

# The Messenger

January, 1989

Official Publication  
of the  
General  
Convention  
of  
Swedenborgian Churches





## From the Editor

# Moving Toward the Light

In conversations with many of you over the past several months, I've been hearing your desire to see in these pages more personal experiential accounts of spiritual growth, group work, sharing the kind of breakthroughs in awareness of our loving power that happened in the spouses' workshop at Convention last June. One of the gifts I took home from that special healing-circle was a slip of paper on which someone had written 'Love and Empowerment'. I need only look at it to remind myself what powerful ministers we can all be to each other, when we allow our lights to shine.

In the late 70s, when I was working as a writer/editor with Parents Anonymous, a child abuse treatment and prevention program, I had the rare experience of interviewing a man who seemed emotionally healthy and had apparently been raised in a family that he enjoyed and was still very close to. When I asked him to sum up his family

strengths, he answered, "I think the most important thing was, that we *knew* that each of us existed as a resource for the other. Not a perfect 'Father-Knows-Best' family," he explained. "It was simply that we each felt known, trusted, listened to, accepted with our weaknesses, and loved 'just as we stood in our shoes'." And that attitude empowered them to function as real resources for each other, to grow and self-correct and talk things out as they went along.

As my healing continues, my feelings of gratitude for my family seem to expand, for all they did and didn't do. We simply didn't know how to be healthy resources for each other back then.

It took many years of healing experiences with fellow children of God for me to move from the fear of an unfriendly universe toward self acceptance and the discovery that we are indeed here to exist as resources for each other. Or as someone recently put it, "We're not here

to see through each other, but to see each other through." Along with this understanding is a yearning to enter into what former Messenger editor, Jim Lawrence, has referred to as "the invigorating elixir of profound fellowship . . . that exquisite spiritual community every sane human being longs for deep in their bosom. A trust palpably present, vulnerabilities shared and explored . . ."<sup>1</sup>

Scott Peck writes, in *The Different Drum: Community Making and Peace*, "The overall purpose of human communication is—or should be—*reconciliation*. It should serve to lower or remove the walls and barriers of misunderstanding that unduly separate us . . . For the reality is that there can be no vulnerability without risk, and there can be no community without vulnerability, and there can be no peace—ultimately no life—without community . . . The greatest gift we can give each other is our own woundedness. The genuine healer has to

be wounded. Only the wounded can heal."

Dr. Patricia Basu<sup>2</sup> put it in more personal terms when she said that "Our scars make us more valuable to others."

It's an honor to have been appointed your *Messenger* Editor, and I feel deeply committed to helping facilitate the kind of communication that will enable us all to feel supported and to feel that deepening sense of community and harmony that can heal the isolation in our minds and spirit, and thus lessen the impact of our geographical isolation.

Some new departments and features are being added to encourage this process—*Tools for Regeneration*, for us to share with each other what is working for us in our spiritual growth; *Ask Swedenborg*, to give you an opportunity to ask *the expert* (AKA George Dole) questions that you would like to ask Swedenborg himself (children's questions to be included), and *The Family Connection*, where we will try to present items and activities of interest to children and families, resources, and hints on how we can work better with children.

<sup>1</sup> Lawrence, James F. "Between the Lines." *The Messenger*, June, 1988.  
<sup>2</sup> Basu, Patricia. "On Crystals, Rainbows and SSR Graduates." *The Messenger*, August, 1988.

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January, 1989  
Volume 209 No. 1  
Whole Number 5133

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Published monthly, except July, by the Swedenborgian Church (founded 1817, incorporated 1861 as the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America).

The opinions of the contributors do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or the Communication Support Unit, 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 a year; single copies \$1.00.

### Deadline for material:

Six weeks before the first day of the month of issue.



# Joy's Journey

Patte LeVan

Marjory Crawford, artist, member of the LaPorte Church, Indiana, inadvertently began her prison ministry when she received a flyer in the mail stating there would be a program at Westville Correctional Center, August 16, 1986, put on by the women inmates. Lunch would be served and there would be a presentation of "For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide (When the Rainbow is Not Enough)." <sup>1</sup>

"About 50 people attended, including a State Representative," Marge recalls. "The play was put on by the women, and the panel discussions were so impressive that everyone in the audience, I believe, must have been changed forever. I know I was. We had a luncheon at which we shared tables with the inmates. The keynote speech was an eloquent plea for prisons to initiate programs that would enable women to return as contributing members of society. The rest of the presentation was the work of a prison staff member, but the parts were acted out by the women prisoners—very convincingly—because all of them had lived those parts.

"The walls in the room where we saw the play and along the corridor were lined with paintings which I assumed were the work of the prisoners. I was half right. They were the work of the male prisoners. The women didn't have an art program. So I heard myself volunteering to teach an art class."

Marge was especially touched and inspired by the woman who had written and delivered the keynote address. The prison program was repeated the following month at Purdue University, North Central. Marge told Ted LeVan, LaPorte minister, and several other members of the congregation about her involvement, and they accompanied her to the second presentation at Purdue.

Thus, the Volunteer Enrichment Program at Westville Correctional Center was launched.

Mark Roser, retired school psy-

chologist, volunteered a class which involved many books and many topics and was called Social Ethics. His son John volunteered to teach a class in home repair to women who had never had any instruction in plumbing or electricity. Marge's sister, Nancy Ahrens, also got involved. Ted began a creative writing class and assisted Marcia Seigel and Lenore Ordas with *A Course in Miracles* class. Swedenborg's

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*As I observed  
dullness become  
brightness in the  
women, I felt . . .  
the kind of  
admiration one feels  
for flowers that  
grow up through  
the asphalt . . .*  
◇

writings were offered for those who were interested.

For 10 years, no programs other than GED<sup>2</sup> classes had been offered the women at Westville, ostensibly because they were to be there only "temporarily". Though guards were present at all times, the women still could not participate in the programs provided for men, because men and women weren't allowed in the same classrooms.

"Some of the women in my art class could not read or write," Marge remembers, "and yet they had artistic talent and appeared in every way at least of average intelligence. I thought of the information I have heard corre-

lating learning disabilities in children and prison populations. I have heard of percentages as high as 85 percent of prison populations being adults who had learning problems as children. As I observed dullness become brightness in the women, I felt an overwhelming admiration, the kind of admiration one feels for flowers that grow up through asphalt . . ."

One of the women inmates who began attending the Enrichment classes was the woman who had written the keynote speech at the presentation and had led the panel discussion. Her name is Joy. She had been incarcerated for over 7 years, struggling in relative isolation to find her own path of spiritual growth. She had overcome several painful health problems through meditation.

Joy and I met for the first time in late '87 when I accompanied my husband, Ted, to the prison for a pastoral visit. She had been reading much of Swedenborg, Jerry Jampolsky's books, *A Course in Miracles*, and whatever she could find that would further her growth. I knew after talking with her for a few hours that she had attained more inner peace than most of the people I'd seen in my lifetime. She kept a journal, or daybook, as she calls it.

Soon after that first visit she began writing her letters to us, sharing the growth that was transforming her daily life. Her willingness to share on this level was of course transforming us as well; we were all of us much different people than we had been before she and Westville Prison touched our lives.

