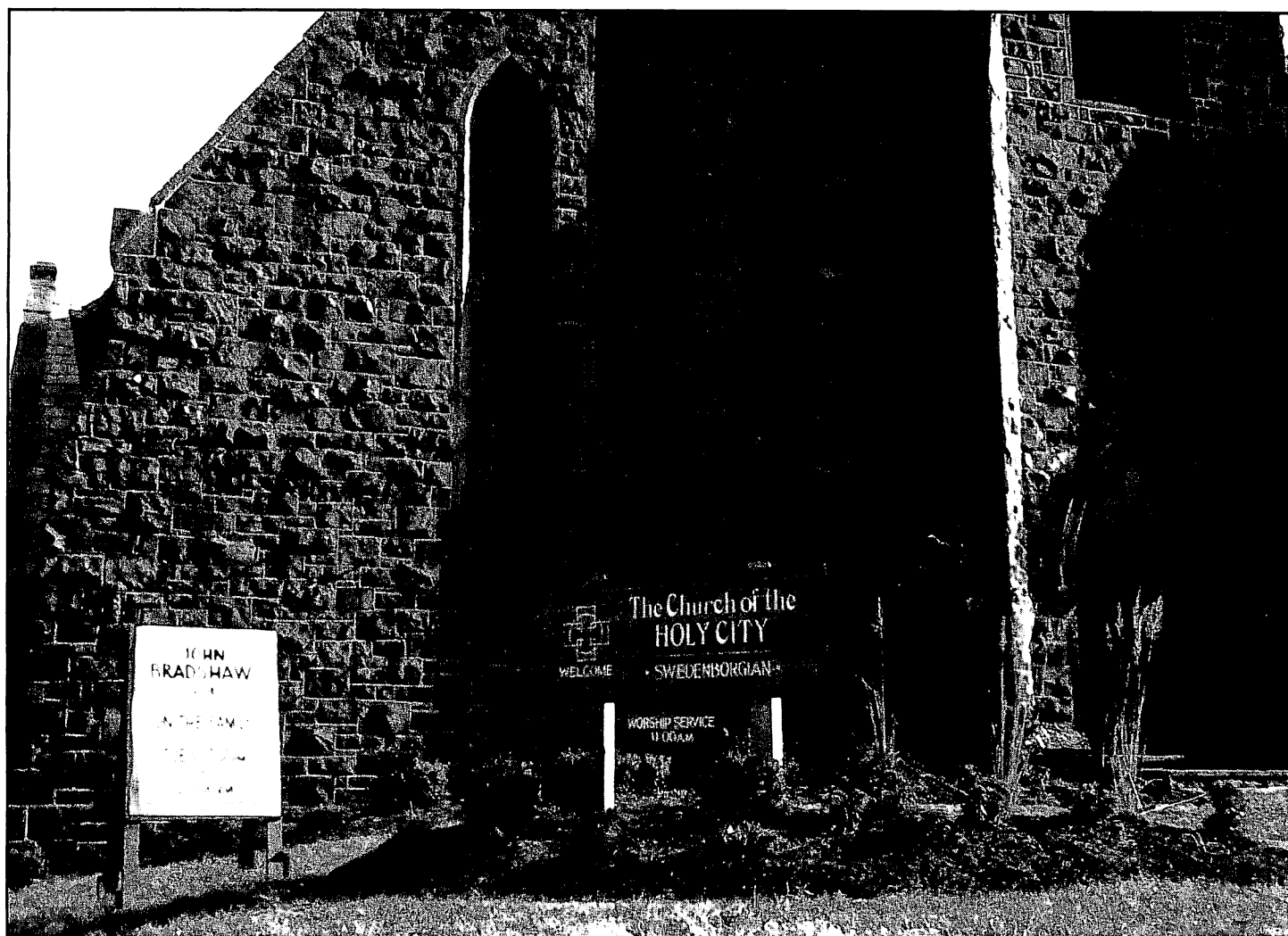


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# The Messenger

February 1992



**The Church of the Holy City  
Wilmington, Delaware**

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Cover: *The Wilmington, Delaware Swedenborgian Church (The Church of the Holy City), built in 1857. In 1916, the church was moved from the original downtown site and rebuilt stone by stone at its present location, 1118 N. Broom St.*

## The Messenger

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## Moving Toward the Light

The January *Messenger* was a special issue featuring articles describing joint efforts made over months, often years, by ministers, congregations, and the Pastoral Ministries Support Unit to "grow the church." This month we continue our growth theme, presenting church stories that we couldn't fit in last month. Woven together, these ten reports form a poignant tapestry of heroic struggle, honesty, vision, insight, discouragement, self-examination, recognition that feelings must be felt and expressed, passion, dedication, commitment, a willingness to fail and a willingness to look at failure as a "different outcome than that hoped for," as something to be learned from rather than allowing setbacks to stop the efforts.

