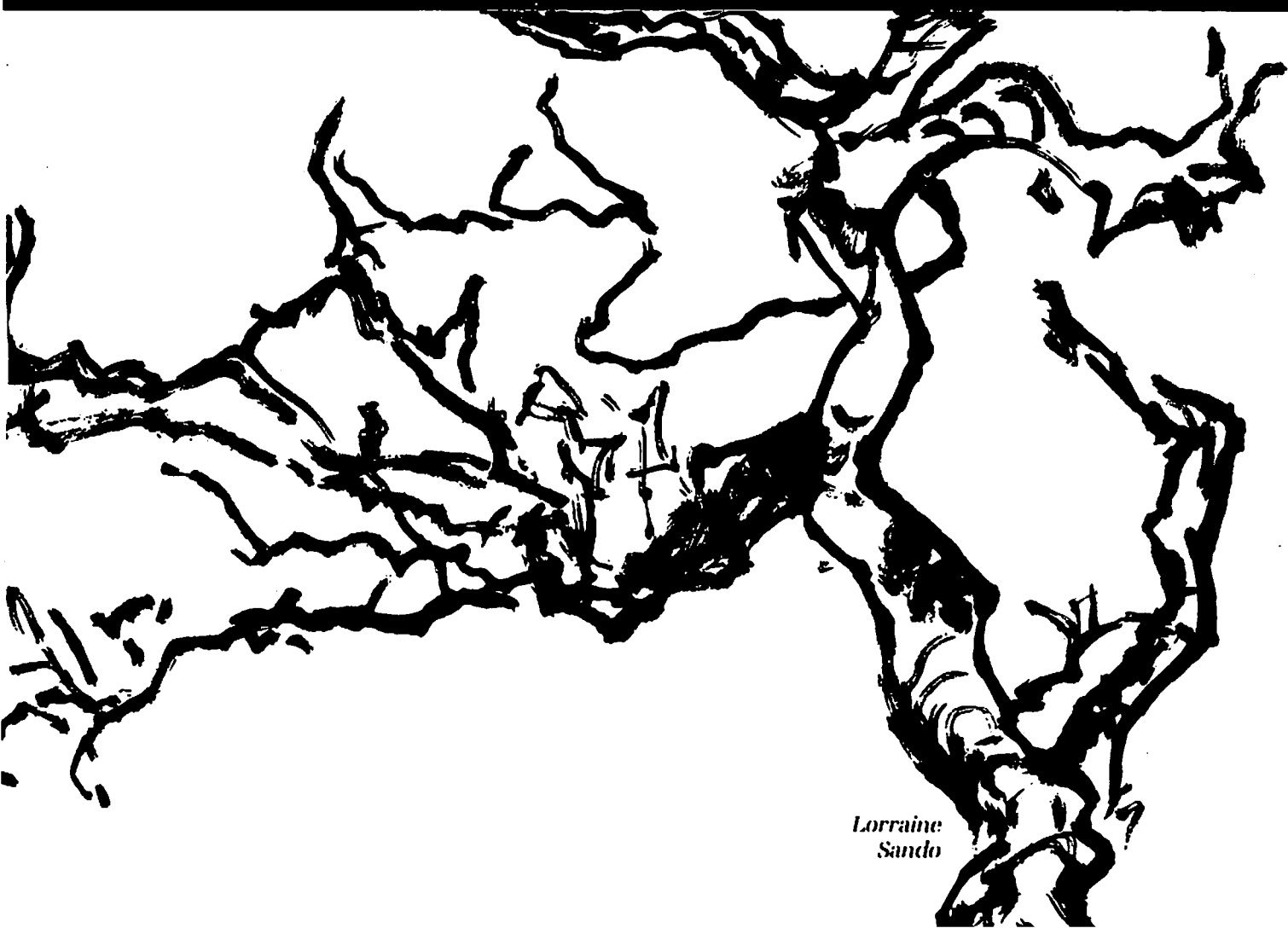


# THE MESSENGER

*Official Publication of the General Convention of Swedenborgian Churches*  
**JANUARY 1986**



*Confronting Mystery*



*Lorraine  
Sando*

## FROM THE EDITOR

One does not need to tarry long in the annals of comparative religion before discerning that certain key features form the backdrop of most, if not all, authentic religions. Perhaps the foremost component is the unifying role of some authoritative text or person. This provides a common spiritual vision and teaching for its adherents. Immediately we think of Christ and the New Testament, and closer to home, of Emanuel Swedenborg and his writings heralding a New Church.

The many strands of Buddhism have Gautama himself and many volumes of sacred text at their center. Hinduism has its sacred Vedic literature. In China, one major branch of religion has Confucius and his Classics, while the other strays not from Lao Tzu's the **Tao Te Ching**. In Islam, the supreme prophet, Mohammed, brought forth the **Koran**, and the Jewish faith revolves around the great Patriarchs and the Bible. All of these religions, with the possible exception of Buddhism, are primarily concerned with God, of course. These figures and literatures are means by which God may be understood and experienced

Many lesser movements could be added to the above list, but the point is sufficiently underscored: Religious faiths tend to rally around inspirational religious leaders and sacred texts, which are usually taken by their adherents to be the exclusive expression of God that is fully authoritative.

*Is there just one true revelation from God, with others being in greater or lesser degree false? Or are many true in important ways, with each adapted to certain niches within the broad diversity of human nature? In **Divine Providence** Swedenborg declares that the creation of Islam*

*was inspired and guided by the Lord. Truths were adapted through Mohammed, according to Swedenborg, to the mind of that culture.*

We of the General Convention tend to believe in the evolutionary nature of God's revelation. Compared to other Swedenborgian movements around the world, our clergy and laity are more willing to consider current streams of spirituality as part and parcel of the New Church heralded by Swedenborg over two hundred years ago. Our view of the "authority" of Swedenborg's writings, then, is substantially tempered by an inclination to respect God's presence among other — and even radically different — religious groups.

Once the wall of exclusivity is thrown down, "authority" begins to reside in that which leads to goodness, usefulness, healthiness. In many areas, we have been inspired to work with other churches and spiritual movements and have found this cooperation to be good. Indeed we have often been humbled by the vitality and productivity of spirit in other quarters, and we sought to learn from them.

*In this new age of communications, cultural differences are minimizing as we experience increasing contact with others, rendering different ways of approaching God as less strange and unusual. We can, with the full support of the generous spirit of our faith, extend a warm hand of friendship, and sometimes of collaboration, to those who take their inspiration from some other source of authority than Emanuel Swedenborg.*

Yuri Izrael

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# Confronting Mystery: The Arts and Healing

*Lorraine Sando*

**A**s I think of writing, I feel anxiety in my belly. I'll do it tomorrow. I look up and my gaze falls on barren fir branches, deadwood on a tall tree. I'm struck with their beauty, their grace. The pale winter sky is their background and I think, "God has made a drawing on the sky." I examine the intricate branching patterns, the small twigs that were once clothed with fragrant fir needles. How simple their form, and yet how complex their intertwinings — like my writing anxiety, like life. I pause for a moment and realize that my anxiety is gone. I find a comfortable chair and my writing has already begun.

This article is about the arts and healing, healing that comes from confronting the mystery of our lives. Mystery, as it's used here, refers to all that we cannot know fully but must embrace to live our lives meaningfully. Mystery is God, art, the unknown, change, love, death, birth...In the preceding paragraph I confronted the mystery of my anxiety and unblocked my frozen writing. My anxiety dissipated, the ice blocking my writing melted and flowed. This poem was born:

God has made a drawing on the sky  
graceful barren fir branches,  
deadwood on a tall tree.  
Intricate branching patterns  
recall fragrant needle clothing.  
How simple their form,  
how complex their intertwinings  
I gaze a long time  
Tree and I merge  
Sweet Connection in  
pregnant tranquility  
God has made a drawing on the sky  
And I will be forever changed.

## The Mystery

The nature of the creative process is to move from unformed to formed, subjective to objective, abstract to concrete. The first stage is characterized by a vague, formless feeling, a need, a desire to do something, a calling from within. In the second phase, the feeling becomes an idea of what we want. The third phase explores ways of bringing our idea into form. Here we are faced with the chaos and anxiety stage, like the restless, unsettled sea. In the fourth phase, the form or work of art emerges and takes form. This is the wonderful "Ah Ha" experience, clicking into place. In the fifth phase, the new form or work of art interfaces and interacts with the world. It has a life of its own.

