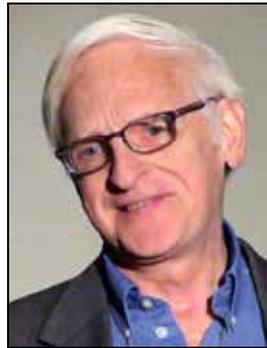




Creation Spirituality Theologian Matthew Fox Keynote Speaker at Annual Convention

Matthew Fox, the American theologian who perhaps has done the most to reframe a positive role for the natural world in Christian theology in the contemporary moment, will deliver the keynote address for the 2019 Annual Convention—whose theme is “Rooted in Spirit . . . Earth is Speaking to Us”—on Saturday, June 29, at 7:30 PM.

Renowned for his “Creation Spirituality,” Fox has authored thirty-five books (translated into sixty-eight



Stanford University, Mundelein College, and Holy Names College. Best known for such popular books as

languages, selling millions of copies), created two institutes of higher learning in Creation Spirituality, and taught at

Original Blessing and *The Cosmic Christ*, he was twice investigated for heresy by Cardinal Ratzinger (later Pope Benedict XVI) and finally expelled from the Roman Catholic Church in 1993.

Today he is an Episcopal priest working with young people to reinvent worship with new forms; his Cosmic Mass has been celebrated in dozens of locales. He spends much of each year conducting workshops and giving presentations around the world and is a visiting scholar at the Academy for the Love of Learning. ☩

Swedenborgian Filmmaker to Screen New Film at Annual Convention

BY JIM LAWRENCE



Marcia Kimpton filming on location

Marcia Kimpton has made a Swedenborgian-inspired film, *Bardo Blues*, that has been winning awards at film festivals. *Bardo Blues* won't be officially released until shortly before the annual convention, but responding to our request, Marcia has agreed to come to Indiana and give a special showing of this work to the attendees at the convention.

Based on and dedicated to her brother, Graham Kimpton, *Bardo Blues* is set in Thailand and tells the

story of a man coming to grips with tragedy by escaping to paradise. With a copy of *Heaven and Hell* visible in multiple scenes, the tense plot unfurls as a Swedenborgian-informed vision of the eternal journey of regeneration with the penetrating challenges of spiritual formation in the natural world that follow through with passage into the spiritual worlds.

Before relocating to Aspen, Colorado, Marcia was a long-time active friend at the San Francisco Swedenborgian Church and Wayfarers Chapel as well

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The Natural World

We are all stuck in the natural world for now, and our daily task is to make sense of and navigate our way through it.

It is amazing that Christians can have such opposite interpretations of God's giving dominion over the natural world to humankind. Some say it means we are to exploit it for our purposes of survival, progress, and comfort while others hold that it means we are the caretakers of the world, charged with the responsibility of protecting,



A manatee greets the editor

not exploiting, the world.

The theme of the 2019 Annual Convention is "Earth Is Speaking to Us," supporting the second interpretation.

Earth spoke to me in an unexpected way last autumn. At the suggestion of my friend Aline, we "swam with the manatees" while visiting Florida. I did not expect much; boy, was I surprised!

As I hovered on the surface wearing a mask and snorkel, manatees began swimming near me out of curiosity. Eventually, they began coming closer, and one moved slowly toward my face and then touched its nose to my face mask as I peered into its eyes. I was able to pet a few of these (up to a half-ton) mammals while they floated benignly beside me.

This was a seminal experience for

me of communing with nature. I felt an extreme peacefulness and oneness with the world for almost two hours of stillness in that aquatic world, simply being with twenty or so friendly manatees that seemed as interested in me as I was in them. (Manatees have no natural enemies, except boat propellers and other man-made hazards.)

This experience not only helped me feel more acutely the sacredness of the natural world but also led me to a greater awareness of my spiritual existence, and to the sacred connection between those two worlds.

—Herb Ziegler

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Church Calendar

- **May 24–27:** SCYL Memorial Day Retreat, Almont New Church Assembly, Allenton, MI
- **June 29–July 3:** 2019 Annual Swedenborgian Convention, Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, IN
- **July 28–August 3:** International Summer Camp for Teens, Purley Chase, England
- **August 28–31, 2020:** Gathering Leaves, Purley Chase, England

the Messenger

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The opinions and views expressed are those of the authors, not of *the Messenger*, the Communication Support Unit, or the Swedenborgian Church.

Letter from the President



The Year of the Lord: 2018–19
—*The Primacy of Spirit*

Dear Friends of the Swedenborgian Church,

This time of year leads me to offer thanks to all the VOLUNTEERS that serve General Convention and all of our churches, camps, retreats, and other ministries. We would not exist without the work, dedication, and time you give. I wrote a similar President's Letter in 2017, and after three years as president, I am even more aware of how important volunteers have been in our past, are today, and will continue to be as we look to the future.

We have nine elected members of our **General Council** who serve voluntarily as the executive committee of the Swedenborgian Church. They are members of churches from around the US and Canada. They meet for two days in November with the executive officers: president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer. They are expected to come to annual conventions, where we have meetings before and after the annual meeting. In addition, we have conference calls as needed. This year, we started a new initiative to improve our contact with all ministries: each General Council member has several contacts to make twice a year to provide information and to check how things are going on the local level.

The four Standing Committees comprise elected volunteers, who provide direction and support for a variety of decisions needed for our operation.

The **Standing Committee for Financial Accountability** meets for two days in September to review the budget and make recommendations about mission grants and augmentation grants for ordained ministers' salaries to the General Council. They also have conference calls as needed.

The **Standing Committee for Education and Resources for Spiritual Community** is responsible for the mini-courses at the annual convention and is working on the annual themes for the Swedenborgian Church, with resources to go with them for our ministries.

The **Standing Committee for Communication and Information** is meeting this month to improve cooperation and team work with all the outreach programs of the Church. They also work closely with our operations and web manager, Samantha Johanson. They manage our web page and electronic presence, and work with the editor of *the Messenger*.

