



## Mini-Courses Set for Annual Convention

The 2018 Annual Convention is fast upon us, and a treasure trove of mini-courses have been lined up for stimulating engagement of the delegates and guests. There are thirteen mini-courses scheduled.

### Mini-Courses for Convention 2018

- “Maurice Nicoll’s Clever Use of Swedenborg” with Jeffrey Adams
- “What’s the Use of the Swedenborgian Church?” with Rev. Thom Muller
- “Swedenborg and New Discoveries in Cosmology” with Rev. Dr. Rachel Rivers
- “Planetary Solidarity” with Rev. Dr. Grace Ji-Sun Kim
- “Exploring Swedenborg’s Life and Times in Sweden” with Dr. Devin Zuber and Colin Amato

(Previews for the following mini-courses appeared in the February *Messenger*.)

- “Swedenborg and Bay-Area Environmentalism” with Dr. Devin Zuber
- “Proprium and Freedom” with Rev. Robert McCluskey
- “Blake and Swedenborg” with Rev. Dr. David Fekete
- “Best Practices in Our Churches and Ministries” with Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence
- “The Old and New Jerusalems” with Dr. Rebecca Esterson
- “Swedenborg as Spiritual Duct Tape: A look into the diverse and

**Register Now!**

**194th Swedenborgian Annual Convention**

**Do You Know the Way?**

**The Year of the New Jerusalem**

**July 1–5, 2018**

**San Jose State University  
San Jose, California**

**Registration and information Inside  
Online Registration and Information:  
<http://tinyurl.com/Swedenborg2018>**

## Curtis Childs Keynote Speaker at Convention

Curtis Childs, the digital media producer for the Swedenborg Foundation, founder and director of “Off The Left Eye” YouTube channel, and producer and host of the weekly webcast “Swedenborg and Life,” will be the keynote speaker opening night at the Annual Swedenborgian Convention in San Jose on July 1, 2018. Curtis is the creator of the “Heaven and Hell” Facebook page, which has recently passed 450,000 followers. Some of his Swedenborgian videos have attained hundreds of thousands of views (one has over a million), and the channel overall so far has more than 10 million lifetime views. Curtis will be with us throughout the convention and will be offering a mini-course as well as hosting a streamed panel interview during the Center for Swedenborgian Studies’ annual meeting. ☛

potent ways Swedenborg’s ideas affect people online” with Curtis Childs

- “Five Stages of Creativity and Five Stages of Regeneration: a Comparison” with Wendy Soneson
- “Spirituality, Sustainability, and Food Justice: Lessons from the Garden Church” with Rev. Jonathan Mitchell

### Mini-Course Prevues

#### Maurice Nicoll’s Clever Use of Swedenborg

*Jeffrey Adams*

By 1921, the Scottish polymath turned mystic, Maurice Nicoll

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## Guest Column

### George Dole—Sole Surviving Runner from the First 4-Minute Mile

With the passing, on March 3, 2018, of Roger Bannister, the legendary runner who broke the four-minute mile on May 6, 1954, on the Iffley Road Track in Oxford, England, Rev. Dr. George F. Dole is now the only surviving runner in that race. In this photograph of the opening gun of that historic race, you can see that George, right, leapt into the lead, which he says he held for about twenty yards. Bannister is third from the left, wearing #41.

In 1982, When I arrived for seminary at the Swedenborg School of Religion and met Professor Dole in person (we had corresponded for a couple of years), as a sports enthusiast, I was already well aware of that epochal race. I even had read an inspiring chapter in a 1979 book, *The Spirit of Synergy: God's Power and You* by Methodist scholar and minister Robert Keck, about how long that record seemed out of reach. But when it was finally broken in 1954, several more runners broke it within a few years. Keck's conclusion was that something much more important



than a sports record was broken: a belief barrier was broken. Once runners knew it could be done, many did it quite quickly. The sermon extolled the power of positive thinking.

Upon learning that my new professor actually ran in that race, I could not contain my amazement. As I tried to absorb this astounding and seemingly crazy piece of information, George, always stocked with charming, clever remarks, demurred with his tell-tale wry smile, "I ran last in the first."

But he didn't! The only times officially recorded were for the top three (Roger Bannister, Tom Hulatt, and Chris Chataway), and George always carried with him the memory that he came in last. He was in the race by virtue of having won first place in the mile at the Oxford-Cambridge track meet that year, a race in which he posted his fastest recorded time at 4:15.2—the best race he ever ran, says he, beating Alan Gordon, the top miler at Cambridge. At the fiftieth anniversary gala celebration in England

in 2004, however, George discovered that he had not run last in the first. As they reminisced, Gordon (third from the right) informed him that he had dropped out due to a cramp and had not been able to finish the race.

Gordon passed away in 2014, and now the other five runners have passed away. George was the only American in the race and has been featured in numerous articles with the passing of Bannister. At 86, he still runs three times a week in the indoor track at the Bath, Maine, YMCA.

George Dole: a Swedenborgian American legend!

—Jim Lawrence

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## Church Calendar

- **May 12:** General Council Spring Teleconference meeting
- **May 25–28,** Swedenborgian Retreat, St. Dorothy's Rest, Camp Meeker, CA
- **July 1–5:** Swedenborgian Church Annual Convention, San Jose, CA.

## the Messenger

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## Letter from the President



**2017–18—The Year of the New Jerusalem:  
The emergence of a new world**

Dear Friends,

A friend sent me a little book called *Perseverance* by Margaret J. Wheatley, and its words and thoughts have been very helpful when times look bleak or I need encouragement to keep working towards what I hope is the best resolution to a difficult situation. There are wonderful quotations followed by a few thoughts related to each quotation.

The quotation I am leaning on today relates to our difficult and divisive political situation.

In the dark time, there is a tendency to veer toward fainting over how much is wrong or untended in the world. Do not focus on that. There is a tendency too to fall into being weakened by persevering on what is outside your reach, by what cannot yet be. Do not focus there . . . We are needed, that is all we can know (Clarissa Pinkola Estes).

I feel overwhelmed with the lying going on unchecked and almost accepted in our country. People saying one thing, until they get caught in their lie, and then it seems they find a way out by either telling another lie or finding a lawyer to lie for them. I wonder what all the lying by public officials is teaching our children. They are so perceptive and influenced by the world around them. What is it doing to our world overall? I want to go back to

the days of Mr. Rogers, where he calmly taught us not to lie and the dangers of even “stretching the truth.”

Mr. Rogers taught us that small children are inclined to tell “tall tales” because they feel so small. And as he pointed out, they are small. Everything and everyone around them is much bigger than they are, and that is scary. They don’t know the right answer, so they make one up. Being small makes you want to be bigger. Some never grow out of lying.

It seems we are taking lying as not being that serious these days. What is a little white lie? And what about socially acceptable lies, like when we tell someone we like their hair style when we really don’t, but want to

make them feel better about themselves. We all have lied, so what is the difference? We must always come back to intent. Are we telling a lie out of goodness in our hearts and kindness? Or are we

speaking from a dark side, to cover up something wrong we have done or to lead others to think better of us, to make ourselves appear bigger and more important?

It is shown that the more we lie, the quicker the lies come, as we no longer are living in the real, true world. Instead we have lied so much, even to ourselves, we lose track of what is truth. The line is blurred between truth and falsity, and it is hard to differentiate. We can become addicted to lying, just like we can become addicted to drugs or alcohol, and it is very hard to break this habit. It is a vital part of how we see ourselves. Lying to ourselves colors our world and it can get very dark, and we do not want to face it.

*Perseverance* goes on with good advice for these times: “Two opposing movements determine a great deal about our capacity—either we open or

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**President Jane Siebert was interviewed about her Swedenborgian journey by Curtis Child on the YouTube channel, “Swedenborg and Life.” View the show at <https://tinyurl.com/yc7y97jx>. The interview begins at minute 46:22.**

# Proposed Changes to the Structure of the Swedenborgian Church

General Council would like to thank all the interested parties that over the past two years have helped to gather information for analyzing, revising, and collaborating on the proposed changes to the governance structure and working bodies of General Convention. These changes are based on: 1) recommendations from the 2016–2018 Structure Review Committee (SRC); 2) 2016–2017 surveys and interviews by the SRC; 3) recommendations from the 2017 Annual Convention General Council meetings and small-group gatherings; 4) the Fall 2017 joint meeting of General Council and Cabinet; 5) input from support units; and 6) a 2018 review by the Amendments Committee.

