedenborgian Church of North America (founded 1817, incorporated 1861 as the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America), Ken Turley, president.

March 2014

Volume 236, No. 3 Whole Number 5388

Editor, Design and production: Herbert Ziegler:

Copy editing and proofing: Robert Leith, Renée Hellenbrecht, and Beki Greenwood

Communications Support Unit: Kristina Madjerac, Ros Taylor, & Steve Sanchez

Reproduction: Gnomon Copy, Cambridge, MA

Editorial Address:

Herb Ziegler, *The Messenger*

2 Hancock Place
 Cambridge, MA 02139

Tel: 617.491.5181

Email: messenger@swedenborg.org

Business and Subscription Address:

The Messenger, Central Office

50 Quincy Street
 Cambridge, MA 02138

Tel: 617.969.4240

Email: manager@swedenborg.org

Subscriptions: free online subscription at www.swedenborg.org. Printed and mailed to US address, \$20/year; to Canada address, \$30/year; to all other addresses, \$35/year; single copies, \$2.00. Libraries, prisoners, free. Send check with address to Central Office. Other requests, write Central Office.

Deadline for submissions is six weeks before the first day of the month of issue.

The opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor, the Communications Support Unit, or the Swedenborgian Church.

Letter from the President



Dear Friends,

After over two months of waking up regularly to twenty below zero, this morning it was thirty below. The sky was clear, the sun was bright, but it was thirty below zero! It got me thinking about light and heat. This morning, going outside was invigorating and dangerous. The bright light with absolutely no heat will wake you right up when you walk out into it and bring your senses alive. The bite of the air in your lungs, the crisp clarity of the light makes it seem like you can see forever. But it is only a few short minutes before the tips of your fingers go numb and your cheeks begin to burn. A few more minutes and you begin to feel that cold pressing through your clothes into your muscles, and shortly after that, right to the bone. And then it is a blessed relief to close the door behind you and get close to the wood stove's radiating heat. A warming, comforting heat that, contained in an iron box, gives almost no light whatsoever! Of course, as good as it feels, if you get careless and get too close for too long it can burn you badly.

When you think of light as truth and heat as love, days like today, thirty below outside in the sun but warm and cozy inside by the wood stove, are a great reminder that while isolated extremes have occasional interesting use and lessons, an appropriate and consistent balance, with variance but without extremes, is most comfortable and ultimately most useful.

My other thought was that while living here, in our rather rustic lifestyle, there are times of quiet beauty and peace and even a kind of enjoyable boredom. But there are also certain chores, and

certain times when given tasks must be done. Specifically, shoveling snow and getting in and stacking the firewood it takes to survive these weeks of below zero weather. Procrastination can put the chores off, but the need for them to be done only increases. And in certain cases, leaving them undone can put you in circumstances that are seriously serious. And yet it is surprising what a difference it makes in the experience given the attitude with which the task is approached. And the tougher the task, the stronger you get in the doing. And when you have those chores done and behind you, there is such a satisfying feeling and sense of self-reliance. The convenience of technology is not always what is best for our well-being. The easiest way to do things is not always the healthiest. Or put another way, the hardships in life have a way of deepening our character, of making us more understanding, stronger, centered, and independent. While I don't for a second believe God specifically sends us hardships, hardship and challenge are built into the design of this world we live in. Not believing God "sends" us hardships, neither do I believe that self-serving statement that "God never sends us anything we can't handle." Our city streets, mental hospitals, and cemeteries are full of those for whom life was too much to handle. In allowing us freedom, it would seem that God has also allowed for a certain element of chaos and randomness that results in innocent victims being "given" stuff to handle. But if we are willing to be open to the possibility, the challenges and hardships of life do provide opportunities for us to grow. In spite of the pain and struggle life in this world may inflict upon us, there is always something to be learned from any given experience. There are no absolutes, because some things wound us and leave us hurt and limping for the rest of our lives; but some things, in the handling, make us stronger. My conclusion, is that the life of regeneration is work, sometimes very hard

[*Continues on page 35*](#)

The Holy City Descends on the *SPLATz* in LaPorte

BY KURT FEKETE

Sixteen enthusiastic Super-Powered Lovable Almost Teens (*SPLATz*) aged ten to thirteen gathered at Manna House in LaPorte, Indiana, over a cold Martin Luther King holiday weekend to study the book of Revelation. At the last retreat, the tweens asked to learn what the Bible says about the Apocalypse, and so it was decided that this would be our theme. Wow, was this ever a big job! Presenting John's vision of the end of times to young people was challenging and a bit intimidating, with all of its bizarre imagery, scary stories, and con-



The Holy City lands!



Looking inside the Holy City



Hot cocoa after sledding

fusing text. Yet, we as Swedenborgians certainly have wonderfully unique and meaningful insight into the Book of Revelation, and I was not going to flee from this daunting yet richly rewarding topic.

Crafts are an important part of all of our *SPLATz* retreats, and very early into our preparation for this topic it became clear to me and the other youth leaders that we must do a really big craft project to bring John's vision down to earth. A few years back, a magnificently scary seven-headed red dragon was built out of paper maché at Fryeburg New Church Assembly summer camp when the children studied Revelation. We wanted to create something equally grand yet totally different now that it was our turn to explore this story. As members of the Church of the New Jerusalem, we decide to go for it and take on the construction of the Holy City New Jerusalem. General contractor Rachael Sbrocco, studied Revelation 21–22, carefully drew up plans, and started to secure materials for the city. Site planning coordinator Lori Gayheart, consultant Kurt Fekete, and Divine City visionary Rev. Jenn Tafel assisted with the design.

We worked together and followed Rachael's steady guidance to help bring together all the needed supplies.

Everything needed to be well prepared so the *SPLATz* would be able to build the city in one weekend. Once the supplies were procured and delivered to LaPorte, the retreat began; the



SCYL teens join the *SPLATz* sledding. Mary, Liv, Cade, Joey, Tony, Bekka, Scout; Skylor horizontal

SPLATz youth jumped in and went to work. Throughout the retreat, the youth painted the golden buildings, brushed the pure gold streets, prepared the river of the water of life, découpaged the enormous sparkling jasper walls, decorated the Twelve jeweled foundations, labeled the Twelve pearl gates, assembled the tree of life and throne of God, and drew angels for the gates. Interspersed between craft times, we read the fantastic stories of Revelation, discussed their inner meaning, and learned how they direct us to a path to

[Continues next page](#)

Continued from preceding page



The SPLATz group goes sledding



SPLATz girls building the New Jerusalem foundation



Miranda, Liv, Mary and Joey working on the walls of the Holy City.