Inherent in some of these reports is a coming-to-grips with the healing crisis that is always part of the growth process, part of the regenerative process—an often painful shedding of old skin and a feeling of strangeness and vulnerability in getting used to the new. Many of us familiar with the 12 Step programs recognize that the healing process can't complete itself until we "make a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves" (Step 4), and "admit to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs" (Step 5). Bradshaw refers to this process as embracing the dragon, the moving through denial and seeing what is. This opens the way for a healthy process of amends, forgiveness of self and others, continued personal (or organizational) inventory, ongoing conscious contact with God and growing reliance and trust in His guidance—in other words . . . spiritual growth.

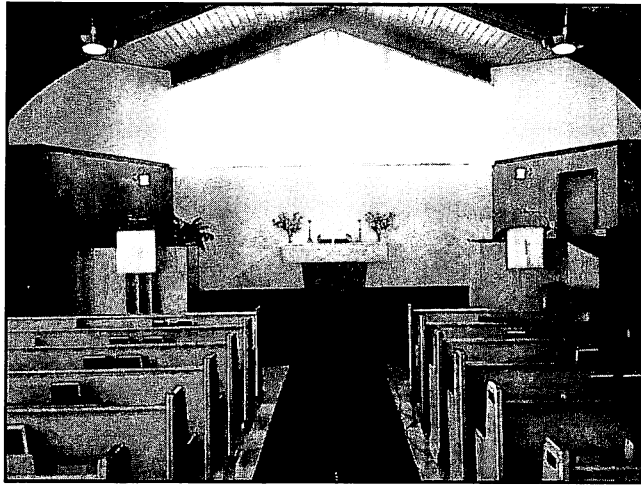
In this month's retrospective by Joy Henderson, "Dreams of Freedom," (p. 21) Professor Kohleschev states simply, "The strongest steel is made in the hottest fires." How appropriate this message seems for a time in the life of our church when some of us have squarely faced the fact that the denomination is in a life-or-death struggle. How many new and wonderful things have emerged in the history of this planet when courageous people were willing to grapple honestly with the need to change or die.

Through any troubled times in an organization, there are those who choose to stay and work within the structure and those who choose to move on to other arenas. These choices are often agonizing decisions, often privately made, in isolated moments of cumulative discouragement, or with a determined optimism kept alive by the shimmering ideal of the potential—what a tragedy if this fine potential isn't fulfilled. There follows a rededication to the vision, something like a reconciling couple who once again focus on the reasons they fell in love.

We need to remind ourselves, probably daily, that everything is in divine order, and wherever the process takes us, it is a necessary part of our growth, individually and organizationally. If we intend to 'embrace the dragon' and continue our searching and fearless inventory, I suggest that it may be helpful to become truly willing to hear the things we don't want to hear so we can move through the denial that can keep us from the health we so desperately desire.

# Edmonton Growth and Outreach

Henry Korsten



*Sanctuary, Church of the Holy City, Edmonton*

It was in October 1988 that the Edmonton church board decided to have an outreach committee. The reason was that reaching out to non-members is a time consuming effort, consequently board and outreach matters cannot be adequately dealt with during the usual time for board meetings.

The objective of the outreach committee is: "To assist the church board in establishing and maintaining an outreach program. The purpose of the committee is to make the Church of the Holy City and its teachings based on the Swedenborgian theology better known to all who are searching for the higher purpose of Life."

To write this article I looked over the minutes of the outreach committee, going back to October 1988; so much effort, so much running around, so much following up on PMSU's suggestions, so little money and so little growth. Where are the 12 new members we hoped for some four years ago? Why didn't we hit the jackpot with all or some of the projects that we embarked upon?

Let me start with the more disappointing projects first before I share with you the more encouraging activities we have been involved with lately. Going over the projects which we undertook over the past four years, I believe that many were more of cosmetic nature, rather than deeply motivated.