We often forget, until it is time for elections, the importance of the **Standing Committee for Nominations**. We are only as good as the people they find willing to serve on General Council and the committees. They are working on new ways to involve people with different backgrounds, views, and experience to serve on committees.

We also have many other committees, run by volunteers: **Retirement Committee**, **Trustees of the Building Fund**, **Committee on Library and Documents**, **Committee on Inquiry**, **Board of Mediation**, **Swedenborgian Online Community Central Committee**, **Board of Trustees of the National Church**, **Board of Directors of Wayfarer's Chapel**, **Trustees of the Center for Swedenborgian Studies**, **Structure Review Committee**, **Committee on Amendments**, **Investment Committee**, **Central Office Review Committee**, **Social Concerns Committee**, **Trustees of the Tafel Fund**, and **Delegates to the National**

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More Mini-Courses for Annual Convention

This year, at the 2019 Annual Convention we are blessed to have fourteen mini-courses to choose from in our education sessions. Ten of those mini-courses were previewed in the March 2019 Messenger. The final four are previewed here.

Nature's Mystic Mirror

Pastor Christine Campbell

Nature is both mirror and teacher. Mystics throughout time have sought divine encounter in the natural world. The observation of nature offers a way to develop a deep awareness of the correspondences between the natural and spiritual worlds.

We will explore tools and techniques used in nature observation and will develop our self-awareness. Nature provides a mirror into the spiritual world which in turn allows us to discern our own limitations and blocks. The correspondences we draw may reveal the places in ourselves that separate us from God and from each other. We are then able to come more fully into the circle of the global community. Nature fosters a global spirituality.

There are time honored ways of immersing oneself into the Natural World. In this class, we will practice concrete skills of "fox walking," "deep listening," and "owl vision," which bring us into deeper communion with the world around us. We will also use a template of journaling our internal and external experience. You will be able to draw from these experiences your own spiritual correspondences. Just as Swedenborg, Goethe, and Emerson, along with many others, drew correspondences and inspiration from the natural world, you will glean your own wisdom. This is a meditative class that will leave you feeling more at peace within and without.

Christine is a lifelong student of the natural world. She has deeply immersed herself

in the natural world through long-time observation practices. An Earth poet immersed in the mysticism of nature, she has completed many courses at Tom Brown Jr.'s Wilderness School (Advanced Tracking and Observation), Hawk Circle Earth Skills Class, Harvest Song Nature Awareness School, and the Kamuna Program of the Wilderness School. Christine has completed several wilderness fasts and vision quests, and she has mentored many people through vision fasts, quests, and year-long apprenticeships. She enjoys creating a bridge for people between the natural and spiritual worlds.

Christine is the pastor at Temenos Retreat Center, in West Chester, Pennsylvania, where she often integrates the nature setting of its fifty-five acres with spiritual growth and formation.

The Challenge of Global Warming

Dr. Michael Huft

Global warming is perhaps the most signature issue of our time, which, if is not properly addressed, will have dire



consequences for all of humankind.

This mini-course will briefly present the science involved, including the causes and progress of

global warming and its physical and biological impacts.

But the subject is much more than just a scientific topic. Economics, politics, and community are also important aspects of the discussion, each in three different ways. Global warming strongly impacts each of these areas of human life. It is imperative that we understand—politically, economically, and socially—how human society arrived at a place in which global warming has become such an important fact. And, most importantly, we must explore what changes may be

necessary to our political, economic, and social systems, in order to successfully confront the challenge posed by global warming.

But, underlying all of these aspects is the spiritual. We are spiritual beings, and it is through that truth that we ultimately have our relationship with the earth and all of its inhabitants and with our neighbors. The spiritual must be, at bottom, what will inform our actions in the face of global warming, as has been eloquently stated by Pope Francis in his recent encyclical on climate change, *Laudate Si*, and which is completely consistent with the truths explicated by Emanuel Swedenborg.

Dr. Huft is a botanist and a retired attorney. He received his Ph.D. in botany from the University of Michigan and, for the succeeding thirteen years, was a tropical botanist at the Missouri Botanical Garden in St. Louis and the Field Museum in Chicago. In his forties, he went to law school, which was followed by a clerkship for a federal judge and eighteen years of practice in Chicago, in the area of nonprofit law and tax-exempt organizations. After retiring from law four years ago, Dr. Huft returned to the field of botany. He is the editor of a peer-reviewed scientific journal, *The Great Lakes Botanist*, and serves on the board of a multi-institutional organization that is preparing the first complete flora of North America. He is a long-time member of the General Church and, now that he lives in Indiana, attends the LaPorte New Church.

Astral Embodiment: How a Swedenborgian Interpretation of Cognitive Neuroscience can Inform Our Reading of Figurative Art

Eleanor Schmarr

Definitions: interoception/proprioception; synesthesia/idaesthesia; photism; tulpa; cerebral proprioception.

Anatomy: right/left; pineal/pituitary; ganglionic/cerebral; masculine/

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2019 Mini-Courses

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feminine; stability/plasticity; information flow/connectomics; afferent stream/efferent stream/interoceptive stream.



So where do we see this in art? I will start with standard, academic figure painting (or photograph) as an example of working from an externalized

modality and then move into more and more abstracted forms of figuration until we have reached something entirely reductive. This will show how each is reflected in anatomical perception and how the process of abstraction can be reinterpreted as a process of generating imagery from more and more specific and phenomenologically representational modalities

Some artists we will engage are Frida Khalo, Melissa Mcracken, Vasily Kandinsky, Jenny Saville, Alex Grey, Barkley Hendricks, Leonora Carrington, Marcel Duchamp, and Kara Walker, as well as a broad selection of shamanic, archeological, and religious art. This adventure will illustrate that spiritual experiences are closely related to anatomical interoception.