The proposed Constitution and By-law changes are printed here for your review and will be discussed at the 2018 Annual Convention at San Jose State University, July 1–5. The Executive Committee of General Council deems it ideal to amend the Constitution and Bylaws at this year's annual convention so that the implementation can become effective immediately. If the amendments are approved, the convention will proceed with elections to the revised bodies of General Convention. If not approved, elections per the current structure will proceed.

The basic changes affect Support Units. The five Support Units would be consolidated into three Standing Committees to improve efficiency, coordination, and usefulness. The Education Support Unit (three members plus a representative of the Center for Swedenborgian Studies) would broaden its responsibilities and become the Standing Committee of Education and Resources for Spiritual Community (four members, including one ordained

minister, plus a member appointed by the Center for Swedenborgian Studies). The Communication Support Unit (three members) and the Information Management Support Unit (three members) would combine to create The Standing Committee for Communication and Information (three to six members); and the Financial and Physical Resources Support Unit (three members plus the treasurer of General Convention) and the Ministries Support Unit (six members) would combine to form the Standing Committee for Financial Accountability (six members, including two ordained ministers, plus the treasurer of General Convention as chair).

All serving members of the Support Units would be able to continue to serve on their respective Standing Committees until they have finished

their term limits. The adjustments in numbers of members on Standing Committees would occur organically as members term off or choose to no longer serve. Members of each standing committee would be elected in the same process as used for support units with the same terms and term limits.

This change would eliminate the Cabinet, which had not met for ten years until the joint meeting with General Council last year.

The Chair of the Council of Ministers (COM) would be an ex-officio member of the General Council, with vote. Currently the Chair of COM is an invited guest.

For full information as to how these new committees would function please refer to the language for the proposed changes below.

*Rev. Jane Siebert, president*

*Only articles and sections with proposed changes appear here. Deletions are shown as strike-throughs and additions are shown as underlined.*

## The Constitution of the Swedenborgian Church

### Article II. Officers, Councils and Administrative Functions

**Section I.** The officers of the Swedenborgian Church shall be President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, and Treasurer, all elected by ballot. The President and Treasurer shall each be elected for ~~a~~ three-year terms, and the Vice-President, and Recording Secretary ~~and Treasurer~~ shall each be elected for one-year terms. The President and Treasurer shall assume the duties of ~~the~~ their offices at the close of the next annual meeting after ~~his or her~~ their election and the other officers shall assume the duties of their offices at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.

The election for President and Treasurer

shall be held at the annual meetings of the Swedenborgian Church in the year ~~previous~~ prior to the beginning of each such term. In the absence of such session the term of office of ~~or~~ the President shall be extended for one year following the succeeding session in order that the succeeding President may be elected one year previous prior to taking office. In the event of the death, resignation or incapacity of the incumbent President or Treasurer, the successor shall be installed for a full term immediately after the successor's election. A President who served for two successive terms shall not be eligible for election to the next succeeding term. The other officers shall be eligible for re-election without limitation.

The newly elected Treasurer shall be the Treasurer-elect and participate as a non-voting member of Standing Committees and other committees with the current Treasurer, including but not limited to, the investment committee and other funding committees. In the absence of such annual meeting of the Swedenborgian Church, the

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## Proposed Changes

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term of office of the Treasurer shall be extended for one year, in order for a new Treasurer to be elected one year prior to the expiration of the outgoing Treasurer's term.

**Section 3.** There shall be a Council of Ministers consisting of all the ministers of the Swedenborgian Church, of whom twelve shall constitute a quorum. This Council shall select a chair, ~~who shall be a member of the Cabinet~~ who shall be an ex-officio member, with vote, of General Council.

**Section 4.** There shall be ~~Standing Committees~~ Support Units as specified in the Bylaws. ~~Standing Committees~~ Support units shall consist of three members, one to be elected annually for a three-year term, or of six members, two to be elected annually for three-year terms, together with such ex-officio members as the Bylaws shall require. Members who have served two consecutive three-year terms shall not be eligible for immediate re-election. Each ~~Standing Committee~~ Support Unit shall have specific focus as defined in the Bylaws and unless otherwise provided in the Bylaws shall elect a chair, ~~who shall be a member of the Cabinet~~.   
**Section 5.** ~~There shall be a Cabinet composed of the Chairs of all Support Units, the Chair of the Council of Ministers, a representative from General Council, and the President of the Swedenborgian Church who shall serve as Chair.~~ (Blank—for future use)

### Article III. Duties and Powers

#### Section 2. (Paragraph 2)

The General Council shall annually review all committee and Standing Committee reports ~~reports from all Support Units~~ and shall recommend to the Church any necessary revisions or clarifications of fundamental principle or priority. It shall receive the budget recommendations ~~of the Cabinet~~, revise them as its wisdom shall indicate, and adopt a budget.

**Section 4.** (Blank) ~~The Cabinet shall coordinate the Support Units' activities, set priorities thereof and ensure that the criteria adopted by the Swedenborgian Church and used for evaluation are applied as uniformly and equitably as possible. The Cabinet shall be directly accountable to and report to the General Council. The Cabinet shall receive the preliminary budget from the Financial and Physical Resources Support Unit and shall negotiate and make such adjustments as it deems necessary. The budget shall be submitted to General Council for its review and approval by a date which Council shall determine. The Cabinet shall also serve as~~

~~an Advisory Board to the President of the Swedenborgian Church.~~

**Section 5.** The primary duties of each ~~Standing Committee~~ a Support Unit shall be to facilitate, initiate and evaluate activities relevant to its focus. Its primary means shall be the provision of supportive supervision for the planning, realization and evaluation of such activities, such supervision to function under criteria approved by the Swedenborgian Church. It shall be responsible for annual review of its efforts with explicit reference to the Swedenborgian Church's PURPOSE, Objectives and Strategies as listed in the Standing Resolutions.

Persons or groups desiring denominational support for new or existing activities shall communicate their desire to the President, who shall refer the request to an appropriate ~~Standing Committee~~ Support Unit. The ~~Standing Committee~~ This Unit shall then appoint a supervisor acceptable to the requesting persons or groups to assist in the planning and the evaluation of the activity.

Within the limits of its budget, ~~a each Standing Committee~~ Support Unit shall meet at least semi-annually, either in person or electronically, as provided in the Bylaws. It shall submit written reports, at least annually, to General Council via the Recording Secretary.

Within the limits of its budget, ~~a each Standing Committee~~ Support Unit shall enlist the services of resource persons as supervisors, make decisions concerning the funding of activities in its care and receive and evaluate reports therefrom, submitting ~~to the Cabinet and~~ to the General Council at least annually a report of its decisions and the activities in its care.

The Chair of each committee ~~by virtue of his or her Cabinet position~~ shall bear primary responsibility for coordinating these activities with those of other Support Units.

## Bylaws of the Swedenborgian Church

### Article III. Order of Business

Reports and communications shall be presented in the following order:

1. Reports of the Officers of the Swedenborgian Church
2. Report of the General Council
3. Report of the Council of Ministers
- ~~4. Reports of the Support Units~~
- ~~5. Reports of the Committees~~
- ~~6. Reports of the Associations~~
- ~~7. Reports of Churches not affiliated with Associations~~
- ~~8. Reports of Trustees~~

~~9. Reports of Auxiliary Bodies~~

~~10. Special Reports~~

~~11. Unfinished Business~~

~~12. New Business~~

### Article VI. Duties of the President

**Section 1.** The President shall perform the duties required by the Act of Incorporation, the Constitution and these Bylaws. The President shall preside over sessions of the Swedenborgian Church, ~~and shall ensure that the activities of the Cabinet are reported to the Swedenborgian Church.~~ In the absence of the President, the Vice-President shall fulfill these duties.

