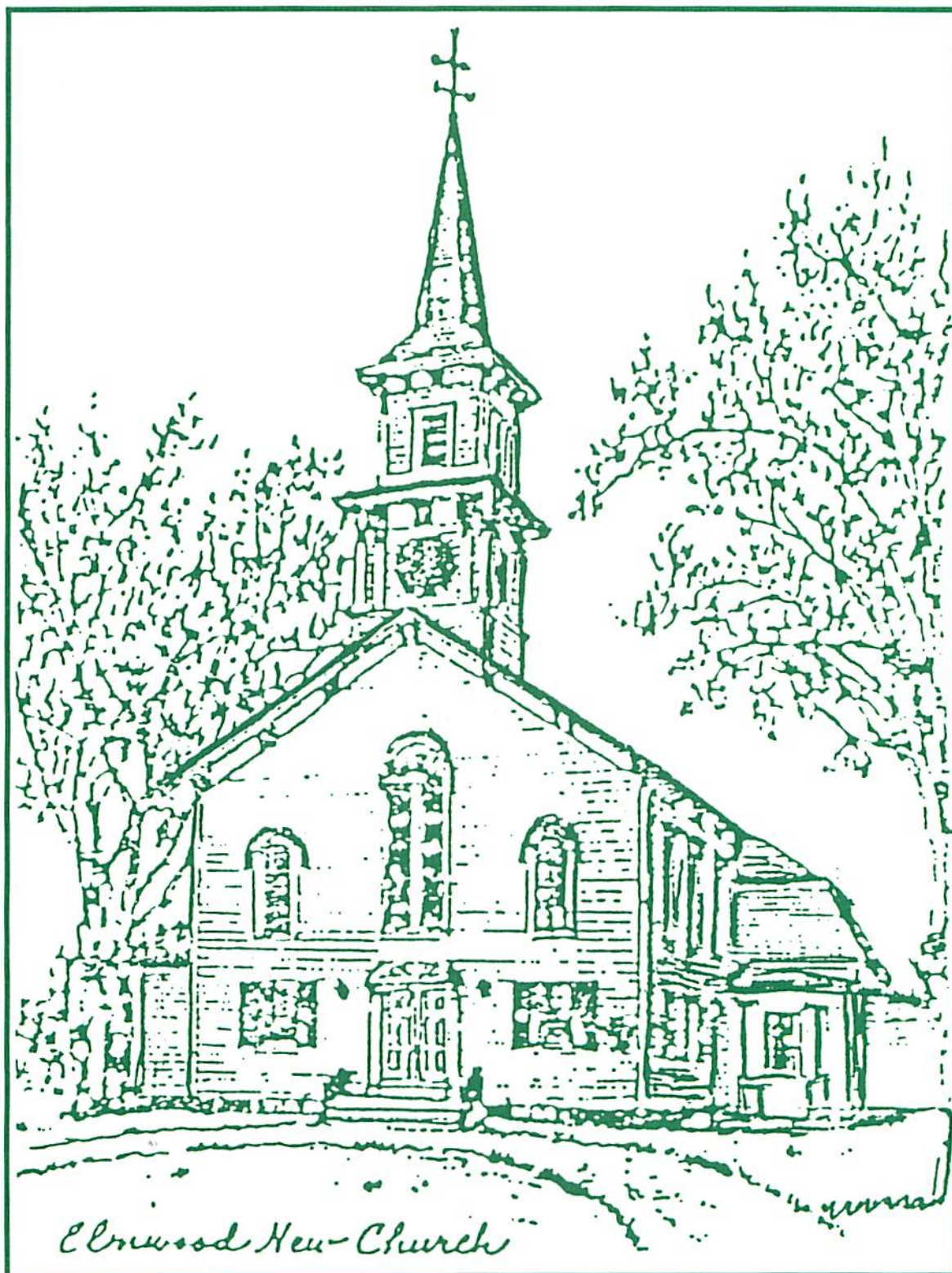


Official  
Publication,  
Swedenborgian Church  
of  
North America

# The Messenger

December 1991



The Elmwood New Church (Swedenborgian), Elmwood, Massachusetts



## Contents

- 159** A Christmas Story  
*Donna Keane*
- 160** Who is the Lord  
*James F. Lawrence*
- 161** Prayersong  
*Ron Kaye*
- 162** What Do We Do, When We Hear The Cry?  
*Henry Korsten*
- 163** Planned Giving  
*Duane Beougher*
- 164** Doings in London  
*Madeline G. Waters*
- 166** New Van Dusen Book Furthers  
J. Appleseed & Co.'s Vision  
*James F. Lawrence*
- 169** The Swedenborg Board Returns!  
*Steve Koke*

## Departments

- 164** The President Reports  
*Richard H. Tafel, Jr.*
- 167** Opinion
- 170** Book Reviews
- 171** Commencements

Cover: *The Elmwood Church of the New Jerusalem, 20 West Street, Elmwood, Massachusetts. Established in 1831.*

## The Messenger

Publisher: The Communications Support Unit

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

December 1991  
Volume 211, No. 11  
Whole Number 5165

Patte LeVan, *Editor*  
Linda Mahler,  
*Town and Country Press,*  
*Layout and typesetting*

### Editorial Address:

The Messenger  
1592 N. 400 W.  
LaPorte, IN 46350

### Business & Subscription Address:

Central Office  
48 Sargent Street  
Newton, MA 02158

The opinions of the contributors do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or the Communications 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.

## Moving Toward the Light

### Egad!

*Guest Editorial by Gard Perry*

A cartoon pictures a wealthy but tired old dowager saying to her husband, "Egad, Henry, here is Christmas at our throats again." What a way to approach Christmas! Yet, if your response is anything like mine, there might be something in you that identifies with her feeling.

I used to approach Christmas with mixed feelings around the issue of exchanging gifts between me and my parents and brothers and other loved ones. There was a kind of pressure I felt and a confusion around how, in the exchange of gifts, to express the value I gave the relationship and the hope I had for the season. This can be a problem for a person who doesn't like to shop.

Until, that is, I learned that I didn't have to try to wrap up all those feelings in the exchange of gifts! My brother Clark confirmed this for me, when I noticed that his gift one year to my mother was a 16-ounce bag of granola. At first I thought, what a lousy gift. Then I saw the sincerity and simplicity with which it was given and received.

It didn't take me long to try on Clark's outlook as my own. I started by baking cookies, and giving them in wrapped oatmeal containers. This year I think the theme will be the gift to each family member of an appropriate photograph that I have taken during the past year.

Adopting this practice has given me some freedom—internal time and space—to listen to the underlying currents in the Advent season. My ear can now be more tuned to the sound that accompanies spiritual birth. My eye can be more seeing into the light and shadows out of which hidden things come forth.

Sometimes a spiritual experience can happen unbidden. I attended the 1989 Christmas Pageant at the Fryeburg New Church, during which I was moved by the closing scene. The lights went out, and in that moment, with the children in their roles gathered around the manger, the Lord was born. And, that year, that moment became a point of knowing the Lord had been born in my heart.

Other times, spiritual experience may be nurtured by a turning to the Lord in prayer on a daily basis. One can ask to be connected with the spiritual processes underlying the events of Advent and Christmas.