Playing Knots!

heaven (as well as show us the pain of selfishness and hell if we choose a less godly route). We studied the messages to the seven churches, the seven seals including the four horsemen, the woman and the dragon, the beasts, the rider on the white horse, and of course, the Holy City.

When we weren't busy building the Holy City or studying the Book of Revelation we took breaks to play. On Saturday we walked over to the LaPorte Public Library. On Sunday we had a blast sledding on at a local hill. The old wooden toboggan took many runs down the hill, and the more adventurous tweens even raced their sleds down a treacherous ice jump run. Some of the teens from the Swedenborgian Church Youth League joined us on our sledding outing. It was great to see them, and the tweens enjoyed seeing their older church friends. Sled-

ding was followed by gallons of delicious hot cocoa. Yum!

On Sunday, we went to the LaPorte New Church Sunday worship service. We shared what we learned about Revelation and showed the magnificent Holy City to the congregation. The youth and leaders worked hard on the New Jerusalem, and it came out beautifully. Building the Holy City really reinforced the story. The youth and leaders will remember the details of Revelation 21 and 22 more clearly and others will be able to learn by viewing the physical manifestation of the Holy City that we created. The Holy City of



Jaylen paints the Holy City gold

the New Jerusalem will be transported to Almont Retreat Center this summer, where it will continually descend upon campers and children from the rafters of the craft cottage. ☪

Kurt Fekete is the youth director of the Swedenborgian Church.



Ava works on the Holy City streets

Atheism: The New Fundamentalism?

BY W. HUNTER ROBERTS

I don't believe in God," he said looking up from the menu. Was he challenging me because he knows I'm a Christian minister, I wondered?

Peter was the husband of a close friend, who had kindly done me a favor. To show my appreciation I was taking him to lunch. Was he intentionally being aggressive? I didn't want to argue. I smiled. "Well, I'm not in the business of conversion," I said, "but for the record, I probably don't believe in the same God you don't believe in," I was hoping to avert hostility and maybe open a dialogue about our understanding of the Divine, since he brought it up. He wasn't having it.

"No," he said leaning forward, "I mean I don't believe in any God!" His words pierced the atmosphere. I conciliated. "I'm not attached to the word. 'God' is just a placeholder for the ineffable—call it what you will," I said, trying to find common ground.

"I don't believe in any of that!" He was becoming openly belligerent. I wasn't sure how to proceed. His wife also called herself an atheist, but we'd had a great discussion about theology as well as sex, love, and our life stories on a bus trip all the way from Budapest to Prague. Before I could respond he threw down the gauntlet, "I'm a scientist. I believe in science."

Should I tell him I believed in science, too, just like I didn't believe in the tooth fairy? That I have a healthy respect for scientific method and discoveries, including the Heisenberg uncertainty principle, which infers a more fluid universe than ever we imagined? That I detest Biblical literalism and recognize evolution as going back billions of years, but also see it as the embodi-



ment of a God immanent in and not separate from creation? It seemed he was more interested in shooting me down like some sort of

straw man. I wondered if he had ever met a minister up close and personal. I took a breath and began.

"You know," I sighed, "There have been so many developments in theology in the past fifty years, it's unfortunate they haven't reached the informed general public. It's like we're still talking about an outmoded version of God who requires checking your brain at

I was talking to a fundamentalist. What I was saying threatened his very identity and construct of life.

the door, which few intelligent people are willing to do—a God who is like a puppet master pulling strings, controlling life, saying, 'A billion dollars for you, Mr. Romney, but nothing for this guy in Africa.' That's nutty. That's not God, at least not the God I worship."

He broke in. "I told you—I don't believe in *any* God!"

"Yes," I persisted, assuming him to be an interested and open-minded conversation partner, "but you must have some version of what you don't believe in. Everyone does, and most people have the same version or understanding of God that they had in approximately the third grade—I call it the third grade catechism version—and it never gets upgraded. God as a thing. It remains their definition of God, never questioned or amended, and then when they're older, maybe in college,

they decide to either 'believe' or 'not believe' in that God. Imagine what it would be like if you never changed your understanding of sex or reproduction from when you first learned about it!" I laughed, having gotten it on the QT that he was pretty sophisticated in that realm. I thought the analogy would appeal, if only to make him curious. It didn't.

"Nothing," he repeated. "I believe in none of that crap. I told you: I believe in science!" He mentioned Christopher Hitchens. He was getting very intense. He started to itemize the many evils in the world. I listened. He raised the holocaust as well as his voice, along with some horrors of which I was unaware as proof of the nonexistence of God.

I nodded. "I agree there is great evil in the world."

"It's not evil, it's just the way life is. But with such a world, how can there be a God?" he asked. It was a rhetorical question.

I still assumed I was talking to a liberal thinker, open to discussion. After all, I knew this to be true in other realms, like politics and sex. So I took a sip of my mineral water and plunged in. "Hmm, I might have something useful to say about this," I offered. "I wrote a whole chapter in my dissertation on it called 'The Changing of the God,' about how serious theologians had to address those questions in the wake of the holocaust. Beginning with Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German theologian who attempted to assassinate Hitler, these questions gave rise to new theologies and a new understanding of God." He had not heard of any of this, of course, but I didn't expect him to have. I told him about Bonhoeffer's letters from prison disavowing the "God of Religion" and calling people to a more adult relationship with

[Continues next page](#)

[Continued from preceding page](#)

the divine, a challenge that theologians would grapple with for the next half-century. “You see, the question of how God can allow evil presupposes that old version of God—the puppet master God—the one pulling strings and ‘allowing’ some things and not others. That’s what I meant about . . .”