She has allowed me to share excerpts from her letters with *The Messenger* readers, so I will let her speak for herself:

**Excerpt from Joy's letter,  
December, 14, 1987:**

*As I write, the world is being washed with snow. It looks as if this will be the first snowfall to stick and there'll be a grand view in the morning.*

*The stress of the past few weeks hasn't fully resolved itself yet. I remind myself that all outward experiences are correspondences of inner realities, so I'm examining me for answers. I believe there are no victims ultimately so I'm working through why I feel so stressed. I've had a good long run of inner peace . . . almost a full year without feeling much in the way of tension. Perhaps this episode of irritation is meant for growth by knocking*

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me out of any spiritual complacency I had sunk into.

Each December since I was 15, I have done a year-end "inventory". It's long, but to summarize, I check the year's goals and progress toward them, my successes, "failures", best and most disappointing behaviors, and set new goals for the next year. I forgive myself and others for any negative feelings I choose to hold, pay emotional debts and all financial ones insofar as possible. So December can be a time of stress for this reason although it's usually a very satisfying and positive feeling as I "cleanse" the year. New Year's is my favorite holiday since I consider it a fresh start and rebirth of sorts.

I've chosen some difficult goals for next year and am both excited and challenged by them. I may have bitten off a bit much but I can't give them up. The first goal is to be of right use. Secondly, to love at all times where I am, those I'm with and what I'm doing. And thirdly, to learn to love the obstacles. The first is from my reading of "The Impersonal Life" and the teachings of Swedenborg. The second was from something Peter Caddy<sup>3</sup> had written. The third is from Towards the Center<sup>4</sup> a book Mark loaned me.

**Excerpt from Joy's letter,  
February 24, 1988:**

The reading I have been doing (of Swedenborg) has expressed much of what I've come to understand during my imprisonment . . . that all that is outward is born from what is within . . . as a man thinketh, so is he . . . that every act springs from hidden seeds in the mind, even "spontaneous" or "unpremeditated" acts. Nobility of spirit is not a thing of favor or chance but of constant right thinking. A person is the master of his thoughts and it's by our thoughts that we are made or unmade, enlightened or destroyed.

One is a victim of circumstances as long as he thinks he is ruled by outside forces, but as soon as we realize that we have creative power by proper use of our thoughts, then we become the masters of ourselves. The outer world of circumstances shapes itself to our inner world of thought. Perhaps this is the greatest of lessons I have learned in my time here, and because I know it now not only by "intuition" but by observation and because I believe it so completely, I will be on guard to avoid "casual" thinking as a

habit ever again. It isn't difficult, nor compulsive, nor bothersome to observe one's thoughts and be aware of their positive or negative orientation and apply corrections, rather like an automatic pilot mechanism on sophisticated planes . . . a gentle turning here, a slight counter pressure there and we stay on course.

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. . . that all that is  
outward is born  
from what is  
within . . .  
◇

"Mind is the Master power that molds and makes,  
And man is Mind, and evermore he takes  
The tool of thought, and shaping what he wills,  
Brings forth a thousand joys, a thousand ills;  
He thinks in secret and it comes to pass:  
Environment is but his looking glass."

James Allen  
from "As A Man Thinketh", late 1800s

This experience of prison has been an efficient, highly compacted way to learn many, many lessons . . .

I have learned much about patience, prejudice, learning to accept help from others rather than clinging to my independence so fiercely. I have learned what values I cherish, which principles I will defend regardless of pressures, absence of any support, or belief in my word. I have learned to believe in ideals which go against the grain of the prison majority (in some cases, almost its totality) and still experience personal peace and caring about those who ridicule the standards I set for myself and my spiritual beliefs.

So I think it's possible that my soul wished to place itself in circumstances for maximum growth. And as a white, educated, healthy female in America in the last of the 1900s, there were few environments in which to experience loss of family, friends, reputation, career, freedom, security, money, health and years of calendar time. Just the years of following petty, contradictory or humiliating orders is a grand lesson in itself. How strong the bending wil-

low is and how mistaken people are about its strength! And I've come to love the spiritual schoolroom (as Emmanuel<sup>5</sup> calls it) that I volunteered for, just as I always loved the schoolrooms of our high schools and universities. I had thought it was going to be extremely difficult to learn to love where I am, what I'm doing and who I'm with when I set my goals for 1988. But the process seemed to take hold even before the year began. And now, it is natural and genuine. No one could be more surprised than me! There are guides and helpers who added their strength to mine to reach these goals . . . both earthly guides and spiritual ones. I have, on occasion, felt them almost tangibly . . . an energy force that's hard to describe and a feeling of love that's awesome.

I was once lonely among friends and family who love me very much. Now I am able to feel at peace among strangers and peers who claim I am of different stuff than they are and often keep me at arm's length. The lessons of prison have given me courage in many forms and I have made the journey from loneliness to solitude . . . a giving solitude full of energy and compassion, not one that's empty and apathetic . . .

. . . . .

Due to practices at Westville Correctional Center, a Federal judge ordered the women removed to Indiana Women's Prison in Indianapolis. By Spring of 1988, the evacuation was completed. Those women later heard from stated that their living conditions and learning opportunities had been vastly improved.

George Scott, the men's art teacher at Westville, took the prisoners' artwork on a statewide tour that included a reception at the Indianapolis State House. The only women's art in that show was the work the women had produced in Marge Crawford's class.

<sup>1</sup> 1977. Ntozake Shange

<sup>2</sup> General Education Diploma, high school equivalency

<sup>3</sup> One of Findhorn's founders

<sup>4</sup> Balokovic, Joyce Borden. *Towards The Center*. Philosophical Library. 1956

<sup>5</sup> Rodegast, Pat & Stanton, Judith. *Emmanuel's Book*. Weston, CT: Friends' Press

*Editor's Note: Joy's Journey will be continued in next month's Messenger.*



# The Incredible Men & Their Flying Machine

Patte LeVan

Don Bowman rests his hand lightly but lovingly on the teakwood frame of Swedenborg's Flying Machine, his delighted and bemused expression much like a child whose invisible imaginings have suddenly become visible for all to see. This model, he says, is true to Swedenborg's original concept as nearly as he could construct it, except that it is one fifth the original design size due to display space constraints. The original craft designed by Swedenborg was to measure 60 feet long and 45 feet wide and stand 19 feet off the ground. This one is 12 by 9 feet, about the size of Bowman's dining room, where it was displayed October 23 at the showing Bowman held at his home in LaPorte, Indiana, prior to its being shipped to the M.I.T. Science Museum's November 9th opening in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Seated in the car, or what we would call the cockpit today, is a Ken doll (of Barbie