During the major portion of the time between October 1988 and February 1991 we were, and perhaps to

a certain degree still are motivated greatly by a concern for the future of the church as an institution and the consequent thought of increasing the membership, as well as maintaining some sort of physical role for the church as an institution.

For instance, we wrote 22 letters to people who are still located in the city. Some are old Sunday school students, others had been in touch with our church for one reason or another (hatch, match, dispatch, mainly).

Result: Eleven people asked to be placed on the mailing list for our newsletter but they do not attend our Sunday worship services. Four of these people attended the Christmas Eve service.

We placed directional church signs on adjacent streets, hoping that it would be easier for people to find us. Result: two young women with babies joined our Sunday service once because of the sign. When we welcomed them after the service (they were late arriving) they told us that they were Catholic and were in the wrong place. No calamity, but no membership resulted either.

We revived the book room and library. We did and still do provide public libraries with Swedenborg

literature. We did and still do deliver the pamphlet *Death and Life* to funeral homes. No new memberships have resulted so far.

We advertised 12 weekly one-liners (e.g. "Are you still waiting for the second coming?") in the major local news-

paper. Result, two serious and a great number of crank calls. No further interest by the callers and no new members.

Over these years, we have held two workshops on Scott Peck's book, *The Road Less Traveled* (six weekly sessions each) and five workshops based on the Faber-Maslich book, *How to talk so Kids will Listen and How to Listen so Kids will Talk* (seven weekly sessions each). We attracted a number of non-members (mainly Catholic mothers), with whom we have very good relationships but no increase in membership.

We considered many other projects, and worked on some; others we didn't follow through with because we didn't have the people power nor the financial resources available.

All in all, the Church of the Holy City became better known in the community and the city. We also developed good relationships with an increased number of people. We are no longer strangers on the block! Our efforts achieved at least that, even if membership did not significantly increase.

We believe that what we have learned from our experience is that we need to reach out to people with

*(Continued on page 20)*

## Edmonton Church

(Continued from page 19)

the Swedenborgian theology rather than competing with services that are already provided by many secular institutions.

And now for more encouraging results of our efforts!

One of our older members thought that outreach with Swedenborgian literature would be the way to go. She donated \$5,000 toward any project that would highlight Swedenborg's theology. A restricted trust fund was established with the interest to be used for the designated purpose.

On advice of Eric Allison, we introduced at the opening of the Sunday worship service a welcome to visitors by a lay person. We introduced a guided short meditation period before the service. We also integrated a modified version of an intercessory prayer during the service. Result: an increased meaning of worship by the members and friends who enjoy worshipping with us.

Some members have brought friends with them to the Sunday worship service. Result: two new members (husband and wife) and a husband and wife who are very interested. It seems to be the personal touch that counts.

After much deliberation about the lecture *Life after Death* presented by Eric Allison at our church in 1990, we ventured to go on our own with a similar lecture in February 1991. Rather than only talking about Swedenborg's visions and theology, I thought that the talk could include near-death experiences, my own and other people's spiritual experiences as well as a segment on dream interpretation. The talk was presented at our church and attended by 38 newcomers. Twelve of these people showed further interest in spiritual growth by signing up for a three-evening workshop on dreams. In addition, four of our own members were also interested in dream interpretation and sat in on the workshops.

After the initial three sessions, we carried on twice a month until June with still four newcomers attending as well as four members, a total of eight participants. Having started again in September, one newcomer and our own members are still hanging in there.

As a result of the talk, six people

showed interest in our *Heaven and Hell* study group. Only one attended, but this person is still in contact with us about Swedenborg's theology. Also, two people have been attending the Sunday worship services, one on a more-or-less regular basis. However, at the present time, neither show an interest in membership. (A dozen people attend the Sunday worship services fairly regularly, but do not have an interest in becoming full-fledged members).

PMSU has fully (morally as well as financially) supported the lecture on *Heaven and Hell*, and encouraged us to follow up with another lecture which took place in October.

This event again dealt with near-death experiences, other personal spiritual experiences and a more elaborate treatment with Swedenborg's book, *Heaven and Hell*. Again we offered 15 copies of the book free of charge to the first 15 people arriving at the lecture, and welcomed a \$5.00 donation on the recommendation of PMSU.