Let's look at some examples of this:

First, a painting. In the beginning, there's a thrusting inner feeling of something needing to be expressed. Next, I know what I want to paint — the idea of what I want to say comes. Then, as I work, there are shapes and colors and lines all over the canvas because painters must work the whole area at one time in order for the painting to be whole and integrated. There seems to be a chaos of colors and shapes; I am frustrated, this isn't what I had planned at all.

I am caught up in a process much larger than myself, and I become the created and creator, one with the painting. Here is where I feel that I become an instrument in God's hands.

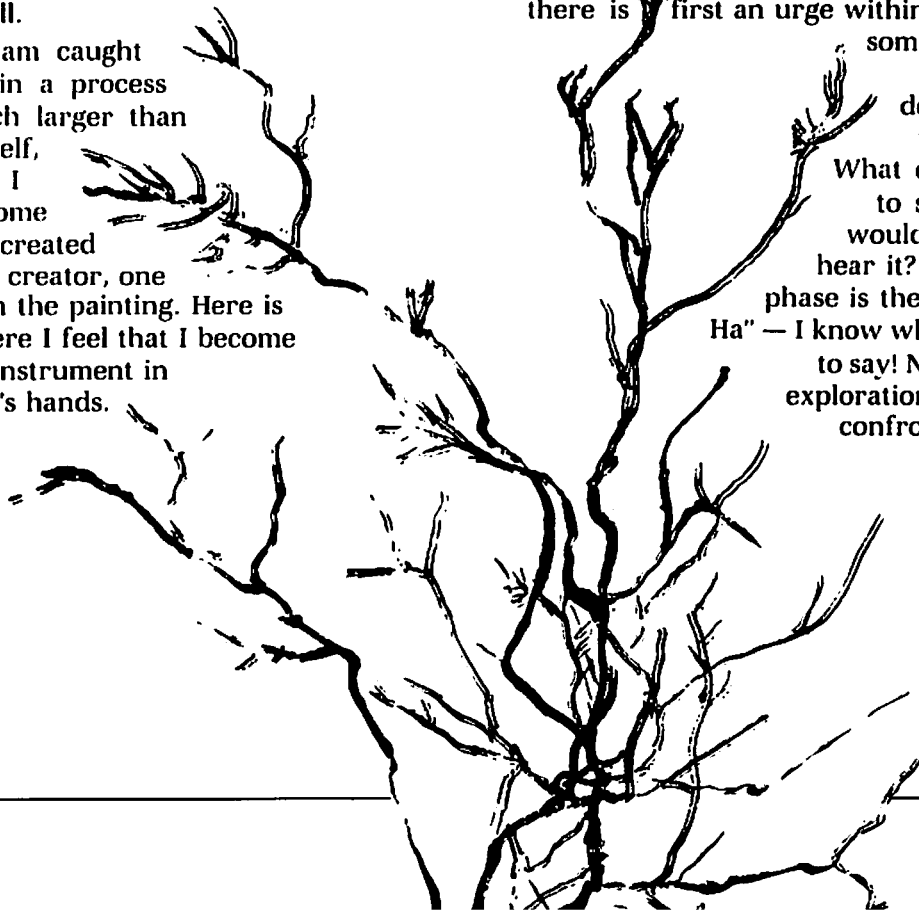
A fervor, a trust, a knowing not what, spurs me on, a stream of energy carries me. I let go, and make the finishing flourishes. I breathe and know that I have found a new order and have grown in the process. Here, I know some of the mystery, and I know also that the mystery is much, much greater.

Then my creation meets the world. As others gaze and interact with it, it takes on a life separate from me, giving life to someone else in ways that I can't predict and which are beyond my intentions.

In the birthing process, there is wonder and mystery, from the vague longings for a new life, through the beautiful development of the embryo, to the final earthy, painful, yet totally exalted arrival of another being.

Parents, too, go through the mysterious creative process. The infant enters the world. She becomes a concrete form having an independent life of her own. She confronts mystery, the first step in the creative process again. Here everything is new and unknown. It's scary, exciting, anxious. The child goes through the most mysterious experience of its life until it dies and faces the next big unknown.

In creating a written piece, there is first an urge within — I have something to say, but I don't know what it is. What do I have to say? Who would want to hear it? The next phase is the first "Ah Ha" — I know what I want to say! Next is the exploration stage — confronting the



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mystery — where do I start? How do I go about this? ...I'll just let it all flow ... then how do I order the flow? Here there is awareness of possible form which has not yet appeared.

Then comes anxiety, perhaps wanting to give up, frustration, discomfort. I remember that anxiety is inherent in change, in the birth of anything new. How will this come together? It's so hard. In creating, *it is so necessary to take one's time*. Breaking away from the work, changing the scene, creates the space for new connections to be made, as we hold the faith and trust that somehow it will all come together.

How do we find the courage to open ourselves, to embrace the mystery, to

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heal ourselves? How can the arts help with this healing? In my work as a psychotherapist/healer, I first get people in touch with their bodies, for dis-ease is a disconnection from our bodies, our mystery, our ground, our God.

Try this exercise: Breathe deeply, consciously into your body, into any feelings of anxiety, or excitement, and notice what happens. Then stand with your feet flat on the floor, shoulders' width apart, feet parallel. Bend your knees slightly, knees over the third toe, enough to feel that tingling of energy in your thighs. Let your belly hang out. In this position you are solidly connected with the ground "standing on your own

two feet." No one can push you over. You are in a position of strength, you are in contact with your body, and thus you have all of yourself available for use.

Healthy children offer other ways of dealing with anxiety/mystery. They wiggle and squirm, making sounds like "oooooooo" or "oh, oh, oh, oh," and jump around and hold onto themselves, cry and laugh. Next time you feel anxious, find yourself a private spot, notice where you feel the anxiety in your body. Breathe into it and allow whatever feelings to emerge. Keep breathing and make some movements and sounds.

We are now getting to the primitive origins of dance and song. Tribal dances have been a communal way of discharging the energy of confronting the mystery. In dance and in drama we have a bodily experience. We use our minds, our bodies, our hearts, our souls to portray our story. We finish with an energized feeling because we have used all of ourselves in the creative act. We have created something that has never been before. *We have become mystery.*

Playing out our life stories offers an opportunity to play different roles, to recapture the remembered past, and to create new scenes for the healing to take place. We discover an understanding of what was, that then produces the healing drama. Inserting a new memory and perception, calling on the healthy good parent within, creates the healing.

Musicians create music to give form to the mysterious music within them, reflecting the inward struggles, passions, discoveries, mystery. Giving it sound and form externalizes it and allows us to hear the mystery. As we mirror our inner world in our music, we become in touch with it as giver and receiver of its mystery. It no longer has power over us!

Our voices, too, want to express our being fully, and yet our throats are places where we repress the life force and tense up. The anxiety of expressing something unique in words or song strangles our words. A certain amount

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of anxiety makes for a fresh and aware performance. But if we run from anxiety, deny it and swallow it down, our voices come out controlled, high pitched, stilted and lacking spontaneity. For therapeutic healing, people experiment with their voices to create new sounds and rediscover their body-soul instrument.

This stage may be brief or extensive. There is no gauge to go by. No rudder but one of our own creation. The mystery lures us on. Finally, if we have hung in there and practiced some techniques, which I shall offer later in this article, the writing comes together and is born. We feel satisfied, relieved, pleased, exhausted, and content to be for a while.

Each time we make it through to a successful completing of form, we grow in the faith and trust to move through the chaos again to a creation of a new form and order. Sometimes, we even enjoy the whole process, as we let go, and know that our God-Creator is ever wanting to manifest his life and his evolving through us, his divine instruments. God is constantly calling us to become who and what we are.

### **Shielding Ourselves from Mystery**

Why and how do we block ourselves from confronting mystery? Our ways of encountering the mysterious are rooted in our childhood, modeled by our parents and teachers. Healthy Moms and Dads can let us know that it's all right to explore, to try new things, to risk to grow. We know that we can always come back and touch base and reconnect with our parental security.

In the process, we are learning that we have ways in our bodies of dealing with these edgy feelings inside us. We wiggle, squeal, hide and draw in; we breathe and we move through our anxiety and on to the next step. We use our bodies to discharge our anxious urging energy.

Sadly, most of us haven't had that

security and encouragement with our natural ways of evolving. We have been taught in fear to control our bodies, to control our speech, to control our spontaneity, to control our minds; in so doing, we split off our connections with our God, our mystery, our sources of healing.