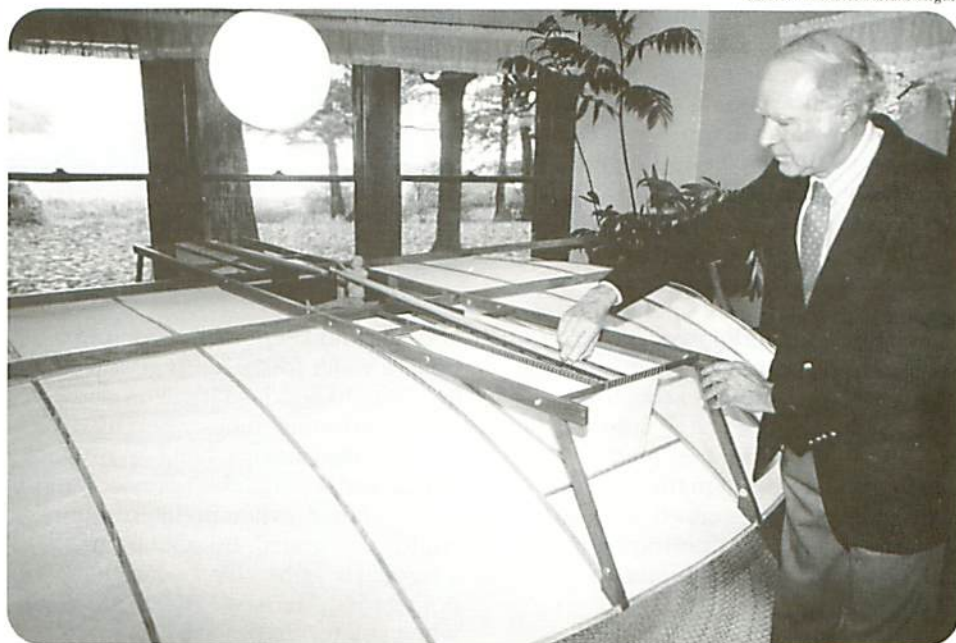
♦

*... I decided to  
go back to  
Swedenborg's  
original sketch  
and descriptions  
and to construct  
... a true  
representation.*

♦

and Ken fame), placed there to give an idea of proportion and scale. And perhaps to kindle our own fantasy that maybe, just maybe, this thing could get off the ground.

Don is an artist, photographer, retired FAA official and landscape architect whose career encompasses master landscape plans for Annapolis Naval Academy and Roosevelt Roads Naval Complex, his own practice in



Photos LaPorte Herald-Argus

**Don Bowman demonstrates how the air duct traps the air so that the downward motion of the oars provide the lift.**

Florida designing master plans for hotels, resorts, condos, and urban planning, including involvement in the first independent hospice program in Arlington, Virginia. His knowledge of Swedenborg has its origins in his longtime friendship with Carol Lawson, chair of Convention's Communication Support Unit.

"About a year and a half ago," he says, "Carol asked if I would be interested in putting together an aeronautical exhibit for the Swedenborg Foundation. I accepted, knowing I would soon be retired. After I went to Bryn Athyn and the Smithsonian, and saw the other models that had been built, I decided to go back to Swedenborg's original sketch and descriptions and to construct as accurately as possible a true representation. As best we can determine, his Flying Machine



**From left: Robert Bowman, Don Bowman, and Stephen Jedrysek, master carpenter.**

was conceived between 1714 and 1716, after his first trip abroad from Sweden, and after attending scientific lectures and studies in England. The sketch he made was accompanied by a

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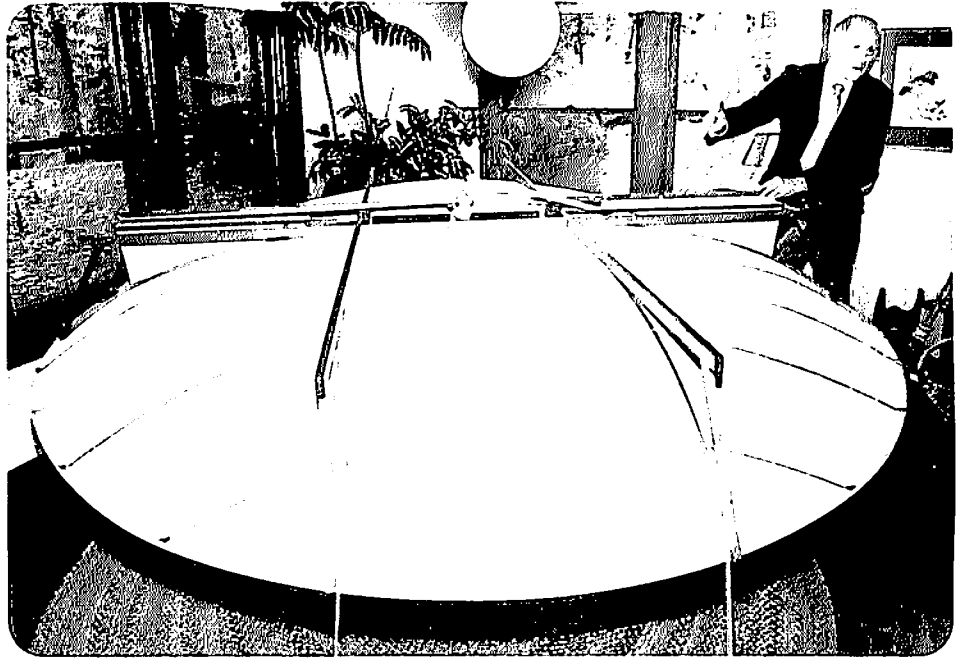
written narrative in Swedish, and these were the principal guides used to develop construction drawings. I hired a professional person to interpret them. My brother, Robert, made the detailed drawings. Bob has had considerable experience in the design and construction of aircraft. The drawings are now the property of Swedenborg Foundation and could be used to build a full-size craft."

Don moves deftly around the craft, bringing alive the challenges of construction and assembly which took approximately 400 hours. "And Bob has about 100 hours in the drawings," he adds. "Swedenborg's careful description of the craft was genius, having virtually nothing scientific on which to base his design. He had to envision the principles and requirements of weight, balance, lift, and thrust needed to propel it through the air. The most unique feature of the machine is the two oar-like devices. They're intended to be operated by man-power, up and down, similar to an air pump and operate in an air duct. This action provides lift as well as forward motion due to the angle of the oar. The fabric under the "feathers", as Swedenborg referred to them lets air pass when the oar is raised and on the downward motions air is trapped, like pulling down on an umbrella, to provide lift."

"Swedenborg stated that the operator should be willing to suffer a broken arm or leg because of the unknown factors of flight. To our knowledge, an operational model was never built; however, his contribution to flight is not challenged.<sup>1</sup> One reason we built this as accurately as we could from the description is that we felt, rather than put in our ideas of making it operable, we should make it as pure as we could and let the students and science museums go from what Swedenborg had designed and intended."

"The woods are teak and cypress, because that's what is known to have been available in Sweden in the early 1700s. The milling had to be precise, right down to a gnat's eyebrow, as well as the setting up of jigs and forms for the bending of the wood. Stephen Jedrysek, a master carpenter, was responsible for that. He's also building permanent shipping crates so that it can safely be shipped in three sections to various science museums for a number of years."

Don talks about spars and splints



**Bowman demonstrates the lift mechanism.**

and ribs and keeping the wood in boiling water for 12 hours so it would be easier to bend, so it's all in one piece. Inventing things when there were no instructions, lying on his back gluing and sewing, the hours of intense concentration, when no interruptions could be tolerated, no phones answered. He grins. "It's a good thing I'm not married," he says. "There are times when you just have to have a lot of peace and tranquility to figure things out . . . there's probably no better way that I can think of to evaluate a person's concept of doing something than building as accurate a model as you can of that object. Your mind sort of parallels what he was doing and what he was thinking, because you're carrying it out . . . it's almost like transferring your mind away from your body into what you're doing, you become part of it, rather than here."

The flying machine might not be able to fly, but for a while, Bowman's mind had soared with the genius of Swedenborg in a peak experience, and now it was over; did he feel a letdown?

In a way, yes, he agreed. "Like raising a kid and sending it off to college or out into the world. You know you have to let it go, you want to let go, but still you have concern for its safety."

A large colorful impressionist portrait of Swedenborg titled "Emanuel Swedenborg: Early Airplane Design" was also on display in Don's living room prior to its shipment to M.I.T..