In 1979 Bob and Marian Kirven sent a Christmas card with a poem, "Christmas Meeting," composed by Bob and written in calligraphy. It speaks to my need to get beyond the *Egad!* experience to the inner hearing that comes with Advent. I share part of it with *Messenger* readers now.

*(continued on page 165)*



# A Christmas Story

Donna Keane

She was tired, worried, scared, alone. It was all so confusing, the divorce, selling the house, the vastness of tasks to be completed before the final door was shut on the land of dreams and heartache.

And Christmas was coming. Christmas was here, and she had done no shopping, she had made no plans, except to try to get through it like any other day as she had for the past few months. So, she did what she had been told to do for all these months, she called someone in AA and told her how she felt, what she was thinking, and that she was afraid she might drink in the incredible, intense aloneness that this Christmas promised for her.

The woman was kind, and said, "Come to my house for Christmas." Others had offered, but it just wouldn't be the same as being in her own home with her own things and family. She was so tired and just wanted to rest.

Then, Christmas Eve was here. Somehow, the days had passed, the nights—oh, the never-ending nights had been gotten through—and Christmas Eve was here. What to do? So much of her wanted just to hide, to stay home and cry all alone. But AA had taught her in these past months that being alone was dangerous, that she was not a good judge of roommates when she was by herself; that, left to her own devices, her best thinking had gotten her into this mess, this alcoholism, and that her thinking now was not much better than it had been when she stumbled into her first meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous.

So, she called her sponsor and went to a meeting. As the meeting ended, the tears sprang up behind her eyes, and she said to some friends, "I can't go home yet, I don't trust myself not to drink." And so, they took her to an all-night AA meeting held on the other side of town, where the street people and the low-bottom drunks were sitting side-by-

side with folks in diamonds and furs, all trying to stay sober during the eve of the birth of the Savior.

It felt so strange, no one mentioned Jesus, or Christmas Eve, or anything about salvation. But, during the hours of sitting and listening to other alcoholics talk about their drinking and their recovery and the miracle of what AA had done for their lives, the miracle happened for her. She felt at peace, at one with the people in the room. A great sense of serenity seemed to pass into her body and her heart, and she said to her friends, "I can go home now, I'm going to be OK."

And she was. Not that the struggles with the chaos of her life went away, but she knew from that time forward that the power greater than herself who had brought her into the program and had reached into her heart that Christmas Eve would be there to support and guide her through all the tough times. People helped, the meetings helped, and the grace of God worked through every aspect of her being as she struggled to accept her alcoholism, to acknowledge God as an ever-present source of strength and love who could restore her to sanity. She decided to turn her life and her will over to the care of God and to see what happened.

As she worked through the steps of recovery and became freer from the bondage of the past, exciting promises of a new way of life started coming true. She was no longer alone and afraid. She began to believe that her living and her being mattered, that she had been created for a purpose.

As she worked and lived, she continued to search her heart for a way in which to share the wondrous joy of God's gift of life and love and sobriety. She stayed close to the AA meetings and helped other people in the same way she had been helped. She worked hard at being a better person, to give up the other addictions of her life—to things, to securi-

ty, to perfection. And at each step of the way, as things got hard, or seemed impossible, the power greater than herself, the God who had brought her a moment of grace, continued to hold out to her the never-ending assurance of love and life, if she would only follow the directions of the program of AA and be faithful to the covenant.

And she did. The miracle of that Christmas Eve became a continuing presence of God in her life. A God she had never known before, a God of faithfulness, and consistency, and compassion. So, she became a worker for this wondrous, benevolent giver of sobriety and life. And each Christmas Eve since the first Christmas Eve so long ago, she hugs the secret to her heart of the moment of birth of her new life. She sings the songs of her childhood, and reads the story of the birth of Jesus to Mary and Joseph so long ago. And she knows that the birth still continues, each day, all over the world when the lost, and the frightened, and the hopeless feel the power of the moment of love in their hearts. It is a miracle which cannot be measured in science or sociology.

It is also a paradox. If this miracle has happened to people, then they don't need to be told about it. If it hasn't happened yet, then all the words God ever invented cannot describe the exquisite experience. But the miracle needs to be shared, to be testified to in community with other people who know and understand the power of the miracle, so that new people can come and listen to the story and receive the gift, and old-timers can come and renew the immediacy of the wonder of the gift.

The story of the birth of the Lord is told over and over, each Christmas Eve, and the miracle continues. Tell the story, share the joy, and join with others who may be hopeless, lost, or lonely, to keep the miracle alive in all of us.

*The Rev. Dr. Donna Keane is minister of the Elmwood, Massachusetts Swedenborgian Church.*



# Who

# is

# the

# Lord?

James F. Lawrence

Speaking recently to a man contemplating entering the ministry, we fell into talking about the practical aids available to us for our spiritual regeneration. When I mentioned developing a personal inner relationship with the Lord, he quickly said that didn't work for him and that he struggled with the role Jesus played in his everyday spirituality—or in other words, he said, he had not made peace with what is known in Swedenborgian theology as the Doctrine of the Lord.

Adding this to many other conversations in recent years, it has been my growing contention that the area in which modern Christians have the biggest questions regarding their spiritual life is how to relate to Jesus Christ. It is a very challenging part of Christianity, for it is unique among the great world faiths in laying a primary emphasis upon relationship with a Person who is no longer living in this world. Buddha, Muhammad, Confucious, Lao Tzu—none of these are considered Divine-Human figures by the adherents of the religion which bears their name and stamp.

## *Two Profiles*

As a way to map out the territory in brief compass, let us look at two extreme profiles among consciously Christian people in their style of relating to the Lord. One is false intimacy, and the other is exaggerated detachment. As true extremes fully existing in one person, they are not necessarily very common, but as

tendencies toward them at times in many of us, they are so common that we all instinctively recognize them. Surely, we all have encountered the false intimacy profile;

such a person is perpetually having detailed and casual conversations with

the Lord, of such a breezy and trivial nature and with so many instances of the Lord telling them this and the Lord telling them that, that Moses would be positively jealous. And so often in these situations, one can't help wondering why the Lord doesn't just give them some earnest advice on getting their act together. Clearly, seen in its more extreme form, such people (and perhaps any of us at times) project onto a psychic ideation of God a wish-fulfillment that the Lord is a bit of an easy chap who happily indulges our every whim and even sanctions our most telling spiritual weaknesses. In Transactional Analysis terms, it is a Child-Child relationship.

The other and opposite extreme profile can't be rendered easily in Transactional Analysis terms, for it is scarcely a relationship at all. Actually a common, mostly intellectual *modus operandi* through the ages, this profile goes by the name of Deism and subsists entirely on an intellectual recognition that some larger scheme is in evidence and has probably been purposely placed into

action by some Providence, but the essence of that Providence cannot be personally known, as it holds itself aloof from its creation. Therefore, this profile, too, can easily involve projection, since a person who fears relationship in general will tend to project their own aloofness onto God.

Between such extremes of false intimacy and exaggerated detachment, where are you? Do you have a personal interaction with What and Whom you know as God? And if you want to build and develop a treasure such as a real and functioning conscious relationship with the Lord, how are we to go about it?