Then, in our held-in, ungrounded, disconnected-from-our-bodies state, the mystery is too scary to confront — life, death, birth, change, art. Instead, we find ways to sedate ourselves. We avoid anxiety with medication and drugs, smoking, alcohol, overeating; we stiffen our bodies. If we never deal openly with the ever-constant companion mystery and its companion, anxiety, we miss the

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and healed.**

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opportunity to open ourselves freely to God, to our world around us and to other people.

### **The Arts: Pathway to Healing**

The example of the barren tree branches I gave in the beginning was a healing for me. Before I began this writing, I was the anxious writer. As I glanced up and saw the tree branch, I didn't know that I was seeing a mirror of my anxiety until later — that's the mystery of it. I directed my attention outside of myself, projected my inner feeling of anxiety onto the branches... I felt barren of words and found the barrenness beautiful. My taking my time, being willing to tolerate

the anxiety in my body, led me to the healing of my anxiety. First poetry came, then writing, then the drawing used in this article.

So also the visual arts — drawing, painting, sculpture, pottery, maybe the medium of our creative expression. In my work as a therapist, I sometimes ask

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**We need people who know that the willingness to experience the anxiety of change — the chaos of seeming formlessness — brings about a new, higher order of humanity.**

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people to draw their anxiety, what's blocking them, their problem. Through art, they give their problem concrete form, color, line, shape and dimension. They externalize their problem. They enter into a dialog with their creation, expanding their awareness of the mystery of healing within them.

The artist in drawing from the model receives from the model. Permission is given to really see, and a healing exchange of energy happens for both model and artist. The artist sees and accepts things as they are, knowing that everything is in the process of change. There is no need to alter: it will change by evolving. In this energy exchange between artist and model, mystery and God are confronted and artist and model are changed and healed.

The process of imagery, in a relaxed state, helps us to go inside and turn on our mind's eye and see or sense pictures. Here, whatever image comes speaks to our inner self at that moment. As we expand the image, we turn to our inner sources of mystery for a healing symbol, a new perception.

At this time in our culture, it is imperative for us to be creative, to confront mystery, to open ourselves to the influx of God so that he may use us more fully as instruments. The ability to deal with mystery is urgently needed. We live in times of very rapid change. The face of our world is changing with overpopulation, denigration of the land, and

pollution of the air and waters. When we avoid confrontation of mystery, violence erupts. For surely if we don't use our legacy of God-energy creatively, we will use that energy destructively, either by destroying ourselves with various diseases or addictions or by violence toward others and our world.

We have access to the highest levels of creativity through our connection with our bodies and minds and the influx from the Lord. Our world needs people who are willing to risk the chaotic, unknown stage of the creative process through which our world is going. We need people who know that the willingness to experience the anxiety of change — the chaos of seeming formlessness — brings about a new, higher order of humanity. We are at their brink in culture today. Connection with our bodies, our mystery, our God, can give us the strength and courage to wrestle joyously with the mystery. In trusting the creative process, we become branches of the tree of life that God draws upon the sky. □



*Lorraine Sando, an art therapist and healer living in Seattle, is a member of the Board of Education for the Swedenborgian Church and a frequent facilitator of workshops at the annual convention of Swedenborgian Churches.*



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# Impressions of the New Church in the United Kingdom

Paul Zacharias

**H**aving spent three months in Birmingham, *Messenger* readers might be interested in some of my impressions of the British Conference, from things seen, heard and experienced.

First, it's helpful to look at the statistics. Conference membership at the present time is much like ours — around 2000 members, with about 40 Societies. I've been told that 7 or 8 of these local churches are healthy and active, many of the remaining groups are struggling for survival, along with others that are showing signs of new life. Again, not unlike Convention.

Currently there are only 17 ministers serving all of these Societies, which means that every minister is responsible for at least two, and in some cases, three Societies. For example, the Rev. Julian Duckworth, presently ministering to two New Church Societies in Mauritius and whose position here I am filling for eight months, regularly visits groups in Gloucester, Nottingham and Northampton — all about 50 miles from Birmingham. And this is typical — which means having worship services on Sunday morning and again in the afternoon or evening.

This is a carefully planned program, established about 3 or 4 years ago, in which every minister is hired by the local area, not Society; thus he is responsible for ministerial leadership in the given region, which is a little like the Cluster Ministry we have envisioned in Convention. Another facet of this same system is that every Society yearly contributes a certain amount to the Central Fund, from which all ministers are paid the same salary. Regardless of experience, age, size of family or location, all clergy salaries are equal. I recall several years ago this policy was seriously considered by the United Church of Canada, but never adopted.

As with most such issues, there are obvious advantages and disadvantages. I rather doubt the concept would fly in Convention, though one never knows. Stranger things have happened. The salary is modest compared to North American standards — about 40% of the typical clergy's salary in U.S.A. and Canada. However, there is also a housing allowance, plus payment of all utilities

and car mileage, so the total remuneration is quite adequate. We should bear in mind that in general the overall standard of living here is about one-third less than in North America, so the net result is that most people live more simply on this side of the ocean. They are used to doing without many items we consider necessities — their material expectations and anticipations are lower than ours — so in the long run things have a way of balancing out.

I've mentioned before that life here is in many ways very similar to life in Canada in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Every so often this sense of time-warp is overwhelming. This has some significant implications. *Cast back in your memory and re-live the mood 35-40 years ago.* Generally speaking the church was still very much the centre of your family activities. You were expected

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**P**eople spoke openly about “putting the church first” in their lives. It was an era when things changed very slowly — “What was good enough for Dad is good enough for me.”

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to support the Church and its activities. A strong church-family spirit prevailed. Newcomers were warmly welcomed to the services, but it took a while before they were really accepted into the “religious family.”

People spoke openly about “putting the church first” in their lives. It was an era when things changed very slowly — “What was good enough for Dad is good enough for me.” It was also a time when most people still thought that things would continue on as they were, almost indefinitely. Oh, they could see that there was change in the air, but they preferred not to look at it directly. Everything would somehow work out all right, President “Ike” was in office and there was a quiet mood of contented optimism in

the air. In a general way, much of this same spirit is reflected in the British Conference today.

This is seen in the flurry of new building currently going on in Conference. In at least six cases — Accrington, Besses'-o-th'-Barn, Blackpool, Kensington, Kearsley and South London — new worship centres have been completed or are on the drawing boards. In Blackpool, 12 condominiums were built on the church property, have been sold, and the proceeds therefrom will finance the total church program. In Kensington the present building is being modified to include a bookshop, lecture room, and possibly counseling facilities. So here and there some bold, new thinking is evident. But when Eric Zacharias attended the Conference sessions this summer he raised the question, "Exactly what are your plans with these buildings?"



*Oakland New Church Centre*

and I'm not sure this query was ever answered.

On the one hand it is gratifying to see new buildings erected and old buildings renovated; but more importantly we need to do the right things for the right reasons. And I sometimes wonder whether the rationale behind the need for physical church buildings has been adequately discussed at the various levels of church government, and this of course applies in England where there are literally thousands of stately, lovely old church buildings, of all sizes, which have been lovingly used in some cases for many centuries, but which are now primarily tourist attractions.

The other day we toured Litchfield Cathedral, the only three-spired Cathedral in the land, a magnificent pile of stone, parts of which were begun in the 10th century, but which now costs 400 pounds a day to maintain. Ultimately one has to ask: "What is the role of physical buildings, and of people, in the Kingdom of God?" And in responding to this question honestly some hard decisions will have to be made. Older Convention members will recall that we embarked on an extensive building program in the 1950s, which at the time seemed relevant and necessary. Today we are beginning to see the situation in a somewhat different light.

A growing number of people today are attracted to "spiritual growth centres." Here we can learn something from our British friends, in that they are making excellent use of Purley Chase. Purley, located about 30 miles east of Birmingham, is a stately old mansion given to Conference in 1925. Interestingly enough, the minister most directly involved in acquiring and running Purley in those early years was the Rev. Schreck, ordained by Convention.

For many years it was quite rustic, much like our earlier Almont, but now Purley has been modernized and can provide overnight accommodation and meals for up to 30 people. It is located in an ideal pastoral countryside, with lovely walks trailing off in all directions. And it is being used almost every week, by all sorts of New Church groups, plus many other outside organizations.

Last year Purley Chase returned a modest profit, which is somewhat unusual for church sponsored centres. The keys to its success are the caretakers, Wilf and Irene Woodhouse, who run a tight ship and provide excellent cuisine. Pat and I will be involved in a Young People's Retreat over New Year's at Purley, along with Chris and Joy Hasler. Later on, in March, I'll participate with Mike Stanley in another Workshop at Purley, and in April I will return again for my last meeting with the ministers. So here is a splendid example of a spiritual growth centre that is serving the New Church very well indeed.