The painting is a reproduction of an original done by artist Otto Neilsen in the 1960s for Scandinavian Airlines System.

At the conclusion of the open house, Ted LeVan, LaPorte minister, was asked to offer a blessing for the craft and the exhibit's future journey.

### Epilogue and Update

Carol Lawson reports that the M.I.T. Exhibit's opening November 9 was a tremendous success, drawing over one hundred people. M.I.T. has asked that the Exhibit stay through the end of January, so it will still be on display for Swedenborg's birthday, January 29.

Following the showing at M.I.T.—if money can be raised to fund its travels, and if Swedenborgian groups can interest science and air museums in sponsoring exhibitions—the Flying Machine will be exhibited throughout the U.S. and Canada.

The name of the travelling exhibition is "Swedenborg, 18<sup>th</sup> Century Scientist." It covers Swedenborg's career from university graduation to 1745 and is designed to make Swedenborg better known and respected.

<sup>1</sup> See Swedenborg's 1714 Airplane, a new book by Henry Söderberg, retired vice president of Scandinavian Airlines System, available for \$16.00 plus postage from: The Swedenborg Foundation, 139 E. 23rd Street, New York, NY 10010.



(Editor's Note: Due to space constraints, the first page of this lecture was cut. It capsulizes the story found in 1 Sam 31:1 to 2 Sam 5:5. You may wish to read these passages of Scripture as you read the lecture.)

# Saul & David and Regeneration

From: Fryeburg 1984 Lecture 2

William Ross Woofenden

The beginning of the kingdom of Israel represents the beginning of the slow upward climb by which the kingdom of God begins to take form in any human soul. And the history of the three kings describes in general its advancement from natural to spiritual, from spiritual to celestial. The natural, spiritual and celestial are represented by Saul, David and Solomon. At the highest level, Saul represented the Lord's humanity while it was being regenerated, as David represented the Lord's humanity as it was being glorified. But our primary concern here will be with the lower level and its relevance to individual human regeneration.

Hebron, whose name relates to association or friendship, represents in an individual the natural good disposition of our unregenerate will, its enslavement to lusts for a time, and its ultimate submission to the Lord as king. But even in the face of this pledge to sovereignty there is much that remains unsubdued and unsanctified in us which is only gradually brought into the order of heaven.

Looking at the more positive side, when religion becomes a living part of our being, when it exists in us as a fountain of hopes and aspirations, the heaven within begins to be felt and becomes a focus of new powers and new joys. And although there will yet be many conflicts before our outer or natural self is brought into order, the power that can do it is there. David will need to reign in our Hebron 7-1/2 years, or long enough to acquire a full state of sanctity in our inner being along with a full faith that total regeneration actually is possible for us. Then

he can become king over our whole being. Meanwhile the inner struggle will often be intense. As Paul wrote to the Christians at Rome, "In my inner

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*... when  
religion becomes  
a living part  
of our being ...  
the heaven within  
begins to be felt ...*  
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being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind." [7:22-23]

Nevertheless, despite this seemingly constant struggle, we will now come into states of experience in which we will realize how inadequate and poor the thoughts, sentiments and affections of our earlier religious life were. Much of what goes on in this period of life is echoed in the details of our text.

For instance, the contest at first seems like a kind of intellectual sport. In the first military encounter between the opposing sides, one version [NAB] records it this way: "Abner said to Joab, 'Let the young men rise and perform for us'. Joab replied, 'All right!' So they rose and counted off: twelve of the Benjaminites . . . and twelve of David's

servants. Then each one grasped his opponent's head and thrust his sword into his opponent's side, and all fell down together." [2 Sam. 2:14-16] If we will grant that this conjures up a bizarre scene indeed, that twelve pairs of young soldiers would simultaneously grab each other by the head with one hand and thrust a sword into the other's side with the other hand, resulting in the immediate death of all twenty-four, we should be ready for some explanation of the meaning of this that is more reasonable than the account of the incident.

Let's try. To grasp an opponent by the head is to challenge his faith or the basis of his beliefs. To thrust a sword in his side at the same time is to attack what your opponent loves. In short, the effort is to repudiate the other in both will and understanding. Oddly, in such a battle, regardless of what your approach to religion is, or which side you are on, each combatant is victor, and each is vanquished. It's sort of like arguing with a Jehovah's Witness, a "no-win" situation. In short, neither side convinces the other, but each one believes that it is he who wields the sword of truth and inflicts a mortal wound on the principles of the other.

In the Biblical account, after this skirmish, the battle began in earnest. And at day's end David's forces prevailed, representing the beginning of that necessary inversion of state which is to result in time in the good of love—rather than truth or justice—becoming actually first, both in the mind's estimation and in the governing or control of one's thoughts and affections. This also implies the

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ascendancy of the spiritual over the natural; for to the extent that we are naturally minded we give truth the first place and good the second. Even if we do not give truth the preference theoretically we do it practically. For instance, if it comes down to a question of whether to be "merciful" or to be "just" to a wrongdoer, guess which way the naturally minded person will decide?—"He did break the law, after all, didn't he?") It is only when we have

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*It is only  
when we have  
become spiritual  
that we give  
practical  
supremacy  
to good.*

◇

become spiritual that we give practical supremacy to good.

As further illustration of how hard this transition, this inversion of state is, we have the poignant incident of Asahel relentlessly pursuing Abner after the battle was over. Let me quote part of the text: "Asahel, who could run as fast as a wild deer, started chasing Abner . . . 'Stop chasing me!' Abner said 'Run after one of the soldiers and take what he has.' But Asahel . . . would not quit; so Abner, with a backward thrust of his spear, struck him through the stomach so that the spear came out the back. Asahel dropped to the ground dead." Bruce says of Asahel that he represents that activity which springs from the impetuosity of the natural affections that have not been chastened by temptation. To capsulize the event, it is said that "in the warfare of the spiritual life, much zeal may be united with much indiscretion, and that a good cause may suffer loss from the well intentioned but misdirected efforts of those who support it."

It's a great temptation to continue on in considerable detail, explaining each of the events outlined above to show how one is likely to move,

incident after incident, through this exceedingly complex period of spiritual growth. But I have a feeling that I should resist the temptation, and instead try to sum up the essential changes in spiritual state that are involved.

In the days of our Saul state, when confronted with our religious duties, we are apt to think only of the letter of the law. And if we were to find ourselves relatively blameless, that is, if we could not single out any particular evidence of having acted in violation of the letter of the law, an attitude of self-righteousness would come over us ever so easily, and we would not feel it amiss to bitterly taunt "wrongdoers," as we saw them, with many an inconsiderate act. In such a state we would be strong for "justice" but weak for loving kindness. We would let the faults or failings of others dominate our conversations. We would be more ready to blame than to excuse. We would, in short, be hard, like Saul.

But once we take the next giant step, pictured by anointing David as king, even though at first he may only be able to rule in the Hebron of our being—the natural good disposition of our as-yet unregenerate will—something of the spirit of the Lord will enter our thoughts and feelings, and we will become much more concerned about our own shortcomings. At the same time we will become more tender with

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*Instead of  
worrying that the  
Lord may condemn  
us after all,  
we lament that we  
do not love him  
enough to live  
in harmony with  
His teachings.*

◇

the weaknesses of others. We will tend to hope for the best. Gradually we will learn to look for the spirit that pervades the acts of others and accept that

what we can see was a well-meant effort even if the performance happened to fall far short of what we might have wished.

