

# THE MESSENGER

*Official Publication of the  
General Convention of  
Swedenborgian Churches*

**JUNE  
1986**



## FROM THE EDITOR

With the June issue, we come to the end of the ten issues which accompany the regular church year. Though we will publish the traditional double July/August issue later this summer, which primarily reports the events of the annual convention of Swedenborgian Churches, the September **Messenger** will begin a new season. The transition will be all the more striking because **The Messenger** will be transferring to San Francisco this summer (see notice elsewhere in this issue.)

It seems good, then, to request some response regarding the shape **The Messenger** has taken on during the past year. In particular, I wish to hear your reactions to the content of the church magazine. I frequently receive short "doing a great job" sort of notes and comments from people, but I also hear occasional lengthy criticisms of the new **Messenger**. Interestingly, these criticisms vary a great deal, and even contradict one another. But it is always good to receive solid reactions; I find that I make adjustments because of them.

For instance, is there enough church news for you? Or too much? Or not the right kind? Would you like to see more or fewer theoretical articles? How do you like the four columnists? Would you enjoy more folksy material, or more scholarly pieces? I have a genuine desire to serve the reading needs of the Swedenborgian movement as it manifests in organized churches and in its many ad hoc varieties. So let me hear your comments!

Putting out **The Messenger** is not a one-person job — I don't want to take all the credit (or the blame). I wish to take this opportunity to

acknowledge and thank the several people who assist in putting **The Messenger** in your mailbox each month. Paul Maring who is responsible for the dramatic change in the appearance of **The Messenger**, will continue as the design artist. His expertise and commitment to excellence are so obvious that it seems almost unnecessary to say it — but my gratitude runs deep for the benefits of his professional talents.

Christina La Conte, our typesetter, also puts many hours into each **Messenger**. The average reader has no idea how many decisions a typesetter makes during the "creation" of each piece. In addition to executing hundreds of technical decisions for each issue, Tina has a keen sense of style and design, enabling her to produce a variety of options from which we can choose. Also in the Central Office, Director Muff Worden oversees the proofing of all copy. In addition, Dorothy deB. Young and Lu Freedman are often called into service. Together, they all three keep mistakes to a minimum.

On the St. Louis end, Naida Bradshaw has been invaluable as my **Messenger** secretary, who also oversees the elaborate and detailed mailing procedures. Assisting with the latter, Grant and Charly Kabrick and Heather Maring, teens active in the St. Louis Society, make their pilgrimage to the church each month for hours of applying mailing labels.

So, as you can see, **The Messenger** enjoys the services of many dedicated people, and I wish to congratulate them all for a season of fine work.

*Jim Law*

---

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### Articles

- 
- |     |   |
|-----|---|
| 132 | One More Time:<br>A Perspective on Reincarnation<br><i>George F. Dole</i> |
|-----|---|
- 
- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| 136 | The Value of Sermons<br><i>Eric J. Zacharias</i> |
|-----|--|
- 
- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| 138 | A Vision of Education<br><i>The Board of Education</i> |
|-----|--|
- 
- |     |   |
|-----|---|
| 144 | Three Illustrators at Work for <i>Chrysalis</i><br><i>Phoebe Loughrey</i> |
|-----|---|
- 
- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| 146 | History of the Prayer Fellowship<br><i>Gwynne Dresser Mack</i> |
|-----|--|
- 

### Columns

- 
- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| 134 | The Art of Aging<br><i>Elizabeth Johnson</i> |
|-----|--|
- 
- |     |   |
|-----|---|
| 137 | Wellness for a New Age<br><i>Dorothy Travers-Davies</i> |
|-----|---|
- 
- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| 139 | The Upper Room<br><i>Leon C. LeVan</i> |
|-----|--|
- 

### Departments

- 
- |     |         |
|-----|---------|
| 142 | Opinion |
|-----|---------|
- 
- |     |           |
|-----|-----------|
| 145 | Eclectica |
|-----|-----------|
- 
- |     |               |
|-----|---------------|
| 147 | Commencements |
|-----|---------------|
- 

### THE MESSENGER

JUNE 1986  
Vol. 206, No. 6  
Whole Number 5105

**Rev. James F. Lawrence, Editor**  
**Paul Maring, Layout and Design**  
**Christina La Conte, Typesetter**

*Editorial, Business & Subscription Address.*

**THE MESSENGER**  
1040 Dautel Road  
St. Louis, MO 63146

Published monthly, except for the one double issue in July-August, by the Swedenborgian Church (founded 1817, incorporated 1861 as the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America.) Central Office: 48 Sargent St., Newton, MA 02158.

The opinions of the contributors do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or the Department of Communication, or represent the position of the church. Subscription free to members of the Swedenborgian Church: non-members, \$8.00 a year; foreign \$15.00 a year; gift subscription from a member, \$5.00; single copies \$1.00.

Deadline for material: 1st day of the Month.

# One More Time: A Perspective on Reincarnation

George F. Dole

**F**airly often nowadays I am asked whether I believe in reincarnation. If the motive for the question seems to be primarily curiosity, my stock answer is, "Not this time around." What I should like to do in this article is explore this particular issue both for its own sake and as an example of considerations that arise when we deal with doctrinal differences.

First of all, our teachings are quite explicit about what happens after death. In a way, we all go to heaven. That is, we all go to the place we want most of all, and for a person centered in self, heaven itself would be hell. In the place we settle, we are given every opportunity for the fullest realization of our aspirations. We can learn and grow to eternity if that is what we want, or strive for eminence if that is what we want.

There is no need for reincarnation in this view. Since we all get exactly what we want, there is no point to a second chance. Since we can progress to eternity, there is no point to coming back to earth to try to attain a higher state. Swedenborg, in fact, states that the experiences some people have of remembering past lives is actually the experience of the memories of spirits associated with such people, and explicitly states that we are not reincarnated.

When we deal with people who believe in reincarnation, though, there are other factors to be taken into account. The primary one is simple. What does this belief do for them? Specifically, does it help them to live good and rewarding lives?

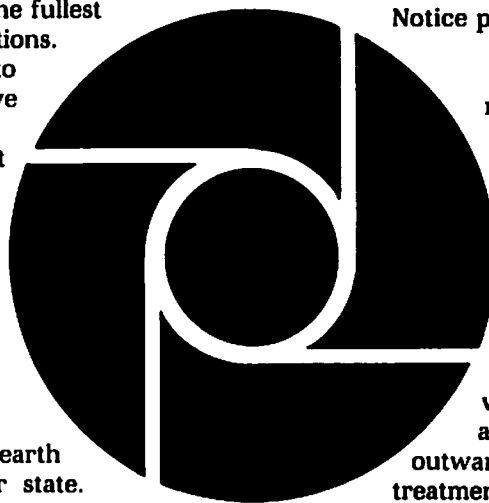
It may not. The obvious danger is that it may lull them into thinking that their present decisions are not important, that they

can live any way they want to, because there will always be a second chance. In the Eastern countries, where there is widespread belief in reincarnation, it seems to foster a kind of passive acceptance of radical injustice. If someone is downtrodden, it is because in a past life that person regressed. If someone receives apparently undeserved favor, it is because in a past life that person did particularly well.

But this attitude is not shared by everyone who believes in reincarnation. Just as there are people who agree with us and who do not use their knowledge well, just as we ourselves may misuse the enlightenment our teachings provide us, so the concept of reincarnation can be used in various ways.