## *Swedenborg and the Lord*

Being a Swedenborgian church,

and especially because his own conscious relationship with the Lord was so legendary, it may be helpful to begin with a recognition that Swedenborg's own personal relationship with the Lord was the central reality of the revelations that make up the doctrines of the New Church. From page one of the Arcana, he makes it abundantly plain that he knows the Lord relationally as a Person, and that there is no other way to have a truly depthful relationship with God. But even as he brings forth the new doctrines directly from the Lord, the writings still grant us a wide latitude in how we pursue a relationship with the Lord, gently leaving us in considerable freedom to devise our own personal, and perhaps even idiosyncratic, way.

Swedenborg's journey was unique and cannot be used as our standard, and even to invoke his own experience is to declare in advance the existence of the Wizard of Oz. But my whole premise for exploring this



topic is that most of us dwell in Munchkinland, where only a few tantalizing yellow bricks are in evidence, and we don't know how much to read into them and for that matter we kind of question the whole enterprise of Wizard-hunting in the first place.

Is there truly such a thing as "the Lord" and are we really supposed to have some kind of conscious, reciprocal, interactive relationship with It, Him, Her? Can intelligent people really carry this off with integrity in the modern age, or are such types of religious folk more like affable ol' Jimmy Stewart and his invisible friend, Harvey?

### *Subtle Encounters With the Lord*

They say there are no atheists in foxholes, and while that may be poetic hyperbole I do often wonder if most people do not, in fact, have a way of talking to the universe with at least some sense of being heard and of being responded to. Especially under high stress or in danger, it seems so natural for a voice deep in the human breast to yell out to something greater, Someone who should be minding the store and who might offer back something helpful, even if shrouded in silence.

Or what about those times when we experience real joy or peace—how many of us so naturally utter a thanks to the Great Whatever is Out There, with a clear feeling in the moment that the thanks is received? Or again, how many people can commit sins without a strange inner sense of having to answer to something higher and greater, that our sin is Known somewhere? A conscious relationship with God begins with just such inklings, and will mature if the dynamics of that mustard-seed of a relationship are treated as real as any human-to-human relationship. The basic requirement at the head of the yellow brick road, then, is an acknowledgment of those funny nudges, taking seriously that occasional sense that something Other is present.

A conscious relationship can also flourish eventually from the simple beginning point of recognizing that a greater Ideal or Value than oneself is afoot in the universe, and being

devoted to that. If the conscious choice is made to live for peace, live for love, live for truth, live for some good quality and to believe this is more important than one's own self-aggrandizement, then a conscious relationship with the Lord has perhaps begun; at least by the lights by which I understand Swedenborgian theology. For if such great goods as love, peace, and truth are loved for their own sake and are held as higher realities than self-advancement, then such a person has already fallen in love with the perfume of the divine. They have said "yes" when it counts and where it matters.

When such a person passes into the spiritual world upon physical death, according to Swedenborg, they will instinctively migrate to the house of the Lord and will not resist a more fully clear relationship with the Lord as they begin to understand that all they love and hold dear emanates from and has its source in the Lord.

So if you see yourself as one who really tries to lead a good life and make positive contributions, but who struggles with the exhortation to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, be encouraged to *keep at the struggle*. You may already be getting quite well-acquainted with the tuck and roll of the Lord's native homeland.

Ultimately, relationship is what it is all about. By ourselves, we are nothing. To be truly alone in life, cut off from the interactive magic of life, is to be in a hellish state; an aching, black void imploding upon itself. All good religion encourages healthy relationship with the rest of life, but the genius of Christianity is the ultimate step to which this exalted principle is taken; There is One who is far more Conscious than we can ever be Who is already relating to us in more intimate and perfect ways than we can conceive. This exciting Relationship is there for the taking, though it is up to us to consciously join the effort in making it worthwhile and satisfying. To receive the awesome joy and meaningfulness of this Relationship is simply our birthright.

*The Rev. Dr. James F. Lawrence is co-minister with his wife, Rachel, at the San Francisco Swedenborgian Church.*

## PRAYERSONG...

Once was a child who lived in a man  
And taught him to laugh and to dance with glee;  
taught him to weep at the death of a rose,  
To fear and to hope and to strive to be free.

Gave him some light to shine on his path  
And a love for the darkness, lingering near;  
Showed a place that was gentle and still  
And could not be reached by his pain nor his fear.

Once was a God who lived in the child  
Who lived in the man and taught him so well,  
And the three shared one voice, and one heart, and one Love,  
And this is the tale the three wanted to tell:

"Oh the time we have wasted, our wisdom to prove,  
And the clatter and din of the thoughts that we spray  
Are shadowed and mocked by one moment, so still,  
That bursts from the night and gives birth to the day.

In birdsong is wisdom; the soft morning rain  
That brushes the sleep from the grasses and vines;  
These are the gifts you may take if you will,  
For these are the best of the things that are mine.

And if you would shine with the greatness within,  
To be One with the God and the Child and the Man,  
Still then your voice, and hear the soft rain  
When it speaks to the trees and the grasses again."

When the silence bestills all the words in your life,  
And the frantic ideas run, swift from your head,  
The three then shall speak, sharing all that they know,

And,  
"Love is All"  
is all that they said!

Ron Kaye  
1991



# What Do We Do, When We Hear The Cry?

*And many were sternly telling him to be quiet, but he began crying out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" And Jesus stopped and said, "Call him here," and they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take courage, arise! He is calling for you."*

MARK 10:48, 49

Henry Korsten

In the 84 years since the first annual meeting of the Western Canada Conference, many changes have occurred. Gone are the horse and buggies; in are the fast cars. One would assume that more people would be at these annual events, because getting around is so much easier these days. Am I dreaming?

At the mid-winter executive meeting, Sharon Slough shared her concern with us about the dwindling number of people attending these meetings. She mentioned that when she was younger there were 80 to 100 members gathering together once a year. Last year the number had dwindled to 28.

Of course there are many reasons why the number of members is getting smaller and smaller. But we can deduce that gradually over the years WCC and the different Societies in WCC have not contributed to the spirituality of people, if the number of members are any indication. We in WCC just haven't been in tune with the need of people in search of their own spirituality or a spiritual relationship with the Divinity of the Lord.

We must ask ourselves the question, what happened over the years, that we have missed or failed to do in WCC? Have we perhaps become snug in our Swedenborgian teach-

ings, rather than having been active in sharing those teachings with non-members? Have we missed the point that these teachings lead to the Lord Jesus Christ?

Are we kidding ourselves when we come up with all sorts of excuses, which we are apt to call legitimate reasons? Are these excuses an escape from what the Lord really wants us to do? We know that He wants us to be helpful to the blind, the people who want to understand their own relationship to the Divinity of the Lord God. But are we listening to their cry?

Have we failed to recognize that we are followers of Christ and that Swedenborg has given us some keys to the understanding of the spiritual relationship between man and the Lord's Divinity? Are we more Swedenborgians than Christians? Or are we Christians pure and simple?

Perhaps our intentions are well meant, but are our actions in harmony with the intentions?

Perhaps the old Swedenborgian teachings are so inbred in our minds, that we are out of touch with the present-day reality. The reality is that many of the old Swedenborgian teachings are often expressed in modern-day language and in a modern-day setting by authors in their popular books and in their

sought-after lectures.

Indeed, many people's need to discover what spirituality really means has not changed. However, the means by which spirituality can be discovered has greatly expanded since Swedenborg published his books. Are we content with Swedenborg's writings in a closed and exclusive small group of people, and perhaps paying lip service to what Swedenborg actually teaches?