I just mentioned the ministers' meeting in April. This is difficult to grasp, but here in the UK the ministers, potentially, can meet together nine times a year. Once at Conference, three meetings are scheduled for Purley Chase, and all the Northern Area clergy meet 5 times each year at the New Church College in Manchester. Except for the minister in Paisley, Scotland, every other minister in the UK can drive to Purley Chase and/or Manchester in three hours or less,

which results, as just mentioned, in a lot of meetings. At the last meeting, held two weeks ago, the agenda included: arrangements to serve Paisley when Rev. Trevor Moffat returns to Australia on January 1st, possible changes in the wording of the Lord's Prayer, counselling and possible literature for parents of still-born children, the question of more guidance for the marriage of divorced people, the wearing of vestments by lay members and theological students, and Harry Heap, editor of the Conference *Lifeline*, spoke to us about possible changes in the official Conference magazine. So, Church meetings, whether here or in Convention, aren't all that different.

A few final cameo impressions. The Church operates on a proverbial shoestring. The total assets of Conference, and its annual budget, are about 20% of Convention's financial figures, and it is nothing less than amazing what they accomplish with their modest means.

The percentage of lay people who are actively involved in the Church, at both local and national levels, is probably higher here than in North America. Almost everyone does something in the life of the church; the Oaklands Society in Birmingham is extremely well organized, and if this is typical, it speaks well of past and present leadership in the Church. This may be partly explained by the fact that most of the older generation (and the vast majority of church members are of the older generation) still place the ordained minister on at least a tiny pedestal, which precludes any mundane work in or around the church premises.

Church outreach here is considerably more difficult than in North America. In Kitchener we have ready access to the local TV station, radio broadcasts, ads in the phone directory and local newspaper, periodic feature articles in the newspaper, etc. These media opportunities are virtually unavailable, at least in Birmingham. Here, too, over 50% of the local population is Hindu, Sikh or Muslim, which further complicates Christian outreach. Finally, about 90% of the people born and bred on these islands have opted out of any religious affiliation, and so far as I can tell, no Christian denomination is making any inroads into this vast majority. The 10% who are church members seem to take their membership quite seriously.

I should mention, that, as in Convention, there is a recent and growing interest in modern music for worship services. A new Service Book was recently issued, which

provides for different approaches in the worship service, and next year a new hymnal is expected off the press, which includes a number of contemporary songs and folk tunes. This is another interesting parallel between our two churches — the average age of the clergy in both organizations is remarkably young, and in both groups we find 3 or 4 first rate musicians and composers — all of which bodes well for the future.

I never cease to marvel at the British penchant for doing things the hard way. Jill Kingslake had us in stitches as she described the way in which the gas line between their home and the street was hooked up, a relatively minor job, which took two men three visits over a period of six weeks. All of which is a propos of nothing, except that it makes life interesting. No doubt you will re-



*Purley-Chase  
Retreat Centre*

joice to learn that I am almost enjoying driving after just three months. Actually once you relax and go with the flow, there is a kind of charming madness to the whole system. Until Convention in North Carolina, ... □

*On leave from the Church of the Good Shepherd, Kitchener, Ontario, the Rev. Paul Zacharias is currently interim minister at the Oaklands New Church Centre, Birmingham, England.*

## WOMEN COMMUNICATING



PHYLLIS BOSLEY, EDITOR

### We've Come A Long Way, Ladies! Happy New Year!

I enjoy reading the old issues of *The Messenger*. It gives an interesting perspective at many levels. From the February 5, 1868 issue let's share the thoughts of a lady only identified as H.W., whose article was headed, "Woman's Influence."

"If we are filled with the blessed influence of the New Jerusalem, which is now descending from God upon us, how can it do anything but flow forth in its own sweet sphere of love and works to bless humanity? To me, it seems we need not wait for public permission on our works of charity, for work we most assuredly shall, and in the right channels; for He who dwelleth within will direct. We know what comes from Him will be perfectly harmonious and in the time and place it ought. I have read some views in *The Messenger*, from time to time, upon women's influence and place. I feel that the more we can become divested of self, and lost in God, the less do we care what are the outward duties which are appropriated to us. Who, I ask, can measure the depths of our influence if we give ourselves up to the control of Divine power? Society must and will yield to such influences, although it may not recognize the channels through which it receives its heavenly vitality.

Can springing wells of water cease to flow? No never; and the streams that issue forth from them, God will direct. Silent and still may women's influence be; but it shall flow forth into the hearts of man, and there become a living and acting thing, nerving and cheering him on to deeds that shall make our hearts rejoice. The little children we have committed to our care, in our homes, will become the receptacles of our holy influences. And they, too, shall go forth to bless humanity.

Then let us not think that we women must go to the ballot box, or forth to face the noisy world, in the capacity of men, to regulate society. To me, it seems that home is better fitted for us to do our part than such places. Then, as man comes home, his mind harassed in contact with evil abroad, he may find in that home holy influences which shall bring to him tranquility and rest, directing his mind heavenward for strength. Such men would be to the world what it needs.

I think the depths of woman's influence can hardly be sounded. May we be enabled and contented to fill our high and holy stations to the honor of God and the good of humanity."

A "different drummer" played for Harriet Hosmer (1830-1908). Ms. Hosmer was a famous sculptress. Her masterpiece "Zenobia in Chains" is in the N.Y. Metropolitan Museum. She was the target of much animosity and derision, as she struggled to the top of her field. In a letter to Phoebe Hanaford, one of America's first clergewomen, Ms. Hosmer wrote:

"I honor every woman who has strength enough to step out of the beaten path, when she feels that her walk lies in another; strength enough to stand up and be laughed at if necessary. That is the bitter pill we must swallow at the beginning; but I regard these pills as tonics quite essential to one's mental salvation... But in a few years, it will not be thought strange that women should be preachers and sculptors, and everyone who comes after us will have to bear fewer and fewer blows. Therefore, I say, I honor all those who step boldly forward, and, in spite of ridicule and criticism, pave a broader way for the women of the next generation."

Nadia Boulanger, musician par excellence, was the first woman to conduct the Boston Symphony (1938). After the concert, a Boston journalist asked her how it felt to be the first woman conductor of a major American orchestra. Ms. Boulanger replied: "I've been a woman for a little more than fifty years, and I've gotten over my initial astonishment."

### Miss Moore, I Presume...

"Our intrepid friend Ruth Moore, a member of the San Francisco Parish, joined the Foreign Service this past year. Her first assignment, beginning this past Sept., was Lagos, Nigeria. The week she was scheduled to fly to Lagos was the very week the airport

in Lagos was closed because of political unrest! However, Ruth made it, and we have had two letters from her. Excerpts below:

**From a letter dated September 28, 1985**

I had a fine trip over here. I spent two days in New York in consultations with the Immigration and Naturalization Service. I saw, finally, the film, *The Gods Must Be Crazy*... Then flew out of JFK for Paris. I flew to Lagos Friday, Sept. 6. Lagos is fine. It's very flat, spread out. The buildings are either quite modern or run-down. I live on Ikayi Island, one of the nice areas. I'm in a walled compound with a swimming pool and tennis court. I have a 3-bedroom, 2½ bath apt. with a balcony. Because it's on the second floor, there are bars on the windows. We're surrounded by tropical trees and flowers: bougainvillea, hibiscus, morning glory, and lots of palms. I have a huge mango tree outside my kitchen window.

There are no traffic signs in Lagos. The traffic is light. They do have some policemen directing traffic. There are frequent blocks of one lane of traffic where armed police stop some cars. Lagos is on the odd-even day license plate system. Garbage collection is infrequent at best. Chickens cluck around the garbage piles by side of the road.

People carry tremendous loads on their heads. Women carry babies slung on their backs like papooses. Nigerians are not that easy to understand: not only do they have a strong accent, but there is no such thing as a simple answer to a simple question, rather, there is always a long, convoluted, semi-relevant reply.

The local African markets have good produce for a price, but some things are unavailable, such as celery, grapes, apples, pears, peaches, plums, nectarines and yogurt.