Notice particularly the underlying assumptions even of the misuses of the concept of reincarnation just described. We would not really deny that "there is always a second chance." That is, Swedenborg insists that the Lord never condemns us. He will always accept anyone who turns to Him, regardless of that individual's history. We would also insist that, regardless of outward appearances, the Lord's treatment of us is fair. There is a rationale underlying the manifest appearances of injustice in our world. There is a providence that covers absolutely everything, a providence that we do not often perceive.

I have heard people misuse this last idea. There is a statement that "people who are in the stream of providence are continually carried toward things happy . . ." (*Arcana Coelestia* 8478), and everything goes well for us. Unfortunately, for anyone who interprets the statement in this way, there are a few more words to the full quotation. The words are, ". . . whatever may be the appearance of the means." That is, the Lord



may lead the good by the means of adversity. If everything is going well for me, it may mean one of two things. It may mean that I do not need any challenges at the moment, or it may mean that the Lord knows I am too weak to face any.

The doctrine of a universal providence, then, cannot be evaluated in isolation from a total context. I would suggest that this is true of all doctrines, including that of reincarnation. It can mean different things to different people, quite apart from its factual accuracy. Used for the best it has to offer, it may represent the best way an individual has found to believe that life is fair and that there is hope for improvement. These beliefs are vital to mental and spiritual health.

So behind the stock answer to the direct question about my belief about reincarnation, there lies a desire not to close the door before finding out what reincarnation means to the person who is asking the question. If it is a primary means of maintaining faith and hope, it would be irresponsible to try to destroy it. If it is the only alternative to believing that "we only go around once, so we should grab all we can," or that our lives are governed by random chance, we should surely be careful not to take it away.

This does not mean pretending to agree, or making no effort to help the person think things through more deeply. What it does mean is trying to reach the level of agreement that underlies the difference in formal belief. We both believe that the world makes sense, that "the system" is inherently fair, even when it does not seem to be.

Only when this level of agreement is reached is it possible to talk about the differences without radical misunderstanding. We must believe that this belief has truly helped the other. They must believe that ours have helped us in very similar ways. There must be a sense that we value deeply what they value deeply; otherwise it would be folly for them to risk trusting us.

We could go even further. We ourselves need to be ready to learn, ready to change our minds. This does not need to involve any mistrust in the truth of our teachings. It indicates rather a necessary awareness that there may be a considerable gap between the teachings themselves and our understanding of them. We often learn more by having our understanding tested.

But even more basically, we ought to be prepared to do ourselves what we ask others to do. If we ask them to look at their beliefs, to reconsider them, then we ought to know first hand what we are asking. We ought to be fellow pilgrims, not intellectual

adversaries.

One of the qualities our teachings prize most highly is "the affection for truth." This is more than mere curiosity, though it certainly may include curiosity. It is a constant desire to find out what is really going on, to see more deeply behind the ambiguities of this external world. It involves a discontent with our present understanding of things, a realization that we are by nature learners.

---

**Used for the best it has to offer, reincarnation may represent the best way an individual has found to believe that life is fair and that there is hope for improvement.**

■

**Since we all get exactly what we want, there is no point to a second chance.**

---

Jesus said to the thief on the cross, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." We do not interpret this to mean that it is all right for us to steal. We rather sense that it refers to the thief's humility and acceptance of justice. He found that level at which he agreed with the Lord. So even with people who disagree with us, we must recognize that the Lord is leading them; and on this assumption, recognize that we need to find out how that leading is happening if we are truly to cooperate with it. □

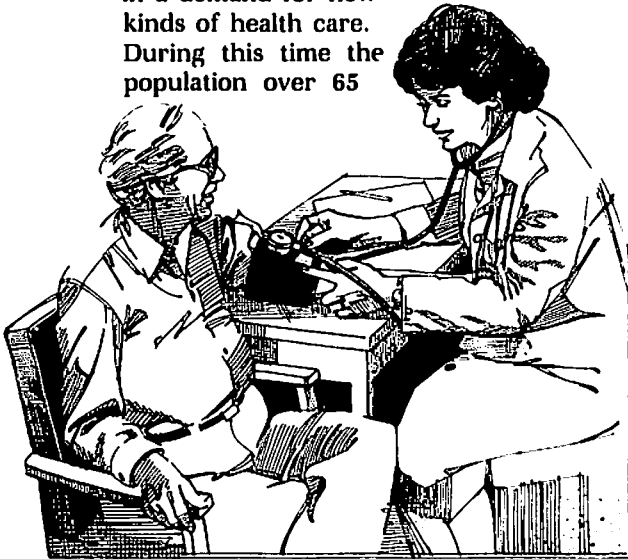
*The Rev. Dr. George F. Dole teaches at the Swedenborg School of Religion in Newton, Massachusetts.*

## **Health, Wealth and Wisdom**

*Elizabeth Johnson*

Many people when contemplating their old age say their greatest fear is that of becoming unable to care for themselves, to be physically and financially dependent on others. The human feeling of dignity and independence is precious, and its loss reduces our capacity to cope with life's circumstances. So the question, "What will become of us when we are too old or infirm to care for ourselves?" needs careful consideration.

The "graying of America," which has been changing the demographics of our country the last twenty years, has resulted in a demand for new kinds of health care. During this time the population over 65



grew twice as fast as the rest of the population. The over 85 group is growing faster still. There is a dramatic growth in life expectancy; a sort of third age is developing. This brings new challenges for spiritual growth, but also health risks, since the longer we live the greater the likelihood of our needing medical care.

The new health care field now developing is Long Term Care, a broad range of services including care in nursing and private homes; social services such as counseling

and residential services providing help with housing. It is also for people who simply need help doing the basic daily activities of dressing, eating, walking, bathing. The definition of long term care is stretching to meet a growing and diverse population of older adults.

There are two kinds of health risks facing older people — *catastrophic* (such as stroke, heart disease, cancer) and *chronic* (which includes crippling arthritis, diabetes, bone frailties, Alzheimer's disease, general disabilities). Hospitals are discharging patients as soon as possible, which means many people go to nursing homes for recovery. Others go home but require further care for some time. In either case there is a drain on the financial and emotional resources of each family.

Many people live with the assumption that Medicare will pay the costs of health care after they reach age 65. It is extremely important therefore to look at the facts:

- Medicare provides partial payments [40%] for medical services. It is divided into two parts — Hospital insurance Part A; Medical insurance Part B. Most people receive Part A, but Part B, which goes to pay doctor bills and other medical expenses, requires a monthly premium that is deducted from Social Security checks.
- Medicare is not designed to cover long term care, therefore provides only 2% of nursing home coverage, limited to skilled nursing or skilled rehabilitation services.

The reality is that most people eventually need three times as many days of non-medical care as they do medical services. It is essential to examine Medicare coverage carefully, know its deductibles, the extent of coverage and its limitations.

The event most dreaded by older people and their families is the decision that one must enter a nursing home. Horror stories are circulated concerning the low quality of care, inadequately trained staff, substandard facilities and abuse of patients. Unfortunately, there is much truth in the accounts, and there is a nationwide move by concerned citizens to bring about many reforms.

Above these concerns, however, is the reality that annual costs for a patient range from \$20,000 to \$50,000. Very few families can sustain that kind of expense for long. Many a spouse has valiantly tried to carry on

under such a burden, rapidly depleting all resources in order to provide care for a loved partner. Eventually the destitute family must apply to Medicaid, the state/federal funding to cover medical costs for poverty stricken people. Although this sounds like a "sob story", it is the grim reality to a growing number of elderly persons and their families. Making provisions for possible long term care before the need arises is a sensible and wise thing to do.

There is a new area of private health insurance becoming available designed to cover the costs of long term care. At present, none will provide extensive home care benefits, and the most comprehensive requires six months of prior nursing home stay before any home care is provided. In shopping for a policy be thorough in researching what is covered and what are the restrictions. Many policies referred to as "Medicare Supplement" do not cover custodial care, which is the area causing all the financial drain.