Have we become narrow-minded and really don't want to know about Swedenborg's idea of a New Church? A New Church, and a new spirituality that will permeate throughout the world and can be found everywhere?

A New Church which is not contained in just one religious organization or another?

A New Church that is not bound by ritual.

A New Church that will be proclaimed by many individual persons. Do we see Swedenborg's teachings as our insurance policy towards heaven, that can be safely stored in the vault of our organization without it being disturbed? Perhaps we do hear the blind man cry for help and wish that he would be quiet and not disturb our insurance policy.

But he began crying out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"



Could it be that Swedenborg's teachings are in need of a new approach? An approach that is based on our own personal convictions of the church's teachings?

Could it be that we need to become much more involved as individuals in sharing with others our personal relationship with the Lord God? Wasn't it Swedenborg who wrote that all religion pertains to life, and that the purpose of life is to do good?

When I think about the history of our organization, wasn't it the personal convictions and actions of the membership in the early years that provided for the growth of the organization? Are we at the present time resting on the laurels of these pioneers of the church? Aren't we using the trust funds which those early pioneers endowed the organization with?

And Jesus stopped and said, "Call him here," and they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take courage, arise! He is calling you."

Indeed, it was Swedenborg's purpose to encourage his readers to hear the Lord's call. Isn't our obligation as members of the Swedenborgian Church to take up that purpose in ways that we can? We are not as gifted as Swedenborg, we must admit. Nevertheless, each and every one of us has specific talents. Talents which should be used in all the areas of modern-day living if we are at all serious about our church's teachings.

"Take courage, arise! He is calling you," can be brought to many people in many different ways. It is up to each and every one of us to help the blind man in approaching the Lord. It is up to us to make our organization strong again in the realization that it is the Lord, who

will make the blind man see.

Let us hear the cry for help.

Let us become inventive with the church's teachings and apply them in our own daily lives to encourage others in their search for eternal life.

Let us follow Swedenborg's example by becoming more deeply involved with our fellowmen, using our knowledge and gifts so that we too may say, "Take courage, arise! He is calling you."

May the Lord be able to use our church organization as a way for people to be helped by Him in understanding His Divine Love and Wisdom for all mankind.

May the Lord bless our intentions and our active involvement in our church organization.

*The Rev. Henry Korsten is minister to the Edmonton Swedenborgian Church, Alberta, Canada. Reprinted from Conference newsletter.*

## Planned Giving



ABOVE: Duane Beougher, Mary Kay Klein, and Betsy Young posing before the Colorado Rockies while attending the Planned Giving School in Colorado Springs, July 29-August 2. The attendees learned how to better make use of planned giving to support the Joint Fund Drive for the Swedenborg School of Religion and General Convention.

Many people would like to make a major gift or endowment to the church and theological school that

has provided them with guidance, insight and inspiration throughout their lives. However, for most

Americans, such a gift may seem beyond their means.

Many who are not necessarily wealthy do acquire sizable estates that they eventually pass to others. This may include such things as life insurance and real estate, as well as traditional savings and investments.

Unfortunately, the probate process often involves larger sums being taken by federal and state governments through estate and inheritance taxes, and other costs. It is ironic that the same governments also provide ways to diminish these losses.

By good estate planning, including in many cases the use of planned giving programs, larger portions of a person's estate may be saved from taxes and pass to the people and charitable organizations they would like to benefit.

Planned giving may be a way to make today's wish possible in the future. For more information, please contact Jerry Poole, Dick Tafel, Pete Toot, Mary Kay Klein, Duane Beougher or Betsy Young.

—Duane Beougher



## The President Reports

I bring you season's greetings and wishes for a joy-filled Christmas and rewarding New Year.

I am happy to share with all of you that we have three new first-year students at our theological school, making six in total. The new students are Kit Billings and Renee Billings-Morris from Cleveland, and Kinichi Kunieda from Japan. They join second-year student Pavel Heger from Czechoslovakia, and fourth-year students Eric Hoffman and Pan Shuttleworth, both from Ohio.

Plans for the revised Temenos project are proceeding. Cost estimates are being obtained and a five-year plan is being updated. The denomination has reaffirmed its acceptance of the Philadelphia church's continued involvement in this ministry and their financial investment of \$750,000.

Exciting things are happening throughout the church. I had the honor of installing Rev. Ken Turley as pastor of the Swedenborgian Church in Portland, Maine. There were over forty people in attendance that Sunday, most of whom are new to our church within the last year. The Portland church is one of the churches receiving focused attention from our Pastoral Ministries Support Unit. It appears that we are beginning to see the dividends.

This Advent Season reminds us of the love of the Lord for his people. The Lord came into our history and lives as the Babe of Bethlehem, and His gift of acceptance, love and forgiveness transcends time. One way we may accept this universal gift of the Lord is to make a gift of our own. As we exchange gifts between family members and friends, let us think about giving a gift to the Lord as well. This could be in the form of an extra contribution to the church's Annual Appeal or a capital funds gift to our church or theological school, or making a specific bequest to the church through our wills.

Merry Christmas to all and Happy New Year! The cup is still half full!



Richard H. Tafel, Jr., President

## Doings in London

The 181st Annual Meeting of the Swedenborg Society took place in Swedenborg Hall, London, May 16, 1991, conducted by President Dr. Freda G. Griffith. Attention was given to how to meet requests for books and help from countries such as Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Russia and other parts of the Soviet Union. The knowledge of Swedenborg in Africa and Asia is developing also and likely to expand. These matters were brought to the attention of the Society by Mr. Norman Petterson, chairman of the Council.

Mr. Norman Turner, Honorary Treasurer, reported some large legacies. In addition to two legacies of under £20,000, there had been a further installment from the William Washington White estate of £56,000, about half the total bequest, and the extremely generous legacy from the late Rev. Frank Fairlie Coulson valued at £288,000. The market value of the Society's investment portfolio has topped £1,000,000—a milestone.

New officers elected are Mr. Richard Lines, MA, as President, and Dr. Freda Griffith as Vice-President. Mr. Norman Turner was re-elected Honorary Treasurer.

Dr. Griffith gave her address entitled 'President's Potpourri,' and, following her paper, spoke of her very close involvement with the Society over a period of some fifty years.

*Madeline G. Waters, Secretary  
The Swedenborg Society  
20/21 Bloomsbury Way  
London WC1A 2th, England*

## From the Archives . . .

### Christmas 1944

The stars a'Twinkling. The moonlight blessing. Shepherds drowsing. A manger waiting. Prophecy fulfilling. O Holy night!

The Kingdom coming. God descending. The Babe appearing. The mother smiling. Heaven opening. The angels choiring . . .

But what doth it profit us if Christ be borne in Bethlehem and not in the stable of our hearts?

Wishing you and Hazel  
true Christmas joy.