“I already told you, I believe in science, not God,” he interrupted. In his mind they were mutually exclusive. I stopped. I wanted to ask what he thought about science and spirituality, the new physics, Einstein and Bohm, who operated with a sense of order and wonder at the universe itself as a great mystery of divine proportions. I wanted to, but I didn’t because I realized he didn’t want to engage with the questions; he already knew the answers. He wasn’t interested in a discussion. That’s when I got it.

I was talking to a fundamentalist. What I was saying threatened his very identity and construct of life. My lunch companion knew who God was, and he didn’t believe in “him.” It was a Santa sort of God, the kind that a small child believes in and then is disappointed by when he doesn’t get a pony in his stocking. I remembered being told he was abused as a child. Clearly that God had failed him.

It wasn’t my first experience of trying to discuss religion with a fundamentalist, but in the past they were of the Christian variety. The experience was eerily similar. I was talking to someone who claimed to know exactly how “it” is, who believed in a fixed, finite, and disinterested universe made of mere matter (despite quantum physics calling into question matter itself and some pretty weird discoveries about waves and particles shape-shifting) and believed in it with a kind of scientific literalism as dogmatic as Biblical literalism.

A fundamentalist is unwilling to

Swedenborg’s Ages

The Five Ages

P. L. Johnson, commentary

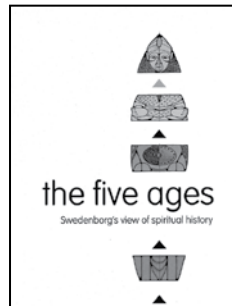
The Swedenborg Society, London, UK

A paperback edition of *The Five Ages*, reviewed in the October 2009 *Messenger*, has been issued. Mr. Patrick pulls together here in one volume Swedenborg’s references to his theme of five ages, or “churches,” delineated in the incomplete and unpublished *Coronis* and scattered throughout his published works,

Johnson has added a commentary to elucidate and facilitate continuity.

Patrick Johnson has been the editor of two Swedenborgian magazines.

The Five Ages is available at the Swedenborg Society Bookshop at <http://tinyurl.com/k28hh3p>.



Letter from the President

[Continued from page 31](#)

work, and that life is full of beauty that can be cruel and comfort that can be seductive. But I do believe this is God’s creation and that the love and wisdom of God is to be found in all things. And that we, each and every one of us, is choosing, right in the midst of everything that is happening, whether our intentions and actions are amplifying and sharing or distorting and diminishing the love and wisdom that is the source of life within and around us. Are we seeking to become better ourselves by helping to make God’s creation better, or are we seeking to serve our own well-being at the cost of others and the world around us?

The life of regeneration is work. But it is good work. It is good work that is better if we willingly engage it with enthusiasm and appreciation that we have work to do. Our lives could easily be something very different. Hey, it was only five below zero this morning! It was snowing, however.

—Blessings, Rev. Ken

consider the unsettling possibility that the universe is more complex, mysterious, and multi-dimensional than anything our symbol systems, descriptions, and analyses can apprehend. A fundamentalist systematically disregards anything that might contradict his worldview, be it carbon dating or mystical experience. A fundamentalist is unwilling to examine definitions and presuppositions, or hear about developments, scientific or otherwise, that might cast doubt or suggest seeing them in a new light—like the bumper sticker popular a decade or so ago with Biblical literalists, “God said it, I believe it, and that’s that.”

When did atheists become the new fundamentalists? I have known many atheists beginning with my wonderful

dad, who insisted I not use the word “God” or pray at his funeral. But this new breed is different: closed-minded, entrenched, and bellicose, shouting and proselytizing their disbelief in the God of their fathers as determinedly and humorlessly as their forebears proselytized with such certainty for a definite, iron-clad system of punishments and rewards in a pie-in-the-sky afterlife. Why do these new atheists allow the Christian fundamentalists to define their reality? And why are they so angry? ☩

The Rev. Hunter Roberts is a spiritual pundit, counselor, and coach helping people take back their lives and reclaim their souls. Read and comment on this and other essays by Hunter Roberts are on *The Huffington Post*, <http://tinyurl.com/klph4pc>.

Camp Years

BY EMILY WOOFENDEN

Do you delineate your life based around one thing every year? An annual family vacation you look forward to all year long? Or perhaps you are a teacher whose life begins every September. You see, my new year doesn't start with January. It starts when I arrive at Fryeburg New Church Assembly (FNCA) the first Saturday of each August. And the last day of the camp session is when the countdown to next year begins. I call them "camp years," because I remember specific events of my life as they relate to the year of that camp session.

This two-week retreat is where I center myself, where I come back to what is familiar and what I have known since the beginning of my life. It is also a link to the many people who have the same connection to it. The rest of the year, we all live completely separate lives in little pockets of the world, and then once a year we gather to reconnect. If you think deeply and put that into context with our current world, it is truly a beautiful thing. It is something to treasure and nurture, something to share with others so that they may have the option to take part. Although it is not this article's intent, I



hope that those of you who have not yet experienced FNCA may consider taking part after reading about a tiny slice of it.

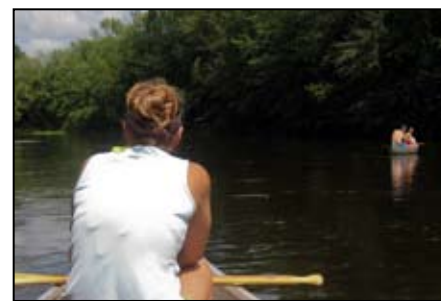
It's no surprise that coming to camp in Fryeburg, Maine, every year is one of the most important things in my life. I've attended since I was a baby. I spent my Spark years (children twelve and under) bunked in the second bedroom of the Woof Cabin with my grandparents, Bill and Louise Woofenden. If I close my eyes, I am back to nights of peering out the top bunk window, longingly watching the Flames (teens) play games on the lawn. Oh, I couldn't wait to be a Flame! Flash forward to my teenage years, and the scene changes to sandy blankets next to a warm fire on the beach as we wait impatiently for the corn roasting in that big sooty pot. Each memory of camp is right there, and so often in the dark winter months, I close my eyes and bring back those pictures to warm my soul. It holds me over until August comes and a new year can finally begin.