**Section 2.** All committees shall be appointed by the President of the Swedenborgian Church, unless otherwise ordered by the Constitution or Bylaws; and vacancies in committees so appointed shall be filled by the President. Vacancies in Standing Committees shall be filled by the President of the Swedenborgian Church should they occur between annual meetings of the church, with such appointed members remaining in their positions until elections are held as provided in the Bylaws.

**Section 3.** The President shall have the privilege of participating, ex-officio without vote, in the meetings of all ~~Standing Committees and committees~~ Support Units.

### Article IX. ~~The Cabinet~~ (Blank)

~~The Cabinet shall meet at least once yearly and at the will of the President as required and shall have the duties and powers set forth in Article III, Section 4, of the Constitution.~~

### Article X. ~~Standing Committees~~ The Support Units (Established ~~Provided by Article II, Section 4 of the Constitution~~)

**Section 1.** The Standing Committee for Financial Accountability ~~Financial and Physical Resources Support Unit.~~

There shall be a Standing Committee for Financial Accountability Support Unit for Financial and Physical Resources, whose central focus shall be on the wise use and development of such resources as are directly under the Swedenborgian Church's control, and the provision of advice and counsel in such matters to the Swedenborgian Church's collective bodies. It shall oversee the management of the Swedenborgian Church's properties and investments, shall seek new sources of material support and shall provide consultants for the

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Swedenborgian Church's collective bodies toward the best coordinated and wisest use and development of their financial and physical resources. This Standing Committee Support Unit shall work in close cooperation with the Common Fund Investment Committee. This Support unit It shall consist of six (6) three members, two of whom are to be Swedenborgian ministers or pastors, four of whom are to be lay members of the Swedenborgian Church, plus the Treasurer of the Swedenborgian Church, ex-officio with vote, who shall serve as its Chair.

Based on its assessment of the overall needs of the denomination, this Support Unit the Standing Committee for Financial Accountability shall make recommendations to General Council as to how best to manage its funds and properties. It shall administer all funds, including but not restricted to, the Augmentation Fund, the Mission Fund, and the lungerich Fund. It shall oversee the distribution of all restricted and unrestricted funds of the denomination and their application process, if any. It shall receive all preliminary budget requests, including but not restricted to, those from General Council, the Council of Ministers and all Standing Committees and committees, and shall prepare therefrom a preliminary budget for submission to the General Council.

This Unit shall appoint annually a committee to administer the Augmentation Fund, to include the President and Treasurer of the Swedenborgian Church ex-officio.

This Unit shall receive preliminary budget requests from the General Council, the Council of Ministers, the Cabinet and all Support Units and shall prepare therefrom a preliminary budget for submission to the Cabinet, including clear indications of any necessity it may see for adjustment.

**Section 2.** The Standing Committee of Education and Resources for Spiritual Community Education Support Unit.

There shall be a Standing Committee of Education and Resources for Spiritual Community Support Unit for Education, whose central focus shall be the development and dissemination of resources for worship, small groups, church growth, stewardship, and board development and outreach. It shall on facilitating activities that enhance the understanding and the skills needed for the realization of the Swedenborgian Church's PURPOSE. This Unit will be concerned with resources, personnel and programming, and will strive to provide

materials for the development of ministries and seek to anticipate and develop programs and resources for local communities' needs for worship, programming and outreach. It shall consist of four (4) members, three to be elected, including at least one minister with five or more years of pastoral experience, plus a member appointed by the Center for Swedenborgian Studies Board of Trustees and will strive to foster excellence in both content taught and in technique of teaching. This Support Unit shall consist of three members plus a representative appointed by the Swedenborgian House of Studies Board of Trustees.

**Section 3.** The Standing Committee for Communication and Information Communications Support Unit.

There shall be a Standing Committee for Communication and Information Support Unit consisting of three to six members, the number to be determined annually by the President of the Swedenborgian Church based upon the needs of the Church at that time. The Standing Committee's whose central focus shall be on coordinating, initiating and promoting communication both within and across the boundaries of the denomination in all variety of media. It will seek to foster coordination among the Swedenborgian Church's publishing and information and technology activities. This Standing Committee Unit will be alert to the climate of opinion both within and beyond the boundaries or the Swedenborgian Church and will also be alert to developments in communication technology. The official organ of the denomination, The Messenger, and the denominations internet presence shall be under the supervision of this Standing Committee Support Unit.

**Section 4.** Nominating Committee (Moved from Article XVII to this article)

There shall be a Standing Committee for Nominations Nominating Committee of five members to serve for five years each; one member to be elected each year, but not from any Association from which his or her predecessor or any other member of the Committee shall be is a member. The unexpired term of any member may be filled from the same Association. A member moving to another Association shall continue to serve and shall be regarded as coming from his or her former Association; but no retiring member shall be eligible for immediate reelection. Whenever possible, the Standing Committee for Nominations Nominating Committee shall propose slates representative of the Swedenborgian Church's overall constituency.

It shall be the duty of this Committee to

present, at each session of the Swedenborgian Church, nominees for the Swedenborgian Church officers (where applicable), vacancies in the elective members of the General Council and all other Boards, Support Units and Standing Committees, unless otherwise appointed. Each year the member whose term is next to expire shall act as Chair of the Committee.

No person shall be nominated to serve on more than one Support Unit at any one time. This order shall be observed by the Nominating Committee and shall be kept by the Chair when accepting nominations from the floor. It is further recommended that no individual serve on more than two administrative bodies or more than two committees of the Swedenborgian Church, the Standing Committee for Nominations Nominating Committee and the Chair being similarly instructed. This does not apply to persons serving ex-officio as provided by the Constitution and Bylaws.

Support Unit for Ministries.

There shall be a Support Unit for Ministries, whose central focus shall be on facilitating ministries within the Swedenborgian Church and facilitating activities that increase the number of individuals and groups consciously committed to the realization of the Swedenborgian Church's PURPOSE. This Unit shall be concerned with resources, personnel, programming, and the provision of administrative and spiritual support to our ministries and will foster supportive communication among like ministries so that pastoral care will be available as needed. It shall be particularly alert to congenial trends in thought and activity outside the Swedenborgian Church and shall conscientiously monitor the effects of its efforts on both the size and the usefulness of the Swedenborgian Church.

This Unit shall consist of six members, including at least one minister with five or more years of pastoral experience and at least one lay person.

This amendment shall take effect at the close of the session at which it was adopted. The initial members of this Support Unit shall be the duly elected members of the former Pastoral Ministries Support Unit and Growth and Outreach Support Unit, who shall complete their terms as members of this Support Unit.

Section 5. Information Management Support Unit. Blank

There shall be a Support Unit for Information Management whose central focus shall be on gathering, storing and distributing data pertinent to the fulfillment

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# Cultural Immersion in Sweden: Swedenborg and His Concepts

BY DEVIN ZUBER

The January immersion seminar at the Center for Swedenborgian Studies (CSS), an affiliate of the Graduate Theological Union (GTU), involved a trip to Sweden. “Cultural Immersion in Sweden: Swedenborg and His Contexts” was taken by a group of GTU students who are studying Emanuel Swedenborg for a week of contextual learning at various sites in Sweden. The group included students Rachel Madjerac, Cory Bradford-Watts, Colin Amato, and Jeffrey Adams, Swedenborgian Church president Rev. Jane Siebert, and Professor Devin Zuber. They sought to locate

Swedenborg within the artistic, religious, scientific, and Scandinavian cultural contexts that shaped his singular output as scientist and mystic, poet and anatomist, geographer and seer. They also traced the impact of Swedenborg’s thought on subsequent artistic and cultural figures in Sweden, including the poet and dramatist August Strindberg and the Sufi painter Ivan Agueli.

When Swedenborg began to quietly publish his unsettling heterodox theology in 1749, his work had remained deliberately anonymous. Yet, after a somewhat infamous episode of clairvoyance tied to a dangerous fire that tore through Stockholm in 1756—an event that attracted the interest of Immanuel Kant in Königsberg—Swedenborg was outed as a mystic who purportedly spoke with angels and the spirits of the deceased. In publications



that followed this international notoriety, Swedenborg sometimes added to his title pages that the work was “*a Emanuele Swedenborg, Sueco*”—from Emanuel Swedenborg, a Swede.