A good policy should offer four years of coverage on all levels of care — skilled, intermediate, custodial. It should have minimum restrictions for qualifying. Above all, it should cover mental disorders or diseases. Nearly half or all long term care policies today do not cover Alzheimer's disease, which is one of the most common reasons necessitating long term care.

In choosing insurance coverage you need to consider:

- your chances of going to a nursing home
- what the policy provides
- cost of coverage

Examine carefully the coverage now available through Medicare and other health insurance you may have. If it is too limited, consider the new policies. Investigate each for:

- levels of nursing care provided
- duration of coverage for each level of care
- amount paid per day for each level
- when benefits begin
- policy restrictions
- cost of policy
- services provided by insurance agent

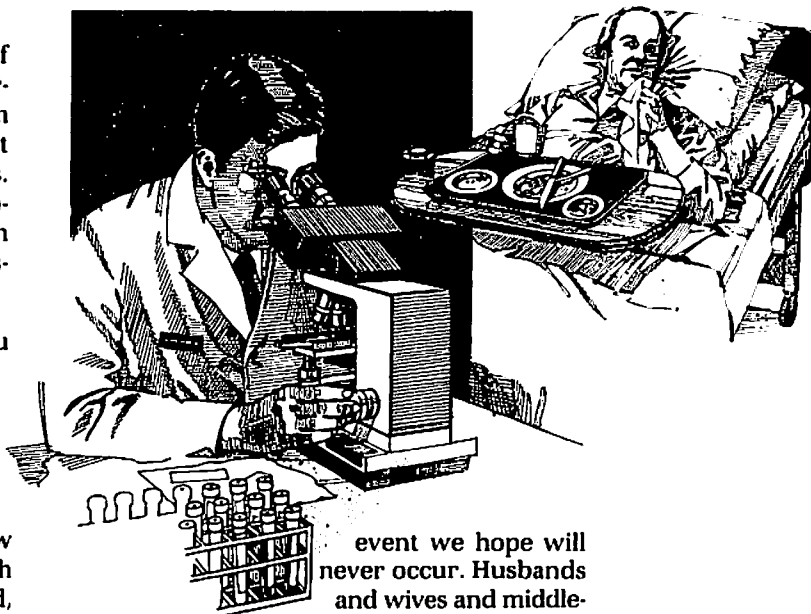
Many federal and state policy makers believe nursing home care is less desirable than community-based home care. Currently available services include home health aides; home visits by skilled nurses and physical, occupational or respiratory therapists; medi-

cal equipment designed for home use; adult day care; respite care; hospice and other options designed for the dignity and cost-effectiveness of home-based care. Medicaid will cover the costs in many states.

Assistance in making insurance decisions is available in most states through the Department of Social and Health Services; a state Insurance Commissioner; Area Agency on Aging. Inquire and search out as much information as you need to make a wise decision.

Since we face the possibility of health problems in our later years, it makes sense to do some careful planning now. We need to take advantage of the wealth of information available on nutrition, exercise, stress management. To preserve our health, we can establish a lifestyle to enhance our physical and emotional well-being.

It is a loving act to think ahead to the unthinkable, to make plans for meeting an



event we hope will never occur. Husbands and wives and middle-aged children of elderly parents can be spared agonizing decisions to sell family homes, or see life savings poured into a seemingly bottomless pit. Research and choices made now can mean the ability to meet and cope with emergencies in the future. □

# The Value of Sermons

Eric J. Zacharias

**I** very recently spent several days in the Boston area — at Convention's Central Office — attending the meetings of the Board of Missions. Someone there must indeed have a mania for clipping and posting cartoons and anecdotes. They are all over the place.

One of these anecdotes has two people talking. Their conversation goes something like this. One person says, "I have been going to church all of my life. At my present age, this tells me that I have listened to 3,120 sermons. Do you know — I cannot remember a single one of them. It does seem to me that a minister's time could be put to better use than preparing sermons that are not remembered."

His friend thought about this for a moment and, then, responded. "You and I are about the same age. Quick figuring informs me that I have eaten approximately 65,700 meals in my lifetime. All during these long years these meals — prepared first by my mother and later by my wife, have nourished me — and do you know — I can't remember what I had for dinner the day before yesterday."

It is probably safe to say that most ministers have, from time to time, wrestled with this issue of the value of sermons. I've been thinking about this little anecdote since reading it at the Central Office. Let's see. In the course of my years in the ministry I've prepared close to 2,000 sermons. I haven't the courage to ask if even one is remembered.

This one other thought has also come to mind. My father was a minister to whom I listened during my growing up years. I listened — but I did not understand. He preached in the German language in those early years — and I knew no more German than — ein, zwei, drei. However, there was nourishment.

The Winter issue of the magazine, *Military Chaplains Review* is devoted entirely to the art of preaching. One of the articles here makes the point that the most important message expressed in a sermon is not through

the words, but rather through its effectiveness in letting the spirit of God's Word and the power of the Lord's presence shine through to the spiritual life of the listeners. A sermon is not a thing in itself. It is the sum total of the life which a congregation and a minister experience in their inter-personal relationships and together in their openness to the Lord. "The power pregnant in preaching, the power waiting to be unleashed in the spoken word, is dependent upon physical 'rootedness.' The preacher must be physically aware and physically available to his people . . . Speaking words well ordered to communicate an idea well developed is not enough."

**In the course of my years of ministry, I have prepared close to 2,000 sermons. I haven't the courage to ask if even one is remembered.**

In my early years, in church, listening to my father preach in the German tongue — and not even remembering one of his sermons — one very powerful lesson did come through to me and take me by the hand. There was never any doubt in my mind that my father dearly loved God's Word. He knew the Lord. For me — at that time of life — that was enough to provide the nourishment I needed. □

*The Rev. Eric Zacharias, former President of the General Convention, is pastor of the New Jerusalem Church, Pretty Prairie, Kansas.*

## **The Nose: Gateway to Serenity**

*Dorothy Travers-Davies*

Visiting Swedenborgians and their churches all over the world has been an extremely gratifying and enlightening highlight of the "around-the-world" vacation Ron and I have been taking. We have enjoyed the interaction and lively discussions with so many involved men and women of the General and Convention Churches and have acquired insights into the ongoing growth and outreach in various parts of the world.

In Sydney, Australia, we visited and talked with the Rev. Ian Arnold, minister for eleven years in the Sydney Society, and toured the church on Shirley Road acquired in July 1985. It was delightful to be told of the changes yet to come and observe the improvements already made. Neville Jarvis, manager of the Swedenborg Lending Library and Enquiry Centre, was equally generous with his time, but also gave us books and pamphlets for later perusal. He told us that the Australian edition of Brian Kingslake's book, *Swedenborg Explores the Spiritual Dimension*, was now in nearly every public library in Australia by virtue of a private endowment.

Among the many fine gifts from these men and their society was a pamphlet entitled, "Swedenborg and 20th Century Thought," Australian University Lectures (1979 - 1980) by W.R. Woofenden. I got excited by these lectures generally, but I was transported when I read two references regarding the synchronicity of the motion of the brain with respiration.

On page 50, in a footnote quote from the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, is this sentence: "Swedenborg showed (150 years before any other scientist) that the motion of the brain was synchronous with the respiration and not with the action of the heart and the circulation of the blood, a discovery the full bearings of which are still unrealized."