It has not been that hot so far, although we are still in the rainy season. It will end the end of October — just the reverse of California. Then it will get hotter and will have the "hamattan" dry, dusty desert winds coming down from the North. Insects have not been a problem — a few dragonflies and some tiny ants in the kitchen. Lizards scoot around outside. I had one in my bathroom once which alarmed me, but everybody told me that was actually good, he wouldn't bother me and he'd eat bugs. I haven't seen him since.

I have been to three churches. The Anglican all-Nigerian church with stained-glass windows in the nave, an organ, and a British and a Nigerian priest. It was jammed with people and the hymnals had the words to hymns, but no music. I went to the Papal

Nuncio where it was an international gathering. I couldn't understand the priest, even though he was speaking English. There was no music and no homily. They had a lovely African-style crucifix and a statue of the Madonna and Child. Last Sunday I went to a Baptist church around the corner. Just a plain cement building, a piano hopelessly out of tune, but jammed with people. They had Sunday School for all groups — men, married women, young unmarried women, and children. People were very warm — a lot of singing. Everybody brought their Bible to read along with the Scripture lessons. Apparently it's affiliated with the Southern Baptists, but nobody shouted "Amen." The former U.S. boxing champion, George Foreman, is visiting here this week under the auspices of the U.S. Information Agency. I saw him at the Embassy this week, and he will be preaching at the (Baptist) church tomorrow. He's become a Minister.

I am in charge of travel, expendable supply, and property inventory, as well as helping out with the computer systems. I have 6 local employees and I'm learning the ropes.

I've joined the local choral group. We'll be producing *The Messiah* for Christmas. I'm also playing a sprite in a one-act play by Garcia Lorca, *The Love of Don Perlimplin For Belisa in His Garden*. I'm studying the prevailing local language, Yoruba.

I would love to hear from you all and welcome all who would like to come to "darkest Africa." I've already made some wonderful friends here, and I feel it's a good place.

The fishing is great. I see fishermen across the way from the Embassy every day.

I haven't yet had a chance to contact the Swedenborgians in Owo, but I will!"

**Letter dated November 12, 1985**

"We just had our annual ship visit by a U.S. destroyer with the South Atlantic Fleet. We went out to greet the ship before it pulled into port, past a lot of large tankers. I'd never been out of sight of land before — it was thrilling. I volunteered to carry a radio on launches, local motorboats, and a cargo boat carrying dignitaries back and forth to the ship. It was great fun. I had a huge lunch with the officers in the ship's wardroom and had two guided tours of the ship. The command room looked like something out of Star Trek!

Saturday night was the annual Marine Ball, celebrating the 210th birthday of the Marines. It was very moving.

I am preparing for a four-night run over Thanksgiving weekend of "Plaza Suite."

We're doing a two person one-act. I play the mother of the bride!

It keeps getting hotter. Supposedly now we're in the "hamattan" season — dust and haze. We had a downpour the other day though. I find the tropical rain refreshing.

I'm busy clearing out a lot of obsolete documents on our Embassy computer. I'm learning a lot and people are great."

Ruth's address is:

American Embassy, Lagos  
Department of State  
Washington, D.C. 20520



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## Remembering André

Sylvia Lange

*He walked humbly  
in the way of the Lord.*

**A**ndré Diaconoff always seemed to me a complete human being, because the intellectual, spiritual and physical aspects of his person supported one another harmoniously.

His intellectual side was well-nourished. Born and educated in Russia, he moved to Switzerland, where he studied philosophy and theology at Lausanne. Here he also became a student of Swedenborg's writings. At the Sorbonne in Paris, he studied law. He spoke and wrote fluently in German, Russian, French and English and learned the classical languages required at European universities.

Those who knew him recognized André's intellectual achievements, yet were not awed by any pretentiousness on his part. Instead, André made others aware of his compassion for them as a child of God. André was intensely dedicated to his mission as a servant of God.

His spiritual mission gave him credibility with both the formally churched and the unchurched in his parish. I don't think André considered anyone a "lost soul." His compassion for his fellow human beings helped him to see redemptive, positive attributes in each individual.

André was not content to be an intellectual or spiritual leader of his flock. He believed in the doctrine of use. His ministry consisted of communicating the essentials of Swedenborg's writings to people of all ages and all social levels, by walking and talking with them directly, humbly and with com-

passion for their needs.

Walking became a way of living, ministering and caring for his parish. Whenever I think of André, I see a tall, commanding form, coupled with a grace in walking, a gentle smile, and an unassuming manner of speaking.

Like many Europeans, André loved hiking. The first time André visited us, I remember he brought along a walking stick to forge a path around the lake. No one had gone completely around the lake because of the marshy area on one side. But André convinced the children eager to accompany him that he had climbed mountains in Switzerland; a lake should not prove too difficult. On these outdoor hikes the children talked with him, and he gained their confidence as a friend and teacher. He was never too busy for the young people; he took them fishing, to the park, to the zoo, or just played games they enjoyed. One day he drove out 30 miles to our place to show my son some new moves in chess. His interest in young people made him a natural to serve on the board of the Loft for St. Paul youth.

André also walked the streets of Selby Avenue, talking to the less fortunate, the elderly, or anyone who needed to feel the assurance that someone cared. New Beginnings took shape as the formal program begun when André found people to help on those daily walks.

Through André's example he taught us, in our church, to savor life, to experience new things, to reach out to others. André enjoyed socials, dinners, fun evenings with games and good conversation. It was beneficial for our small church to do these things to stay alive and vital.

André loved music, especially the simple Russian hymns or anthems. He also cherished his wife Evelyn's musical contribution to the service. Her Sunday morning vocal solos added much to the high quality of music in our church. André seemed rejuvenated by music, and his enthusiasm inspired us to worship God through song.

André's intensity and vitality helped us to keep sight of our mission as a church. For André, the church included a wider parish than Sunday morning worshippers; the ministry included more than a Sunday sermon; to walk in the way of the Lord required a life-long commitment.

Each of us in the Virginia Street Church remembers André, a humble servant of the Lord, and continues to walk in spirit with him. □

*Sylvia Lange is a member and the organist of the St. Paul Society, where the Rev. André Diaconoff served as pastor 1965-1975.*

## **Excellence in Advertising**

*Eric Allison*

A poster, flyer, or pamphlet can communicate volumes about any event just by its style of presentation. If you advertise an event using posters made with magic markers and card board, you are doing lots of extra work and probably producing a very mediocre product. For a little more money, you can use Letraset letters, graph paper to keep lines straight, and your own typewriter to make a letter-sized flyer on colored paper, which communicates a much better image. If you don't want to spend thirty dollars on an artist to do it for you — take your time, plan your event well in advance so you are not rushed, and get the opinion of several people about the content and layout of the sign. When you have completed it, take it to a printer or a good copy machine and run off the number you need.

I personally favor saving time and paying an artist to do a really professional job. If making more than 500 copies, I recommend going to a printer. At most "instant print" type places, you can have 500 copies made for about twenty dollars. If spending fifty dollars sounds like too much money to spend on advertising, then I'd suggest you're more concerned about saving money than you are about building your church. Anything worth doing is worth doing right.

The content of your sign is important — don't rush it. Try to plan events at least two months in advance and check out what other organizations in your region are doing so that you avoid competing.

There are many methods for distributing your flyers or signs. Supermarkets, schools, university and public library bulletin boards are the obvious places. Make sure that every member of your congregation gets at least one sign to put up. Apartment buildings are also fair game. If you are bold enough, ask people to pass them out on a busy street or to stuff mail boxes in the area around your church. You may also hire (for about six cents a piece) a delivery company to go door to door with flyers for you.

If you are hosting an event that hits a very specific audience such as teachers or counselors, make sure that every counselor or teacher gets a flyer on their desk. Stop by the school or counselors' office and deliver it yourself. There is nothing like personal con-

tact to make a sale. If the program is for children, the school will usually see to it that every child gets a flyer to take home with them. Find out where your audience is and go get them.

Don't skimp. So what if you find some of your flyers on the pavement: that may be what it takes to *Get the WORD Out*. □

### **The Upper Room**

## **The Surging Sea**

*Leon C. LeVan*

As Jesus approached the seaside to cross the Sea of Galilee, He was accosted by a certain scribe who proclaimed, "Master, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest." Jesus was not overwhelmed by the unexpected offer. He said to the scribe, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head."

We never hear of that scribe again. Just the opposite was the case when Jesus said to another man, "Follow Me." But the called man replied, "Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father." Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury the dead." In both instances the Lord adapted His teaching to the state of the person before Him. Superficial and short-sighted, the scribe could not see the hard work and sacrifice that going with the Lord would require. The man called by the Lord to become a disciple was reluctant to leave his "father" — his old familiar selfhood. Both men faced their supreme opportunity. Both failed. Neither are heard of in the Scriptures again.