Taking cue from these laconic title-page remarks, the seminar sought to deepen and contextualize the specifically Scandinavian dimensions of Swedenborg’s project. Learning on location allowed the group to unpack the ways that both Swedenborg’s science and his theology emerged out of a space that lay on the margins of Enlightenment Europe: a hyperborean liminality where the currents of Enlightenment rationalism became entangled with a swirl of esoteric and folk traditions, and the fervor of the same radical Pietism that had produced (in Germany), a generation earlier, Jakob Böhme.

Site visits included:

- Swedenborg’s summer house, the only extant piece of his former estate on Södermalm, now part of the Skansen Folk Museum
- Riddarhuset, the House of Nobles, where Swedenborg served as an active member of Parliament for many years following his family’s ennoblement
- Gamla Stan, the old medieval island in the heart of Stockholm where Swedenborg lived at various points, and where his father had served as royal chaplain to the king
- Falu Gruva, the enormous copper mine in Darlana where Swedenborg

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~~of the Swedenborgian Church’s PURPOSE. This unit will, within the limits of its budget, oversee the purchasing and maintenance of necessary equipment and the hiring of appropriate staff, and in cooperation with the denomination’s collective bodies, will devise efficient, equitable, and acceptable principles and means of access and distribution of information, primarily within the boundaries of the Swedenborgian Church.~~

### Article XI. Electronic Meeting Guidelines

Section 5. The procedures approved by General Council under this Article shall be communicated by the Central Office to all members of all boards and committees, ~~and support units~~ of the Swedenborgian Church at least once a year, following the close of annual convention sessions. They shall also be published in the annual *Journal of the Swedenborgian Church*.

### Article XVII. Nominating Committee (Moved to Article X; Blank)

### Article XVIII. Common Fund Investment Committee

The General Council, at its first meeting following each annual session of the Swedenborgian Church, shall appoint an

Investment Committee of not less than three members, one of whom may be the Treasurer of ~~the~~ General Convention, which shall be charged with the general oversight and care of the investments and securities of the Swedenborgian Church Common Fund, with full power to purchase and sell and to invest and reinvest as in their judgment and discretion may seem advisable. Any members constituting a majority of said Committee may exercise all of the authority and powers hereby granted to or conferred upon said Committee. This Committee is authorized to make investments and reinvestments in such bonds, notes, debentures, corporate stocks and other securities and such real estate, real estate mortgages, interests in real estate mortgages, and other property as the Committee, in the exercise of reasonable intelligence and caution, shall deem best. This Committee shall work in close cooperation with the Standing Committee for Financial Accountability. ~~Financial and Physical Resources Support Unit.~~

### Article XXIII. Amendments

(Add new amendment date) 



## Cultural Immersion

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often went as a royally appointed assessor of the mines

- Darlanas Folk Museum, to learn about the rich folk culture and indigenous artistic traditions in a region to which Swedenborg's family had deep connections
- Uppsala Cathedral, to visit Swedenborg's tomb, and Uppsala Castle
- The Gustavianum at Uppsala University, where Swedenborg matriculated and studied, and may have observed anatomical dissections
- The pre-Christian Viking settlement of Old Uppsala, (Gamla Uppsala), to experience the thinness between Uppsala University's cosmopolitan aspirations and the proximity of old Norse religious practices and folkways.
- The archives at the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, to view the collection of Swedenborg manuscripts, including his so-called "Spiritual Diary"—one of the largest single-author manuscript collections from the eighteenth century in the world, now designated part of UNESCO's "world memory" cultural heritage
- The Stockholm New Church and the Reading Room of the Lord's New Church in Sweden, two Swedenborgian groups currently active in Scandinavia
- The Nordiskamuseet, to explore the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century religious and cultural dynamics that shaped Swedenborg, as well as later paintings, texts, and photographs tied to August Strindberg's occult interest in Swedenborg.



*Following are excerpts from student blogs about their experiences and reflections, written while they were in Sweden.*

### Goddess Speaks

BY CORY BRADFORD-WATTS

Wow, Stockholm. I can't get over the beauty of every stone, from the cave-like, mossy subway walls to the cold facade of the royal palace. It seems everyone speaks English, to such an extent that foreigner's guilt has been quite foreign. Even the cold is, strangely, a nice change from the endless spring of the Bay Area, and our winter gear feels like the appropriate mantle for our expedition.

Yesterday, we visited some of the beautiful folks at Stockholm's Swedenborg Memorial Church. They serve as appropriate early mentors for our cul-



tural immersion, embodying openness and kindness as they describe how they decid-

ed to join Swedish Swedenborgian denominations: working for positive change from within through example and activism. The church itself is much like the New Church Cathedral in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, designed to represent various aspects of Swedenborgian theology, with an emphasis on the deeper meanings of nature and how Goddess speaks to us through scriptural metaphor.

Speaking of Goddess speaking, our devotional this morning was led by our denominational president, the Rev. Jane Siebert, on spiritual portals. As I look through the portal from my

room in our boat hostel, the Chapman, I'm reminded to clarify that by portals, Jane meant all the ways that the Divine communicates with us. Although we Swedenborgians tend to emphasize specific "correspondences" and metaphors within scripture, one of her points was that God approaches us through whichever doors we open for him. Swedenborg viewed the universe like a hologram, with nature and mundane processes representing deep, spiritual truths and methods of Divine transformation. Goddess is much less interested in a specific method of interaction or religion than she is in its positive arc and the end result: a transformed heart and mind, reoriented toward impactful love and embodied wisdom.

It's been a whirlwind tour, and I'm still trying to get my head around it. My gratitude to Devin Zuber, CSS, and our donors is tremendous. I can't quite get over the fact that I'm finally out of North America, in Europe, and walking through these historic streets and halls. I've only mentioned a drop in the bucket, but what a drop it is! If you look closely you may make out a universe, with an arc toward love and justice gravitationally grounding us, bringing us all closer to water, to peace, to each other.

Yesterday, we had the vast pleasure of experiencing an interactive art exhibit that really opened our minds as well as challenged some of our personal comfort zones (in a good way!). Speaking for myself, it was really wonderful having my usual perspectives disrupted and enter a realm where I had little control, being directed in an environment I couldn't see and hearing a narrative designed to expand my sense of reality. And then later we joined the artists Martina Seidl and Christer Lundahl for dinner—such a lovely Swedish family! It was quite an honor being invited into their home and warmed by

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## Cultural Immersion

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their energy and perspectives.

The museum housing that experience was the Moderna Museet. And there was a wide range of modern art there, from the enveloping (a huge grid-  
ed room with lawn chairs and a video playing the strangest “games”) to the mundane (if you know what I mean—like an entirely white painting with a dot of orange toward the bottom). It was quite a place. We had lunch there with a view over what seemed like the entirety of Stockholm: smaller than I imagined, packed with such rich vibrancy and beauty.

Thursday we also visited the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, learned about the Nobel Prize, and saw the rooms where the deliberations and announcements are generally made for their portion of it (chemistry and physics). It was fascinating to see Swedenborg’s portrait in the announcement room, as he was an early member of the Academy! We also got to nerd out over some of that Swede’s original manuscripts held there. How fascinating and what an honor—the fragile pages written in Latin reminded me of the fragility of history and how our interpretive lens shapes our reflections of everything. We had inspiring, fantastic hosts and were greatly blessed by their attention and all the work they do in the archives.

### Spiraling between Worlds

BY RACHEL MADJERAC



The concept and significance of spirals have been popping up in a variety of ways throughout our trip so far. This morning for our devotional, Jane encouraged us to think

deeper about correspondences and, as an example, she told us about the significance of her own spiral necklace.

A bit later in the day we all had the incredible privilege of flipping through

some of Swedenborg’s original, hand written, eighteenth-century manuscripts. As Colin and I were looking at pages in *Apocalypse Explained*, we noticed that at the very end of the

book, a spiral had been drawn. As I flipped some more, I found several others drawn at the ends of other parts of the book. They seemed to signify the completeness of that thought or idea, because there were many other sections that had blank space left after them, as if to say that he wasn’t sure if he was done with that section yet.