Then on page 61, Dr. Woofenden (referring to R. L. Tafel's three-volume *Documents Concerning Swedenborg* as the principal source for the thumbnail sketches) cites the *Regnum Animale*, dated 1743-44, as the work where Swedenborg shows analytically that the motion of the brain is synchronous with respiration. Astonishing!

Some of you may remember that Ron

and I gave a course at last year's convention on health. The accent was on breathing and "toning" — or the use of the lungs, their capacity, and the sound production for health. I have long believed that sound itself creates a spiritual bridge. This is why we chant and sing in church. It is not just the value of the words and affirmations, but the physical production of the tone encourages correct posture, diaphragmatic breathing and a clearing of the passage to the brain.

Toning is a healing procedure. Ancient mystics may not have been aware of the scientific base of the respiration—brain connection, but certainly chanting raised the vibrations both inside the human system, as well as outside the group experience.

Ayurveda, the 5,000 year old science of self-healing from India, has always taught that the nose is the door to the brain and consciousness. They cleanse the nose with powders or herbs; use ghee (purified butter) oils or salts for migraines, nervousness, anxiety, fear, negativity and dizziness as well as dry sinuses and loss of sense of smell; and use aloe vera juice, warm milk, juice of asparagus root or gotu kola juice drops for falling hair, conjunctivitis and ringing in the ear.

The native tradition of India also teaches nasal massage for nose lubrication. Dip the little finger into an oil, (olive oil would be acceptable), and insert into each nostril as deeply as possible and lubricate with gentle massage which helps relax the deeper tissues and is excellent for stress. Ideally, a person should lie with the head hanging down and the nose facing up for this self-treatment and continue supine for at least two minutes after the massage.

In a new book by Dr. Vasant Lad, Director of the Ayurvedic Institute in Albuquerque, New Mexico, it is suggested that the finger should be moved first in a clockwise, then in a counter-clockwise direction. "By this means," he writes, "the emotions that are blocked in the respiratory tract will be released."

Add this treatment to the daily toning and one can be assured that the connection between respiration and the brain will be stimulated, strengthened and enhanced.

Here's to smarter Swedenborgians!  
Aum! ☐

# A Vision of Education

*The Board of Education*

**O**ur Church, as an organization and as a living organism, is, like our culture, very much in a time of transition. We are working toward a reorganization of our structure. Many of our churches have closed in recent years; many of those which are surviving are looking for new ways to reach out and have impact on new people. While social values have not changed so much, their outward expression has. Fewer people are attending churches, with the exception of fundamentalist ones; marriages are as likely as not to end in divorce; individuals are more aware of their responsibility to maintain their health; and political and social upheavals around the globe touch our lives in many new ways.

The Board of Education seeks to respond to the changing needs of Convention, of local churches, regional associations, and individual members, as well as to reach out beyond our present contacts. At the same time that we search for new ways to accomplish these goals, we recognize the need to hold fast to our central purpose and philosophy, our reason for existence and for all of our activities. Since our elected and *ex officio* members are continually changing, we adopted a position paper in 1977 to help us maintain our central focus. During the past months, we have had this paper before us for reaction and revision. With only one small deletion, board members have reaffirmed this philosophy of education as the position from which we do our work. We wish now to share our philosophy of education with *Messenger* readers.

## **Philosophy Of Education**

**Position Paper adopted by the Board of Education of the Swedenborgian Church in August 1977, revised and reaffirmed in February 1986.**

Swedenborg foresaw a new age in which the Lord's presence would enable human beings to live in free, people-centered societies on this earth. The goal of the Swedenbor-

gian Church in this new age is to help persons to become aware of the presence of the Divine in their growth process as they learn to experience their own integrity and meaning as unique individuals, and their potential to become angels who return the Divine love consciously and freely.

This goal is essentially educational. It is based on the assumption that each person is created with a never-ending potential for growth, self-actualization, and discovery of meaning in life, and that the experience of this growth gives insight permitting participation in the growth process of others. Human beings are not mechanically functioning pieces of matter, passively responding to conditioning and behavioral control. They are active beings, capable of self direction. Within basic human limitations, they have the freedom and responsibility to make choices for their own lives, which affect the lives of others.

Choice, however, has little meaning without an understanding of alternatives and implications. Education can provide an atmosphere in which possibilities are revealed and clarified, and in which informed, intelligent choices can be made, so that individuals can discover for themselves their own conceptions of what is of value. Such a non-parochial atmosphere contains a respect for variety and difference. Learners are offered the opportunity to experience the effects of their choices in interactions with others in a climate of trust rather than blame. Learning takes place when choices are viewed as actions with consequences rather than unchangeable decisions leading to success or failure, and when the individual can risk trying out new behaviors and discover that the world may not operate as he or she has always assumed.

This education of whole persons as feeling, caring individuals, learning through experiencing intellectual and spiritual growth, de-emphasizes the mere memorization of facts and information. Truth is not taught by the simple telling; learning is through struggle, engagement, and an involvement that links knowledge to feelings to create a sense

of meaning. The goal becomes the development of persons who do not passively reflect the values and ideas of their culture but who actively seek to understand and transform that culture. This process involves freeing minds from prejudice and arbitrarily imposed authority, allowing them to think for themselves and make their choices freely and rationally.

For Swedenborg, knowledge of facts or of sense data is necessary material for learning. Facts must be provided. But learning comes in relating these facts to love, in committing them, as he says, to life rather than to memory. The ability to connect sense data with feelings is dependent partly on sensory awareness. Education of the whole person includes re-educating and sharpening sensory perceptions and expanding bodily awareness and potentialities. The process of connecting what we see and hear with our intuition, imagination, and feeling reactions may still be largely unconscious for the learner or for the teacher. But the degree to which learning takes place will depend on the depth of feelings and the openness to new ideas tapped in the educational process.

This depth of feelings and this openness go far beyond the individual. Swedenborg speaks of Divine love constantly flowing into each person, coming to us through many and varied means: through spirits and angels, through reading the Bible, through worship experiences, through love between friends and family, through wonder at the beauty of nature, through becoming aware of truths, through looking within and feeling something from beyond flowing into ourselves. Swedenborgians understand one of the major goals of education as helping people to get in touch with this transpersonal aspect of life in a continuing process of renewal. As Swedenborg says, the basic "cause of man's ignorance is man's belief that he lives from himself, and that he has no connection with the first Being of life . . . Yet if that connection were broken a man would fall instantly dead." (HH 302)

Swedenborg emphasizes that this Divine love desires diversity. No person is encouraged to imitate another, nor to imitate a given standard model, in order to make connection with the source of life. Rather, each seeks to use and to integrate his or her own unique talents to experience and to respond most fully to the particular and distinct act of love present in an individual life. This response means action as well as understanding. It meets the needs of others, and uses talents effectively for good in society.

As persons experience this unique growth process through their interchange

of ideas and feelings with others, they become more capable of individualized learning and self-direction. Whether they are children, young people choosing careers or life styles, or adults reflecting on the direction of their inner or outer lives, they learn to deal with the motives and goals that express the meaning of their lives. Their freedom and responsibility for their own education becomes a greater reality. The educational process these individuals experience as growth-producing becomes a model for them to expand and refine in their personal and professional lives. As each life is touched and changed as the connection with the Divine is more conscious and more functional, such education becomes an expanding reality, reaching out to affect unknown lives in generations to come. □

### ***The Upper Room***

## **Whose World Shall It Be?**

*Leon C. LeVan*

A well-known theologian recently wrote a book contending that all our present striving to establish the Kingdom of God on earth is out of date by 1600 years. We are one thousand, six hundred years too late, he says. During the first three centuries of the Christian era, there was a chance that Christ might conquer the world. But when the Emperor Constantine adopted Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire, at that point, says the theologian, the world conquered Christ. In the conflict between Jesus and Caesar, Caesar was victorious. Thus, (our theologian concludes) this is not God's world at all. It is the devil's world, and all talk about making it a Heaven on earth is merely wishful.