Little by little we will become less concerned with what the letter of the law commands that people should do and instead seek the spirit and intent of the divine law. We will learn the meaning of the Scripture, "Anyone who knows the good he ought to do, and doesn't do it, sins." [James 4:17]. And it is by such lessons as these that in us the house of David will grow stronger and stronger while the house of Saul grows weaker and weaker.

In the Saul state we dread evil, but it still has a strong attraction for us. If sin were allowable, we would delight in it. There is a secret yearning for forbidden fruit, forcing us to restrain ourselves with a strong hand and many a struggling prayer. (A recent TV commercial shows a fat friar saying of a particular brand of ice cream that "it's so delightfully sinful!")

In sharp contrast to this, in the David state, when the spirit of true religion begins to get a hold on us, sin comes to be more and more regarded as detestable in itself. We come to regard dishonesty in word or deed as a hateful destroyer of confidence. We find growing within ourselves a loathing of impurity in all its phases. We know it is forbidden, but we begin to see and feel why it is forbidden. We begin faintly to see sin as the Lord sees it, and to plead with the apostle, "Who will rescue me from this body of death?" [Rom. 7:24] It is not the punishment we fear now, but the evil itself. We now dread not that we shall be found out in our wrongdoing, we dread the wrongdoing itself.

Instead of worrying that the Lord may condemn us after all, we lament that we do not love him enough to live in harmony with His teachings. All of this could be pretty overwhelming. It is not by chance that the wars between the houses of Saul and David were long. But that in itself is a cause for hope.

So let us end with a threefold summary: First, let us realize that the work of regeneration is vast, complicated, and momentous. Second, let us not be surprised or discouraged if our progress from time to time seems slow. And third, let us never tire, or lack faith and loving trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. He will do His lion's share of the work. And He will patiently lead us in countless ways to do ours.



## The Family Connection

### The Family Connection

*A New Department  
for Children, Families,  
and Sunday Schools*

Ted Klein

This is the beginning of what I hope will be a regular feature in *The Messenger*. As part of the new children's and family ministry program, developing under the Education Support Unit, I plan to present ideas, suggestions, and activities geared to children and families. Some of these activities children can do on their own, and some can be tried by families and Sunday school classes. Please send me material!! I would especially like activities by children for children, and ideas from parents and Sunday school teachers. Please send materials to: Rev. Dr. Ted Klein, Children's and Family Ministry Program, 273 Perham Street, West Roxbury, MA 02132.

Ted Klein

During this year I have sent out 115 copies of the needs survey questionnaire, which was also printed in *The Messenger*. Among the people who sent questionnaires were Sunday school personnel, ministers, society presidents, and association presidents. As of September 30, 1988, a total of 34 responses have been received. Of these, 25 were from individuals, 6 from churches or societies, and 1 from an association executive committee. A composite of those suggestions received to date is now available.

Emerging clearly from your responses is a need to move in the direction of

This exercise is one of those explored in last year's Convention mini-course on communication in families. It has been used in some scouting programs, and could be used in Sunday school classes as well as families.



#### Goals

- ♥ To remind each of us of our own gifts and abilities and those of others.
- ♥ To encourage appreciation of one another.

#### Preparation

- ♥ Find a time when the exercise can receive your full attention.
- ♥ Approach the exercise as both fun and important.

#### How to Play

- ♥ Each of you draw and cut out a treasure chest for yourself and write your name on the front.
- ♥ On the back, list a gift or talent you have. Then pass the treasure chest to the person on your right.

- ♥ Each of you list a gift or talent of the person whose treasure chest you have received. Then pass that treasure chest to the person on your right.
- ♥ Continue until each one of you has received back your own treasure chest with listings from everyone.
- ♥ Each of you read to the others all that has been listed on your treasure chest.
- ♥ Talk about what you've read. Share your feelings and what you learned from the exercise.

## Summary of Responses: Children and Family Survey

building and maintaining what could be called a "mobile people-program-materials pool." With a well developed pool, needs of groups and individuals could be directly addressed by providing people, programs, and/or materials. For example, if a local church or an association needed a workshop in parent-child communication, the workshop and leadership could be provided. If a Sunday school were looking for new suggestions for activities, many suggestions could be provided.

Other very important ideas and suggestions have emerged. One is to have a

regular feature in *The Messenger* for children, and possibly also features for families and for Sunday schools. Another is to find more ways of maintaining contact with isolated children. Another is to develop programs that can be used both in Sunday schools and in homes.

Many responses spoke of the value of existing programs: church camps, the Dole Notes, the activity books, *Five Smooth Stones*, programs for children at Convention, and a variety of local programs. These programs can be a foundation from which there can be expansion and growth. An

important part of the needed growth is a widespread commitment to the importance of programs for children and families (as well as programs for youth—another very important area).

More responses to the survey questionnaire are welcome! Only a few suggestions have been mentioned; many other thought-provoking ideas can be found in the composite of responses. For copies of the questionnaire and/or composite of responses you may contact: Rev. Dr. Ted Klein, Children's and Family Ministry Programs, 273 Perham Street, West Roxbury, MA 02132.



# Weekend Impressions: Closeted with the Cabinet

Patte LeVan

As new editor of *The Messenger*, I was asked to attend the October 15-17 Cabinet meeting in Newton, Massachusetts, to get to know the members and see how the Cabinet works.

The Cabinet is composed of the chairpeople of the six Support Units and the Chair of the Council of Ministers. It meets under the chairmanship of the president of General Convention for the purpose of determining and structuring the programs of Convention.

There is something a little formidable about the word Cabinet, and I suppose part of me was prepared to feel intimidated since some of these people's church roots go back several generations. My anxieties were dispelled, however, when John Perry picked me up at Newton Corner to taxi me to the Central Office of the General Convention. John is treasurer of Convention and chair of the Financial and Physical Resources Support Unit. His brother, Fred, is vice-president of Convention. They are in fact third-generation Swedenborgians. Their grandfather was Rev. John Whitehead, who was involved in Convention in the late 1800s, but most of their family have been deeply involved laity. The brothers are former research and development engineers who are devoting even more time to our church since they retired. There is about each of them an air of benevolent practicality that is reminiscent of the angel in the old James Stewart film, *"It's A Wonderful Life"*.

Through the main entryway of the 80-year-old mansion that houses the Swedenborg School of Religion and the Central Office, a bust of Swedenborg on the right gazes benignly at a copy machine on the left. We climb up to the third floor where everyone who has already arrived is having a home-cooked meal at a long table at one end of the office. Most of them I've met

only once at Convention, but the warmth and jokes give me the feeling that I'm a treasured member of the family. Muff Worden, in her red, blue and yellow parrot earrings, with a smile and voice that can fill (or empty) a hall, as I am to discover when she

◇  
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and jokes  
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of the family.  
◇

emits a wild YOO-HOO to summon the troops. Hard to describe, it's beyond a mere yodel, not blood curdling enough for a Comanche war cry, but the effect is galvanizing. A sign over the kitchen sink says: WASH YOUR OWN DISHES NOW! YOUR MOTHER ISN'T HERE! Mother isn't, but Muff is and has been executive director of Central Office since 1984.

The Rev. Paul Zacharias, chair of the Council of Ministers, tall, quiet, blue eyes that seem to be contemplating an inner vision, reminisces about his nine years as *Messenger* editor, when he did everything himself in his home in Kitchener, Ontario.