The Sea of Galilee is a large inland lake surrounded by mountains. Steep valleys lead down to the sea from the heights above. It is common for sudden storms to rush down through those valleys as if they were wind tunnels and lash the sea into instant turbulence. When the weary Savior sank to sleep at the back of the ship, perhaps the disciples drew together at the fore to vent their criticism that Jesus had been so inflexible in His requirement of discipleship. The storm came upon them suddenly and with great fury. It lashed the sea into swift commotion. One *Gospel* says the ship was covered with waves. Another declares it was filled with water. When life-long fishermen like Peter, Andrew, James and John were in danger of drowning, we know there was a

good basis for their fears.

"Storms" in the Scripture are images of storms in people's spirits. The winds and waves that lashed the ship and its occupants picture such violent emotions as rise from hell and disturb our minds during our temptations. Jesus, you remember, was tempted "forty days and forty nights" in the wilderness. Moses was "forty days and forty nights" in the wilderness of Sinai. Elijah traveled "forty days and forty nights" without food to that same mountainous region, where he experienced the earthquake, wind and fire.

Temptations are spiritual storms and are pictured in various ways. The sudden storm that engulfed the ship of the disciples while Jesus slept was none other than the Divine symbol of the turbulent and surging forces from hell that beat against all souls whom the Lord is leading to good.

Everyone who has experienced temptations of the spirit knows how bitter, joyless, and unclean they are. A good husband will seem hateful to his wife. A devoted wife will seem opprobrious to her husband. Each will find their marriage so tasteless and joyless they may wonder how they came into it in the first place, and may even consider it a Divine punishment from which there seems no relief. How thoughts race and churn like winds of the sky and waves of the sea at such times. That is the tempest on Galilee. That is the "forty days and forty nights" in the wilderness when no "bread" and no "water" is taken. That is the spiritual "storm."

The disciples in the ship did not immediately call on Jesus for help when the storm first struck them. They seem to have waited till destruction was impending. Then, when the ship was filling with water, and death looked into their white faces, they came to the Lord and cried: "Master! Master! we perish!" Thereupon the Lord rose up, and rebuked the wind and the sea, "and immediately there was a great calm."

The "great calm" signifies Heaven. The peace of Heaven comes into the soul that has called on the Lord to help it fight its false thoughts and evil intentions. Our own false thoughts are the winds of the storm. Our evils threaten us with spiritual death. During temptations we mistake falsities for truths and evils for goods. The hells attack us from within ourselves. But the Lord and the Heavens defend. The combat we experience, the struggle we feel, is the laboring of the angels who defend us against the assaults of the hells.

As Jesus stilled the storm on the Sea of Galilee, who could have supposed that the little ship bearing frightened disciples was an image of the church of the future? So little. So helpless. So rent and tossed by winds and waves — and yet how invincible with the Lord within.

New Church people should take heart from that little ship on the surging sea. Temptations may come to individuals and the church. We may have doubts and fears. But by means of such temptations the Lord opens our interiors to greater inflowing of love and wisdom from Himself. We should thank Him for His presence and His loving care, as we too cross our seas through storms and tempests. If He is in the ship, and we seek His help, we know we shall reach the farther shore safely.

Our tempests of temptation are not beyond the Lord's help. In times of peril He saves us from the storm. In times of tempest, we should listen for His quiet words: "Peace, be still." The storms will end. The winds and waves will disappear. There will follow the beauty of God's "great calm." □

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The opposite of a correct statement is a false statement. But the opposite of a profound truth may well be another profound truth.

Niels Bohr



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# What Swedenborg Can Teach Us

*Chester E. Pond*

**B**eloved reader, if you really desire to get rational and Spiritual ideas of God, of the Church, and of people and things in general, then lay aside all prejudice, if you have any, and read Swedenborg.

If you honestly desire to develop a symmetrical and well-rounded Christian character, then lay aside every jot and tittle of your sectarianism, if you have any, and with a childlike spirit of teachableness read carefully the works of Swedenborg.

If you care to look right into your own heart, and see how weak and how very small you are, then read Swedenborg;

If you wish to see what great and boundless possibilities lie before you, read Swedenborg.

If you would like to know to what a terrible hell you are tending so long as you follow the dictates of your own selfhood, then humble yourself and read Swedenborg.

If you wish to get a true glimpse of ineffable wisdom and of the "exceeding and eternal weight of glory" that awaits all those who are "pure in heart," then open your own heart to the Lord at once and read Swedenborg.

If you wish to learn what it is to die and how you ought to live to meet a happy death, then be honest in the study of Swedenborg.

If you desire to get some true, adequate conception of how much it means to love God with all your heart and your neighbor as yourself, then with the humility of a little child, study the writings of Swedenborg.

If you honestly desire to become a better man or woman than you are now, no matter how high your present standing before the Lord or other people, then study the heavenly writings of Swedenborg.

If you would like to have your own personal pride and self conceit all torn by the roots and cast to the four winds, then humble yourself, lay aside all ideas of your present great attainments, either in ecclesiastical learning or in any other kind of

learning and become a humble student of Swedenborg.

If you are not actually afraid to go to the very bottom of your own heart in search of personal sins, and if you really possess the moral bravery to traverse your own soul through and through, as with a lighted candle, in search of your very last secret fault, then read carefully and prayerfully the heart-searching writings of Emanuel Swedenborg.

Again, if you cannot now believe what I say about Swedenborg is true, then give up and forsake every known sin, open your heart to the Lord and read for yourself.

Finally, beloved reader, if you are already a sincere lover of the Lord and wish to learn just how to feed your inner life of pure Divine Truth, and wish to know just how to feast your innermost soul on pure Divine Love, and if you desire to become well-acquainted with deep things of God, and if you really wish to know just what it means to be an actual partaker of the Lord's Divine nature and of His own holiness, and if you wish to learn just how to dwell continually in the secret place of the Most High, and how to abide for ever under the shadow of the Almighty, then study diligently the deep spiritual meaning of the Word of God as now set forth and explained by the Lord Himself through the writings of His servant, Emanuel Swedenborg. □

*The Rev. Chester E. Pond was a Congregational minister in Philadelphia early in this century.*

# ECLECTICA



## Chrysalis Emerges!

The Swedenborg Foundation this month is launching its new Journal, *Chrysalis*, with an introductory issue available from the Foundation. The magazine will appear three times per year starting in Spring 1986.

*Chrysalis* is intended primarily as a general outreach publication. The Foundation will use *Chrysalis* for responding to the many requests for information coming from viewers of its motion pictures. New-Church people can use *Chrysalis* to give to friends who want to know more about various Swedenborgian viewpoints and what Swedenborgians are interested in.

*Chrysalis* will not report on Foundation news or New-Church events, but will be a nonsectarian, interdisciplinary, idea magazine intended to appeal to a literate audience interested in exploring the reality of spirit. The Foundation hopes that current Swedenborgians — as well as those being introduced by *Chrysalis* to the wide range of Swedenborgian interests — will be stimulated and entertained by the new journal.

To make *Chrysalis* permanently feasible, the Foundation will need the support of Swedenborgian subscribers world-wide. The introductory issue is \$6.75 postpaid. A subscription for the three 1986 issues is \$20. Help support this new and long-needed publication. Send \$6.75 for the introductory issue or \$20 for a year's subscription or \$26.75 for both, to: Darrell Ruhl, Executive Director, Swedenborg Foundation, 139 East 23rd St., New York, N.Y. 10010.

## Kitchener Youth Helping Overseas Needy

The youth of the Church of the Good Shepherd, Kitchener, Ontario, have sponsored a "Poor Man's Chili Supper" and film night to help the UNICEF water project in South Kordofan, Sudan. The youth planned, promoted and executed the chili supper. Afterwards, they showed the film, "The Good News Is Water." In addition, they sold UNICEF cards and notes. A total of \$490.00

was raised for this worthy project.

## Kemper Road Center Keeps Dreaming

The Rev. Richard Tafel has been exhorting his congregation to pursue their dreams. At their lake retreat center, Beside-the-Point, the Rev. Tafel and Vicki Hackett facilitated a three-day workshop, Nov. 1-3, on effective dream journaling and the development of tools for analyzing and interpreting one's dreams. Last spring a very successful dream exploration workshop yielded a solid ongoing "dream growth group." This group is comprised largely of people new to the Kemper Road Center and its varied programs.