In contrast to this we have the statements of the Bible: "Our Father who art in Heaven, Thy Kingdom come." "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever." "Fear not, Mary, for thou shalt bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus; and of his Kingdom there shall be no end."

Thus, we have two views of the world: one, that it is the devil's world, in which Christ is defeated and over-thrown; the

other, that it is God's world, in which He is King of Kings, Lord of Lords, and in which He shall reign for ever and ever. Which of these views is true? Which is valid? To which shall we hold? Will the Kingdom of God ever come? Or is humanity doomed to the present struggle with evil without hope of ultimate victory?

When the Children of Israel left Egypt and were approaching the Promised Land, Moses sent out twelve spies to determine if Israel had enough strength to enter the Land and conquer it. After exploring the Land for forty days, ten of the spies said, "No." But the other two (Caleb and Joshua) said, "Yes." Caleb and Joshua had seen the same things that the others had seen. They had seen the same giants, the same fortified cities. But Caleb and Joshua were "men of faith"; and being men of faith, they had also seen what the others could not see. They had seen that the Lord's "hand," the Divine Providence, is in all human affairs; and that God is able to bring to the Promised Land all who hold fast to the truths of His Word.

Will the Kingdom of God ever come on earth? Will this world ever become a sinless world? The weight of evidence was (and still is) on the side of the ten fearful spies. Each war gets bigger than the previous war. Each economic crisis seems followed by a bigger crisis. Greater armaments are assembled. Greater navies and air fleets are built. Napoleon was bad, but Hitler was worse; and perhaps now we see something worse than Hitler.

As for our own lives, the older we grow the more we are aware of our spiritual needs. If we had only television, radio, newspapers, and magazines to go by, we might utterly despair of the triumph of righteousness in this world. We might say with the Biblical spies that we cannot possibly enter the Kingdom Land, and agree with our contemporary theologian that this is the devil's world and that Christ is helpless in it. But we have more than the news media. We have the Word of God, and because we have the Word of God we take our stand with Caleb and Joshua, the men of faith, believing that the promises of God are not in vain, and the promises of God shall not fail.

When the Lord was on earth He was tempted in the wilderness forty days. Note those "forty days" — the same symbolic "forty days" that the spies spied out the Land of Canaan. During those "forty days" of temptation in the wilderness, the Lord (if I may so speak) "sent out spies to spy out the land." He looked into depraved human nature. He explored the dark interiors of human life. He searched out the heart of the Human Race to

which He had come; and looking upon this world of adultery, hatred, murder, theft, and sin, He said: "I will establish My Kingdom there."

You and I need not ask if God can establish His Kingdom on earth. He is establishing it. We need only make a place for Him. Your heart and your mind — that is the "land" in which the Kingdom of God is planted on earth. Heaven is not found in tall buildings and fancy clothes. Heaven is planted in human character, in your life and mine. During the "forty days" in the wilderness when Jesus "spied out the land" by exploring the soul of the Human Race, He foresaw all that our hearts and minds would be. Every sin we have ever committed, every falsity we have ever entertained, Jesus saw and met them all; and knowing us better than we know ourselves He said: "I will establish My Kingdom in you."

Will the Kingdom of God ever come down to earth? Should we look for it in the history of the world? Be not dismayed by the reports of the wordly spies — televisions, radios, newspapers, magazines. "For the Kingdom of God cometh not with observation (of these things). Neither shall men say, lo! here, nor lo! there. For behold the Kingdom of God is in you."

Keep strong your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who came to this world to give the children of our Fallen Race a new will and new understanding. Now in the New Church He also gives us new truths. Pray that we may deny ourselves, take up the cross, and follow Him as He leads us into the Heavenly land. He gives us a new "Caleb" and "Joshua" — a celestial heart and spiritual mind to lead us into new labors, inspiring us with new faith, teaching us the new truths of the Word of God. Grant, Lord, that we may never cease to pray: "Our Father who art in Heaven. Thy Kingdom come." □

## Nominations Update

The following information is in addition to the article "Nominations from the Nominating Committee," (May 1986 *Messenger*)

**President:** Rev. Randall E. Laakko (3 year term — President elect for one year before term begins, whoever is nominated)

**Augmentation Fund:** (3 years — not five)

**Department (not Board) of Communication**

# Stone House Book Room Opens

Paul Martin Grumman

**M**y family and I came to the Greater Seattle area after graduation from SSR and Ordination into Convention's ministry in 1982. The first few years we were busy getting established in our new environment, buying land and building a house, and working with and getting to know the Swedenborgians in the Northwest. When we were somewhat settled, we felt ready to reach out more to the New Age spiritual growth oriented public. With no Swedenborgian Church buildings here, I envisioned renting a "store front office" where we could hold our meetings and reach out to the public by establishing a book store and growth center.

I was compiling my ideas into written form to submit as a proposal to the Board of Missions when we stumbled upon a charming historic house for rent in Redmond, Washington. Given that there were several others interested in renting the "Stone House" at that time and that we had not yet sent off the proposal, it seemed a long shot that we could actually secure the house for this project. As Providence would have it, and with funding from the Board of Missions, the Pacific Coast Association, and several individuals, everything did work out and in September we started holding meetings there and on December 14th the Stone House Book Room opened its doors to the public.

As the name implies, the Stone House is built of rounded reverbed stones and mortar, unique in this area and indicative of the age in which it was built. (It was built in 1914 and is one of the oldest houses in Redmond.) The interior provides a very special combination of being very functional and offering a very comfortable and warm environment for a wide range of activities. There are four rooms, plus a kitchen and bath. As you enter, there is a small room directly in front of you which is now the book store. Through a doorway to your right there is a large living room with a fireplace. To the back of the house, off the living room, is the kitchen and another small room which is being used as an office. The fourth room is on

the second floor and might be remodeled for use as a meditation room or a children's room.

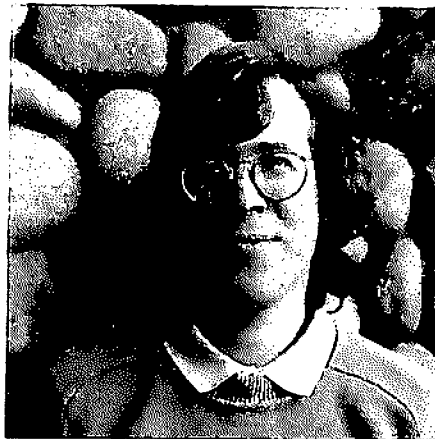
In the book store, we currently have a selection of 300 titles on spiritual growth, as well as all of Swedenborg's writings and most of the collateral works. The books are arranged in the following categories: Christianity, Eastern Religions, Meditation, New Age, Spiritual Psychology, Dreams, Death and Dying, Mysticism, Mythology, Native American, Personal Accounts, Holistic Health and Healing, Children, Diet, and Travel. The wealth of knowledge and inspiration within this small room is exciting and we have already had many enthusiastic responses to our collection of books.

We call the larger room our reading room. It is comfortably furnished and presently has two large bookcases now, thanks to several generous donors who responded to our request for books in the *October Messenger*. Three more bookcases have

been ordered. We advertise the reading room as a place where people can come to enjoy a cup of tea, sit by the fire and read, view the Swedenborg films on video tape, and engage in informal discussions. It is our center for meetings, workshops, lectures, and films, among other activities. Our hope is for the Stone House Book Room to eventually become a community center for the area's New Age community.