Dorothy deB. Young, recording secretary of General Convention since 1984, a deceptively fragile-looking Dresden figure who has been a pillar of the Boston Society for years, a founder of an association for retarded citizens, and grandmother of twelve.

Downstairs in the large wood-paneled dining room the meeting is underway with vice-president Fred Perry presiding for president Randall Laakko who was ill and couldn't attend.

Carol Lawson, chair of the Communications Support Unit (COMSU), editor-in-chief of *Chrysalis*, former associate *Messenger* editor in late 50s early 60s, was unable to attend also, due to conflicting schedules. She is retired from a career with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), raised six children, and in her spare time puts together little projects like the Tarrytown Conference and the Swedenborg Exhibit at M.I.T.. I had met her at Temenos in late September, 1988. Each time we talked I felt warmed and inspired, and I miss her presence here.

Bill Etue, ten years in computers, chair of the Information Support Unit (IMSU), officer and active member in the Washington, D.C., church, hunches over his lap-computer like a parent in closed circuit intimate conversation with his child. Sharp, funny, "user friendly", he is dedicated to helping Convention ministries develop a computer network to enhance their communication. His dream is for everybody in Convention to be IBM-compatible (whether they're compatible with each other or not is probably somebody else's department). He says he "flies in like Batman" when he gets a computer SOS; and after an encouraging chat with him I came away feeling even I could learn to use a computer.

The Rev. Richard Tafel, Jr., tall, energetic, is chair of Pastoral Ministries Support Unit (PMSU), editor of *Our Daily Bread*, pastor of Kemper Road Center for Religious Development, camp director, volunteer fireman, counselor, former chair of the Council of Ministers, total in-the-moment enthusiasm. When he is articulating an idea his own intensity often propels him out of his chair and he paces



around the table, large expressive hands describing along with his words. Likes to give off-the-wall answers, but admits when he's wrong, seems scrupulously fair, tough-minded, dedicated to bringing maximum fun to his ministry.

Chris Laitner, chair, Growth and Outreach Support Unit (GOSU), is also the current president of the Almont New Church Assembly in Michigan. Short red hair, warm smile and voice, open, master's degree in music, she is music teacher in an elementary school in Gladwin, Michigan, population 5,000. She grew up in the church, her grandfather was a convert and a reader of Swedenborg. What was it like, growing up in the church, I asked her. She says she went through the usual

John Spalding's *An Introduction to Swedenborg's Religious Thought*, when she was a senior in high school. She feels Swedenborgian doctrines can and should be turned into more easily accessible language for ordinary people to grasp. She talks about her work, how much she enjoys it. I'm thinking how lucky those kids in Gladwin are to have a teacher of that caliber.

Martha Richardson from Fryeburg, Maine, is chair of the Education Support Unit and president of the Sunday School Association. She came into the church at age 21 to learn to teach Sunday School and stepped into a whole new world. She has two grown children, one at home. Soft brown eyes and unlikely accent that she insists is typically Maine. Martha speaks openly of the pain of divorce after 24 years of marriage and the stages of growth she went through and is still moving through to regain peace of mind. Her strong belief that God's plan for her is unfolding as it should, has seen her through. She radiates the kind of strength and optimism that you can only get by walking through the pain.

The meeting was to go from Friday night to Sunday noon. Lengthy meetings are tiring, and this was no exception in terms of the body on the chair for so many hours, but the attitude here was one of openness, acceptance and support; a real eagerness to hear each other's input.

I was told that these discussions around the table, people being able to talk like this, was a recent phenomenon. Before the reorganization, there was top-heavy management, duplication of effort, people would be working almost in a vacuum by themselves and discussion never spilled over. Support units were created to streamline the process and create a format in which ordinary church members could have more of an impact with their ideas. For instance, let's say that you as a church

member think of something innovative that your church ought to be doing. You send the idea to the president of Convention; he receives it and gives it to the appropriate Support Unit who

◇  
*What I was  
watching  
was a new level of  
communication . . .*  
◇

then assists you in finding a "dream-weaver" to help you get a proposal in shape to present to the Cabinet. There's increased responsibility and accountability on the part of the administration to hear and process an idea. The people who are making decisions about what to do are also the people who are going to do much of the work, so there is built-in accountability.

What I was watching was a new level of communication, and the synergy created when the heads of the Support Units are able to put a problem out on the table, get all the points of view, clarify it, and prioritize it in the here and now.

I am aware that we are in a new age—an age of creative communication with the goal of achieving true community. There is a format here and quality-people to make it happen.

As I'm leaving, I see a poster in the living room: "*Community is the native environment of the human spirit.*"

◇  
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a real eagerness  
to hear  
each other's  
input.*  
◇

process people do, between 16 and 30, wondering whether there's any rhyme or reason to what you believe. The first book that made any sense to her was



# A Course In Miracles

## *My Experience*

Marian Kirven

When I was a librarian, articles and reviews began coming over my desk which referred to *A Course in Miracles*. I began to be curious what it was. When I saw an ad in the Interface catalogue for a ten-week class in *A Course in Miracles*, I decided to take it. That was in the Fall of 1985. I took it and I liked it.

The first session included a two-part film on how *A Course in Miracles* (ACIM) came to be. It was dictated through Helen Schucman, a professor of medical psychology at Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York City. Helen describes herself in the preface to the textbook as: psychologist, educator, conservative in theory and atheistic in

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*... what a  
 tremendous change  
 they would go  
 through;  
 for this is  
 the miracle  
 that the course  
 offers.*  
 ◇

belief. The head of her department, Bill Thetford, was tired of the aggressive and angry attitudes in the work-setting and he wanted Helen to join with him in finding another way. Helen agreed to help him, little realizing what a tremendous change they would both go through; for this is the miracle that the course offers. She began having symbolic dreams and seeing strange

images. She was recording these experiences in a journal when she found herself writing, 'This is a course in miracles . . .' and was introduced to the Inner Voice. Helen took dictation from the Voice over a period of years, while continuing to work and keep to her normal routine. Thetford encouraged her efforts. Other people became interested and helped get the dictation into manuscript form. They were reading it and were inspired and thought it should be published.

*A Course in Miracles* is a 1,200-page, three-volume work. At the close of that first class session, we were instructed to begin our reading. It was difficult to understand in places but I always found it interesting. The feeling I had from reading it was: 'Ah! Updated Christianity for the twentieth century.' I do not feel that it is contrary to Swedenborg's teachings (except perhaps on reincarnation), rather it is a way of using our Christian concepts to expand our worldview to take in all of God's creation seen and unseen. It is about miracles and how to recognize them by expanding your concept. Students of the course generally begin to recognize miracles in and around their lives. I do. As I read, I underlined the quotes that really spoke to me. I offer some of them to you here: "The goal of the curriculum, regardless of the teacher you choose, is 'Know thyself.'" "Wrong Decisions have no power, because they are not true." "The extension of God's Being is spirit's only function." "Alone we can do nothing, but together our minds fuse into something whose power is far beyond the power of its separate parts." "On this journey you have chosen me as your companion instead of the ego." "You cannot change laws you did not make, and the laws of happiness were created for you, not by you." "... you do not understand how lofty the Holy Spirit's perception of you really is." "If you choose to see yourself

as unloving you will not be happy." "Whenever you question your value, say: 'God Himself is incomplete without me.'"