Seeing the spirals that Swedenborg had drawn reminded me of something we saw yesterday in the Swedenborgian Church in Stockholm. They had a beautiful metal sculpture that a parishioner had crafted, and they used it not only as a candelabra but also as a way to explain their theology to visitors.

These spirals keep popping up, and in some way they are serving as an affirmation that we truly are moving through a very special experience in being here.

### Swedenborg’s Heaven and Hell on Earth

BY RACHEL MADJERAC

Yesterday we went down into the copper mines in Falun, which made the Swedenborg family incredibly wealthy. The parts of the mine that we went into were the primary sections

that were mined in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with many of the boards we walked on being original to that time.

We saw a bucket that was used to bring copper ore, supplies, and people in and out of the mine. Listening to our tour guide talk about the bucket really resonated with Swedenborg’s poem about when he himself was going down into the mine via a bucket.

I glide down from the upper world  
in a bucket,  
thus hanging, I am brought all the  
way to the dark shadows of death.

But, as I moved to and fro hanging in the  
middle of the air,  
it was pleasant for me to sing holy hymns.  
It was pleasant thus to weigh this poor  
and fragile life,  
*which all depended on the power of a rope.*  
Behold,—in the recesses of the *mine* the  
band of Hades hurridly rushes along,  
with dark faces wondering at me and my  
followers



As we experienced the mine and heard the stories about what it was like to be down there in the eighteenth century, it was

easy to understand why Swedenborg wrote about the mines as being a hell on earth. They were hot with fire and putting off tons of toxic smoke and they quite literally led you down into the underworld on a physical level.

The same reading that included the poem about the mines presented an idea that really helps us to understand how Swedenborg experienced both heaven and hell while here on earth. For him, the mines provided some imagery and a feeling of what hell would

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be like—the fire, the darkness, the lack of air, the constant threat of danger, and the unnatural plunge into the depths. It was his example of hell on earth.

The contrast to this, Swedenborg's heaven on earth, was his garden. In his garden he cultivated a space of life with many beautiful plants and tree sculptures of animals, birds chirping with music playing, and spaces for leisure and play. His garden was very much an example of his paradise here on earth.

Although we cannot fully experience the joy of the garden, we were able to see his summer house as well as the site where it originally sat. We also were able to see an incredible diorama of the garden while we were visiting the Swedenborgian Church in Stockholm.

Being able to experience the mines and learn more about the garden helps us to learn not only more about Swedenborg's life but also to see how his life related to his writings, how the theology and the ideas were lived, and how they came to be.

### Just Beneath the Surface

BY RACHEL MADJERAC

During one of our last meals together, Jane posed the question, if you could ask Swedenborg something now after this trip, what would it be?

One of the things that has occurred to me throughout the trip is that Swedenborg is kind of always present just below the surface of the city of Stockholm and in the Swedish cultural legacy. In so many of the museums and sites that we visited, there is open recognition of the various contributions of people that Swedenborg worked with, like Polhem and Linnaeus. Yet Swedenborg's name is rarely mentioned. When he was recognized, it was either in a not-so-public-space or,

more often than not, just a small section in a large number of people or a part of something mundane—a street sign, one name of many on the side of a building, a plaque on a busy street.

Although Swedenborg himself had no intention of starting a new religion, I wonder what he would say about the way his legacy has, in a way, settled beneath the surface in his home country. In some ways it feels terribly unfortunate for a man who wrote so much and was involved in so many different things. Yet, on some level it also feels fitting. He is



present within the society, but in order to access him and his ideas, you have to dig a little deeper; you have to look with intention.

*"Venturum est tempus, quando illustratio"* (There will come a time when the people will be enlightened.) *Arcana Coelestia* §4402.

### Swedenborg's Island

BY COLIN AMATO



site where Swedenborg's house once stood. To think that the majority of the buildings on that main street were



destroyed by the Great Stockholm Fire of 1759 made me appreciate the buildings that still stand. I was asked recently if this trip was making me change

my views on Swedenborg. I pondered this for a little bit and realized that this trip has caused me not really to change my views on Swedenborg, but rather appreciate him

as a historical person, a real person who lived in this city, breathed the air, and saw the same sites that I see now.

Holding Swedenborg's *Spiritual Diaries* in my hands made it very real; seeing his handwriting made it real. We also had the chance to see locations associated with his life, and that made it real. We went to the Nordic Museum and saw the exhibition of August Strindberg. Looking into Strindberg and seeing the impact that Swedenborg had on his writing of plays and essays was fascinating. It would seem that Swedenborg's influence on modern Sweden is present both consciously and unconsciously: Consciously in Swedenborg's influence on the artists and creative people of his country; unconsciously in that, even the average Swede knows about Swedenborg and attributes his work to mystery and spirituality.

I find it fitting that Swedenborg's former residence is surrounded by young hipsters, creative artists, and members of the LGBTQ community. Being in Sweden has presented to me wonderful examples of people being in like communities and being useful. I also had the excellent time of talking with Swedes about Swedenborg. In a country that is majority secular humanist and atheist, religion does not play a role in the same way it does in the USA. However, when I discussed Swedenborg's theology with people I met here in this country, there was

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a deep sense of curiosity and willingness to explore the ideas, even if they did not agree fully with the implications. That type of openness to new ideas, or old ones in this case, gave me hope. It appears that Swedenborg's island is in good hands and should be looked at as a living example of a heavenly community.

### A Garden Church

BY CORY BRADFORD-WATTS

As you come up to the gate, you're a little hesitant; you've been told about the gentleman Swedenborg and how welcoming he is but you've also heard about his visions and that he may be out of his mind. The gate is open when you get there, and you call out. No one answers, but you've heard there's an open door policy on Sunday afternoons, and so you walk in. As you enter you're struck by the simple beauty of the courtyard, surrounded by trees and brush of a type you've never seen before. Across the way is an even more beautiful space, a garden filled with lush foliage, box trees in the shape of animals, plants and fruit that are new to your eyes, and a design that pleases your mind. There's also a small house and other structures off to your left. As you explore the space, breathing deeply of the aromatics, you're further distracted by the sound of birds, laughter, and perhaps music from a gate to your right. You're not sure what to expect as you pass through, but the glimpse you've already gotten astounds, and it seems like this is only the beginning.

Swedenborg's home, and especially his garden, served as a sanctuary and altar for the seer and, perhaps, for the neighborhood as well. It was one of only a few in the area, and it was very popular for its beauty. It was a place of contemplation and meditation. He made music there, accepted guests,

explored and wrote literature within the small summer house and his study, and entered into botanical artistry; he grieved, cried, and mined theological depths within this space. Its structure was clearly designed to engage and entertain Emanuel—he designed it—as well as to amuse his guests and his servants and their families. There was a maze, stone paths, an orchard, flowers of all kinds, plants from around the world, summer and garden houses, a library, and a large birdhouse full of songbirds. Its beauty and enveloping nature was probably quite astonishing—all surrounded by high walls.

As the stories go, Swedenborg would eventually lead guests to a door, promising to show them his next, even greater garden. He'd then reveal a mirror ball reflecting their surprised faces back to them. And in a sense, this joke was much more than a fancy for him. We don't spell it out often, but it's clear that Swedenborg felt called to help cultivate others' spirits: spiritual transformation seems to be the impetus and point of his theological writing, his



life's work. Our hearts and minds were clearly the gardens that Swedenborg most yearned to nurture, to lead to abundance. But this space was probably the closest to what you could literally call Swedenborg's church, his heaven on earth. In later life, outside of work, this is where he most often and clearly expressed embodied worship in many forms, where he had fun, and where he most consistently engaged with others.

In retrospect, it's no surprise that

Swedenborg would choose a garden for the setting of his life's work and play. Swedenborg describes the deeper meanings, correspondences, of a garden, perhaps, in more ways than anything else in his theological works. He relates various forms of working in a garden to the three major parts of what he viewed as salvation (no matter what your religion): 1) repentance relates to weeding, 2) reformation relates to healing, rearranging, and grafting, and 3) regeneration relates to fruiting and abundance. For him, a garden also represents us more generally, our rational minds, the Word, a church, heaven, and the Lord. He emphasizes that gardens appear everywhere in heaven due to their abundance of correspondences, with each garden's form and plants modified for the specifics of the occasion and the people there.