Presently meeting at the Stone House are a weekly meditation group, a bi-weekly Swedenborg Forum, a monthly "Stone House Gathering," and occasionally the Seattle Fellowship's monthly meeting.

The meditation group practices different forms of meditation together and then



shares personal meditation and spiritual growth processes.

The Swedenborg Forum is currently reading "A View From Within: a Compendium of Swedenborg's Theological Thought" as a basis for discussion.

The Stone House Gathering hosts a new topic or presentation by a different person each month. Planned topics include China, Trekking in the Himalayas, Central America, Mysticism, Comparative Religion, and Regeneration.

The Seattle Fellowship's monthly gathering includes an informal worship experience followed by a pot-luck dinner.

A weekly film series is being planned featuring films on such people as Thomas Merton, Ram Dass, Stephen Levine, Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, Krishnamurti, Gandhi, and Swedenborg.

We also plan to start monthly workshops by a variety of leaders on such topics

as The Grief Process, Retirement, and Art and the Healing Process.

The Stone House Book Room is a project of the Swedenborg Spiritual Growth Center, an independent non-profit corporation which exists to facilitate the spiritual well-being of people. We are very much in our evolutionary stage and welcome any input and suggestions. The Stone House Book Room would not be what it is without the ideas and inspiration of many people across the country, the faith of the financial supporters, and the efforts of several dedicated people here in the Northwest.

Please send for our catalog of available books.

Stone House Book Room  
16244 Cleveland St.  
Redmond, WA 98052  
(206) 883-7825

Your support would be greatly appreciated. ☐

## OPINION

### Church Growth

Dear Sir,

Your thought provoking editorial on Church Growth makes a valid and important point. The Swedenborgian movement has indeed had a much greater impact on religious thought than its small numbers would indicate.

Yet your editorial seems to suggest that it is a simple matter of choice as to whether a congregation gets involved in the challenge of growth or decides to enjoy the warm and intimate fellowship of the small church. Admittedly, some Swedenborgian congregations are unlikely to grow no matter how much effort is expended simply due to their geographic location. But it does not seem to me that we have a choice as to whether to put effort into spreading the new gospel or not.

The Lord has revealed new truths for the benefit of the whole human race. If we believe we have something of value, we cannot in conscience hold it to ourselves. It may be that some of us want to spread the church for our own benefit, and to increase our own enjoyment, but that simply reflects our human limitations. Given the nature of human laziness, most of us would rather not put an effort into church growth. Some people may welcome your editorial as getting us off the hook, and the relief that is felt may be

even more selfish than the doubtful motives that at times inspire us to work for the growth of the church.

*The Rev. Frank Rose, Pastor  
Sunrise Chapel, Tucson*

### Analytical Excellence

Dear Reader,

In the February *Messenger*, the Rev. Robert McCluskey of Portland, Maine wrote an extensive article on the structure of the National Council of Churches of Christ and how that structure facilitates the work of the Council. The General Secretary of that body wrote the following letter of appreciation. (I should add here that Robert had to be cajoled into permitting publication of this letter.) Mr. Brouwer has also indicated that the NCCC would like to use the article in its own communications in the future. I thought you would be interested.

*Editor*

Dear Friend,

One of the most interesting incidental aspects of being General Secretary is reading the various denominational publications that come across my desk. I have read a lot of them in the last year, but in none of them have I found anything remotely approaching the careful, lengthy and skilled article on the NCCC which you (Rev. R. McCluskey) authored for the February 1986 edition of *The Messenger*. Many, many thanks.

*Arie R. Brouwer, General Secretary  
National Council of Churches of Christ*



## **WOMEN COMMUNICATING**

*Phyllis Bosley*

### **A Headline For Living . . .**

"The way to God is by the road of men. Find thy far heaven in near humanity . . ."

*Edwin Arnold*

*(from the Sydney, Australia New Church Magazine)*

A few days before Margit Tobisch left for Vienna, she forwarded a note to me as Editor of "Women Are Communicating" (I liked that "Are"):

"I have been meditating on some of the verses in the Gospels for a long time, and I am struck by the realization that there were, and I am certain that there still are, people who can and do perceive (not just know, it is deeper than knowledge) that Divinity of Jesus. Hence I am sharing my meditations:"

#### **First through Fifth**

##### *The FIRST*

man who perceived that Jesus was Christ, was ANDREW, the brother of Simon. "He saw his brother Simon first, and said to him, "We have found the Christ." *John I-41*

##### *The SECOND*

man was Philip, whom Jesus called to follow Him. Philip called his friend Nathaniel and said to him, "We have found that Jesus, the son of Joseph of Nazareth, is the one concerning whom Moses wrote in the law and the prophets." *John I-45*

How did he know? This man has truly seen deeply into the MAN he was facing, to be able to say this.

See in this connection "The Walk to Emmaus." After the resurrection, when Jesus opened the Scriptures unto the two disciples: "And beginning from Moses and from all the Prophets, He interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." *Luke 24-25-26-27*

##### *The THIRD*

man was Nathaniel, who said to Jesus, "Rabbi you are the Son of God." *John I-49*

How did he know?

##### *The FOURTH*

was the woman of Samaria who, when call-

ing her townspeople to come and see the man who told her everything asked, "Can this be the Christ?" *John IV-28-29*

She must have had a glimmer, if not yet a full perception of Jesus's Divine Nature.

##### *The FIFTH*

were the townspeople of Samaria, who invited Jesus to stay with them. "And a great many believed in Him, because of His word. And they were saying to the woman, Henceforth it is not because of your word that we believe in Him: for we ourselves have heard and KNOW that this is indeed the Christ, the SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD." *John IV-41,42*

How did they know? How did they?

Was it the Holy Spirit that revealed these profound truths to these people at first contact?

I stand in awe when I meditate on the above, for they all perceived in their spirit the DIVINE NATURE OF JESUS upon first contact.

It takes many of us years, some a lifetime to perceive, see and finally understand and ACCEPT, that JESUS CHRIST IS THE INCARNATE GOD OF THE UNIVERSE. Many perceive this and many more never accept it.

Blessed are those who do perceive, understand and accept HIM in their lives. HIM we can visualize, we can turn to HIM as a friend and as our Heavenly Father.

To end our *Messenger* Year — this thought from a little song our children used to sing in church.

### **What God Hath Promised**

God hath not promised  
Skies always blue,  
Flower strewn  
pathways,  
All our lives through;  
God hath not promised  
Sun without rain,  
Joy without sorrow,  
Peace without pain.

But God hath promised  
Strength for the day,  
Rest for the labor,  
Light for the way;  
Grace for the trials,  
Help from above,  
Unfailing sympathy,  
Undying Love.



## Three Graphic Artists Work for *Chrysalis*

Phoebe Loughrey

**T**he Swedenborg Foundation's new magazine, *Chrysalis*, has a varied and multi-dimensional format each month. A constant demand for talented graphic artists in their special fields of design, fine arts, and layout is ongoing. Three of these artists are profiled in this article; they are Valerie Brugler, Lisa Alfelt, and Carolyn Judson. These three have helped on the issues to be published in 1986 (spring, summer, fall).

Brugler lives with her two children and husband (Ronald P. Brugler, minister) in Almont, Mich. She and her husband have been active in evolving the Almont two-week summer camp into a year-round facility for retreats and conferences.

Brugler's graphic arts career began when she studied at the prestigious Art Institute of Pittsburgh. She feels fortunate that Convention's Department of Education underwrote this graduate work.

A brooch, on display at the Boston Museum of Fine arts, with a mirror-image crane design has been copied by Brugler for the *Chrysalis* summer 1986 issue. It is part of Alice Skinner's "Reflections."