This insight suggests a new way of understanding Swedenborg's concept of the "Universal Human" of heaven. I will accompany my presentation with quotations from Swedenborg's works, including especially his pre-theological *Rational Psychology* and the mother lode of his theosophy, *Arcana Coelestia* (*Secrets of Heaven*).

Simple drawing exercises will encourage participants to sharpen participants' interoceptive faculties!

Eleanor Schnarr is a Swedenborgian artist and poet from Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania.

Save The Date for Gathering Leaves!

The event for women within the Swedenborgian Church and wider movement

Friday 28–Monday 31, August, 2020

To be held at Purley Chase Centre, Warwickshire UK

Dear Friends: this is to invite you to save the date for Gathering Leaves, the Swedenborgian women's gathering, in 2020.

The event will comprise divine worship in all its forms, talks, discussion groups, sister circles, circle dancing, country trail walking, meditation, yoga, art and craft, and a day trip out.

As many attendees will be travelling long distances, extra dates either side of the event have been blocked out in the Purley calendar to accommodate people's travel schedules.

Further information, including how to register, to follow.

She has a four-year studio certificate from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and is pursuing an M.F.A. at the San Francisco Art Institute. She is a member of the Hillside Swedenborgian Community, where her partner, Thomas Muller, is pastor. Her art practice centers on the concept of "Cerebral Proprioception" and attempts to visualize the connectomics of the human brain from subjective observation.

Death and Dying: the Hospice Experience from a Chaplain's Perspective

Rev. Gabriella Cahaley

We will first look at the recorded words Swedenborg said just before he died. Then we will cover these topics:

- Conversations at the end of life are always shaped by the disease process experienced by the dying person. We will share examples of what has been said to patients and their families as death approaches.
- Families have their own unique experiences as their loved ones approach death.
- Some patients and their loved ones often express their fears and anxieties.
- Chaplains may be permitted to

enter into that sacred space with patients and their families as death approaches. At that sacred time, the family may be most receptive to consolations about eternal life and the presence of angels.

Rev. Cahaley's first career was in the water. She taught and coached swimming, water exercise, and aquatic therapy classes. Later in life, she sensed a call to a more interior practice of soul care. After finishing her undergraduate degree at the University of Arizona she went unto seminary, first at the Pacific School of Religion then transferred to Earlham School of Religion where she earned her M.Div. degree. Since her ordination in 2011, though briefly, Gabriella



pastored three different congregations. During her husband's illness, Gabriella worked as chaplain and bereavement coordinator in Tucson. After her husband's death, she returned to Georgia, where

she served as bereavement coordinator and chaplain for two hospices. Recently, Gabriella left the hospice world to work as a pastoral counselor at a residential treatment center. ☪

SPLATz Find Themselves in the Middle at Almont

BY KURT FEKETE

Ten spirited SPLATz (Super Powered Lovable Almost Teens), aged ten to thirteen, traveled from four states to attend a youth retreat at Almont Retreat Center in March. Our theme was “Being in the Middle,” and Zsa Zsa got things started by arriving with me early and drawing a beautiful picture of a girl caught in the middle between an angel and a demon. The idea of having a retreat about the middle came from a retreat we had way back in October 2011, almost eight years ago. I showed a chart comparing the outer and inner aspects of an object, and the question came up, “What’s in the middle?” I answered, “Nothing is in the middle.” Later, I thought about that question for a long time, and I reached the conclusion that, actually, almost everything is in the middle. We are rarely on the extreme ends, so we’d better organize a retreat and talk about the middle!

Once everyone arrived on Friday evening, we opened our sessions with rules, housing announcements, and an icebreaker of charades, where everyone had to act out a word while introducing themselves.

The kids were tired from the long day of school and travel, so we played a few more games, then all got settled into their rooms for the evening.

In the morning, we started our first

session about being in the middle. The SPLATz positioned themselves along a continuum string with “yes” and “no” at the ends. Then they were asked a series of questions, like “Do you like pizza?” “Is your favorite color blue?” and more difficult ones like “Do you



Zsa Zsa and her retreat poster

like yourself?” and “Are you a good friend?” They moved along the string towards yes, no, or somewhere in the middle, according to their answer to the question.



Splatz boys: Trent, Ethan, Cash, and Connor

Next, we discussed the ways we are in the middle. We talked about being in the middle of childhood and adulthood, being in middle school or the middle dorm at camp, living in the

present between the past and the future, and being in the middle of the macrocosmic universe and the microcosmic world.

Then, we talked about the difference between inner and outer, our brain versus our mind. We discussed how we live in a finite outer body but possess an inner infinite soul. This led us to selfishness and selflessness.

We humans are in the middle between pleasing God and pleasing ourselves. We rise above this middle area when we finally discover that pleasing God is the way to receive the most pleasure for ourselves. All of our lives on this earth and even the start of our next life in the world of spirits is a struggle in the middle between good and evil, truth and falsity. The resolution of this middle conflict ultimately determines whether we will reside in heaven or hell.

In the afternoon sessions, we talked about drama triangles which involve a bully, a victim, and a hero. We learned that all positions cause pain and come from a place of pain. We all need attention and love—that’s what we desire most in this world. We enter into the drama triangle as an unhealthy way to get attention and love.

We looked to the Bible for some examples of these drama triangles and found them in the stories of Saul, David, and Jonathan in 1 Samuel 20 and of Moses, the Pharaoh, and the Israelites in the book of Exodus. The SPLATz shared stories of their experiences in the drama triangle, where they felt caught in the middle. Later in the afternoon, the kids got

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Bring the Children to Convention!