The lecture was advertised in the first section of the local newspaper. We still use, with appropriate changes, the original design provided by Eric in 1989. We also advertised the event for 11 days in the personal column under "Coming Events." The first blizzard of the season brought 20° below, but even so seven guests showed up along with seven regular members. A turnout of 14 people in that kind of weather seems a strong indication that people, especially those in the 25 to 40 age group, have a growing interest in spirituality. We had two ushers at the lecture who welcomed people and asked them how they got to know about the event. We feel it is important to gain that feedback for future advertising. The cost of advertising is high, and more than we can afford. PMSU has provided funding for it, but we try to keep the cost down while getting the best results.

We again asked people to sign up for the dream workshop should they be interested, and invited them to join us in a meditation, prayer and discussion gathering every Sunday evening at the church. This is a new approach aimed toward deepening our spiritual awareness in a relaxed and easygoing setting. Perhaps we might see some young adult members who don't attend the regular Sunday morning worship service?

Things are looking up—two new people are coming to church regularly because of the *Life After Death* lecture, and another has said he wishes to join in the near future. We are planning to repeat the lecture in March.

Looking ahead, we anticipate spending our available personpower and financial resources on sharing our theology in some practical and thought-provoking ways. We will endeavor to reach people who are indeed interested in the search for a relationship with the Lord God in some meaningful way. I believe that we (and that includes our church organization as a whole) are only means for the Lord God to reach out. Ours is not the glory!

Nevertheless we need to have faith and trust in our church, that indeed it has a meaningful purpose in the Lord God's creation. We need to work and put our best efforts into sharing the Word from the Swedenborgian perspective with hope in our heart.

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



*Church board members (from left, back): Maria Korsten, Doreen Van Rooijen, Rev. Henry Korsten, Jim Spencer, Randy Runka, Stella Podmore, Audrey Milot, Barry Reed, Doris Tabler.*

# Dreams of Freedom

■ *His face was both a source of gentleness and a map of many painful roads taken.* ■

Joy Henderson

*Throughout history mankind has struggled to burst free from tyranny in all its forms—religious, political, economic and social. Whether it's Yeltsin calling for liberty from atop a tank as the hammer and sickle is rent from the Soviet flag, Nelson Mandela serving as a lightning rod in the battle to end apartheid, Martin Luther King, Gandhi, the Dalai Lama, or any one of us who in times of oppression and bigotry finds that power of greater understanding and forgiveness, we all share in a universal dream of freedom.*

*In the recent past, it would appear that the move toward realizing these dreams is quickening. The Berlin Wall has crumbled, Mandela is released after 28 years in prison, Communism as a valid political—economic system is completing its death-throes, the Eastern European nations are rising from the ashes of oppression and the Baltic States have gained their independence. These triumphs were won at great cost to individuals. As ever, many die before the prize is won. But true freedom lies in the inner victories, as Swedenborg reminded us, and as the following retrospective demonstrates. Even when there is injustice all around us, it is the inner peace and inner strength, gleaned from the depths of the spirit, that is the mightiest resource and the greatest gain . . .*

\* \* \* \*

Before he spoke, one could have thought him to be any one of a number of ragmen who had once been a common sight weaving their horse-drawn wagons through the neighborhoods. Or he might have been mistaken for a vegetable

huckster selling produce from the rear of an old beat-up truck by calling housewives from their sinks and stoves. But this was 1964, and in the short span of ten years, the ragmen and hucksters had quietly disappeared along with electric trolley tracks, Burma Shave signs and ice-men who delivered their home-sized glaciers for leaky iceboxes. Not that he felt himself above performing any of those tasks. His heart did not work in that way and he truly believed that any job a person did conscientiously was valuable and honorable. He told us many times during those years that nobility and dignity come from within the person, not from appearance or occupation.

Yet it was his appearance and occupation that first had its effects on everyone he met. He was 5'4", well over 60 when I first saw him. His face was both a source of gentleness and a map of many painful roads taken. The smile was crooked, turning up more on the right side, but the almost constant twinkle in his eyes kept us all from noticing that, until we found ourselves sitting in front of him everyday—as, sooner or later, all science majors did. He was the university's most famous science professor . . . Dr. Kohleshev, physics department chairman. And along with that title went a chilling reputation for expecting excellence and requiring readiness that made more than one fainthearted student change majors.