Having seen so many heavenly gardens it's no wonder that Swedenborg went through so much personal effort to create his own, to gather the huge collection of plants that he did. He very intentionally collected from America and here at home, from across Europe and from Africa. Dutch figures of animals and other objects made out of box trees adorned his lawn, and there were artichokes, lemons, alliums and roses, tulips, carnations, catmint, chamomile, sweet peas, and the list goes on and on. This is one reason why the artistic depictions never do Swedenborg's garden any justice—they rarely depict the variety of life within it—and why words like mine indubitably fall short.

And this was not an isolated, purely selfish sanctuary. A large amount of the produce cultivated by Swedenborg and his gardener went to Swedenborg's servants to use or sell, and they are said to have retired remarkably well-off. Many people came to visit the garden, and Swedenborg would entertain. It's very conceivable that there were regulars. Further, as we know, garden

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## Mini-Courses

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(1884–1953), had sailed the esoteric seas, harboring in no less than thirteen traditions, from the Bible to Chinese mystics, Gnosticism to Sufi literature, and Blake to Swedenborg. He also played a decisive role in estab-



lishing psychology as a legitimate field of Western medicine due to his studies and close friendship with C. G. Jung. Despite climbing these impres-

sive peaks, Nicoll had not discovered a satisfactory vista from which his spirit could see, that is, until he met the Fourth Way's P. D. Ouspensky, G. I. Gurdjieff's foremost student. This serendipitous lecture left Nicoll "radiating with an inner light," sending him pacing throughout the night stating to his wife, Catherine, holding their newborn, "This is it!"

Although this "silent missionary," as General Convention's Gordon Jacobs calls him, has not gone entirely unnoticed by Swedenborgians (especially due to the efforts of the likes of Frank Rose, Bob Maginel, Ed Sylvia, and most notably, Peter Rhodes through his books *AIM*, *AIM—a Workbook*, and *Observing Spirit*), it is curious how anonymous Nicoll remains. Interest in Swedenborg has rebounded noticeably in the past three decades, Gurdjieff has consistently been studied since his death, and, of course, Jung is like a godfather of twentieth-century esoterica (and was actual godfather to Nicoll's only child, Jane). Nevertheless, Nicoll's clear-minded explanations of both the mysteries of faith in general and "Swedenborgianese" more specifically remain little known.

This mini-course hopes to alleviate this condition by sharing research

gathered from archives, books, and manuscripts since beginning my studies in 2017. Just as importantly, however, are the exchanges with many of the leading Fourth Way and Swedenborgian scholars, not to mention the echoes I heard while walking in Swedenborg's footsteps throughout London.

Whether Nicoll's works can facilitate Swedenborgians' regenerative journey is up to the individual, but those making that determination will likely hear a context that otherwise would remain unknown.

After completing a bachelor's degree in secondary education at Penn State University, upon discovering the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg a few years later, Jeffrey Adams studied at Bryn Athyn College and Theological School. He has investigated, taught, and written about Swedenborg's systematic theology for over two decades and is now completing a master's degree in New Religious Movements at the Center for Swedenborgian Studies at the GTU. His research is to determine the degree of influence Swedenborg's writings had upon the Fourth Way teacher Dr. Maurice Nicoll (1884–1953).

### What's the Use of the Swedenborgian Church?

*Rev. Thom Muller*

In a time of ever-increasing disillusionment with traditional forms of organized religion—and the Judeo-Christian tradition as a whole—what is the potential of the Swedenborgian movement for playing a uniquely relevant and useful role in today's spiritual landscape? We will look at the many ways in which a New Church approach can contribute to meeting a deep and urgent collective need for "rational spirituality" and holistic inner work.

Rev. Thom Muller is pastor at Hillside, an Urban Sanctuary/Hillside Swedenborgian Church, in El Cerrito, California, as well as



coeditor of *Our Daily Bread*. His passions include the intersection of religion and psychology, interfaith spirituality, comparative mysticism, and the Western esoteric tradition. He was ordained into the ministry of the Swedenborgian Church of North America in 2016, upon receiving his theological education at Bryn Athyn College of the New Church and the Center for Swedenborgian Studies/Pacific School of Religion at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California.

### Proprium: The Search For Swedenborg and New Discoveries in Cosmology

*Rev. Dr. Rachel Rivers*

Swedenborg wrote that everything in the physical world portrays aspects of our inner, spiritual reality. In the last one hundred years there have been scientific discoveries about the nature of the cosmos that radically alter our understanding of the physical universe in which we live. In this mini-course we will examine a few of these discoveries, such as the Higgs field, dark matter, and gravitational waves, and imagine together what spiritual truths they may illuminate.

Rev. Dr. Rachel Rivers has been serving as a Swedenborgian minister and pastoral psychotherapist for thirty-five years. For the past ten years she has been the minister of the Swedenborgian Spirituality Group of West Marin and maintaining a psychotherapy practice in San Francisco. She has a passion for relating quantum physics and cosmology with Swedenborgian spirituality.



### Planetary Solidarity

*Rev. Dr. Grace Ji-Sun Kim*

Climate change affects everyone. Yet, because women make up the majority of the world's poor and tend to be more dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods and survival, they are at a higher risk. Her book *Planetary Solidarity* (Fortress Press 2017)

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## Mini-Courses

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brings together leading Latina, womanist, Asian, Asian American, South



American, European, and African theologians on the issues of doctrine, women, and climate justice. A focus on women is warranted because theological

and ecclesial documents too often do not spell out the ways climate change affects poor and indigenous women around the globe. This mini-course will examine the problem of climate change and how as the body of Christ we all need to engage in saving and preserving creation. Earlham valedictorian class of 2014 Rev. Anna Woofenden will introduce Dr. Kim and also respond to her remarks before moving to general discussion.

Rev. Dr. Grace Ji-Sun Kim is associate professor of theology at Earlham School of Religion and author or editor of thirteen books, most recently, *Planetary Solidarity; Intercultural Ministry and Embracing the Other*. Dr. Kim is on the American Academy of Religion's board of directors as an at-large director. She writes for *The Huffington Post*, *Sojourners*, and *TIME*, and more of her writing can be found on her own website. The *Englewood Review of Books* included her in the list of "Ten Important Women Theologians That You Should Be Reading." Dr. Kim is also an ordained Presbyterian minister (PCUSA).

## Swedenborg and Bay-Area Environmentalism

Dr. Devin Zuber

In this mini-course we will explore the environmental legacy of John Muir and his circles, contexts that prominently included several early San Franciscan Swedenborgians



## A Swedenborgian Production

Michael Robbins, president of the Swedenborgian Church of Puget Sound, has written a script that he wants to produce as an animated video. The working title, "Thugs in Heaven," addresses a topic that frequently arises in conversation with our church members.

His religious satire addresses the fallacy of salvation without repentance. Many other Christian churches put excessive emphasis on "belief," preaching that believing in Jesus is all that is required to enter heaven. If this were the case, we would have a heaven polluted with evil spirits who were granted access just because they believed in a series of facts, and where good people who didn't "believe" during life are condemned to hell.

and the establishment of the San Francisco Swedenborgian Church. Learn about the history of this fascinating moment and its implications for ecological concerns in the twenty-first century. Participants are encouraged to read, in advance, John Muir's short-story, "Stickeen" (available at <https://tinyurl.com/yafawtmy>).

Dr. Devin Zuber is an Associate Professor of American Studies and Literature and faculty member of the Center for Swedenborgian Studies. At the Graduate Theological Union, Devin serves as a core doctoral faculty in the Department for Historical and Cultural Studies, where he teaches in the program concentrations for Art & Religion, New Religious Movements, and Religion & Literature. Prior to coming to Berkeley in 2011, Dr. Zuber taught at the University of Osnabrueck (Germany). He has been a fellow, scholar-in-residence, or visiting research professor at the Eccles Centre for American Studies at the British Library (London), at the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning about Religion and Theology at Wabash College, in Stockholm University's Department for Aesthetics and Culture (Sweden), and at the Rachel Carson Center for the Environment (Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich).

While it may someday be produced for the stage, it is the playwright's objective to illuminate hearts and minds on the Swedenborgian theology in a viral video that deconstructs the idea of belief.