## Homeopathy Lecture Explores "Space Age Medicine"

Dr. Richard Moskowitz, a Homeopathic physician popular with Swedenborgians in the Boston area, offered a lecture at the Swedenborg Library in backbay Boston entitled, "New Wine in Old Bottles: Homeopathy As A Paradigm For Space Age Medicine." Dr. Moskowitz presented such basic homeopathic concepts as the law of similars and the theorem that true medicines produce in healthy people the same symptoms that they cure in sick in people. Since Homeopathy addresses itself explicitly to the total person, Dr. Moskowitz strove to show how this method of practice is grounded in both holistic theory and the best of modern science.

## Reincarnation and Swedenborg

Reincarnation is one of the most popular topics in New Age circles these days, and newcomers inquiring into the Swedenborgian Church often ask what Swedenborg's teaching is on this vital subject. A 21-page pamphlet giving one Swedenborgian minister's perspective is now available. First published in 1937, and reissued now with slight editing by Lee S. Woofenden, "Rebirth and Reincarnation" discusses the issue, in readable English, of spiritual rebirth vs. physical reincarnation. Postpaid prices are as follows: single copy, \$1.00; 2-9 copies, .80 each; 10-24 copies, .60 each; 25 or more copies, .50 each. There are an east coast and a west coast distributor: Lee S. Woofenden, 699 West Shore Dr., Guemes Is., Wash. 98221, or, Swedenborg Library, 79 Newbury St., Boston, Mass. 02116.

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## New Church in West Africa

Joseph Agbaje, who heads up the New Church in Nigeria, writes that the work continues apace there. Their financial picture is not good, he notes, but their assurance in God's support is unabated. There is one fully functioning group, which is in Owo, but four new societies in Epro, Ifo, Ute and Ehinogbe are working to become self-sufficient and vibrant. They have a need and a hunger for books on doctrine, and will gratefully receive any books at: New Church, 46 Fajuyi Road, P.O. Box 22, Owo, Nigeria, West Africa. He writes that the groups have increased in membership and that there are a total of twelve students studying for ordination at the present time!

## Elmwood Welcomes New Minister

The Rev. Kenneth O. Turley was installed as the new pastor of the Elmwood New Church, Elmwood, Massachusetts, on Nov. 17, 1985, with the president of the General Convention, the Rev. Randall E. Laakko and the General Pastor of Massachusetts, the Rev. Wilfred G. Rice, officiating. The Rev. Turley will be working part time as pastor to the Elmwood congregation, while also taking on duties of developing the Blairhaven summer camp into a year-round conference and retreat center. Incidentally, we think the Elmwood New Church wins the prize this year for the most financially successful fall church bazaar in Convention — they realized \$950.00. Good Work!

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## The Ladder of Charity

1. The first and lowest step on the ladder of charity is to give to ease the distress of the suffering, but with reluctance.

2. The second step is to give cheerfully, but not until solicited.

3. The third step is to give cheerfully and in proportion to the amount of your resources, without solicitation or supplication.

4. The fourth step is to give cheerfully, proportionately and unstintingly, but with you yourself putting your gift into the needy person's hand, thus causing in him the painful emotion of shame.

5. The fifth step is to know the objects of our bounty, but to remain unknown to them.

6. The sixth step is to bestow charity in such a way that the benefactor shall not know the relieved persons, nor they the names of their benefactor.

7. The seventh step, and the most meritorious, is to obviate the need for charity by preventing poverty. This is the highest step and the summit of charity's golden ladder.

*Moses Maimonides of Cordova, Spain  
Twelfth century*

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## Touch of Thee

Dear Lord:

How could I have ever lived ere these many days have flown,  
had I never seen your handiwork, nor you had ever known?

How could I have ever known all the joys that have come to me,  
or endured the sorrows from which I could not flee?

How could I have seen all the wonders nature brings,  
or even heard the voice of a little bird that sings?

How could I have felt the touch of Thee,  
Had I not wanted to feel that touch on me?

*Ruth Brandau  
Detroit Society*

## Solution to Gender Gap?

Dear Editor

Words fail us. As our sensitivity to the women in our culture increases, we find many ideas that we cannot express in unbiased language. Saying, "Any sane person knows his limitations," implies that all sane people are male. "He who laughs last" excludes the women who laugh best.

Our staid circumlocutions fail us as well. To say, "A fool and his or her money are soon parted," is awkward. It accents the fool's sex, and the fool's sex is irrelevant to the statement. And "he" and "his" do convey masculinity. We wince at constructions like "Man is a mammal because he suckles his young." He doesn't. She does.

Although we have a pronoun, "it," for those having no sex, the neuter pronoun is not a neutral pronoun. Don't refer to me as, "A writer trying to express itself clearly."

Our language today must acquire the ability to speak of a person without regard to his (her?) sex. Let us introduce a neutral pronoun: "Che," declined "Che, chim, chis, chis, chimsel" as follows:

"Che who fights and runs away, lives to fight another day."

"Let chim march to the rhythm which che hears, however measured or far away."

"A scoundrel is chis own worst enemy."

"The pleasure is mine, but let the work be chis."

"Anyone who falls in love with chimsel will have no rivals."

The idea here is not to force a new convention on anyone. We need not rework our literature to make it gender neutral. We should brow-beat no one into learning new words. But to the anguished writer who has despaired of turning out phrases like, "Tell him or her to keep his or her hands to himself or herself," this offers an alternative.

It's simple. It expresses chis thoughts clearly. It's easier to deal with than the stilted phrases and minor slights over which we've been stumbling. And don't you think it has kind of a ring to it?

David R. Throop  
Austin, Texas

## The Lord's Prayer

Dear Editor,

Your plea for letters from your readers, in the November, 1985, issue of *The Messenger*, prompts me to write the following, thus unburdening me of some of my more important thoughts:

Our Lord says, just prior to giving us His Prayer, "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him." With this in mind, our own intrinsically self-oriented *wants* can't possibly coincide with, or come in the same order as, the Lord's *needs* for us.

Prayers, therefore, from a merely human standpoint, for the most part center around and stem from the key words "how, what, when, where, which, who and why." "Want" and "Why" probably account for most of our prayer complaints. But the Lord not only disregards what we see as most important, but lists in importance, from a *spiritual* standpoint, the order and magnitude of that for which we should pray. Hear, now, the Lord's Prayer as stressing the *spiritual* aspects of that for which we should pray, in *His* order of their importance.

Who:-	Our Father
Which:-	who art in heaven:
What:-	hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
Where:-	on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts,
How:-	as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.
Why:-	For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
When:-	forever: Amen.

Anne Nonymous

## Corrections

Dear Editor

Lest anyone think that I researched "The Romantic Puzzles of *Conjugal Love* 229" (November, 1985) late at night when my thoughts were getting blurry, I want to point out some mistakes that occurred in my article. Section 3356 of Swedenborg's *Spiritual Diary*, quoted on page 215, really

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does support the article's thesis. It reads:

When I wrote... that the thoughts of angelic spirits and angels are like parables, certain spirits doubted, because the idea of a parable is not understood by them; wherefore, angels and angelic spirits tested the matter, whether their ideas fell into parables, and it *was confirmed* by them, that they do not fall otherwise than into parables, for parables contain generals.

An extra "not" got in there before the word "confirmed" and completely reversed Swedenborg's point.

Also, near the top of the same page, the words, "His natural partner must now remain single the rest of his or her life or marry someone else," unfortunately gives a man a partner of either sex.

In the righthand column near the top, the words, "... a newly born child is not complete enough to be either half of anyone in particular," of course makes no sense. For "either" please read "the other."

On page 216, the left column near the bottom, the words, "As the *Diary* suggests, the angels are not aware that they are speaking in very literal terms" is the opposite of what is meant. They do feel that they are as literal as anyone. It's that troublesome "not" again. This time, it was missing from its place just before "speaking." Was it the one that showed up in the *Diary* quote?

In the righthand column, page 217 near the top, the words, "Still, the story is not necessarily a description of how our romances begin," wrongly leaves out "must" before "begin." The point is that the story of the young man in section 229, taken literally, would imply that there is a general rule: The romance that the Lord wants for us is signalled by an immediate recognition of the partner. How our romances commonly *do* begin is in contrast to this. If this isn't quite clear, nevermind.

One more. Near the top of page 217, the word "unnatural," in "It is an image not often used by Swedenborg, but his philosophy makes the unnatural world resemble a womb," clearly has no right to be there.