He had a gift for blending opposites in himself, in the coursework and in his worldview. It was he who first made me aware that physics and philosophy are not very different, but rather just two ways of describing the same thing—that they have

almost everything in common. In his class, honesty and quality work were a basic standard but he repeatedly stressed that true honor and excellence come not at the expense of others; he therefore saw to it that we engaged in cooperation and non-competition in our struggles to learn and accomplish. His small stature, slight frame and thick glasses certainly gave a first impression of frailty, yet anyone meeting him had a distinct awareness of a strong presence. And just as he had a way of blending opposites, he also seemed beyond them or untouched by them. There are people in this world who belong to the group that judges others and there is the group who is judged. The first group rarely regrets their position; the second almost always regrets theirs. Regardless of what his past had been, he seemed to belong to neither category, to be intentional in this mindset and to be free of either judgment or regret.

And once he did speak, the listener had the odd sensation of understanding every word he spoke but unaware how this was accomplished, since the doctor had traces of accents from five different languages plus a hint of Southern drawl. He would merely explain that he was "well-traveled." His speech exhibited an economy of syllables that would do Western Union proud, and a wry sense of humor made him prone to put some english on his English.

But the lasting effect he had on us went far beyond his appearance, speech, or even his formal teaching. The ingredients of such a powerful presence can best be explained by what we experienced one morning in

(Continued on page 22)

**Dreams** (Continued from page 21)

a small class in thermodynamics. The subject was how heat affects different materials and why. School seemed boring to us that day, and our young hearts were preoccupied with social matters . . . a subject more vital to us than school. As students are likely to do at such times, we tried to derail the prof by asking unrelated questions. Someone asked where he was from and why he came to America. The inquiry had caught him off guard and from the look in his eye, we would have sworn we could hear a heart breaking. After a strange silence he began to tell us of his mysterious "travels."

He was born in Kiev just before the turn of the century when that city was still in a country called the Ukraine and was fighting to keep Russia from occupying it. He studied in Moscow but before his studies were completed, the Russian Revolution broke out and he fled with his parents and sisters to a small Polish town outside Warsaw. There he graduated from the university, got married and began working as a physicist. It seemed that the pogroms and racial prejudice of Russia were behind him once and for all. He was a Jew and Jews in the Russian territories fled, died or lived in fear. But Poland was economically devastated from the First World War, work was hard to get, and Jews were the first dismissed. So he and his wife and son moved on to Germany where work was promised and secured. When Hitler came to power, once again the family fled, this time to southern France, leaving behind his parents and sisters. For the third time he learned a new language, adding French to his native Russian and the Polish and German he had been required by employers to use. During this time, he and his family were transported back from France to work in camps where his wife and son died. His parents and all his sisters had been taken to death camps. And when the war was finally over, he came to America to work on a space project underway on a military base in Alabama. But the American South in the 1950s was alive with pre-

judices against foreigners, intellectuals, and Jews. The scientists who lived off-base were exposed to threats, physical harm and cross burnings. After the project moved to a different state, Dr. Kohleschev came north and, at age sixty, settled in Indianapolis, finally finding a place to end his journey. Along the way he had lost parents, sisters, two wives and a son to the works of hate.

When he saw that our class had been transported in time and place, he brought us back to the present and the problems at the end of the chapter . . . one of which seemed unsolvable. He dropped hints about the temperature formulas at the back of the book, about the melting point charts and about how to use the formula under discussion. Finally, he just paused and paced for a couple minutes, eventually giving us the insight we needed, not just to

the problem, but to life. "The hotter the fire," he offered, "the stronger the steel." We dutifully made a record of this in our notebooks. But all the while we knew that he was not thinking of Pittsburgh blast furnaces. He was seeing the reflection of fires from torched huts in Russia, blazing furnaces in Germany and flaming crosses in Alabama. And almost three decades later, I still recopy inside the front cover of each new year's daybook the law of physics which gives meaning to the catastrophes of life . . . "The strongest steel is made in the hottest fires."

*Joy Henderson's work first appeared in the pages of The Messenger in January and February 1989, with "Joy's Journey," and again in February 1991 with "Lunch-Counter Culture."*



## Meet Us In St. Louis, Louis For Convention '92

St. Louis—Gateway to the West! Gateway to a new convention! Gateway to some magnificent adventures! Just 10 minutes from that amazing feat of engineering, the Gateway Arch, rising majestically over downtown St. Louis, representatives of the Swedenborgian Church will meet next June at Washington University for the annual convention. Local Swedenborgians invite members of our church family to share with us the serenity of our Garden Chapel, and the wonders of our river-home in America's heartland.