Henry Knoll

*"Christmas 1944" was written by a New Church man in New York to the Rev. and Mrs. Henry Arends in Minnesota. Contributed by Eugene Carlson of Knoxville, Iowa.*



## Moving Toward the Light

(Continued from page 158)

*I said I was too busy; that was true.  
The world has always more that must  
be done*

*Than I can do and still have time  
to get*

*To Bethlehem to see my Lord-  
who-waits*

*So silently and undemandingly  
For me to stop and listen and take  
time.*

*But timing by a brighter star  
And hearing in an inward ear  
I stopped and stood and turned and  
came*

*To Bethlehem and found my Lord  
Right where the prophets said he'd  
be—*

*Alone, neglected, in a spot  
I'd not had time to notice yet,  
Where traffic was too loud to  
hear*

*His silent loving call to me,  
Where busy people might not  
be—*

*And stopping at the stable now,  
Ready to turn in to praise,  
I meet you coming down the street  
To the same place in this same time!*

### OH COME LET US ADORE HIM!

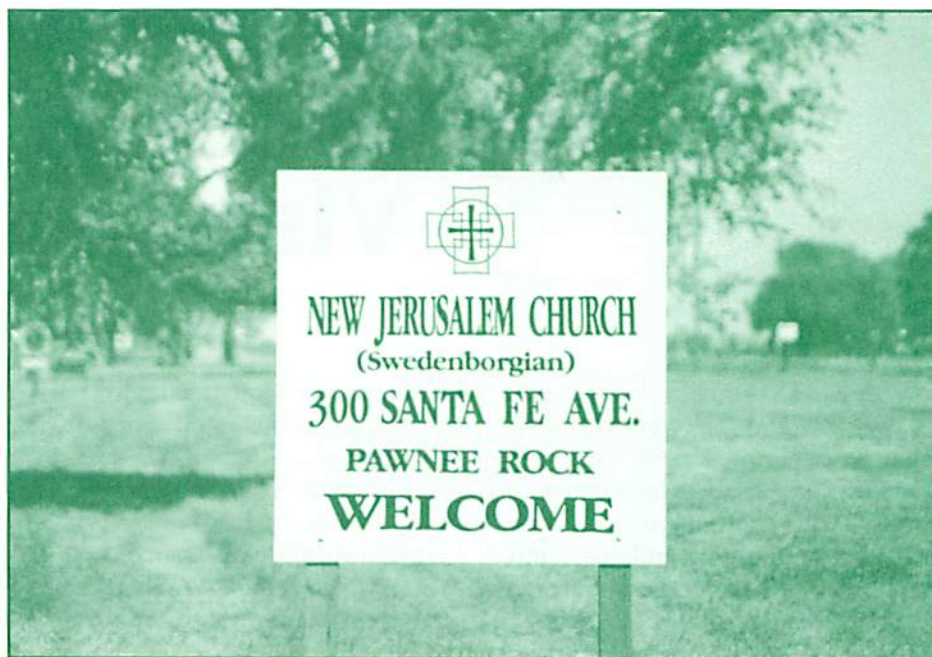
*The Rev. Dr. F. Gardiner Perry III is minister to  
the Fryeburg, Maine Swedenborgian Church.*

The SWEDENBORG FOUNDATION invites you to use our toll-free number for ordering your holiday gift books. Call and ask for our latest catalog. Visa, Mastercard, and American Express gladly accepted. Thank you and Happy Holidays!

**1-800-366-7310**

Practical, Profound, Joyful. Give the gift of *Chrysalis*, Journal of the Swedenborg Foundation, to your loved ones. Subscriptions are \$20.00.

# WAY TO GO!



The Pawnee Rock Swedenborgian Church in Kansas has erected two beautiful new highway signs at both ends of the town to welcome visitors and acquaint them with the New Jerusalem Church. This outreach project was recently completed by the Growth Committee.

*How should a person repent? . . . by examining  
oneself, recognizing and acknowledging one's sins,  
praying to the Lord, and beginning a new life.*

True Christian Religion

## The Women's Alliance Mite Box 1992

*will support*

### The Twelve-Step Work of the Rev. Dr. Wilma Wake

*Step 11: Sought through prayer and meditation to  
improve our conscious contact with God . . . praying  
only for knowledge of His will for us and the power  
to carry it out.*



# New Van Dusen Book Further J. Appleseed & Co.'s Vision

James F. Lawrence

With the December release of *The Country of Spirit*, selected writings from the career of Wilson Van Dusen, a long-awaited book becomes available. Dr. Van Dusen is not new to the Swedenborgian audience, and all of the essays in the book have been published under other covers, but taken as a collection *The Country of Spirit* provides an exciting new volume for lovers of Van Dusen's powerful perspective on Swedenborg and spiritual practice.

The project began with a frustration that only two books existed from Wilson Van Dusen's creative pen—both highly acclaimed by scholars and laity alike. A case can certainly be made that *The Presence of Other Worlds* is the most successful book ever published in reaching new audiences with a Swedenborgian perspective, other than Swedenborg's works themselves. I have personally known of at least six people who feel that their lives changed through a growth experience engendered by reading this book. In addition to those, another two dozen or so readers have expressed an enthusiasm for Van Dusen's work far surpassing the reaction I am accustomed to in Swedenborgian publishing.

Let it suffice to say that I wish many more volumes had flowed from the intense and questing spirit of Wilson Van Dusen. Some four years ago I approached Dr. Van Dusen "in retirement" with a proposal for writing a new book, which he accepted and worked at for eighteen months, but without satisfaction in the effort. During that period, I

became better acquainted with him and learned of his significant publishing largesse—some seventy items covering thirty years and appearing in a potpourri of magazines and journals. Admittedly, many were Swedenborgian publications in both of the main American branches of the New Church.

In reading through them, I realized two things that led to the development of *The Country of Spirit*. First, in many articles, his special and unique voice spoke just as powerfully as his books. Secondly, it was evident that his particular mystical slant on Swedenborg and on the religious quest in general was developed as early as 1958. Though nuanced and modified in the succeeding three decades, the unmistakable "Van Dusenish" way of spirituality is consistently explored throughout this period.

If a dozen or so of these pieces could be presented under one cover, I realized that this could be the "new Van Dusen book." *The Country of Spirit* is the result of this lengthy process; a sharpened focus on approaching Swedenborg, spiritual practice, and mystical perception. This is now available to individual readers and to Swedenborgian centers around the world.

J. Appleseed & Co. is committed to a central goal: the publication and distribution of contemporary works presenting and interpreting a dynamic and relevant Swedenborgian spirituality. *The Country of Spirit* joins two other books and a lovely glossy pamphlet in a growing family of publications. In the thirty months

of J. Appleseed's still fledgling existence, some five thousand books have been sold (mostly to book centers and retailers), and two articles on Swedenborg have been successfully placed in "outside" spiritual magazines.

Slated for publication in 1992 are a second edition of the popular *Awaken from Death*, with a new introduction by near-death scholar Kenneth Ring, and a new volume especially targeted for our wedding ministries on a Swedenborgian view of marriage.

*The Rev. James F. Lawrence is director of J. Appleseed & Co., the publishing outreach arm of the Swedenborgian Church, and co-minister with his wife, Rachel, of the San Francisco church.*

## COME TO FLORIDA!

Swedenborg House in DeLand has a cottage available at reasonable rates for Swedenborgians traveling in Florida. One hour from Disney World in Orlando, and thirty minutes from the beach! For more information call (904) 734-7378, or write to:

Revs. Skuli Thorhallsson and  
Deborah Winter  
Swedenborg House  
825 W. Mercer's Fernery Road  
DeLand, FL 32720



## Opinion

*In this section of the Messenger we are pleased to present the varied views of our readers. Letters published here do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Editor, the Communications Support Unit or the General Council of the Swedenborgian Church. Published letters may be edited for brevity and clarity.*

*When you see an opinion with which you disagree, please send your own views to the Editor so that The Messenger can be a forum for individual viewpoints. We welcome letters on all pertinent topics.*

### Social Action Concerns Committee Status

Dear Editor,

I would like to express my appreciation to Carol S. Lawson for her September 1991 *Messenger*, Letter To the Editor inquiring about SACC. It is reassuring to hear that Swedenborgians care about the church's role in social concerns. Perhaps she might consider contributing her expertise in the area of writing to SACC study projects and communicate her ideas and needs directly to SACC.