◇  
*"... you do not  
 understand  
 how lofty  
 the Holy Spirit's  
 perception of you  
 really is."*  
 ◇

"This is the only thing that you need do for vision, happiness, release from pain and the complete escape from sin, all to be given you. Say only this, but mean it with no reservations, for here the power of salvation lies:

I am responsible for what I see. I choose the feelings I experience, and I decide upon the goal I would achieve. And everything that seems to happen to me I ask for, and receive as I have asked." (417-8)

Both Schucman and Thetford have entered the spiritual world, but they have left us a great gift.

*A Course in Miracles* is published by Foundation for Inner Peace, P.O. Box 635, Tiburon, California 94920.

(Editor's Note: This is the first in a series of personal experience articles on the use of *A Course in Miracles* as it relates to Swedenborgian concepts. If you are using the course, please let us hear from you.)



## Tools For Regeneration

*"What we thought was the horizon of our potential turns out to be only the foreground."*

Marilyn Ferguson, *The Aquarian Conspiracy*

## The Therapeutic Journal

A journal is not new. The "diary" is a worldwide phenomenon and has been used by many for centuries. Both words have the same dictionary meaning, "a book of days". However, the journal of today is an entirely modern concept. It is not like the rigid diary of years past nor like a travelogue which one writes while on a holiday. Today's journal is a psychological tool that can be used as a positive adjunct to other therapies in the healing process. Moreover, it can be a way of developing one's potential and a means for connecting with the taproot of creative inner resources in health as well as illness.

Carl Jung, Marion Milner, Ira Progoff, and Anais Nin are among those who have conceptualized the principles of modern journal writing. They recognized the need for people to reflect upon knowledge that comes from within.

We have only begun to grasp the potential benefits of journal work. Reports state that parts of the mind such as memory, intuition, imagination, dream imagery, and other creative faculties are helped to unfold and develop. These are mainly right brain functions. The educational focus of culture and society have been on the left brain, many times at the expense of right brain activities. Modern science has indicated that the so-called masculine and feminine ways of thinking are merely different functions, of the two sides of the brain. The left side is rational, linear, verbal, logical, and conscious while the right side communicates in symbols and images, is non-linear, intuitive, creative, and subconscious. The two sides can be balanced through journal writing for it is a process of expression and reflection. With the blending of the rational with the intuitive faculties, an enormous and wonderful energy is released into our lives. One can discover solutions to problems, practice creative abilities, and enter into and value life and living. It can help one understand the past,

discover joy in the present, and create the future.

Journal writing is the only form of writing that promotes complete freedom of expression. It is private in nature with no formal rules of structure, content or style. There is no "right way" to do it, only limitless possibilities. It is up to you to discover your own special way. And as your needs change, your methods will change. But, essential to the process are self honesty, a willingness to take imaginative risks, experiment, play, be open to adventure and pursue your own path. In so doing, you will be creating and re-creating yourself.

### Suggested Devices for Writing:

1. Catharsis - an emotional outpouring, release. Uses emotional language.
2. Description - reproduces reality as it is, better than it is, worse than it is. Uses sensual, intellectual language.
3. Free-Intuitive Writing - releases the voice of the subconscious, gives a message from inner consciousness. Uses intuitive language.
4. Reflection - an observation of the process of one's life. Tends to deal with the overall, general perspective. Mostly in intellectual language.

### Suggested Techniques for Writing:

1. Lists - help focus problems, make them finite.
2. Portraits - a form of description of self or other.
3. Map of Consciousness - graphic images, drawings of what is in the mind.
4. Guided Imagery - taps right brain, like day dreaming. Meditate on

ideal setting that represents beauty and tranquility.

5. Altered Point of View - write about self as "he or she" or try to understand someone else by writing about them as "I".
6. Unsented Letter - usually written to people with an emotional significance in your life. Can be written to any *thing* as well as any *one*.
7. Dialogue - a conversation with yourself to help you gain insight into a person, event, or subject. Can give understanding on how body and mind interact.

### Ways to Begin:

Write fast. Forget all requirements and restrictions about writing. Flow, spontaneity, and intuition are key words. Do not plan what you are going to do. Discover what you have done once you have done it. Write to yourself. You are the creator and the audience. If you have difficulty getting started, try to express the present moment in image, feeling, or descriptive form. You might ask yourself the following questions:

- Where are you in your life now?
- How do you live?
- What are you thinking, feeling, experiencing?
- What do you desire?
- What do you fear?
- What do you value?
- Whom do you care about?
- What is the significance of the present moment in the context of your life?
- What is changing in your life?
- What is changing in you?

*From: The New Diary, Tristine Rainer, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1978.*

*Editor's Note: If you are keeping a journal for your own personal/spiritual growth, please let us hear how it has worked for you, or send in any tips you might want to pass along to other journal writers.*



## ON FUNDRAISING

## Deferred Giving

Dorothea Harvey

Appeals for deferred giving come from many sources—schools, colleges, almost every group that appeals for funds at all. To me they seemed geared to the very wealthy only, something to skim by on the way to a small direct gift to a school I had attended. My experience this past year has changed my awareness.

When my father came to America to study for the ministry, he wanted one place as permanent. He found a piece of property in Essex County, Massachusetts, very like his native Essex in England. This he bought and built a home on it, finishing it in 1904. A road later divided one third of the property from the rest. By 1987, property values in Massachusetts had risen to an amazing extent. I was having trouble taking care of all the grass and brush, and so I sold the land across the road to an eager buyer.

Then I talked to Jerry Poole at the Swedenborg School of Religion (SSR) Board of Managers' meeting. He arranged for me to make a deferred gift of \$90,000 to SSR. In return, I will

receive for as long as I live (and as long as my brother lives, if he outlives me), a charitable gift annuity of \$525 per month. My gift to SSR was helpful in lowering my income tax for 1987 and up to the next five years. The income also has a lower tax rate than that of a commercial investment because it is from a charitable gift annuity. The School also benefits before my death in that the \$90,000 is appreciating in value, and normally pays a greater return than the guaranteed monthly income I receive, as well as growing to be a bigger asset in the end.

The benefits to me include my relief that someone else who knows more than I is taking care of my investment, my sense of security in the good regular income, my knowledge that I am supporting theological education as well as the IRS in the transaction, making a difference in my culture beyond simple income, and my joy in making my own decision as to how my assets are used.

In my experience, deferred giving is not for the very wealthy only. It benefits both the giver and the receiver from the beginning. It works.

*(The Rev. Dr. Dorothea Harvey is former Chaplain and Professor of Religion at Urbana University and has recently retired. The foregoing is the first of monthly columns to be run on various aspects of fundraising.)*

## Love Does Such Things

Christianity holds  
that the infinite God,  
in the person of Jesus  
at a point in time,  
crossed an unimaginable borderline  
and personally entered history.

Before  
such an undreamable dream  
the intellect falters.  
It was at this point  
that a friend gave me a clue  
that helped my understanding  
more than any measure  
of bare reason  
He said:  
"But love does such things."

Author Unknown

*(Reprinted from BEST FRIENDS newsletter October 1988. Serve International, 120 Interstate North Parkway East Suite 404, Atlanta, GA 30339.)*

## Women's Alliance

## From the Alliance Treasurer

Dear Members and Friends:

I thank each of you for your generous help with the 1988 annual appeal of the Alliance of New Church Women. The contributions totalled \$2,467.00.