Steve Koke  
Rough and Ready, California

Dear Editor

We were pleased to see on page 203 of the October 1985 issue of *The Messenger* mention of Volume 3 of the new translation of *Arcana Caelestia* which is being published by the Swedenborg Society.

We regret, however, that there is an incorrect statement in your note. The Translator, the Rev. John E. Elliott, is a Minister of the General Conference of the New Church, but his salary is actually being funded by contributions from the General Church in Bryn Athyn, and the entire cost of printing and binding the new translation, and all other incidental expenses, are being met by the Swedenborg Society.

Madeline G. Waters  
Secretary  
Swedenborg House, London

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## Messenger Contributors

The following names are people who responded, up to printing time, to the appeal in the October issue of *The Messenger*. We are sincerely grateful for your show of support for the work of our official church publication.

Philip & Emma Alden, Lititz, PA  
Edna Anderson, Elmwood Park, NJ  
Isabell Behrer, Sewickley, PA  
Bertha Berran, San Diego, CA  
E.R. Carlson, Knoxville, IA  
Alice L. Clark, Brockton, MA  
Adrienne Frank, Westport, CT  
Claire Gabrielle, Cannes, France  
Gloria Grabin, Santa Maria, CA;  
Grace Elinor Johnson, East Tawas, MI  
Dave & Anna Jean King, Bartlesville, OK  
Henrietta Knutson, Iowa City, IA  
Steve Koke, Rough & Ready, CA  
Howard A. Lawrence, S. Yarmouth, MA  
John Locke, Port Huron, MI  
Carl Lundberg, Los Angeles, CA  
Lynne B. McLure, Glen Ellen, CA  
Elizabeth Munger, Michigan City, IN  
NY Association  
T.H. Neilson, New Westminster, B.C.  
Fred and Nancy Perry, Jackson, NH  
Jeanette Ryan, Cedarville, MI  
Margaret Schwarm, Woodside, NY  
Donna Sekhon, Front Royal, VA  
Jessie Selee, Lynbrook, NY  
Lavina Siebert, Larned, KS  
Alice Spear, Los Angeles, CA  
Margit Tobisch, Aptos, CA  
Valerie Thompson, South Gate, CA  
Ola-Mae Wheaton, Fryeburg, ME  
Josephine Zimmerman, Pleasant Ridge, MI

## French Connection

*Dorothy Travers-Davies*

Travelling through France in September, my husband Ron and I contacted the Rev. Alain Nicolier and his wife Kathleen. Alain studied in Bryn Athyn for four years but insisted on being ordained in 1978 in the Convention Church instead of the General Church. As such, he is conducting a most unusual ministry of outreach from his base near Beaune, the capitol of Haute Bourgogne.

France currently has 650 different "sects" or religious persuasions outside the Roman Catholic Church. In this atmosphere of competition Alain and Kathleen, while conducting Sunday services in their barn-converted-to-a-home, give of themselves in many community ways. Three years ago they, along with others, established the I.R.I.S.E.H., loosely translated as the Institute of searching and information for the unfolding human.

Kathleen and Alain are vegetarians who organically grow many fruits and vegetables. They and their four children live in the country 22 kilometers outside Beaune. Alain delivered, single-handedly, all four of his children. And Kathy, a Californian by birth, devotes much time to their joint activities, but also prepares many vegetarian meals for study groups; these astound the participants because of the clever substitutes, such as soya bean preparations, for meat. And this in France, the center of "plus gastronomique!"

The Institute has six major activities:

1. It has founded a co-op for organically grown grains.
2. In the second floor dormitory rooms it runs children's camps each summer for three weeks.
3. It conducts two week-end seminars for couples so they can communicate on three levels and join together in the physical, psychological and spiritual experience of "epanouissante." (Alain explained that this word means the flower that opens in the sun. Ron and I were reminded of the beautiful relationship experience we had at this year's Pre-Convention Conference.)

4. Kathy, particularly, is working with nursing mothers groups both in France and the United States. A new circuit of information is developing. France, like the United States, has gone through a period where doctors found it convenient to recommend formula feeding. But New Age French women are asking questions about proper nutrition. For example, babies don't care for a milk highly flavored with garlic and onions. In many instances they will have gastro-intestinal reactions. So nursing mothers have to modify food preparation habits during this period and, with Kathy's help and information from many groups, nursing is just coming back in France.

5. Workshops on "Being Yourself" are conducted and the two week-end seminar costs one tenth of the attendees' monthly salary. Eighty people have attended so far.

6. Finally, the Institute is deeply involved in ecological problems and teaches harmony with nature and suggests a new approach to energy-conserving housing.

Alain believes the New Church needs a New Age approach. He sees a changing church with a ministry devoted to educating people in life-style changes. He and his wife spread out a smorgasbord of ideas that reflect a Swedenborgian theology, but they are not limiting themselves to Sunday morning services and pastoral counseling. They are workers in the field, and they are harvesting their first fruits with their children as they see seeds take root and grow into new thoughts and activities in the regenerative process.

Before we left, Alain generously gave me twenty-five passages from the Writings which refer to health. Some day he proposes to present an abstract on Health Writings of the New Church.

So it is with great pleasure that I share these experiences in this column. From Beaune in the heart of France, New Church teachings are reaching people in the Paris region and the Mediterranean area. For Alain, the "church specific" is truth and the New Church represents the heart and the lungs. Let's think about how many areas are open to us for contribution and plan a new approach in our life in the New Year that broadens our horizons and maybe even affects our old habits a little. Buon Natale. □

## COMMENCEMENTS

### Baptisms

**Braun** — Dylon David Braun, son of Sharlene Braun, was baptized into the Christian faith at the home of Jack and Batcha Smith, Vernon, B.C., on October 20, 1985, the Rev. Erwin D. Reddekopp officiating.

**Camiller** — Kyle Paul Eric Camiller, son of John and Sandra (Osborn) Camiller, was baptized into the Christian faith on August 4, 1985, at the Paulhaven Camp's 25th anniversary, the Rev. John Bennett officiating.

**Chute** — Richard M. Chute III, son of Deborah and Richard Chute, Jr., was baptized into the Christian faith on Nov. 3, 1985, at the Fryeburg New Church, Fryeburg, Maine, the Rev. David L. Rienstra officiating.

**Hatch** — Jeffrey Steven Hatch, son of Steven and Kathleen (Sherman) Hatch was baptized into the Christian faith on Nov. 10, 1985, at the Fryeburg New Church, Fryeburg, Maine, the Rev. David L. Rienstra officiating.

**Lucier** — Randall Scott Lucier was baptized into the Christian faith on Dec. 1, 1985, at the Elmwood New Church, Elmwood, Mass., the Rev. Kenneth O. Turley officiating.

**Meyer** — Curtis James Everett Meyer, son of Wally and Nancy (Spencer) Meyer, was baptized into the Christian faith on Oct. 20, 1985, at the Church of the Holy City, Edmonton, Alberta, the Rev. John Bennett officiating.

**Sloate** — Dean Michael Sloate, son of Cheryl Lynn Sloate, was baptized into the Christian faith on Dec. 1, 1985, at the Elmwood New Church, Elmwood, Mass., the Rev. Kenneth O. Turley officiating.

### Birth

**Henry** — Isaac Robert Henry was born to Amy Henry, member of the Urbana, Ohio New Church Society, on Nov. 12, 1985.

### Marriage

**Reid-Anderson** — Linda Reid and James Anderson were joined in Christian marriage on Oct. 5, 1985, at the Church of the Holy

City, Edmonton, Alberta, the Rev. John Bennett officiating.

### Deaths

**Gofton** — Alf Gofton, 96, passed into the spiritual world on Nov. 18, 1985. He was a longtime member of the Church of the Good Shepherd, Kitchener, Ontario. Memorial Services were held on Nov. 22 at the Ratz-Bechtel Funeral Home, the Rev. Eric Allison officiating.

**Laitner** — Ben Laitner, former member of the Detroit Society, passed into the spiritual world on Oct. 5, 1985, in Malibu, California. He was a church organist for more than fifty years; his last position was with Malibu Presbyterian Church.

**Strand** — Elmer Strand, 95, passed into the spiritual world on Oct. 29, 1985, in Sonoma, California. He was a member of the San Francisco Parish and formerly a member of the Detroit Society.

“ ”

Prayer and love are learned in  
the hour when prayer  
becomes impossible and your  
heart has turned to stone.

Thomas Merton

General Convention of the New Jerusalem  
in the United States of America  
*The Messenger*  
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