This valued graphic artist is caught between elation at publication and frustration by the low numbers of *Chrysalis* being distributed (3 to 6 thousand copies). Should professors get only one copy of *Chrysalis*; she asks. Isn't more better to spread the word? One friend wonders "Is it fear of success?"

A question like this is not uncommon among Brugler's church colleagues. Why is it with so much talent and hard work, that so few of the rest of the nation know about all this activity?

What Brugler feels is the best and most important aspect of Church philosophy is, "The way we foster individuals' growth; we concentrate so much on death because in it we see growth beyond."

Lisa Alfelt, age 20, was born and raised in Bryn Athyn. Her father, who died in 1981, was a leader in that community as the librarian of the Swedenborgian Library and editor of *The New Philosophy* for ten years. He also participated in the work of the Swedenborg Foundation and the Swedenborg

Scientific Association. Her mother teaches at the Academy.

For two years Alfelt has helped with the layout for *New Church Home* and *New Church Life* and has just begun layout for *Chrysalis*. She is also co-in-charge of the Bryn Athyn print shop.

Having grown up in Bryn Athyn, Alfelt has had a special life compared to her peers in most of the country. She feels that this provided her with a feeling for life and others that fits her into society in a different, but complete way. Alfelt also feels lucky and hopes that she can demonstrate to others how Swedenborg's teachings have set her apart. For the moment a life of sharing is her center.

Having studied at the Academy and now learning her skills as a layout artist through the community at Bryn Athyn, she feels satisfied with her present goals.

Carolyn Judson graduated from Michigan University and spent the next twenty years there working in clay, creating primarily sculpture. After her parents' deaths she moved permanently to Brooklyn, N.Y. Her husband is a cabinetmaker, and her youngest of three children is in high school.

Besides her pencil and two pen-and-ink drawings to be published in upcoming *Chrysalis* issues, she has two wood sculptures on display in New York. Through the influence of her husband, she has been drawn to wood as a medium for her sculptures. One, displayed outdoors, is a nine foot tall arch.

Judson has spent many summers at the Fryeburg Assembly, where her work has been exhibited. She feels that even though the church may be stuck in modes that seem too traditional for herself, she likes many individual members and merits them with having had a positive impact on her. Louise Woofenden, Carol Lawson, and Alice Skinner are some of the names mentioned by Judson who she feels are positive and strong. These and others have encouraged her to seek her current goal: "To live more closely to what I believe in, that is, personal freedom of expression in my work and my life." Judson wants to contribute as many before her have.

The New Church has had long-time support from many artists (William Blake, Archie Sewall James and Howard Pyle, to name a few). *Chrysalis* continues this tradition with creative, thought-provoking articles, illustrated and illuminated by powerful illustrations. If you haven't read *Chrysalis* yet, do so, and put it in your library to return to where you know you can find it. This publication is making new headway within the

New Church. Support it by subscribing. The first 300 subscribers are invited to send a free gift subscription to a non-Church friend. So hurry: send \$20 to Darrell Ruhl (The Swedenborg Foundation, 139 East 23rd Street, New York, NY 10010) together with the name and address of your gift recipient. □



### **Blairhaven Prepares For First Season Under New Director**

Blairhaven, a non-denominational children's summer camp, sponsored by the Massachusetts Association of Swedenborgian Churches, embarks upon a new leg in its long journey under the leadership of the Rev. Kenneth Turley, the pastor of the Elmwood (Massachusetts) New Church. With a theme of "Old Traditions and New Directions," Blairhaven is taking applications for two two-week sessions: July 6-19 (ages 8-11) and July 20-Aug 2 (ages 11-13). This camp features a beautiful setting on Kings-ton Bay. The program is replete with discussion and study classes of the Bible; art, crafts, music and drama; swimming, sports and recreation; field trips and nature studies. The low tuition of \$150.00 per child makes it affordable for all. For further information, write or call: Camp Blairhaven, P.O. Box 1414, Duxbury, Mass., 02331, tel. (617) 934-7131.

### **Douglas Rafter Concert**

The Church of the New Jerusalem, Fryeburg, Maine, is proud to announce that they will be sponsoring "The Douglas Rafter Concert" at their church on August 10, 1986. Mr. Rafter, who has given thousands of organ concerts, has appeared on the Today Show, along with many other television and radio engagements. He is a former Boston New Church organist as well. He will be presenting a lecture on Church Music on August 11, at the Fryeburg New Church.

### **Swedenborg Society Announces New Journal**

The publishing arm of the General Conference of the New Jerusalem has just released the first issue of what is to be a bian-nual journal that pursues, in the words of the editor, the Rev. F. C. Elphick, "that par-

ticular spirit of enquiry inspired by the Writings of Swedenborg. In these works we find a wealth of material which can be used in beginning to explain many of the mysteries of life."

The first issue is thin — only 12 pages the size of a *Reader's Digest* — and there are no graphics. The opening article by the editor, "Of Lions and Jellyfish and Exploding Beetles," is a thoughtful meditation on evolution, Darwinism and Swedenborgianism. The journal, at only two pounds per year (whatever that translates into for American and Canadian dollars these days) seems eminently reasonable. To subscribe, write to: The Swedenborg Society, 20-21 Blooms-bury Way, London, England WC1A 2TH.

### **Book Competition**

Though the time is running late, the Swedenborg Lending Library and Enquiry Centre of Australia is still seeking manuscripts for their Book Competition announced in 1984 for the Swedenborg 1988 Tricen-tenary. The official deadline is June 30, 1986, but *The Messenger* has been notified that they are willing to extend this, if they know that there are manuscripts forth-coming.

There are two categories. They are look-ing for manuscripts in the neighborhood of 30,000 - 50,000 words on topical subjects directed to the general public (e.g. Evolu-tion/Creation, Marriage Love/The Place of the Sexes, The Relevance of the Book of Rev- elation and the Future.) Illustrations consid-ered highly desirable. The second category is a book for young children (ages 5 - 10) on any appropriate subject, but issuing from Swe- denborg's religious writings. Illustrations are essential and no length is prescribed. A prize of \$750.00 will be awarded to the win-ning author in each category, and the author will retain an interest along with the Centre in the copyright. Swedenborg Lending Li- brary and Enquiry Centre, P.O. Box 42, Wil- loughby, New South Wales, 2000 Australia.

### **Toombs Awarded Patriot Medal**

Bernhard Althin Toombs, life-long mem-ber of the Cambridge Swedenborgian Church, located on the Harvard campus, has been awarded the Patriot Medal by the Sons of the American Revolution. This is the highest award offered by that organization; it stands for exceptional services. The medal and certificate were presented at the annual meeting of the S.A.R. in Dedham, Massa- chusetts, February 15, 1986. Mr. Toombs, in addition to his active role in the Cambridge Society, is Associate Editor of the "S.A.R. Bulletin" and is active in their Continental Color Guard.

## History of a Prayer Fellowship

Gwynne Dresser Mack



Once there was a very successful New Church Prayer Fellowship. It no longer exists, although now and then a desire for it stirs briefly.

In the mid-fifties of this century, two New Church women who were long-time friends — one living in California, the other in New York — discussed a mutual friend who had been ill for a long time. Why, they said, doesn't our religious knowledge help her? Consideration of this resulted in a plan to get a group together, to work on the possibilities of using New Church understanding for healing. Fifty members were selected from our various societies to form a Prayer Fellowship for helping to control sickness and misfortunes by applying prayer, based upon truths concerning spiritual power.

Of the fifty persons invited to cooperate, only one did not join.