Once again, we have a great children’s program lined up for the 2019 Annual Convention at Valparaiso University in Indiana. Like last year, children aged 5–12 are invited to attend, and great subsidies are available to help families with tight budgets. We’ve worked hard to ensure all children can attend. The registration fee has been waived, room and board is discounted to half

the adult rate, and for those traveling from a distance, scholarship funds are available to pay for up to half of the child’s airfare. We are blessed to have Riley Tishma lead the children’s program this year. The children’s program theme—Caring for the Planet, Caring for Yourself—will complement the theme of the convention. Last year, at the San Jose Convention, kids had wonderful time playing and learning as

they built “spiritual toolboxes”

We’re so excited to have children attend the convention, as our spiritual community is not complete without them!

Contact Samantha Johanson at Central Office or Kurt Fekete: kfekete@hotmail.com, 802.345.0169 for more information. We would love to have you include Annual Convention in your summer plans! ☪

SPLATz Retreat

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a chance to do some acting when they role-played some different scenarios involving bullying, such as rejection, the put down, and exclusion.

In the evening, we discussed ways that we can get out of the drama triangle and methods to survive and perhaps even thrive in the middle. I concluded the evening session by explaining that God is pure love and pure wisdom. God never hates or punishes. God never lies or spreads gossip. The Lord’s Divine Love (red) and Wisdom (white) embrace you, wrap around you, and protect you. The Lord guides us through the middle and helps us discover ways to deal with being caught in between.

After the session, we enjoyed an ice

cream party and played more games. Catchphrase is always a popular evening activity at retreats, and this re-

in the soft, still, embrace of peace and love.

We arose Sunday morning for our final breakfast together. We cleaned up, said our goodbyes, and then departed, closing the doors on another SPLATz weekend together. We are all so blessed to have our friends and teachers to help us overcome our fears and become more confident, loving souls.

Thank you to Almont and Lori Patana for providing a safe and inviting space, and special thanks to youth workers Craig Carson, Kelli Craft, and Jack Earls for donating their valuable weekend time in service to our

youth and the Church! ☪

Kurt Fekete is the youth director of the Swedenborgian Church. He lives with his wife and daughters Zsa Zsa and Ava in Gorham, Maine.



SPLATz girls: Ellie, Zsa Zsa, Ally, Bella, Nora, and Boston



Retreat staff: Jack, Craig, Kelli, and Lori

treat was no exception! The evening ended with a guided meditation in the library, where I led the SPLATz to a sacred place by the water where they could sit in the sand under the stars

Proposed Statement of the Swedenborgian Church on Discrimination

A draft proposal for this statement was presented at the 2018 Annual Convention and printed in the September 2018 Messenger. After one year of study open to all members of the denomination, the following will be presented on the floor of

the 2019 Annual Convention for vote as a standing resolution.

As Swedenborgians we affirm the core truths of our faith that honor the diversity of both heaven and earth, and recognize

that loving people who are different from us is integral to the practice of a religious life.

We also acknowledge that broad generalizations about races, nations, genders, sexual orientations, physical abilities, and religions can be found in our sacred texts when interpreted literally, and that these texts have been used on occasion to promote opinions that run counter to these core truths.

We hereby affirm our responsibility to interpret our texts in the light of love and inclusion, in heaven's light, and categorically reject interpretations of the Bible or of Swedenborg's writings that promote any discriminatory viewpoint. Where any translation or interpretation appears to invite the reader to engage in exclusionary or hateful thinking, promote stereotypes, or justify discrimination against anyone for any reason, regardless of the source, we stand against this. If any member, clergy, employee, or other affiliated person indicates by word, deed, works, writings, affiliations, or any other means racism, anti-Semitism, anti-Muslim bigotry, gender bias, heterosexism, ableism, or any other expression of prejudice, they do not reflect nor represent the practical doctrine of the Swedenborgian Church.

We encourage one another to advocate for those who face discrimination and to actively address these expressions of bias in our personal interactions and in the larger society. We also acknowledge that forms of discrimination come in many subtle shades, and that we have a responsibility to regularly investigate our actions and beliefs, both individually and collectively, to align them with these truths, so that we may all be greater vessels for Divine Love in the world. ☩

Proposed Resolution on Ending Gun Violence

In 2017, the General Convention voted to endorse a resolution from the National Council of Churches on the issue of gun violence. Due to a clerical error, that vote was not recorded in the minutes. At the 2019 Convention, the Social Concerns Committee will bring this resolution forward to be voted on once again. We see this as an opportunity to reaffirm our previous vote and to officially lend our name and support to this important and on-going issue. The wording appears below; the resolution with background material is available at the NCC website (nationalcouncilofchurches.us) or by contacting Rev. Robert McCluskey (jgb1995@gmail.com).

Ending Gun Violence: A Resolution and Call to Action by the National Council of Churches of Christ, U.S.A.

"[L]ive in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you. (2 Corinthians 13:11)"

Adopted by the Governing Board May 17, 2010; reaffirmed Feb. 23, 2018

This Resolution and Call to Action is a collaboration of the member communions of the National Council of Churches USA (NCC), with local and regional ecumenical bodies of the United States. It addresses the grievous problem of gun violence in the United States and is a part of our

continuing response to the crisis, faithful to our biblical perspective.

Resolution And Call to Action

No community, church, or individual believer can address a problem as complex and intractable as gun violence on its own. Therefore, together, the member communions of National Council of Churches U.S.A. RESOLVE to:

- 1) call upon our local, state, and federal legislators to enact reforms that limit access to assault weapons and handguns, including closing the so-called federal "gun show loophole," which allows for the purchase of firearms from private sellers without submitting to a background check, or providing documentation of the purchase.
- 2) participate with movements such as "Heeding God's Call" (<http://www.heedinggodscall.org>) to insist that commercial sellers adopt and adhere to responsible sales practices.
- 3) prayerfully, financially, and otherwise support the NCC staff in coordinating ecumenical efforts for gun violence reduction, including preparing educational materials about the magnitude of gun violence, developing avenues for dialogue among gun owners and gun control advocates within our congregations, and offering a faithful witness in cooperating with inter-faith and non-religious anti-gun violence advocacy organizations. ☩

195th Session of the General Convention of the New Jerusalem

Council of Ministers: Wednesday, June 26 - Friday, June 28;

Opening and Keynote: June 29; Outing Day: July 2;

Convention events run June 29 through July 3

Convention 2019 will be held in Valparaiso, IN on the campus of Valparaiso University (VU). To learn more about VU, visit <https://www.valpo.edu/>. (This is not a VU-affiliated event.) **To learn more about the 2019 Convention and view a list of Frequently Asked Questions**, please visit <http://tinyurl.com/Swedenborg2019>, 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. Rooms include one standard linen and towel pack. Pillows are additional at \$5 a pillow (limited inventory). Please mark on next page if you will need one and add \$5 to your package price. If you are local or traveling via car, please consider bringing your own.