SACC has gone through many changes since Cabinet approval in 1988 as an official Convention committee under the wings of the Education Support Unit (EDSU). Before

SACC had been endorsed by the Cabinet, a volunteer Ad Hoc social concerns committee started up work on active concerns in 1984. Our main goal was to compose the proposal for endorsement, develop the committee infrastructure, and to begin small-scale programming.

Before these goals were achieved, the Ad Hoc committee was supported and in some cases asked to develop programs on social issues by the Council of Ministers, the Swedenborgian Delegation to the National Council of Churches, The New Church Youth League, the Women's Alliance, local churches, Associations, and individuals. These referrals, embraced by the Ad Hoc Committee, reaffirmed with great enthusiasm the need and support from within Convention for a social concerns committee. Previous *Messenger* articles report on those Ad Hoc and SACC activities, including Convention mini-courses and booths on child abuse prevention, South Africa, 12-Step recovery programs, AIDS awareness, the Agape House, the death penalty, and the Beacon House; a food distribution program supported by the Wayfarers Chapel. Because of the excitement and commitment to programming, SACC's infrastructural needs were often put on the back burner, such as committee members' tasks, length of duty, procedures for filling offices, etc. We did, however,

achieve Cabinet approval and began operating as the Convention committee, SACC, in 1988.

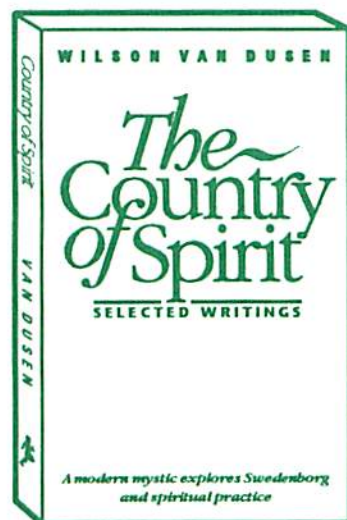
Many of the Ad Hoc committee members stayed aboard to serve SACC. In these early years we provided good programming, produced meaningful editions of *Loaves and Fishes*, raised important questions concerning our philosophy, goals, and operating procedures. I am grateful for their commitment, perseverance, and sense of humor. This group of people, with meager resources, came together with a common vision and made it a reality.

It is not so difficult to understand that after serving on the Ad Hoc committee and SACC, the original committee was experiencing symptoms of burnout. In 1990 Bill Etue and Susan Weiss left Convention due to personal frustrations with the denomination. Rev. Judith Dennis chose not to renew her involvement in order to pursue other ministries. Wendy Little, the NCYL representative, maintains her enthusiasm and commitment to SACC. Yet, the time arrived to open her office to another leaguer. I, also, felt it appropriate to pass on the torch.

The SACC's chair appoints committee members from a pool of volunteers with the ultimate approval of EDSU. Facing the loss of the original committee, I took on the challenge

*(continued on page 168)*

## JUST PUBLISHED



# The Country of Spirit

SELECTED WRITINGS

by Wilson Van Dusen



J. Appleseed & Co. 3200 Washington Street, San Francisco, CA 94115

Lovers of Van Dusen's work will  
enjoy this new collection of  
essential writings.

List Price: \$5.95 plus postage

**Special  
Introductory Offer  
from the publisher  
\$5 postpaid**

Please make your check payable to:

J. Appleseed & Co.  
3200 Washington Street  
San Francisco, Ca 94115



## Opinion

(continued from page 167)

of forming a new group with EDSU's assistance.

In summer 1990, Rev. Carl Yenetchi agreed to serve as chair and editor of *Loaves and Fishes*. Betty Yenetchi became secretary/treasurer and I shifted to program consultant. The NCYL Representative will be elected by the leaguers at this winter's retreat. We are asking volunteers interested in serving as members-at-large. Rev. George Dole is research consultant, Rev. Stephen Pultz is NCYL consultant and Loring Young serves as consultant for youth in the military. Due to Rev. Ken Turley's withdrawal as chair of the worship committee, we hope the new chair will agree to be our consultant. We also hope to have consultants from the Women's Alliance and other Convention groups interested in participating in social concerns ministries.

In the midst of this committee reformation, the Cabinet put a freeze on SACC's budget. SACC's accountability and role as advocate were in question. This resulted in stopping all activity of SACC, including preparations for the death penalty issue to be addressed at convention in Ontario. Consequently, SACC's resources this past calendar year were consumed in the fight to rescind the freeze. After long deliberations and written documents to EDSU and the Cabinet, the freeze was lifted in May, 1991. Perhaps, The Rev. Robert McCluskey's observation that, "The whole idea of religion having a direct relationship on people's actual lives was so frightening that SACC was effectively dissolved"<sup>1</sup> is a wish only applicable to some in Convention. For I am pleased to announce that SACC is here, in action and more determined than ever to continue its activities.

A fundamental goal of SACC, which is in the SACC proposal endorsed by the Cabinet, remains top on our priority list. SACC and EDSU believe that SACC should be granted Support Unit status for several reasons: (1) If SACC became a Support Unit it would lighten EDSU's already full agenda and free SACC

from going through two hoops—EDSU and the Cabinet—for budget and program approval. (2) SACC would have a voice on the Cabinet, thus communication and accountability would be direct (eliminating the need for EDSU to translate to the Cabinet SACC's agenda and progress). (3) Elections, according to due process at convention, would become the procedure by which SACC Committee positions would be filled, thus increasing equal participation and representation from the Convention body. We hope that the Cabinet will see the wisdom in this and soon grant our request for Support Unit status.

SACC will be meeting this fall with a full agenda. We encourage your feedback, are available to help churches and Associations start social concerns committees and will gladly receive materials for *Loaves and Fishes*. Please send your communications to Rev. Carl Yenetchi, c/o The Wayfarers Chapel.

Once again, I thank all of you who support SACC and we look forward to many years ahead of progressive and productive work in the areas of peace and justice ministries as SACC moves into its second phase of growth.

*Susan Turley-Moore*  
San Francisco, California

<sup>1</sup>McCluskey, Robert Rev., "On The Fence," Sermon delivered at the 167th Annual Convention, Ontario, June 30, 1991.

## SACC

To the Editor:

What the Cabinet asked of the SACC Committee was that it help our Societies and individuals to study all sides of social issues. The objective would be to enable Swedenborgians as individuals to take informed individual action. This is clearly an educational function.

*Carol S. Lawson*  
Buckingham County, Virginia

## Clarification & Corrections

Dear Editor,

I am writing in response to the September *Messenger* with a clarification, two corrections, and an alternative for your readers. First the clarification. The sermon I delivered

at convention in Kitchener was based on the following Scriptural references: Genesis 12:1-7; 13:14-18, and Revelation 21:1-5, 22-27. Now to the corrections. In the summary of my sermon, at the top of the third column on page 118, the sentence reads: "Rather, in the Holy City, there is one temple" it should read, "... there is *no* temple." (The reference here is to Rev. 21:22) Secondly, and unrelated to my sermon, the article on page 117 by Susanne Lorraine cites John 12:2 as the source for the phrase "In my Father's house are many rooms." The correct source is John 14:2. And finally, the alternative: should any of your readers find the \$2 charge for a full copy of my sermon a hardship, I would be happy to send them a copy if they simply write or phone me at the church. Thank you for this opportunity to inform your readers.