The procedure was carried on entirely by personal correspondence and a monthly newsletter from headquarters. Anyone was welcome to join; no-one, after the first fifty, was asked — but new members who applied to join were welcomed with appreciation for their interest. There were no dues, and money was never solicited. Yet there always were funds for any specific need that arose: equipment, postage, printing pamphlets for distribution, and in time a book. Nothing was planned that could not be paid for. Money for all expenses came from voluntary contributions, including several from Convention's Council of Ministers. This Fellowship was a lay project, which stood entirely on its own feet with spontaneous gifts from various directions.

Several volunteers assisted in the details of communication, so that monthly bulletins and other literature had prompt circulation. A steady stream of correspondence developed, as members wrote to the leader to discuss general and personal questions. A focusing-point had to be established as more and more requests came pouring in for the Fellowship to pray for persons in need of help. This could only be handled by mailing long lists of names unknown to most of the members.

So a definite study program was begun,

to clarify the *meaning* of prayer, and its effective use. How often is prayer just a cry for help — or a means for feeling religious by repeating memorized words? How often is prayer used for thanking God in appreciation of something special? If we truly listen for this, prayer then becomes not talking to God, but talking *with* Him — and this is the *meaning* of prayer. If, in trying to listen, we get an answer, it is not in a voice like ours; it is an indescribable flowing of thought into our minds from the Mind of God.

The result of a year's discussion of prayer as a two-way communication, not just a routine or last hope in emergency, was a book called *Talking With God*. Its chapters came from the monthly letters sent to each member of the Fellowship, discussing prayer as a human expression of a continuing personal relationship between an individual and our Creator. This book was intended to be a hand book for the Fellowship members. A New Church minister in England showed it to a well-known publisher of religious books, who immediately asked for the right to produce all future printings. Thus it has had five editions and distribution all over the world (and has been translated into Japanese.)

Emphasis upon individual communication with God brought up the question of praying for the lists of names unknown to most. If we were learning to talk with God, how much better to help others to do likewise than to act as a go-between! For fifteen years the study and effort toward this was carried on. Groups praying together, about an overall problem or disaster, are talking with God as from one mind concerned with something known and felt by all. This kind of help surely is needed.

Learning to find healing through communicating with our God — not just by talking together about Him or talking to Him — but by talking *with* Him, immediately opens the way to receiving from Him the ability to apply spiritual determination.

Now the Prayer Fellowship has disappeared, apparently due to lack of available management. Former members occasionally express a wish for renewing the Fellowship; but it must be recognized that the work involved (as it was done before) requires continuous attention and dedication.

If the Prayer Fellowship is to be revived, of utmost importance is establishing the one permanent reason for its existence: to open a thruway for associating directly with God. It is then that we personally receive His help and become a means of sharing the contact with others. What endeavor could be more

appropriate for members of "The Lord's New Church on earth"?

*Gwynne Dresser Mack is the author of **Talking with God**, which is available from the Swedenborg Library, 79 Newbury Street, Boston, Massachusetts, 02116. □*

## COMMENCEMENTS

### Baptisms

**Bitter**—Jacqueline Heather Bitter was baptised into the Christian faith in Edmonton, Alberta on April 5, 1986, the Rev. John Bennett officiating.

**Lorenzen**—Christopher James Lorenzen was baptised into the Christian faith in Edmonton, Alberta on April 6, 1986, the Rev. John Bennett officiating.

**Milligan**—Andrew Lee Milligan, infant son of Phillip and Nella Milligans was baptised into the Christian faith on March 31, 1986 at the Church of the Holy City, Edmonton, Alberta, the Rev. Erwin D. Reddekopp officiating.

**Patterson**—Kayla Rayna Patterson, daughter of Greg and Tonya Patterson, was baptised into the Christian faith on March 23, 1986 at the Church of the New Jerusalem, Pawnee Rock, Kansas, the Rev. Eric J. Zacharias officiating.

**Schellenberg**—Erin Jolene Schellenberg, infant daughter of Gerald and Mary Schellenberg, was baptised into the Christian faith on April 6, 1986 in the home of Helen Schellenberg (grandmother), Winnipeg, Manitoba, the Rev. Erwin D. Reddekopp officiating.

**Wills**—Matthew Richard Wills, son of Richard and Shelley Wills, was baptised into the Christian faith on April 6, 1986 in the home of Helen Schellenberg, Winnipeg, Manitoba, the Rev. Erwin D. Reddekopp officiating.

**Wills**—Raleigh Lynne Wills, infant daughter of Richard and Shelley Wills, was baptised into the Christian faith on April 6, 1986, in the home of Helen Schellenberg, Winnipeg, Manitoba, the Rev. Erwin D. Reddekopp officiating.

**Wilson**—Jenny Lee Wilson, daughter of Randy and Anita Wilson, was baptised into the Christian faith on March 23, 1986 at the

Church of the New Jerusalem, Pawnee Rock, Kansas, the Rev. Eric J. Zacharias officiating.

### Deaths

**Hoover**—Helen Hoover, longtime member of the Virginia Street Church (Swedenborgian), St. Paul, passed into the spiritual world on March 25, 1986.

**Wiley**—Ellen Wiley passed into the spiritual world on March 5, 1986. Resurrection services were held on March 8, 1986, the Rev. David L. Rienstra, of Fryeburg, Maine, officiating.

### Two Boards Seek Executive Secretary

The Board of Education and the Department of Communication are searching for people to handle the duties of Executive Secretary, both of which are part-time paying positions. The position requires an ability to be organized and productive without supervision, as well as the willingness to attend at least two sessions of exciting meetings per year. For more information for the Board of Education position, write to Lorraine Sando, 1518 S.W. 130th St., Seattle, Wash. 98146, tel. (206) 242-7354. For more information regarding the Department of Communication position, write to Ethelwyn Worden, 48 Sargent St., Newton, Mass., tel. (617) 969-4240.

### Volunteers Needed For Convention Youth

The New Church Youth League needs two volunteers who are planning to attend convention '86 to fill the positions of "Care Bears." Care Bears are preferably a man and a woman who are willing to room on the same floor as the Leaguers and enforce the "Rules For Leaguers At Convention." If you are interested and will be available during the evenings at convention, please contact: Nancy Little, 73 West St., East Bridgewater, Mass. 02333, tel. (617) 378-2206 — or — Robert McCluskey, 80 Wilson St. #5, Portland, Maine, 04101, tel. (207) 871-8281.

### Important

All further **Messenger** correspondence should be sent to:

**The Messenger**  
2107 Lyon St.  
San Francisco, California 94115

General Convention of the New Jerusalem  
in the United States of America  
**The Messenger**  
1040 Dautel Road  
St. Louis, MO 63146

NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
ST. LOUIS, MO  
PERMIT NO. 4517

Forwarding Address Correction Requested

## SWEDENBORG LIBRARY & BOOKSTORE

79 NEWBURY ST.  
Boston, MA. 02116  
Tel. 617-262-5918

### Special Sale:

<i>The Story That Has No End</i> — Mack pb	\$2.50
<i>Worship and Love of God</i> — Swedenborg pb	\$2.50
<i>Last Judgement</i> — Swedenborg pb	\$.50

### New Book:

*New Thought or A Modern Religious Approach*  
*(The Philosophy of Health, Happiness, and Prosperity)*  
— Martin A. Larson hc \$19.95

### Pamphlets:

<i>ES &amp; ESP</i> — Mack	\$ .50
<i>Imagination &amp; Rationality</i> — DeCharms (excerpt from <i>New Philosophy</i> )	\$2.25

Discounts Available: 10% Minister, 20% Libraries, 30% Bookstores

***Price does not include postage***