We have planned a welcome ranging from a riverboat ride on the Mississippi River to a tour of such local sites as the Arch, the Missouri Botanical Gardens, a new Science Center and a world class zoo on the grounds of the turn-of-the-century World's Fair.

Less than an hour away, other opportunities abound. To the east in Illinois, you can bike or drive the Great River Road along the Mississippi passing huge bluffs where Indians once held *their* national conventions, and where eagles still fly. To the west, you can walk the brick and cobblestone streets of St. Charles, a several-centuries-old settlement along the Missouri River. To the south, you can marvel at the giant granite Elephant Rocks, remains of mastodons and petroglyphs. Nearby, you'll find parks with elk, bison, swans and owls; trails along rivers, across fields of wild flowers and through cool forests. Farther south still, in the Ozarks, you can see untouched wilderness, spectacular sunsets and some of the most picturesque rivers and springs anywhere. To the north, you can explore beautiful limestone caves and the town where Mark Twain's Huck Finn came of age.

Missouri beckons—and Swedenborgians here invite you to meet us in St. Louie, Louie . . .

*Brenda Hollweger, Convention Planning Committee, St. Louis, Missouri*



# Swedenborg on the Sexes

Steve Koke

*The distinction (between the masculine and the feminine) essentially consists in the fact that in the male the inmost is love and its clothing is wisdom, or what is the same, he is love veiled over with wisdom; and that in the female the inmost is that wisdom of the male, and its clothing is (her love of that wisdom). But this love is feminine love and is given by the Lord to the wife through the wisdom of the husband; and the former love is masculine love and is the love of growing wise. . . (Conjugal Love, n. 32.)*

Despite the intriguing central idea that sexuality is actually love and wisdom, this statement has been a problem for many people. Swedenborg seems to define women as if they must depend on men for their inner life. Without a man, a woman would have no "inmost," or at least an empty one. In response, we have suggested that he was influenced by his times or was being only very general.

It helps to start with Swedenborg's top-down method of thought. This puts everything in a unique perspective. He will typically begin his major discussions with the highest expression of his subject—the way, for example, that it appears in the heavens. There, it is in its most principled and elemental form just right for extracting basic definitions. But we may not see much of this form because it lies obscurely above or behind our own experiences; in fact, the higher it is the more elusive it will be. Swedenborg found that although he had to take the risk that our fragile intuitions wouldn't always let us see up there, he could now explain all forms of the subject that are lower down—that is, all forms less precise, more loosely varied, but more readily visible to us.

A result of this top-down development is Swedenborg's *Heaven and*

*Hell*. The book begins with the Lord and heaven, descends to the more ambiguous world of spirits, where we currently spend most of our time, and ends with hell. That is, once the high essence of life is pointed out, everything else falls into place, and he can analyze even mundane things with clarity.

*Conjugal Love* follows the same program. The book opens with "memorable relations," first about happiness and joy in heaven, then about a wedding in heaven, as if, in good top-down fashion, these things will be the soul of what follows. Swedenborg then discusses the sexes and marriage, first on a high and somewhat archetypal level (n. 32 above), then in mixed states and circumstances as we commonly find them. Finally, it ends with a section on "scortatory love," or destructive sexuality.

Just the position of Swedenborg's definition of the sexes, then, so near the beginning of the book, suggests what is at the core of things, what we today call the *unconscious*, not necessarily what we would see in ordinary behavior.

One interesting consequence of this high inwardness is that the man and woman in his definition are already married. We don't expect marriage to be part of a *definition* of the sexes, for it looks outwardly like just one application of sexuality. But Swedenborg found conjugal love, not the individual self, at the highest level of his investigations. That is, only in close and intimate marriages does the deeper core of sexuality reach maturity. The forces in n. 32 produce a vital exchange of life and consciousness that makes an angel tell Swedenborg, "She is my heart and I am her lungs" (n. 75). Until then, sexuality is relatively uncensored and unfinished.

Later on in the book, we find that

women don't ultimately love men, but wisdom. The difference, though, is subtle:

*For the man cannot be loved solely on account of his form, because he appears as a man, but on account of the endowment that is in him which makes him a man. (n. 91.)*

In n. 353 we read that "she shall love the intelligence and wisdom of her man, and thus the man..." In other words, women don't love wisdom because they love men, they love men because they love wisdom.