We made contributions this year to the following activities:

- Urbana University Library
- Church Women United
- Convention Baby Sitting
- Church Camps (5)
- *The Messenger*

In addition, after hearing the inspiring reports of the young people's retreats, we decided to double our contribution this year to the New Church Youth League. We continue to help Kei Torita in her ministry in Japan, and we have given the Harvey Chapel at Urbana University a communion service.

A tenth of the money coming from Contributing Memberships and General Contributions (\$142.00) was sent to Church World Service Crop Fund to help alleviate world hunger.

Again, I want to thank all of you who have made this such a successful year for your Alliance.

Mary C. Ebel,  
Treasurer

## FLASH!

Pawnee Rock, Kansas, parish celebrated their Centennial November 6. We'll be hearing about their Ladies Service Alliance in the February issue. If their Alliance is as old as the parish, we should have some great news.



# New Faces

Mary Kay Klein

The Swedenborg School of Religion (SSR) was pleased to welcome seven new students this year. Four of them will be working towards ordination in General Convention, one towards ordination in the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, and two are taking courses for personal interest.

Dr. Reuben Bell has been taking four courses at SSR while commuting from Fryeburg, Maine. He is an osteopathic physician with an active general practice in Fryeburg. He is working toward ordination with the ultimate goal of attaining a doctorate in Swedenborgian theology. These studies will hopefully lead to a career in education, where he can combine the disciplines of medicine and theology.

Eric Hoffman, a first-year student working towards ordination in General Convention, completed a B.A. in Zoology at Ohio State in 1987. He and his wife Norma, were married in July, 1988 and now reside at SSR. While in Ohio, Eric designed a dinosaur exhibit for the Center of Science and Industry. He is now writing a comic book which he hopes to incorporate into his future ministry. Eric is working part-time at a pet store in Newtonville to finance his first year at SSR.

Pam Shuttleworth, a 1988 Urbana University graduate, initiated a peer support group while at Urbana University. While working towards her associate degree at Edison State she completed an internship at an alcoholism center in Greenville. Her long-term goal is parish ministry; she hopes to integrate counseling with her other activities as a parish minister within General Convention.

Dr. Wilma Wake has been admitted as an advanced student. She received her Ph.D. in Social Foundations of Education at the University of Maryland in 1976. More recently she completed her M.Div., with an emphasis on Pastoral Counseling, from the Episcopal Divinity School. She expects to finish her M.S.W. from Boston University in December, and is cur-

rently working on her thesis for a D.Min. at Episcopal Divinity School. She plans to work as a social worker while completing her work at SSR. She hopes to be ordained in General Convention and to establish a wholistic center in the Concord, New Hampshire area.

Nancy Daniels is a graduate of Virginia State College. She lives in Cambridge with her daughter Veronica, who is now in fifth grade. She is house manager for the Hildebrand Outreach Center in Cambridge, a home for the homeless. She plans to study at SSR for two years before going on to prepare for ministry in the AME Church. She has a strong long-term interest in Swedenborg.

◆  
*... we have  
been blessed by  
the new students  
who have joined  
us this fall.*  
◆

Ken Mills is a member of the Yarmouthport Church who commutes from Cape Cod to take both Systematic Theology and Introduction to Bible at SSR. At this time he is a student for personal interest rather than because he is seeking ordination.

Jane Perry is also taking courses for personal interest, to find feedback and interaction that she could not get on her own in the effort to understand more about God and Swedenborg. She has been commuting from Malden. Jane will soon be leaving for Nashville to pursue her career in theatre.

The faculty, the ongoing students, and I feel we have been very blessed by the new students who have joined us this fall. We look forward to a happy and productive school year together.

## Ask Swedenborg!

by George Dole

### What About Women?

**Q:** What did Swedenborg think about women?  
(Submitted by Mark Roser, Beverly Shores, Indiana)

**A:** In his private life, Swedenborg was twice disappointed in his hopes to marry; and late in his life was apparently confident that a particular bride awaited him in the spiritual world. He was known to have a courtly manner with women, and to enjoy their company.

For his theological views, we must combine two kinds of source. The most explicit treatment of the sexes comes in Marriage Love, where there is considerable stress on the differences between them. He describes women as being, so to speak, inwardly wise and outwardly loving, and men as being the reverse. He accords leadership to men in intellectual matters, and to women in matters of affection. He also makes it abundantly clear that nothing is so destructive of marriage as the desire of either partner to rule over the other.

This treatment of the differences must, I believe, be read in the context of the rest of his works, in which he characteristically writes about "the individual" (*homo*) who is to be regenerated, and makes no distinctions of gender. Both men and women will go through periods when the understanding must seem to rule, and both are designed for a heaven where love rules. We must also bear in mind his repeated statements that no two individuals are alike.

To sum up, I find Swedenborg saying that there are real differences between the sexes, differences which are designed to be complementary rather than competitive. I find him also saying that there are also profound similarities, and that every individual is created to differ in some manner from any stereotype we might imagine. And finally, I find him saying that the purpose of the differences and the similarities is mutual appreciation—that we are equally created for the sake of the other.

◆  
*Do you have a question? Jot it down and send it to The Messenger.*



## Commencements

### Baptism

**Kinder** — Karl Michael Kinder, second son of Gordon and Chris Kinder was baptized into the Christian faith, February 14, 1988, at the Church of the Open Word, St. Louis, Missouri, the Rev. David L. Rienstra officiating.

### Confirmation

**Hollweger** — David Hollweger was confirmed into the life of the General Convention of Swedenborgian Churches September 25, 1988, at the Church of the Open Word, St. Louis, Missouri, the Rev. David L. Rienstra officiating.

### Marriage

**McClendon and Tafel** — Diana Lynn McClendon and David Immanuel Tafel were united in marriage, September 24, 1988, at the Wayfarers Chapel in Rancho Palos Verdes, California. The groom's father, Rev. Harvey A. Tafel, celebrated the wedding.

### Emanuel Swedenborg

Once flashed across this earthly span  
Heroic figure of a man,  
Wise in the world, yet undefiled  
And sweet and gentle as a child.

His genius bridged the centuries,  
Too close to judge immensities,  
A future day, a larger age  
Can better his superbness gauge

Who dared to take the final leap  
Across the vast ethereal deep  
To prove this thing that men call death  
But liberating of the breath

Freed to pursue the homeward way  
Divested of its feet of clay,  
As simple as antithesis  
Of butterfly and chrysalis.

Serene upon the crest of time,  
Alone in quest of the sublime,  
There wait the precepts of his pen,  
A challenge to the souls of men.

—Marie D'Autremont Gerry

**Gabell and Hewitt** — Kiersten Renee Gabell and Christopher David Hewitt were united in marriage October 21, 1988, at the Church of the Holy City in Wilmington, Delaware, the Rev. Ernest O. Martin officiating.

**Singles and Sinopoli** — Anne Singles and Dominick Sinopoli were united in Christian marriage October 29, 1988, at the Church of the Holy City, Wilmington, Delaware, the Rev. Randall E. Laakko officiating.

### Deaths

**Wilson** — John E. Wilson, husband of Mrs. Bonnie Wilson, and member of the Church of the Open Word, St. Louis, Missouri, entered the spiritual world, October 8, 1988. A memorial service was conducted October 10, 1988, by the Rev. David L. Rienstra

**General Convention of the New Jerusalem**  
**The Messenger**  
48 Sargent Street  
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