Sincerely,  
*Rev. Robert McCluskey*  
New York Swedenborgian Church  
New York, NY 10016  
(212) 685-8967

## SWEDENBORG FOUNDATION NEW YORK CITY

- Publisher and distributor of Swedenborgian and related literature since 1850
- Non-sectarian center for dissemination of Swedenborgian thought
- Contact point for Swedenborgians all over the world

The Swedenborg Foundation seeks an

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

to manage its operation, interact with the public, and work with the board of directors to build support for its programs.

Candidates must demonstrate expertise in administration and ability to work with volunteers. Solid background in publishing and marketing essential. Experience in fund raising desirable. Sensitivity to budget limitations a must.

Interested individuals should send a resume and salary history to: John R. Seekamp, Vice President, Swedenborg Foundation, 139 East 23rd Street, New York, New York 10010, 212/673-7310.



# The Swedenborg Board Returns!

Steve Koke

The Swedenborg Board is an electronic bulletin board system, called a BBS for short, that acts like a post office. A computer runs the Board and receives messages that you would like to leave for others. The people you leave these messages for can then call in and read their messages on their own computer screens and reply to you. Texts and documents can also be exchanged this way, and with proper planning, committee meetings can be held, possibly saving expensive airfare. The Board has more details. Contacting the Board requires a computer, a modem, and telecommunications software. A modem is a device for channeling messages to and from your computer through a telephone line.

If you have access to the equipment, almost the entire world is open to you. There are networks consisting of linked bulletin board systems through most of the world. The volume of "mail" that passes through these systems every day is astronomical. In addition, news and information services are available where thousands of people pick up the latest news, have articles compiled for them from media services and major newspapers, join continuing "conferences" on selected fields of interest, or just leave messages for friends.

The Swedenborg Board was started a few years ago by Muff Worden, who operated it out of Convention's Central Office in Newton. One unfortunate day an electrician flipped the wrong switches at the wrong time in the basement and literally fried the computer. Now, after three years, my struggles with a new field of expertise, and high hopes, the

Board has been revived in my home in California. It is a Convention-sponsored *utility*, available to anyone in the church and to interested religious seekers, for business, pleasure, or education. If you have the equipment, please use the Board. It's habit-forming and extremely social, just to start with.

By the time you read this, the Board will have joined one of several networks of BBSs that extend throughout North America and overseas. We will try to make contact with Swedenborgians in the British Isles, the European mainland, Australia, and any other place where Swedenborgians are engaged in this kind of communication. International conversations may be a common feature of the Board, and messages can be read by all other users unless determined by the sender to be private. This allows discussions to pull in many different people.

Please call, through your telecommunications software, (916) 432-4279, during the following hours:

East coast: 8:00 P.M. to 11:00 A.M. the next morning, Tuesdays through Saturdays, but ending at 10:00 A.M. Sunday morning.

West coast: 5:00 P.M. to 8:00 A.M. the next morning, Tuesdays through Saturdays, but ending at 7:00 A.M. Sunday morning.

These times are equivalent. For other time zones just add or subtract the appropriate number of hours.

*Steve Koke is a member of the San Francisco Swedenborgian Church and serves nationally on the Information Management Support Unit.*

## New 1991 Fryeburg Lectures

### The Leading Edge In Swedenborgian Theology

For years the Fryeburg New Church Assembly Annual Lecture Series has been noted as the place where some of the best current thinking in Swedenborgian themes happens.

Once again, these sessions have been put on cassette tapes for general distribution. Now you can listen to the leading edge in contemporary Swedenborgian theology while driving to work, relaxing at home, or as part of a discussion group. Donate a new 1991 set to your church's library as a future resource!

### The Story of David

- David and Goliath* (Ken Turley)
- Courage, Fear and Jealousy* (Ted Klein)
- Our Church in Czechoslovakia* (Pavel Heger)
- Loss and New Life* (Ted Klein)
- War Between the Houses of David and Saul* (Bill Woofenden)
- Bringing the Ark to Jerusalem* (Dorothea Harvey)
- Who Wants a King?* (George Dole)
- Nathan's Parable to David* (Bill Woofenden)
- David and Absalom* (George Dole)

### Growth Through Service

- Twelve-Step Programs and Spiritual Growth* (Wilma Wake)
- For Instance?* (George Dole)
- Martha and Mary—A Parable for Growth* (Robert McCluskey)
- Ways of Dealing with Evil* (Bill Woofenden)
- Checking Results* (George Dole)
- Use is Good* (Bob Kirven)
- Doctrine of Charity on 'Service'* (Bill Woofenden)
- What's the Use?* (Bob Kirven)
- When a Little Evil is a Good Thing* (Gard Perry)
- Is Growing Through Service an Impossible Ideal?* (Bill Woofenden)

The two weeks are \$20, only one dollar per 45-minute presentation! If you wish, you may order only one week.

Make your check out to:  
Church of the New Jerusalem  
4 Oxford Street  
Fryeburg, MI 04037

(Add \$2 per week for shipping and handling; total \$12 for one week, \$24 for two weeks.)



## Book Reviews

## Spiritual Growth and Inner Child Work

***How Can I Help? Stories And Reflections on Service***

Ram Dass and Paul Gorman  
New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987.  
Paper.

Ministry is a "helping profession," with a constant demand that the minister be concerned. Some of us become quite skilled at what the book calls "professional warmth," even to the point of deceiving ourselves—I'm reminded of the "vicar" in *Divine Providence* 109. *How Can I Help?* cuts through this professional morass, and does so without putting people down. To me, it is an irresistible mix of very real stories and compassionate insight. It is religious without being sectarian and psychologically acute without being doctrinaire. "Who we are . . . begins with the One. Unity, not separateness, is our starting point" (p. 40). There is a story on almost every page, usually in the first person, so statements like this are never relegated to the realm of pure theory. Many of the stories are heartrending, like that of the nurses in neonatal intensive care who decided to hold infants when the time came for them to die. When you move from that to read the comments that follow, "compassion" is not just a word you can look up in a dictionary. Ram Dass and Paul Gorman manage to write simply without oversimplification, which is no easy task. The result is a book with moment after moment of quite striking beauty, calling us to let go of our fears and give ourselves to it.

*Reviewed by George F. Dole*

***Illuminations of Hildegard of Bingen.***

Text by Hildegard of Bingen with  
Commentary by Matthew Fox  
Santa Fe, NM: Bear and  
Company, 1985. Paper

Hildegard of Bingen was a twelfth century mystic, teacher, theologian, poet, scientist, healer, and musician.

Like Swedenborg, in middle age she experienced a spiritual awakening. She wrote works describing visions of illuminations; under her direction, the illuminations were also painted to accompany the text. This book contains reproductions of twenty-five of her illuminations, many of which touch on familiar Swedenborgian themes: the human as microcosm of the macrocosm, the glory of creation, regeneration, the new heaven and the new earth. I was totally fascinated by her insights and found them changing and enlarging my understanding of spiritual reality. I would recommend this book to both clergy and lay persons who are looking for a spiritually enriching experience.