For a few years now, I have been attending camp as a young adult. Last summer, I was elected to the Board of Directors and accepted the position of camp registrar. (My Auntie Nancy will be training me to do as wonderful a job as she did; I hope I can live up to it!) Camp is certainly a different experience as a young adult, and I am seeing a whole new side of FNCA that I am embracing and really loving. So when the Outreach Committee needed somebody to write an article about young adult camp life, I happily volunteered.

There is so much to say when describing life at camp as a young adult, or "Bonfire" as campers twenty-two to sixty-plus are so

aptly named. (See www.fryeburg.org/castofcharacters to learn more.) The highlights that stand out in my mind are morning lectures, social events in Frank Hall, assorted camp activities, and the freedom to make the most of the entire FNCA experience.

One of my new favorite things at camp is attending lectures. I will be honest: as a teen, I wasn't crazy about lectures. (SHOCKER, I know.) It was this thing you had to do in order to get to do the fun stuff. But now, as a young



A relaxing canoe ride upriver

adult, I find the lecture program to be really interesting. Why do I love the lectures, you ask? Well of course we all have our own personal favorite lecturers and I won't get into that, but overall I just find them intellectually and spiritually stimulating.

Now that I am a little bit older, have some life experience under my belt, and I am in a place where spiritual growth is a conscious part of my life plan, listening to lectures and the discussion that ensues is really fulfilling. I find myself jotting down quotations and thinking about them later. I've even been known to tweet really juicy tidbits (but not from inside the lecture hall, of course). I find myself making connections to my life and having moments of realization that can guide me in making choices. It is a calming way to spend a few hours a day, and it centers me. Plus, I learn stuff. Learning stuff is awesome!

Another part of camp I love as a young adult is hanging out in Adrienne

[Continues next page](#)



All generations gather for an organized camp activity

Continued from preceding page

Frank Fellowship Hall, and the social gatherings that happen there. This is a cabin out in the woods, away from everything but the tent sites. It's secluded enough that you can make a little noise out there even if the rest of camp is supposed to be quiet. Adults use the space for special activities, everything from drum circles to card games to one



Bonfires celebrate Miriam Lexie's 2013 Scrabble Tournament win.

of my favorite new traditions there: the finals of the annual Lalla Searle Memorial Scrabble Tournament. Do I play Scrabble? Nope! Sure don't! But I love having it in the center of the room as I play a different game with another group on the periphery, or sit on a comfy couch and chat with people I haven't seen in a year.

Frank Hall is a place where we play games and talk into the night while someone plays a hearty tune on the piano. Peals of laughter sporadically erupt as old and new friends swap stories. It is a happy, social place, where elder generations and budding generations come together and continue to knit the tapestry of our spiritual community.

Another big part of camp for me as a young adult involves the organized and spontaneous activities that take place. A great thing about being a young adult at camp is the amount of leisure time we have to fill! Between lectures and lunch is a great time to have a spontaneous game of cards, go for a bike ride on the rail trail across the

street, take a walk in the woods with a friend, or have a good conversation. After lunch comes rest hour, for which I have a newfound appreciation these past few years. This is a time of peace and tranquility, a time that I most enjoy knitting on the deck and gazing at the mountains. If I'm in a more energetic mood, I may host a game gathering in my cabin.

After rest hour, there are so many more options. There is sunbathing on the beach and daily swimming at our Saco River waterfront. I love to swim or canoe up-river with friends and family. There is also plenty of time to take trips to local natural attractions such as Emerald Pool, Echo Lake, Jockey Cap, or one of many nearby mountains that can be hiked in an afternoon.

We just have to make sure we are back in time for dinner, which is always ready and waiting at 6:00. (Thank you, Flames and cooks.)

Another thing I must mention is Work Day. Okay, those of you who actually know me know that this is by all means not my favorite day of the week. However, all sustainable communities must work hard and work together to keep things going strong. Last year, I spearheaded a project to revamp the old four-square court. It's on an old concrete slab that once housed a large storage tent. Working with a few others, we swept it, scrubbed it, and

re-painted the lines. We worked well past the required two hours, and it was worth every second of sweat. After it dried, we played rousing games of four-square every day. And everyone played: Sparks, Flames, Bonfires, and we even got an Ember or two in there! That will be one of the most memorable sessions for me, because I was integral in making it happen. What fun!

One thing I love the most about being a young adult at camp is how much freedom I have to make the experience what I want it to be. As a Spark and a Flame, your day is quite organized for you. Don't get me wrong, I loved every minute of it back then; but there is something about an annual two-week spiritual journey with so many open choices that really captures my soul. Even as I write this article, I find myself fantasizing about the coming summer and how I will fill those weeks to maximize the potential. This "camp year," my new job as registrar will change the experience for me yet again, because it involves extensive planning before, during, and after camp that I have not participated in before. I am excited and ready to jump in!

This is just a slice of why I love Fryeburg New Church Assembly. It is a very piece of my spiritual core, something I have anticipated every year for pretty much my entire life. The people there are my family, if not by blood then by camp connection. It is a magical piece of the world that, when discovered and utilized properly, can enrich everyone who experiences it. ☪



Alex Dyer plays 4-Square with some exuberant and determined Sparks.

Emily Woofenden is a fourth generation FNCA camper, where she is camp registrar, board member, Outreach Committee member, and, children's religion class teacher. She lives in Rutland Vermont, where she teaches sixth grade. For more info on the FNCA, please visit www.fryeburg.org.

Book Review

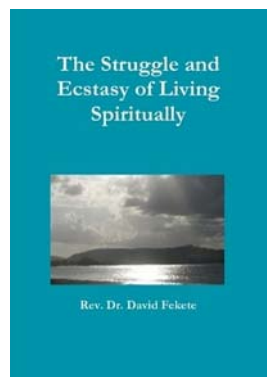
A Journey

*The Struggle and Ecstasy
of Living Spiritually*
Rev. Dr. J. Fekete
Self-Published, 2014

REVIEWED BY WILMA WAKE

My favorite way to explore Swedenborgian thought is through stories of people's everyday lives. I love hearing people share how some concept of Swedenborg helped them solve a problem. Stories like that bring Swedenborg's words into my daily living.

Rev. Dr. David Fekete's latest book provides stories from his own life that show us how Swedenborgian concepts



have impacted his growth. His stories invite us to apply the concepts ourselves.