Roommates (singles are additional, but in shared suites): 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 6-12: No registration fee and their room and board is 1/2 the adult rate. Children 0-5 Contact Central Office for details. Scholarships are available to pay 1/2 of the airfare. Contact Central Office for details.

Youth League Program: The Youth League program runs from Saturday, June 29 through Wednesday, July 3 and is supervised by Kurt Fekete. If you want your teen to attend without a parent, please contact the Central Office and touch base with Kurt as well.

Internet: Free guest wireless access is available.

Parking: Free.

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 charged 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 3 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 to your contact list to ensure that you receive all of our email updates.

Ground Transportation: Please see the FAQ for more details.

July 2 Outing: There will be a July 2 outing to the La Porte New Church, Manna House, and Stone Lake/Cummings Lodge for a catered picnic, which is included in the room and board and meal packages below.

Name		
Name		
Street		Apt. #
City	State/Province	Zip
Home Church/Organization	Preferred Email	Day Phone
Names, ages, and genders of any minors accompanying you		
Additional Notes to Central Office:		
Special Dietary Needs and/or Mobility Issues (Not everything can be accommodated)		
Specific Roommate Request (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 below):

<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

Recommended airports to fly in to are Chicago O'Hare and Chicago Midway airports. Transportation suggestions from airport: Coach USA, rent a car with others, Uber/Lyft apps can be easily downloaded on any smartphone and connected to a credit card. On July 3, we may provide a Coach bus early in the morning for drop-off at both Chicago O'Hare and Chicago Midway airports at an additional cost. This would save you time and money. Please check here to be added to the July 3 reservation list and more details will be provided at a later date.

Convention Name Tag

Please list below your name, title, church (that you are associated with, association, or committee, etc.) that you would like listed on your convention Name Tag. We will not be able to alter them at Convention, so please be as specific as possible:

Room and Meal Package Information: All rooms will be double occupancy (unless otherwise requested). Multi-bedroom suites with bathrooms. Singles are available for an additional expense, but if you are receiving a subsidy, you will be responsible for the additional cost: 7 nights-\$90; 5 nights-\$60; 4 nights-\$45. Please see note on previous page regarding pillows. For those staying off campus, meals are not provided unless registered and prepaid. For overnight stays or meals that don't fit listed packages, or for children's rates (or to apply for child or youth scholarships), contact the Central Office. Dinner on July 2 is included at the catered picnic outing in LaPorte. If you do not attend the Outing you will be responsible for your own dinner at your own expense. We will provide more details soon. **FAQ is coming soon!**

Please check this box to donate for Child and Youth Scholarships to attend convention, and indicate amount: \$ _____

Please check this box if requesting single room. Please check this box if you will be attending the Outing on July 2

REGISTRATION (Everyone Pays This)	Adult \$100	Youth League or Volunteers \$50	Children Free (0-12)	Family Maximum \$200 (immediate family only: parents, guardians, minor children)	One Day \$30	Total of People and Amount
Number of People						
Total						

Please check box for all amounts below that apply and figure by # of people for total

ROOM & MEAL PACKAGES (Per Person Pricing)	Double-Room, Meals, Linen Pkg, Outing	Single-Room, Meals, Linen Pkg, Outing	Meals only, no Lodging	Need a Pillow? It's extra.	Late Fee, if paid after May 24, at 5 p.m. (EST)	Subtotal	# of People	Total
Regular Convention- Sat. June 29-Wed. July 3 (4 nights): 4 dinners, 3 lunches, 4 breakfasts	<input type="checkbox"/> \$325	<input type="checkbox"/> \$370	<input type="checkbox"/> \$110	<input type="checkbox"/> \$5	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50	\$		\$
General Council/Lay Members-Fri. June 28- Wed. July 3 (5 nights): 5 dinners, 4 lunches, 5 breakfasts	<input type="checkbox"/> \$400	<input type="checkbox"/> \$460	<input type="checkbox"/> \$140	<input type="checkbox"/> \$5	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50	\$		\$
Council of Ministers Members/Licensed Pastors-Wed. June 26-July 3 (7 nights): 7 dinners, 6 lunches, 7 breakfasts	<input type="checkbox"/> \$550	<input type="checkbox"/> \$640	<input type="checkbox"/> \$200	<input type="checkbox"/> \$5	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50	\$		\$

GENERAL CONVENTION SUBSIDIES & SCHOLARSHIPS: Room & Board, or Meals only	#People	Total Discount
Council of Ministers/Licensed Pastors for required meetings & convention (double-room/meal pkg. cost), from COM budget		\$ ()
General Council Lay members for required meetings & convention (double-room/meal pkg. cost), from Gen. Council budget		\$ ()
Scholarship: Swedenborgian Youth League Officers (double-room cost)		\$ ()
Scholarship: Children, ages 6-12: One half of adult rate		\$ ()
Scholarship: Children, ages 0-5: Call Central Office for Scholarship rates and requirements		\$ ()
<i>Total Subsidies and Scholarships</i>		

GRAND TOTAL of Donation, Registration, Room & Board, less Subsidies (See rates above)

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 charged 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

Rev. Anna Woofenden is Urbana University Scholar in Residence

Urbana University announced the 2019 Swedenborg Scholar in Residence, Rev. Anna Woofenden, founder of the Garden Church and Feed and Be Fed Farm, and co-host of the Food and Faith Podcast.