Belief changes. We may one day feel our belief in the Lord is unprecedented, only to be granted a miracle that inspires a new level of belief we never thought possible. At the same time, faith has beauty and purpose, which is sometimes misapplied by telling non-believers they won't go to heaven.

Michael is seeking assistance in all forms including voice actors, graphic designers, animators, content editors, and financial contributors at <https://www.gofundme.com/ThugsInHeaven>. He can be reached by email at [msrplans@gmail.com](mailto:msrplans@gmail.com) or by phone at 206.355.3750. ☎

His forthcoming book, *A Language of Things: Swedenborg and the American Environmental Imagination* (UVA Press, 2017) explores the impact of Swedenborgian thought on nineteenth century ecological aesthetics. He is the editor of a newly revised collection of critical essays on the Romantic poet William Blake and Swedenborg (Swedenborg Foundation, 2016), and has published widely on nineteenth century American literature (Emerson, Hawthorne, Audubon, Henry James), and other topics including the memorial aesthetics of 9/11, ecocriticism, and Don DeLillo.


## Exploring Swedenborg's Life and Times in Sweden

Devin Zuber, professor, and Colin Amato, student, at The Center for Swedenborgian Studies will recount their January 2018 week-long immersion course in Sweden. They will present insights into Emanuel Swedenborg, his life, and his work gleaned from his time and place in history as a Swede, a scientist, a nobleman, and a theologian. ☎

## Correspondence in Religious and Philosophical History

Dean Jim Lawrence is published in the current annual volume of *Correspondences*, one of the two peer-reviewed academic international journals for the study of Western esotericism in the history of religions. He performed a word history on “correspondence” itself and produced “Correspondentia: A Neologism in Aquinas Attains its Zenith in Swedenborg,” which was selected by the editors to be one of three long features.

Dean Lawrence shows how the metaphysical term, “correspondence” (*correspondentia* in Latin)—so deeply associated with Swedenborgian thought—first began with the late medieval Dominican titan, Thomas Aquinas, as part of Scholastic philosophy. It was a brand new word, constructed for a particular philosophical purpose and was one of the last neologisms of Latin. From there, the useful concept helped shape hermetic philosophy and then neo-Cartesian thought in similar ways, all of which was familiar to Swedenborg, who profoundly repurposed the word and concept into a centerpiece of “the heavenly doctrines.”

To read Dean Lawrence’s article, go to: <http://correspondencesjournal.com/16402-2/>. 

## Cultural Immersion

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walking and working, maze traversing, music making (as Swedenborg did in his summer house), and raising birds, are all considered potent spiritual practices for many people today. So in a sense, we can think of Swedenborg’s garden as the first Swedenborgian garden church, an early precedent to Rev. Anna Woofenden’s enterprise

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Inspirational worship services filled with music, variety, and shared leadership  
Live filming of “Off the Left Eye” with Curtis Childs and professors from the Center for Swedenborgian Studies, and keynote speech by Curtis on opening night  
Special program for children ages 5–12 and child care for children 3–4, with scholarships for children  
Outing to experience the Redwoods on July 4th  
Four different mini-course sessions with three fascinating options for each session (See February and March Messengers.)  
Holy ordination service at a nearby church  
Teen program where friends join together to play, go on outings, and create an amazing theatrical worship experience  
Important business meetings to discuss changes to the bylaws and other good news about what’s happening in the Swedenborgian Church  
Gathering for new-comers and others to orient everyone to the campus and location of events  
Meeting old friends and making new friends, for that is a big part of the Swedenborgian Church’s annual convention  
And the University is nestled right in the middle of the city of San Jose.  
Additional entertainment is within easy walking distance.

in San Pedro, California.

Beyond all of these details, we can see how this entire space served as a canvass for Swedenborg. Gardening itself was an art for him, one that involved researching and collecting, communicating and procuring, designing, digging, positioning, logistics, hiring, and managing. His art, both within his literal garden and the garden of his theological works, served to bring people together, to delight our minds and give us a glimpse of heaven. As we’ve seen with the San Pedro Garden Church, working together in

a garden can be extremely empowering and transformative. It invites and deepens community if we do it right: it improves our confidence, awareness, and connections to each other, as well as with nature and the Divine. And that’s what this is all about, community and connection emboldening a deep, selfless love. It’s why we’re all here, together, reflecting on a transient garden long gone.

All of that said, it’s probably no coincidence that Swedenborg was 55, just before his spiritual awakening, when

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## Passages

### Deaths

**Gordon Bennett** passed fully into the spiritual world February 24, 2018. He was the son of Muriel and the late Rev. John Bennett. The Bennetts were longtime members of the Edmonton Church.

**Alberta (Altie) Margaret Loewen** of Olds, Alberta, and a member of the Calgary New Church Society entered fully into the spiritual world February 19, 2018, at the age of 86. A celebration of life was held February 24.

Altie had a warm, compassionate and kind nature. She always tried to see the goodness in people, and her sense of humor always kept people laughing. She will be deeply missed and lovingly remembered by her husband of sixty-two years, Don. She is also survived by her children Rod, Myrna Poisant, Lori Taylor, Darren, and Garth; sixteen grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren. ☪

### Cultural Immersion

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he bought this plot of land. Knowledge of this altar gives us Swedenborgians a better look at the man behind the books. It helps to ground Swedenborg in reality, away from politics and world-travelling, publishing, and spiritual spelunking. From all accounts, we get a picture of a guy happy to make others happy, pleased by delighting others, making art, and creating abundance. He wasn't afraid to get his hands dirty. You can almost see him now, pausing up the bend, peacefully awaiting you and the moment when he gets to teasingly unveil his next, even greater garden.

More from the Cultural Immersion in Sweden blogs in the April Messenger.

### Letter from the President

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close, we withdraw or step forward, we turn toward or away, we look inward or outward."

This says to me I have a choice in how to respond to what I see as reprehensible lying. I can throw up my hands and say, "World, I am out of here until things change for the better. I am going to hole up and avoid the political rhetoric. I can't take it." Or we can step out and not focus on the lying, but rather focus on where we are needed. What can I do? How can I best speak my truth? What am I lying about to myself? How can I refrain from accepting my own lying?

I need to speak with my children and grandchildren over and over about the importance and value of truth. Not pointing fingers, as they will see it for themselves, but reinforcing the good that comes from truth and the evil that comes from lying.

When lying becomes so acceptable to people that they lie all the time and become addicted to dishonesty, unable or unwilling to stop lying, they are the ones who are affected the most, because they are not able to recognize and honor actual truth. And it is the truth that sets us free. Lying binds us.

Scripture tells us lies come from our hearts. This is serious business. Lying can make our heart dark. And when

we make excuses for someone that lies, we are joining them on the dark side. Scripture tell us it is like accepting someone that murders, or steals, or cheats.

These are the words of Jesus:

- Evil thoughts come out of a person's heart. So do murder, adultery, and other sins. And so do stealing, false witness, and telling lies about others. (Matthew 15:19)
- Adultery, greed, hate and cheating come from a person's heart too. So do desires that are not pure, and wanting what belongs to others. And so do telling lies about others and being proud and being foolish. (Mark 7:22)
- When you lie you belong to your father, the devil. You want to obey your father's wishes. From the beginning, the devil was a murderer. He has never obeyed the truth. There is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his natural language. He does this because he is a liar. He is the father of lies. (John 8:44)

Our original quotation that leads us in how to persevere in this chaos and dark time tells us not to focus on all that is wrong. We can't ignore it either but we must remember that we are needed in these times to be honest, to speak our truth, and to help others.

"We are needed, that is all we can know."

—Rev. Jane Siebert

### The Annual Meeting of the Corporation of the New Church Theological School (dba the Center for Swedenborgian Studies of the Graduate Theological Union)

will be held during the annual session of the  
Swedenborgian Church of the United States and Canada,  
Monday, July 2, 2018 at 7:30 PM,  
Campus Village 2 Building  
San Jose State University, San Jose, California.



### 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 questioning 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.

In his theological writings, Swedenborg shared 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.