For example, he writes about a summer in graduate school

when he worked as a masonry laborer, bringing bricks to the masons. He describes the joking and playing around that they all engaged in as he threw bricks up to the scaffold, paying little attention to what was happening to the bricks afterwards. He was surprised at the end of the summer to see a beautiful wall that had emerged through all the joking around.

Rev. Fekete observes,

I've found that that's how spiritual growth works. Very gradually, without our being aware of it, God forms us into spiritually aware beings. . . . As with the wall we built, we are not even aware that our spiri-

Osteopathy and Swedenborg

*The Influence of Emanuel Swedenborg
on the Genesis and Development of
Osteopathy, : Specifically on Andrew
Taylor Still and William Garner
Sutherland**
by David B. Fuller, D.O.

Osteopathy and Swedenborg demonstrates the previously unrecognized influence of Swedenborg's ideas on the creation and development of osteopathic medicine, especially in regard to body/mind/spirit and the anatomical inter-relationship

tual growth is happening.

Then he references the following from Swedenborg:

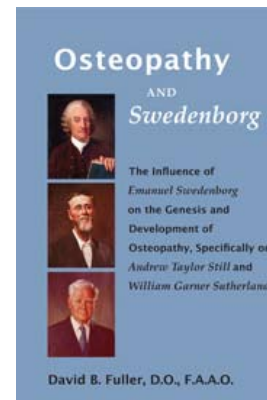
It is a law of Divine Providence that man shall not perceive or feel any of the activity of Divine Providence, and yet he should acknowledge providence. (*True Christianity* §175)

I found that story such a great illustration of Swedenborg's law of divine providence, that we can't feel God's activity in us most of the time, or it would hinder our growth. But when we look back over time, we can see with amazement the work God has done in us!

The Struggle and Ecstasy of Living Spiritually is a delightful book. It is written with an honesty that helps us to connect our own experiences to his. It is short, and can be read quickly. However, each story has considerable depth, and I want to go back to them to continue to experience their depth of meaning.

Go to <http://tinyurl.com/k9yxr6d> to purchase *The Struggle and Ecstasy of Living Spiritually*. ☸

The Rev. Wilma Wake is minister of the Swedenborgian online community. She lives in Portland, Maine.



ship of the nervous system, fascia, and fluids throughout the body.

Osteopathic medicine was started by Andrew Taylor Still in

1874, and has since grown into a broad profession covering many specialties. However, they all have grown out of the osteopathic tradition that recognizes each patient as more than the sum of the body parts, treating with a "whole person" approach including recognizing the important role that the musculoskeletal system plays in disease and health as well as recognizing the triune existence of body, mind, and spirit.

William G. Sutherland was a student of Still at the turn of the century. Sutherland developed his own cranial concept based on Still's osteopathic philosophy and practice. He was also greatly influenced by Swedenborg, especially Swedenborg's work titled *The Brain*. *Osteopathy and Swedenborg* includes a study of cranial osteopathy and Swedenborg's paradigm of the brain and soul-body interaction, comparing concepts such as Swedenborg's spirituous fluid and Sutherland's Primary Respiratory Mechanism.

In the process of making these connections the book traces the influence of Swedenborg's ideas through and across the America of the nineteenth century, specifically through the metaphysical and healing movements of Transcendentalism, Spiritualism, New Thought, and Theosophy. Swedenborg's ideas are then compared and contrasted in detail with the ideas of

[Continues next page](#)

Reflection

I Remember Cal

BY ROBERT MCCLUSKEY

They say first impressions mean a lot. I first met the Rev. Dr. Calvin E. Turley in September, 1978. The occasion was the first class of my first day at the Swedenborg School of Religion. He was to lead a course entitled “Forms of Ministry.” Although I didn’t know it at the time, that alone should have been enough to indicate what Cal’s “genius” was, his keen insight into and understanding of Swedenborg’s vision of a church truly new and inclusive.

Our first assignment was also telling, in its simplicity and implications. First, we were introduced to something called *The Swedenborg Concordance*, by John Faulkner Potts. It’s a six volume index, arranged alphabetically, which allows one to locate any important use of a term by Swedenborg in his theological writings. An essential tool for student and pastor alike. We were to look up two words in Potts’s *Concordance*: piety and worship. What we found was a rather surprising take on what seem to be two of the most commonly understood terms in any religious study.

I went to piety first; it’s short, taking up less than a page in Potts. There I found that Swedenborg offered none

of the usual commendations, nor any of the usual contrasts between the pious and the impious. Instead, he spoke almost exclusively of piety as a sign or symptom of hypocrisy, sanctimoniousness, and self-righteousness, if not self-aggrandizement. He saw it as the ultimate foil to what for some is the quintessential Christian virtue: humility.

Next came worship, a big word in Swedenborg’s theology, taking up several pages in Potts. Still, it wasn’t long before his gist became clear: worship referred primarily to charitable or useful acts on behalf of our neighbor. The externals of worship – the building, the liturgy, the hymns, the prayers, the sermons, even the sacra-

ments – were but empty forms if they did not spring from, reflect, and lead to acts of charity. (While he insists on the validity of the externals of worship, at no time does he consider them good in and of themselves.)

What could be more obvious? Piety is good, impiety is bad, and worship means going to church on Sunday. Well, for Swedenborg, and for Cal Turley, nothing could be further from the truth! (Not that impiety is good, but rather the whole schema of pious/impious, of judging others – and ourselves – according to shifting and often impossible standards needs to be done away with, transcended. As for worship, the word in both the Hebrew and Greek refers not to some elaborate church service, but to a simple state of humility and prostration before the Lord. Cal taught us both these things.)

So here was a microcosm of Cal. Embracing the marginalized and the oppressed, working on behalf of gays, alcoholics, victims of abuse, and those suffering from psychological/spiritual

illness. Thoroughly cantankerous, blustery, oppositional, maverick and innovator – but also caregiver, counselor, consoler and conciliator. An agent of charity in the classroom, in his counseling office, in the board room, and yes, in the church. In short, an imp in a continual state of worship.