As part of this year's residency, Urbana University will host events in support of Rev. Woofenden's visit, including "Food and Faith: Conversations from the Soil and Around the Table" and "Urban Gardening and Community Engagement."

The Swedenborg Scholar in Residence at Urbana University program has been funded by the

General Convention of the New Jerusalem (the Swedenborgian Church) since 2000. Rev. Woofenden's presentations are free of charge and open to the public. For more information, contact Samantha Kapp-

Williamson: Samantha.kappwilliamson@urbana.edu.

About Rev. Anna Woofenden

Anna grew up in the San Juan Islands in the state of Washington. She has lived around the country and traveled throughout the world. Anna is now based in Gambier, Ohio, with her husband David. She enjoys nature,

gardening, art, children, writing, community, singing, laughter, and a good cup of chai. She is passionate about spirituality, justice, food, the earth, beauty, compassion, and community and is still driven by a calling to reimagine church.

About Urbana University

Urbana University prepares students for successful and professional careers within a caring and supportive environment. Regionally well known for education and teacher preparation programs, Urbana was founded in 1850 by Swedenborgians. Since 2014, Urbana University is a division of Franklin University, accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. ☩

Swedenborgian Filmmaker

Continued from page 49

as a student at the Swedenborgian House of Studies. She continues to read Swedenborg and strives to understand and interpret his works.

Garnering a growing list of accolades, *Bardo Blues* has won "Best Film" at the Amsterdam International Filmmaker Festival, the Los Angeles Independent Film Festival awards, Canada's Yes Lets Make a Film, and World of Film International Festival Glasgow. It has also received other Indie awards for best cinematography, best editing, best actor, and best actress (Marcia herself). "Bardo Blues" will begin distribution in the U.S. in May; more information is available at www.bardoblues.com.

The film showing at the convention will be on Sunday night, June 30, following the annual meeting of the Center for Swedenborgian Studies. Marcia will give a short presentation about the background to the film before

Lights, Cameras, Action! Can You Change Your Life Story?

Swedenborg & Life — Now with Season Themes

The new *Swedenborg & Life* (<https://swedenborg.com/sl/swedenborg-and-life/>) seasons consist of four episodes, one of which will air every third Monday at 8 PM ET. The second season with a new theme will begin in June. On the Mondays in between new episodes, it will explore Swedenborg and the Bible during "Swedenborg & Life LIVE" and take live questions from viewers in our hour-long Q&A show called "Good Question!"

A new show, called "News from Heaven," airs Thursdays at 12:30 PM ET and Saturdays at 11:00 AM ET. In each of these upcoming shows, Curtis Childs will share excerpts from Swedenborg's works and apply the concepts to life.

presenting the eighty-five minute film. A writer, director, producer, and actress, Marcia's earlier films are *Star*, in the reality style genre, and a "mockumentary" on reality shows called *My Reality*. ☩

Rev. Dr. James F. Lawrence is dean of the Center for Swedenborgian Studies; director, Doctor of Ministry Program at Pacific School of Religion; and core doctoral faculty at the Graduate Theological Union..

If you've never seen an *offTheLeftEye* video production or haven't tuned in in a while, head over to the channel now and see what we've been up to at <https://www.youtube.com/user/offTheLeftEye>.

As part of a non-profit organization, our video programs are available for free to anyone, anytime they need them! If you'd like to support our mission, your tax-deductible donation will strengthen and solidify our reach and growth. Donate or become a member: <https://swedenborg.com/donate/>. ☩

Nominations for Elected Positions in the Swedenborgian Church

The Nominating Committee nominates at least one candidate for each open elected position. Elective offices and nominees to date are listed on the chart at right.

If you are interested in being nominated for any position, contact the Nominating Committee through Central Office.

In addition to the candidate to be elected to the Board of Trustees of the Center for Swedenborgian Studies (CSS) by its representative class (members of the General Convention), two candidates nominated by the CSS Board are to be elected as at-large-class trustees at the CSS Annual Meeting, which will convene at 7:30 PM on July 1, during the Annual Convention in Valparaiso, Indiana.

Karen Conger: Recording Secretary

It's once again an honor to accept nomination for the office of recording secretary of the General Convention, a position to which I was first elected in 2015. I am a lifelong, third-generation Swedenborgian who was raised in the Church of the Holy City in Washington, D.C. I have been a member of the Urbana Society and the Los Angeles Society, and I am currently a member-at-large of the Pacific Coast Association (PCA). I have served on the Ministries Support Unit for several years and the Nominating Committee more than once. I was the secretary of the PCA for several years, as well as holding elected positions on the Board of



Position to be Filled	Term (Yrs)	Candidate
President	3	***
Vice-President	1	Tom Neuenfeldt*
Recording Secretary	1	Karen Conger*
Treasurer	3	***
General Council layperson (2 to be elected)	3	Carl Helm* Susan Hulcher
General Council Minister	3	Rev. Betsy Coffman*
General Council Minister (unexpired term)	1	Rev. Thom Muller
Standing Committee for Communication and Information:	3	***
Standing Committee for Education and Resources for Spiritual Community:	3	***
Standing Committee for Financial Responsibility	3	Stan Conger
Committee on Admission to the Ministry (CAM): clergy	3	Rev. Sage Cole*
Board of Trustees of CSS, representative class	4	Open
Board of Trustees of CSS, at-large class	4	Open
Nominating Committee	5	BJ Neuenfeldt

* Incumbent

** Nominated by the Center for Swedenborgian Studies (CSS) Board of Trustees

*** No candidate to be elected this year

Directors of the Los Angeles Society and the Wayfarers Chapel. I continue to very much enjoy working as secretary and hope to continue in the position. Thank you for your consideration.