## Another West Coast Convention!

BY JIM LAWRENCE

We celebrated last year our 200th anniversary of the first ever convention of the Swedenborgian Church, in 1817. Although the annual convention is held in different parts of North America and rarely occurs in the same location two years in a row, it took 132 years before one was hosted on the West Coast—in 1949, the year Wayfarers Chapel was opened. Plenary sessions (photo below) were held in the lovely but now-raized mission-style Los Angeles Church on Westmoreland Avenue. Since 1949, there have been nine more conventions on the West Coast:<sup>1</sup> 1959 in Carmel; 1969 in Claremont; 1977 in San Francisco; 1982 in Irvine; 1987 in Tacoma; 1995 in San Francisco; 1999 in Malibu; 2005 in Berkeley; and 2009 in Seattle. This year's annual convention, in the heart of Silicon Valley, will be the tenth since that historic 1949 convention.

Only one person in this iconic photograph of so many New Church worthies is still living. A large blow-up photograph with most of the people identified will be on display at the convention in San Jose.

<sup>1</sup> 1959, Asilomar Conference Center, Carmel, CA; 1969, Harvey Mudd College, Claremont, CA; 1977, University of San Francisco, S.F., CA; 1982, University of California at Irvine, Irvine, CA; 1987, University of Puget Sound, Tacoma, WA; 1995, San Francisco State University, S.F., CA; 1999, Pepperdine University, Malibu, CA; 2005, University of California, Berkeley, CA.





# 194th Session of the General Convention of the New Jerusalem

**Council of Ministers: Thursday, June 28 - Saturday, June**

**30; Opening and Keynote: July 1; Outing Day: July 4;**

**Convention events run July 1 through July 5**

Convention 2018 will be held in San Jose, CA on the campus of San Jose State University (SJSU). To learn more about SJSU, visit [www.sjsu.edu](http://www.sjsu.edu). (This is not a SJSU-affiliated event.) **To learn more about the 2018 Convention and view a list of Frequently Asked Questions**, please visit <http://tinyurl.com/Swedenborg2018>, email [manager@swedenborg.org](mailto: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. Rooms include one standard linen and towel pack.

**Roommates (doubles only):** If you have a specific roommate in mind, please fill in their name in the designated space. If not, please fill in the matching section. You will be paired with someone of the same gender.

**Childcare:** Please contact the Central Office for details and forms.

**Children 12 and Under:** No registration fee and their room and board is 1/2 adult rate. Scholarships available to pay 1/2 of airfare Contact Central Office for details.

**Youth League Program:** The Youth League program runs from Sunday, July 1 through Thursday, July 5 and is supervised by Kurt Fekete. If you want your teen to attend without a parent, please contact the Central Office.

**Internet:** Free guest wireless access is available.

**Parking:** Cost of \$10 per day/\$21 per week for parking permit in the 7th Street Lot (South Parking Garage). Cost of \$11 per day/\$50 per week for parking permit in the Campus Village Parking Garage. Please check the box below so we know how many cars will be parking on campus. See the FAQ for more parking information.

**Reservations and Payment Deadline:** No new room, meal, or outing reservations will be available after May 24 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 May 24 at 5PM ET and must be done by calling the Central Office between 9AM-5PM ET, M-F.

**Arrivals and Departures:** Check-in on arrival day for on-campus guests is between 10AM-5PM. Check-out on July 5 is before 11AM. See FAQ for details on arrivals/departures outside of these windows.

**Mobility:** Attendees will need to bring or rent their own mobility aids. Please see the FAQ for more details.

**Communications:** Please provide a valid email address below if you have one. We provide as much information as possible via email. Add [manager@swedenborg.org](mailto:manager@swedenborg.org) to your contact list to ensure that you receive all of our email updates.

**Ground Transportation:** Please see the FAQ for more details.

**July 4 Outing:** There will be a July 4 outing to the Redwoods area, which is included in the room and board and meal packages below. Details to follow.

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

## Roommate Matching

We will do our best to match you with an appropriate roommate if you will be in a double room and have not indicated a roommate 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?

## Travel Information

☐ To travel from the Norman Y. Mineta San Jose International Airport we suggest a taxi cab or a Uber/Lyft ride as it is a short distance from the airport to the campus. Uber/Lyft apps can be easily downloaded on any smartphone and connected to a credit card.

## Convention Name Tag

Please list below your name and title you would like listed on your convention Name Tag:

\_\_\_\_\_

**Room and Board Packages:** *Note:* All rooms will be double occupancy. There are only 110 beds available in suites (4 bedrooms, 2 baths, kitchenette and lounge area). If not all are reserved we will try to honor those requesting singles, which would be a double room with one person paying the single rate, on a first requested and reserved single basis. We cannot guarantee singles. (See FAQ for prices if available) For overnight stays or meals that don't fit the listed packages, or for children's rates (or to apply for child or youth scholarships), contact the Central Office. Dinner on July 4 and will not be in the dining hall. We will provide more details soon.

**REGULAR CONVENTION Package A:**

**Sun. July 1 - Thurs. July 5 (four nights):**

\$354 per person/double room. 4 nights lodging, 4 dinners, 3 lunches, 4 breakfasts, 1 linen pkg. and July 4 outing.

**GENERAL COUNCIL LAY MEMBERS Package B:**

**Sat. June 30 - Thurs. July 5 (five nights):**

\$444 per person/double room. 5 nights lodging, 5 dinners, 4 lunches, 5 breakfasts, 1 linen pkg. and July 4 outing.

**COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AND LICENSED PASTORS Package C:**

**Thurs. June 28 - Thurs. July 5 (seven nights):**

\$627 per person/double room. 7 nights lodging, 7 dinners, 6 lunches, 7 breakfasts, 1 linen pkg. and July 4 outing.

☐

*Please check this box if requesting single room, if available.*

**Meal Only Packages:** For those **staying off-campus** who want to buy meals. Meals are not offered unless registered and pre-paid.

**REGULAR CONVENTION Package X: Sun. July 1 - Thurs.**

**July 5, meals only: \$125 per person, includes 4 dinners, 3 lunches, 4 breakfasts and July 4 outing.**

**GENERAL COUNCIL LAY MEMBERS Package Y: Sat. June 30**

**- Thurs. July 5, meals only: \$160 per person, includes 5 dinners, 4 lunches, 5 breakfasts and July 4 outing.**

**COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEMBERS AND LICENSED**

**PASTORS Package Z: Thurs. June 28 - July 5, meals only: \$230 per person, includes 7 dinners, 6 lunches, 7 breakfasts and July 4 outing.**

**OUTING PACKAGE R:** July 4 outing to Redwoods, including train ride through Redwoods, \$50 per person. For those not staying or eating on campus.

| Registration         | Cost  | # People | Total |
|----------------------|-------|----------|-------|
| Adult                | \$120 |          |       |
| Youth League         | \$60  |          |       |
| Child (0-12)         | Free  |          |       |
| *Family maximum      | \$240 |          |       |
| One Day Registration | \$50  |          |       |
| Local Volunteer      | \$60  |          |       |

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

| Room & Board   | Package | #People | Total |
|--|---------|---------|-------|
| Room & Board or Meal Only Package (see package descriptions for rates) |         |         |       |
| <b>\$50 Late Fee (for package paid after May 24 at 5PM ET)</b>         |         |         |       |

☐

Please check this box if you would like to donate for child and youth scholarships to attend convention, and indicate amount: \$

| General Convention Subsidies   | #People | Total Discount |
|--|---------|----------------|
| Council of Ministers and Licensed Pastors: Package A or C (double room), or Package X or Z |         |                |
| General Council Lay Members: Package B (double room), or Package Y                         |         |                |
| Swedenborgian Youth League Officers: Package A (double room) or Package X                  |         |                |
| Children 0-12: One half of adult rate for any package                                      |         |                |
| Other (please specify):  |         |                |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Grand Total (from Registration, Room &amp; Board, and donations, less Subsidies)</b> |  |
|---|--|

### 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 May 24 will be subject to a \$50 late fee. See "Cancellations" section of FAQ 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: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

3. ☐ Credit card or bank payment via PayPal - We will email an invoice

4. ☐ Check: Send checks payable to The Swedenborgian Church to: 50 Quincy St., Cambridge, MA 02138