I knew Cal for less than six years, and during that whole time he served as president of Convention, and a word about that seems appropriate. That word is inclusive, another expression of his charitable impulse. At times, it appeared to some that Cal was torn by competing demands, needs and commitments. But I don’t see that as an accurate description. Instead, it seems to me that Cal offered himself as a bridge between disparate groups within, and outside of, Convention.

The largest and most obvious gulf he sought to bridge, or rather obliterate, was that between “traditional” and “alternative” ministries. I put them in quotation marks, as I believe Cal would have done, to remind us that these terms are often more of a hindrance than a help in our efforts to define exactly what forms of ministry are appropriate and useful in the church. This gulf had been a source of tension within the church for some time, and Cal gave unceasingly in his efforts to find common ground and a unified vision of the New Church. That this tension has greatly lessened over the last thirty years, and in the process has born much fruit, I believe is to a large extent the result of Cal’s efforts, and his ability to inspire those around him with the same vision and energy.

Remember Cal? Who could forget him! ☩

Robert McCluskey lives in West Hollywood, California. He is a former minister of the New York New Church and the Portland New Church.



Cal Turley

Continued from preceding page

Still, Sutherland, and osteopathic philosophy and practice.

David B. Fuller, D.O., F.A.A.O. teaches and practices at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine and is a fellow in the American Academy of Osteopathy.

Available at both <http://tinyurl.com/SwedenborgAmazon> and swedenborg-philosophy.org. ☩

Open Letter to the Church

Continued from page 29

unite those who live it, leading them to live new lives of health, wholeness and deep connection in the Spirit. It makes known the power of this revelation to illuminate and unite all the old stories of humankind, the differing religions and the sciences, and it celebrates the vision of a diverse human family united in the truth of love.

We dream of a church that is bold in the declaration of its mission, that it is sent as a midwife to the birthing of this new age of human being, uniting heaven and earth. This is the promise of the New Jerusalem, and our common future turns on the success of this birth. The church, in concert with many others, is in the forefront of this work and famous in the world because of it.

We dream of a church that makes known all that it proclaims through the highly effective use of electronic and other mass media. This church's use of the web and social media is state of the art; its message is consistent, clear, and compelling. The church's name is a byword for hope; its work is synonymous with positive growth and change.

We dream of a church whose work is that of change, of human spiritual transformation, whose core focus and primary concern is to be a place where the individual—the church in microcosm—can be helped to find and follow their own life path into deeper connectedness in the Spirit.

We dream of a church that leads the world in the development of creative and cutting edge tools and programs for facilitating this life-long learning process. People come in their hundreds and thousands from all across North America because they know that, with this church, they can start living a life that is good right now, a life that makes sense and gives them hope.

We dream of a church that, being less interested in "right belief" than in

"right practice," promotes a common commitment to learn the way of the Spirit, which is the way of love. Everything about this church has to do with love, with fostering the capacity of people to learn how to live in right relationships of compassion and caring for one another and for all Creation.

We dream of a church that excels at building and maintaining healthy, vibrant, Spirit-filled communities needed to support the transformation of those it serves into healthy, vibrant, Spirit-filled people. These communities are of all kinds, permanent and temporary, with buildings and without. They are open to all and all are welcomed, accepted and loved. Children and youth are needed, with good places to be and good work to do, to help them grow spiritually. What all hold in common is living the way of love, supported and enlivened by the direct and powerful experience of the Divine through personal practices, communal worship, and service.

We dream of a church passionately engaged with the world, for service to others is raised up as an essential dimension of the practice that transforms. This church enters into all those places where right relationships are blocked or broken by injustice and violence. Campaigns for healing and reconciliation are supported locally, nationally, and globally. Opportunities for advancing ecumenism and inter-faith dialogue are also lifted up wherever they appear. The voice of the church is known, heard, and respected as a moral and spiritual authority.

We dream of a church which develops a diversity of spiritual leadership to guide its work. This church has moved away from exclusive reliance on full-time professional clergy produced by the graduate school model. Its preparations for ministry are typically shorter-term and more people-oriented, cost-efficient, and practical. They focus on personal spiritual formation and the

skills needed for facilitating spiritual growth and building community in particular roles. Most spiritual leaders work part-time and are supported by their ministries and by other work they may do.

We dream of a church of many different kinds of ministries, led not only by pastors, chaplains, and youth leaders but also by spiritual directors, life coaches, missionaries, healers, counselors, teachers, and others. This church is dynamic and flexible in the ways it empowers many to reach out into the world and go wherever people are and wherever there is a need. There are wellness and retreat centers, summer camps, mission trips, pilgrimages, annual gatherings, online groups, community actions, special events, and more.

We dream of a church that is organized as a network or web of all these many ministries and thousands of individuals across the land. It is a movement, a "Way," as it was when it first began, connected by a common commitment and a shared hope. Thanks to the excellence of its communications, information and ideas flow swiftly through this network. Its annual gathering, Convention, functions as a central hub with a flattened and highly flexible structure. Open discussion and consensual decision-making enable resources to flow quickly to where they are needed most.

This is the church we dream of—authentic, passionate, transformative, engaged, spiritually always growing and always loving.

This is a church for living our future now—a New Church for a new age.

—Rev. John
Maine,
Church of the
Good Shepherd,
Kitchener,
Ontario



190th Session of the General Convention of the New Jerusalem, July 2 - July 6, 2014

Council of Ministers: June 29 - July 1

2014 Registration Form

Convention 2014 will be held in St. Louis, MO on the campus of Webster University. To learn more about WU, visit www.webster.edu. To learn more about the 2014 Convention and view a list of Frequently Asked Questions, please visit www.swedenborg.org, email manager@swedenborg.org or call the Central Office at (617) 969-4240.

Lodging: See next page for more details. Rooms will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis, and may fill up before the end of the registration period. **All rooms are doubles.** Rooms include one standard linen and towel pack. If you find that you often need extra towels or blankets, you are advised to bring some with you.

Roommates: If you have a specific roommate in mind, please fill in their name in the appropriate space. If not, please fill in the roommate matching section, so we can try to pair you with someone with similar habits and needs.

Childcare: The childcare program will run July 2 through July 6, during meetings, for children ages 3-12. **If you will be bringing children, please contact the Central Office to obtain the necessary forms.**

Teen Program: The teen program runs from Wednesday, July 2 through Sunday, July 6, and is supervised by Kurt Fekete. If you want your teen (age 13-17) to attend without a parent, please contact the Central Office.