Vice-President: Tom Neuenfeldt

I am pleased to be running for my fourth term as the vice-president of our denomination. I continue to learn more and more about our church and the wonderful people who make it what it is.

In my role as vice-president, I have had an opportunity to participate in meetings, celebrations, and worship services across North America. I



also serve as a board member of the Swedenborgian Online Community; Central Office Review Committee chair; and a Trustee of the National Church, in Washington D.C. I also serve on a feasibility study committee for the Swedenborg Chapel Study-Advisory Team in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

My wife, BJ, and I continue to be active in the Almont New Church Assembly and in the Michigan Association.

I am no longer on the board of our Seminary, but my eight years there offered me an opportunity to be involved in the formation for our ordained clergy and licensed pastors.

The leadership skills that I developed in my thirty years as a school

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Nominations

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administrator have served me well in my vice-presidency. I developed an endurance for sitting through long meetings while remaining attentive and positive. If reelected, I will continue to put these skills to use.

General Council (Minister): Rev. Betsy Coffman

I am honored to accept nomination for a second term on General Council. It has been a great privilege to serve, and I hope to be able to continue to contribute meaningfully as a General Council member to the issues, challenges, and decisions we face as a church. As the longtime pastor of the Urbana Swedenborgian Church, I am especially in tune with similar ministries within our denomination, and my prior service on a number of other committees over the years, as well as six years as vice-president, has allowed me to gain an understanding and appreciation of the wide variety of ministries within Convention that seek to “spread the word” of all we have to offer from a Swedenborgian spiritual perspective.



Betsy Coffman lives in Urbana, Ohio.

General Council (Layperson): Susan Hulcher

Running is my earliest memory of the Swedenborgian Church—running around with my little friends at Urbana College for a convention, that is, before creeping into an emptied meeting room to play with the microphone. We giggled as our voices echoed in the massive space. But that glee comingled with bits of apprehension if the adults heard us. They were in a nearby room

having cocktails. So after performing our small act of rebellion, we carried on to an alternate play location—perhaps a safer one. But I don’t remember.

At five-years-old, my family relocated from Springfield, Ohio, to Canada. First we moved to British Columbia, where my grandparents Rev. Erwin and Lisa Reddekopp lived. We then settled one province over in Alberta.

Thanks to the Church, I’ve had many great opportunities. I’ve attended Almont Winter Retreats and numerous conventions as the Youth League’s Canadian representative. Summer activities brought me to Paulhaven Children’s camp. I can’t tell you how blessed I feel to have experienced both my American and Canadian personas. It has granted me a unique perspective and broadened my understanding of our organization as a whole.

As an adult, I began to take positions on the Western Canada Conference (WCC) Board, serving as Alberta representative or vice-president. I was also one of the founding members of the Paulhaven Property Committee (PPC). The PPC oversees maintenance of the forty acres of land that Paulhaven Children’s Camp sits upon. Every year, I teach at Paulhaven, and in the last few we’ve incorporated yoga and meditation. This I have been pleased to lead.

Currently, I am vice-president of the Calgary New Church Society. We are a small but loyal group made up of General Church and General Convention members. The Calgary Society has persevered for over fifty years despite never owning a building. This circumstance has led me to several observations, one being, that while our congregants differ regarding certain



applications of Swedenborgian writings, we pleasantly coexist because of our fundamental beliefs. Another realization is our society just enjoys the community of it all. Sometimes it’s all one can get anymore, and we steadily carry on because we want to.

Thank you for allowing me to “run” once more. This time for a seat on General Council. I welcome any opportunity to expand my knowledge. And if accepted I hope to offer what I’ve learned so far, with our larger community.

Nominating Committee: BJ (Betty Jean) Neuenfeldt, (nee Johnson)

I am a Michigan native; I grew up in Detroit and attended the Church of the Holy City there, following in the footsteps of Grandma and Mom. I am descended from Swedenborgians in Paisley, Scotland (who immigrated to Almont, Michigan, and began a church and, later, a summer camp there.)

The Nominating Committee is an important body in the Swedenborgian Church, although it is often taken lightly. Choosing names to present for the offices and committees in our denomination at the annual conventions is a job that takes much thought and knowledge of the workings of our denomination and its constituents. Nominees should represent the geographical diversity of the church as well as diverse political viewpoints on church and secular issues.

The term is a long one, five years, so it takes someone willing to agree to that much time. It also takes participation in committee work and coordination during the year to prepare the slate.

When asked, I thought it would be

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The Art of Eleanor Schnarr



Eleanor's Schnarr's visionary paintings take advantage of the unique properties of oil paint on paper to create a psychedelic dimensionality that blends together the image-making traditions of oil and aqueous media with the aesthetic of stained glass.

Drawing inspiration from her own multimodal synesthesia, Swedenborgian philosophy, and contemporary neuroscience, Eleanor's practice centers around the concept of "cerebral proprioception."

She is working to create new modalities to visualize the connectomics of the human brain from subjective observation.



Eleanor studies in the MFA Painting Program at San Francisco Art Institute. She lives in the Bay Area with her husband, Rev. Thom Mueller. Her website is EleanorSchnarr.com and her Instagram is @eleanorschnarrtist. 

Reflection

Racism

BY JANE SIEBERT

I'm not Racist or anti-Semitic. Like many of you, I grew up in a good household. My parents were lower middle class, but I never felt poor or lacking. I don't think there were any Black children or Hispanic children in my school. I'm not sure I would have noticed. Most were Christian, but we never concerned ourselves with it, and I didn't know what anti-Semitism meant. No one in my home spoke disparagingly about people of different races or different religious traditions. I was never bullied, and I hope I never bullied anyone else.