*Reviewed by Mary Kay Klein*

***Healing The Child Within, Discovery and Recovery For Adult Children Of Dysfunctional Families***

Charles L. Whitfield  
Deerfield Beach, FL: Health  
Communications, Inc., 1987,  
Paper.

Charles Whitfield describes a growth or recovery process where persons become free of dominance by their egos or false selves, and discover and heal their true selves or *children within*. Whitfield describes the dominance of a defensive ego with people who have grown up in dysfunctional families. The recovery program outlined takes effort and discipline, but brings release and joy as it moves into acceptance and unconditional love. With this approach we can learn to nurture ourselves, while also engaging the support of others in seeking to meet needs and express and share feelings. In confronting pains and losses, we can become aware of them, pass through them in experience, and let go of them. This growth goes with an increasing emergence of the *child within* who is loving, giving, compassionate, and expressive. Good resource for people involved in recovery programs and for helping professionals.

***Healing Your Aloneness, Finding Love and Wholeness Through Your Inner Child***

Erika J. Chopich and  
Margaret Paul  
San Francisco: Harper and Row,  
1990. Paper.

The authors describe the Inner Child as that in us which feels and experiences, the Inner Adult as that in us which thinks and acts. When the Inner Adult loves the Inner Child, they are in connection, and we are in wholeness. When the Inner Child is abandoned by caretakers and by the Inner Adult, there is great loneliness, and we can become driven by addictions and efforts to control others. Healing aloneness involves restoring and continuing to nurture the connection between the Inner Adult and the Inner Child. With this connecting, a higher self emerges and is responsive to our needs, freeing us to love others. The authors suggest a practice of daily dialogues between our Inner Adult and Inner Child, along with ways of finding support from professionals and others in recovery. Along with presenting some inclusive views of spirituality, the book provides much that can aid healing, and can be important for both self help and ministry to others.

***Homecoming: Reclaiming and Championing your Inner Child***

John Bradshaw  
New York, NY: Bantam  
Books, 1990.

For information on audio and video tapes contact Bradshaw Cassettes, P.O. Box 980547, Houston, Texas (713-529-9437). The book and tapes trace effects of a wounded inner child that extend into adult life, causing intense pain and dysfunction. The inner child is described as originally wonderful, and ways are developed to be in touch with the inner child. A program is presented for going back through each developmental stage and allowing the inner child to heal, then moving forward to integrate the child and adult sides of oneself.

*Reviewed by J. Theodore Klein*



## Book Reviews

### Children and Family Books for the Christmas Season

#### *Night Tree*

Eve Bunting

Illustrated by Ted Rand

On a cold Christmas Eve, a young boy and his family gather their supplies, pile into their pickup truck, and drive to Luke's Forest for their annual holiday visit. They greet their favorite tree like an old friend. By moonlight in the quiet forest, they decorate the tree with popcorn, apples, tangerines, and sunflower seed balls as a gift for the animals of the woods. Later, back home in bed, the boy imagines the birds, squirrels, opossums, raccoons, skunks—and maybe even a bear and a fox—feasting, singing, and celebrating around their tree on Christmas Day.

The realistic voice of the young narrator, the strength of the family bond, and the unusual holiday tradition show storyteller Eve Bunting at her heartwarming best. Ted Rand's luminous paintings capture the mood of a nighttime forest on Christmas Eve.

*Picture book, ages 4-8, 34 pages*

#### *Finding the Green Stone*

Alice Walker

Illustrated by Catherine Deeter

Johnny lives in a town where everyone owns a shiny green stone. He has one, too—until his mean-spirited behavior makes him lose it. His family and the whole town help him search for the stone. But, to find it, he alone must discover the "Bright green sun in his heart."

Alice Walker has written an original picture book for both children and adults that shows us we have the power within ourselves to find love, happiness, and friendship. Catherine Deeter's beautiful full-color illustrations are filled with the light and emotion of this moving tale.

*Alice Walker won the Pulitzer Prize and the American Book Award for her novel The Color Purple.*

*Picture book, all ages, 40 pages*

## Commencements

### Baptism

**Chaplin**—Julia Nicole Chaplin, daughter of Jeffrey and Diane (Swett) Chaplin, was baptized into the Christian faith October 13, 1991, at Church of the New Jerusalem, Fryeburg, Maine, the Rev. Gardiner Perry officiating.

### Confirmation

**Harnden, Lord and Lord**—Harmon E. Harnden, Katherine Lord and Walter E. Lord, III were confirmed into the life of the Swedenborgian Church October 20, 1991, at the Church of the New Jerusalem, Fryeburg, Maine, the Rev. Gardiner Perry officiating.

### Death

**Boivin**—Vivian A. (Mrs. Raymond) Boivin entered the spiritual world September 15, 1991, in Bridgton, Maine. Resurrection service was conducted September 18 at Wood Funeral Home, Fryeburg, Maine, the Rev. Gardiner Perry officiating.

### New Address

Peggy Regamey  
Springbrook Nursing Home  
300 Spring Street  
Westbrook, ME 04092

### Correction

Nancy Perry's phone number is incorrect in the 1991 *Journal*. The correct number is (603) 383-4286.

### Church Family News

The Rev. Dr. Wilma Wake's mother, Margaret Wake, died recently following a long bout with cancer. Everyone who knew her enjoyed her company and respected her courage. Wilma's address is:

Smith Hill Road, RFD 2  
W. Franklin, NH 03235

SSR President Mary Kay Klein's father, Joseph McKeon, had bypass surgery last Thursday in Albany, New York. He had major lung complications following the surgery but has since improved. A long recovery process is expected. Please include him in your prayers. The Klein's address is:

273 Perham Street  
W. Roxbury, MA 02132

Since last February the Rev. Edwin G. Capon has been serving the church in St. Paul on an interim, part-time basis. This usually means two long weekends a month, flying to St. Paul and back from Oakland, California. Next spring or summer the Capons may be moving to St. Paul. Besides Sunday services, Rev. Capon has already officiated at 10 weddings.



IN TWO THOUSAND YEARS, MILLIONS HAVE  
 FOLLOWED THE STAR, SEARCHED FOR THE  
 STABLE, DISCOVERED THE NEWBORN  
 CHILD... AND YET, FROM  
 GENERATION TO GENERATION,  
 ACROSS THE PASSING  
 CENTURIES, THE JOY NEVER  
 DIMS, THE GOOD NEWS  
 NEVER LOSES ITS POWER  
 TO BRING US TO OUR KNEES  
 IN ADORATION... FOR EACH TIME  
 A SEARCHING HEART FINDS  
 CHRIST THE SAVIOR, THE ANGELS SING,  
 HEAVEN REJOICES, AND CHRISTMAS,  
 BLESSED CHRISTMAS, COMES AGAIN...



*(F.J. Hoff)*

**The Swedenborgian Church  
 of North America  
*The Messenger*  
 48 Sargent Street  
 Newton, MA 02158**

**Non-profit  
 Organization  
 U.S. Postage  
 PAID  
 Plymouth, IN  
 Permit No. 105**

**Forwarding Address Correction Requested**

CENTRAL OFFICE  
 48 SARGENT ST  
 NEWTON MA 02158-2399