Internet: Free guest wireless access is available.

Parking: Free. Please check the box below so we know how many cars

will be parking on campus.

Room & Board Reservations and Payment Deadline: No new room or meal plan reservations will be available after Friday, June 13 at 5PM EST. Any room and board reservations not fully paid by this date will be subject to a \$50 late fee. Event registrations will be accepted for as long as space permits.

Cancellations: Fully refundable prior to Friday, June 13 at 5PM EST. Cancellations must be done by calling the Central Office between 9AM-5PM EST, M-F.

Arrivals and Departures: Check-in on arrival day is between 2-5PM at your assigned dorm. Check-out on July 6 is between 9AM-11AM. **Any arrivals or departures outside of this time must be coordinated with the Central Office in advance.**

Mobility: We cannot guarantee the availability of mobility aids such as wheelchairs. Please contact the Central Office for more information and help with local arrangements.

Communications: Please provide a valid email address below if you have one. In order to facilitate faster communications, and to save money on printing and postage, we strive to provide as much information as possible via email. Please add manager@swedenborg.org to your contact list to ensure that you receive all of our email updates.

Ground Transportation: From Lambert St. Louis International Airport: <http://tinyurl.com/2014Transport>. Go Best Express Airport Shuttle will service the campus for \$24 one-way, \$44 round-trip. You must book online at <http://tinyurl.com/2014Shuttle> to receive discounted rate. Please see the FAQ or contact the Central Office for more details.

Name		
Name		
<input type="checkbox"/> Please check this box if you will be parking on campus		
Street		Apt. #
City	State/Province	Zip
Home Church	Preferred Email	Day Phone
Names, ages, and genders of children accompanying you		
Please Describe Any Special Dietary Needs and/or Mobility Issues (Not everything can be accommodated)		
Specific Roommate Request		

Travel Information

<input type="checkbox"/> Please check this box if you will have a car at Convention and would be willing to do a pickup at the airport on your arrival day
<input type="checkbox"/> Please check this box if you will have a car at Convention and would be willing to do a dropoff at the airport on Sunday
<input type="checkbox"/> Please check this box if you will be flying into Lambert International and would like to be added to an email list for you to coordinate sharing a ride on your arrival or departure day.

Roommate Matching

We will do our best to match you with an appropriate roommate if you have not indicated one above.

Please indicate your gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

I am (check all that apply):

<input type="checkbox"/> An early riser	<input type="checkbox"/> A night owl
<input type="checkbox"/> A heavy sleeper	<input type="checkbox"/> A light sleeper
<input type="checkbox"/> Fragrance sensitive	<input type="checkbox"/> Fragrance-free
<input type="checkbox"/> A CPAP machine user	<input type="checkbox"/> A snorer

Anything else we should know when matching you?

Next page for fees ➡

Room and Board Packages (please note that all rooms are double rooms):

1. **Package A (June 29 - July 6, seven nights):**
(choose this for Council of Ministers members)
\$283 per person
Includes 7 nights of lodging, 7 dinners, 6 lunches, and 7 breakfasts.
2. **Package B (June 29 - July 2, three nights):**
(available **only** to Council of Ministers members working outside of the denomination who are only able to attend COM meetings)
\$139 per person
Includes 3 nights of lodging, 3 dinners, 2 lunches, and 3 breakfasts.
3. **Package C (July 1 - July 6, five nights):**
(choose this for General Council members or pre-Convention arrival)
\$231 per person
Includes 5 nights of lodging, 5 dinners, 4 lunches, and 5 breakfasts.
4. **Package D (July 2 - July 6, four nights):**
\$185 per person
Includes 4 nights of lodging, 4 dinners, 3 lunches, and 4 breakfasts.

Meal Only Packages: For those staying off-campus who want to buy meals. If you are staying off-campus and do not select a pre-paid meal plan, you will not be able to eat most meals in the dining hall. Only weekday lunch may be paid for at the door.

5. **Package X (June 29 - July 6, meals only):**
\$172 per person
7 dinners, 6 lunches, and 7 breakfasts
6. **Package Y (July 1 - July 6, meals only):**
\$120.50 per person
5 dinners, 4 lunches, and 5 breakfasts
7. **Package Z (July 2- July 6, meals only):**
\$94.75 per person
4 dinners, 3 lunches, and 4 breakfasts

Registration	Cost	# People	Total
Adult	\$110		
Teen (13-17)	\$100		
Child (3-12)	\$50		
Under 3 years old	Free		
*Family maximum	\$330		
One Day Registration	\$40		
Local Volunteer	\$50		
Women's Alliance Luncheon	\$11.75 for those paying for a Room and Board or Meal Only Package; \$20 for everyone else		

*Family maximum price applies to immediate family members (i.e., parents/guardians and children) only.

Room & Board	Package	#People	Total
Room & Board or Meal Only Package (see package descriptions for rates)			
\$50 Late Fee (assessed on R&B packages paid for after 5PM EST June 13, 2014)			

General Convention Subsidies	#People	Total Discount
Council of Ministers (for ordained Swedenborgian ministers with membership on the Council of Ministers only) - cost of Package A, Package B, or Package X		
General Council (current members of the General Council only) - cost of Package C or Package Y		
SCYL Officers - cost of Package D or Package Z		

Grand Total (from both Registration and Room & Board, less Discounts)

Payment Information

All prices are in US currency. **If you pay with a Canadian check, please add US\$5 for handling. Please be advised that all prices are listed in US funds and must be converted for payment in other currencies. All room and board reservations not paid in full by 5PM EST on June 13 will be subject to a \$50 late fee.** See "Cancellations" section for refund policy.