The only disparity I remember was feeling like doctors' and lawyers' kids or "rich kids" were in a different league than I and ran with different friends, but it didn't matter. My mom sewed most of my clothes, and she was a good seamstress. She even converted my white prom dress into my wedding dress, and I felt beautiful in both. University was much the same. There was a bit of diversity, but we pretty much stayed in our own groups, and I didn't question it.

I went off to the Peace Corps in Africa after college. I was definitely in the minority, but I didn't feel "minor" in anyway. I was held up as different, yes, but in a good way. People were curious about me. Everyone treated me with respect, probably more than I deserved. I was twenty-two years old.

Going on in my adult life, I worked alongside a variety of people. Some I got along with better than others, but it was not due to the color of their skin or choice of religion. At least I never thought so.

So, something that happened the other day really threw me and makes

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Racism

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me step back and ask, “Where did that come from?”

I was driving home from visiting my ninety-nine-year-old mother on a two lane highway that is always busy. They have added passing lanes, which helps to clear out some of the long trains of cars that can back up behind someone not going the speed limit. I was at the back of one of those and glad to see a sign designating “Passing Lane Ahead. Stay Right, Except to Pass.”

The problem was the car that led the pack did not move to the right lane, and the drivers were confused. Finally, they started passing on the right side—one, two, three . . . four. “Oh, keep going,” I thought, “just a little farther and it will be my turn.” I whizzed by as the passing lane was about finished and I looked at the driver in the slow car, expecting to see an elderly person (which is my own form of prejudice that I am fully aware of). As I passed and looked, I thought to myself, “Oh, it’s a middle-aged Black woman. She

doesn’t know how to drive.”

That second I caught it. My hidden racism came into full view. I was surprised and deeply saddened. “Where did that come from?”

And then I thought about what we are taught in our Swedenborgian theology. We have to examine ourselves to see the wrong in our lives before we can do anything about it. That day, that moment, I became aware of my hidden prejudice. It helped me look at other things in my daily life that I hated to admit. I do not want to have these feelings. I didn’t think I did, but there it was, and now I could do something about it. ☩

Nominations

Continued from page 61

a good chance to use the information I have gathered over many years serving on other General Convention committees—The Education Support Unit, The Fiscal and Physical Resources Support Unit, the Michigan Association, and Almont New Church Assembly. I’ve attended over twenty-five conventions, through my teen years, young adult years as a parent with small children, and most of my later adult years. I know the hardest part of this job is making those calls: “Would you be willing to serve as” Should I be elected to this position, I hope all of you think seriously about a positive answer if you get the call, knowing that you were chosen with a lot of thought going into the request. Our church, like most churches, runs on volunteer power; each of us has the ability to help.

Rev. Sage Cole: Committee on Admission to the Ministry

Rev. Sage Cole is the pastor and director of Swedenborg Chapel in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Ordained into the ministry of the Swedenborgian

Good News!

We have received many generous donations for our annual meeting (Convention 2019) from churches, associations, and individuals. We pass these savings onto you in reduced registration fees for everyone and scholarships for children and teens.

One example is the \$2500 donation we received from Marquette Associates through Michael Shone, our consultant for investments in the Common Fund. This donation and others helped to reduce the registration fee from \$120 to \$100.

Michael has been involved in recommendations to the Investment Committee for the Common Fund for almost thirty years. He has steered the committee in good fiscal decisions that have kept payouts to participating churches and our denomination level in times of bull markets and bear markets. Our investments are sound, and the returns outshine those of many other institutions comparable to ours. Looking over the past, the track record is good, and we can thank Michael and his team for helping the Common Fund to grow and support our ministries and the goals of the Swedenborgian Church. ☩

Church in 2005, Sage has served in a variety of settings: the first pastor of the Swedenborgian Online Community.org; the associate pastor of the



Church of the Holy City in Wilmington, Delaware; the pastor of the Fryeburg New Church in Fryeburg, Maine, and for six years as a hospice chaplain in southern

Maine. Sage lives with her husband and two young sons in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts. ☩

Letter from the President

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Council of Churches.

I join our youth director, Kurt Fekete, in thanking all the volunteers who devote time and care to our youth program, camps, and retreats. There are also many committees within our Council of Ministers.

If you are interested in any of these committees and offices, please let me or members of the Nominating Committee know. And if I have missed some volunteers, please forgive me.

For now, I say a deep thank you for the dedication, time and leadership you offer

You bring the future,

—Rev. Jane Siebert, President

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.

Earth Is Speaking to Us

195th Annual Swedenborgian Convention

LaPorte New Church with the Illinois Association

Welcomes you to Northwest Indiana,
Where you can meet up with loving friends and find new ones.

Saturday, June 29–Wednesday, July 3, 2019

**Valparaiso University
Please Register Today!**

Valparaiso University is a beautiful and accommodating campus for us. We will enjoy our meetings in spacious, modern rooms, meals for every palette at the Founders Table, and worship services in the Resurrection Chapel. The modern Beacon Residence Hall and lounges are all ours. Valparaiso's town square, a short ride from campus, offers a wide array of restaurants and pubs.

Plan to arrive on Saturday in time for the Welcome Reception, 3–5 PM, to meet new friends and connect with others.

The opening of the convention on Saturday evening will include the church banner procession (bring your banners!) and focus on our earth-care theme, with keynote speaker Matthew Fox, an American priest who is well-known as pioneering theologian, educator, author, activist, and mystic, reawakening mysticism and protecting Mother Earth.

Offered throughout the convention are worthy and inspiring mini-courses. (See [page 52](#) for details.)

There is a Teen Program (ages 13–18) and a Children's Program (ages 5–12). For available scholarships for youth and children to attend, and childcare options, please call Central Office, (617) 969-4240.

On Tuesday, July 2, we'll come together for an outing to LaPorte New Church, celebrating its 160th anniversary, and Manna House, and then enjoy an afternoon at a peaceful LaPorte lake and lodge for a catered picnic.

Checkout is Wednesday morning by 11:00 AM.