Payment Method

1. **Credit card by mail (DO NOT email credit card information) - Fill out the following:**

Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Amex ☐ Discover ☐
 Card Number: _____ Exp. Date: _____
 Cardholder's Name: _____
 CCV/Security Code: _____
 Billing Zip Code (if different from mailing address): _____
 Signature: _____

2. **Credit card by phone - call (617) 969-4240, Monday through Friday, 9AM-5PM EST**

3. **Credit card or bank payment via PayPal - enter an email address to receive a PayPal invoice to pay your balance below:**

4. **Check: Send checks payable to The Swedenborgian Church to: 11 Highland Ave., Newtonville, MA 02460 (After April 1, please mail to: 50 Quincy St., Cambridge, MA 02138)**

Passages

Confirmations

The Garden Chapel—Church of the Open Word—in St. Louis, Missouri, welcomed three new members on January 26, 2014—**Cory Bradford-Watts, Rachel Burrows, and Joan McNair O'Neal.**



Deaths

Waldtraut I. Petrie, a member of the Swedenborgian Spiritual Community (Puget Sound), was born in 1918 at the end of the First World War, into a devoutly religious Lutheran family in war ravaged Europe. Her formative years



and young womanhood occurred in Nazi Germany. Waldtraut's strong spiritual and metaphysical interests took root early

on, resulting in her lifelong passion for peace. Her dedication to the pursuit of peace and love spanned the almost ten decades of her life. Waldtraut successfully transitioned on February 13, 2014. She is greatly missed by family and friends and lives on in our hearts forever.

Alix Williams passed fully into the spiritual world on January 23, 2014, at age 93. She is survived by siblings Thomas and Allan Williams, Rosemary Westby, and Hilda Johnson. She

was a longtime member of the Boston Church of the New Jerusalem until its troubles began in 2003, when she became a faithful congregant of Swedenborg Chapel in Cambridge, where she was much loved.

Alix was the daughter of a Swedenborgian Minister, the Rev. Charles Nussbaum-Strutt. Of German Swiss origin, he went to Paris to train as a doctor, where a friend introduced him to Swedenborg's writings, which so impressed him that he decided to train for the New Church ministry. He became a General Convention minister and an American Citizen, serving churches in St. Louis and Portland, Oregon, and then become pastor of the New Churches in Mauritius (in the Indian Ocean), where he married a young French Mauritian, Hilda Collins (the daughter of a Catholic Priest). Alix was one of their four children. The family moved to Switzerland when Charles died. The family returned to Maritius when Alix's mother married Thomas Williams, an English engineer, who adopted the children. Hilda and Thomas eventually had five more children.

Alix returned to Switzerland for her secretarial education at age 17 and remained there throughout World War II. She moved in with her Aunt and Uncle in England, attending the Kensington New Church. She supported her mother and younger siblings when they moved to England after the parents had separated, helping with both money and mothering to some degree. She taught ballet in addition to her secretarial work. Not being married or having put down roots, Alix, with her two older brothers, emigrated to Canada. Still searching, she moved to Boston, where she found her spiritual home. She decided to study for and achieve degrees in Social Sciences and

English Literature, studying Blake, Arnold, Longfellow, Browning, Emerson and Joyce. She also became a voluntary 'advocate' for handicapped children,



explaining their special needs for them in court.

Alix was a loving and caring person. In her role as big sister she had at times to be severe with us, but in retrospect, she was always as gentle as possible and loved us in spite of our idiosyncrasies. She guided my taste in Literature and gave me my first Bible at 12-years old. In the UK she is still remembered as a ballroom teacher by former New Church youth club members, and she has left a legacy of a high standard of ballroom dancing at our social evenings.

—Hilda Johnson

Express Yourself

Continued from page 44

would be what—embarrassed? There are much worse things in the world than being embarrassed. So I speak very slowly, (as I study their faces to see what they think of my voice) and I get through it. Not one cashier has looked at me as weird, or worse yet, with pity.

So, I will continue to adapt and change, and I appreciate everyone around me who is doing the same. And on the days when joy is hard to feel, I re-focus on how much I do have that is good in my life: for example family, my coffee friends, Kansas State sports, people near and far praying, laughing at Brad's jokes, and the overall sense that I am not alone in this.

What will they think of me?
must be put aside for bliss

—Joseph Campbell

Paula Hilbert is a member of the Pretty Prairie (Kansas) Swedenborgian Church.

About the Swedenborgian Church

Emanuel Swedenborg was born January 29, 1688, in Stockholm, Sweden. Although he never intended a church denomination to be founded or named after him, a society was formed in London fifteen years after his death.

American groups eventually founded the General Convention of Swedenborgian Churches. As a result of Swedenborg's spiritual questionings and insights, we as a church exist to encourage that same spirit of inquiry and personal growth, to respect differences in views, and to accept others who may have different traditions.

Swedenborg shared in his theological writings a view of God as infinitely loving and at the very center of our beings, a view of life as a spiritual birthing as we participate in our own creation, and a view of scripture as a story of inner life stages as we learn and grow. Swedenborg said, "All religion relates to life, and the life of religion is to do good." He also felt that the sincerest form of worship is a useful life.

Reflection

Express Yourself

BY PAULA HILBERT

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. (James 1:2-3)

Just how important is it to be able to express yourself verbally? This started to feel like a trial to me, I was struggling to find the joy. When I first starting thinking about writing this, the focus was going to be the frustration associated with not being able to talk. But after researching how much communication is done non-verbally, I feel so much better. I will continue to persevere against ALS!

One article I read stated that anywhere from sixty to ninety percent of communication is non-verbal. Some of these non-verbal forms are facial expression, body language and posture, gestures, personal space, eye gaze, touch, appearance, and paralinguistics—or pitch and tone of your voice. If I'm hon-

est, my family will probably tell you that I have always excelled at one or two of these—namely facial expression and body language. I've been told I can freeze a glass of water just by looking at

it. Not the most flattering, but now I'm thinking I've been training for this period in my life for years!

Last night I downloaded an app on my iPad to speak for me. My husband Brad and I were in bed, and once I had navigated my way through it, I was ready for it to speak. My first sentence was, "I want hot chocolate and cook-

ies." This was not lost on Brad, who appropriately and non-verbally responded with a chuckle and rolled over in bed.

When I am out shopping and need to talk to cashiers, I've been so pleasantly surprised at their patience. Questions like "What is your phone number?" or "Spell your last name" are of course easy ones, but I know I get that deer-in-headlights look sometimes. I'm so afraid they won't understand me! And then I

[Continues on page 43](#)



[Important Notice About Central Office: Page 30](#)