Now if women are basically lovers of wisdom, they will be involved with it whether a man is around or not. Whatever currently passes for it can be found in the teachings of a church or a social movement, the special effectiveness of some personalities, in careers, fields of study—everywhere.

Nevertheless, Swedenborg sometimes attaches all this to a "male" because all forms of masculine wisdom are summed up and made personal by the masculine form and temperament. In the heavens the male form represents wisdom, and the feminine can then be depicted symbolically as if it is constantly relating to a man.

In the modern picture of the sexes, everyone has both masculine and feminine characteristics. Swedenborg has seemed instead to take up the older, more restricted picture in which men are only masculine, and women are only feminine:

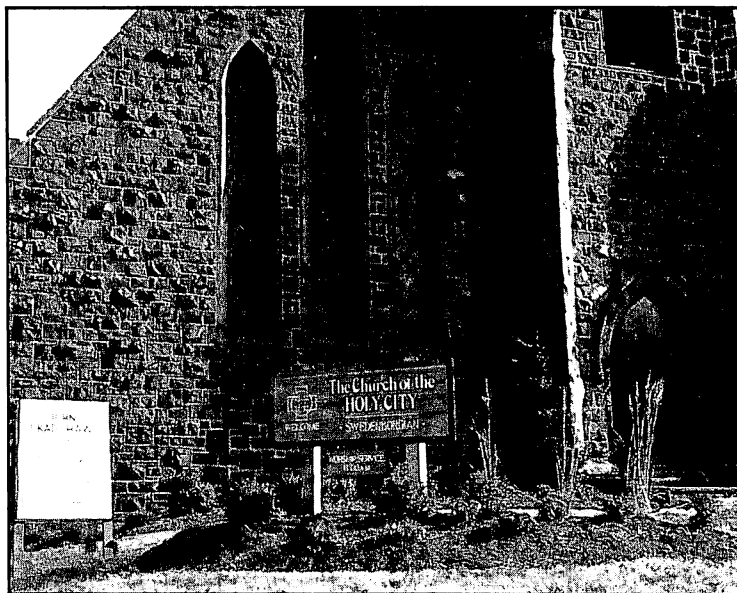
*...there is nothing in soul, in mind, and in body, that is not masculine in the male and feminine in the female. (CL 46.)*

But *masculine* and *feminine* are defined as loves in his psychology;

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# The Swedenborgian Church in Delaware

*Irma Reinhold, Major Travers, Randall E. Laakko*



The Church of the Holy City, in Wilmington, Delaware is growing. Envision its growth. See people coming to its programs and services. What a vital and growing church!

The adult membership is fifty, with as many as 18 children attending on Sunday. Over the years, new members have joined at about the rate others have left. This static state of membership has been a major concern, and we decided to change this pattern.

A well-planned and well-attended growth seminar was conducted in September 1990 by Eric Allison, the Pastoral Ministries Support Unit's church growth consultant. Eric had previously asked us to visualize for 20 minutes daily, our church growing in membership. We practiced this for a period of time and have had six new people become members in the past year. Following a study of our area, our church building and congregational life, Eric presented many ideas for programming, advertising, growth, building/plant improvement and increased lay support of the minister, following up with another visit in February 1991.

Eric had informed us that PMSU saw our church as a potential candidate for focused assistance. He urged that we try, as an experiment, a one-year direct mail campaign to increase

membership. With PMSU support this seemed to be an excellent opportunity, so after some deliberation, we accepted this challenge.

Twice-monthly growth committee meetings were held until plans for the mailings were finalized. This was no easy task. A source has to be found for a "New Movers" list (a list of people who had recently moved to the area). Fliers had to be designed and printed, mailing supplies purchased. Envelopes were hand-addressed and stamped, material folded and stuffed. Eventually, all this came together. We sent out our first mailing in February 1991. By April, we were sending out 800 mailings per month. Each address received one mailing for four consecutive months. Eagerly we awaited the results. Few interested responses came. By July, and after consultation with Eric, we decided to discontinue the mail campaign. We recognized that the number of mailings sent was too small, and we had neither the personnel nor the finances to expand the program.

After introspection we chose a new tack, electing to put more effort into advertising our church and its programs. Again, Eric's counsel and moral support were solicited. He conducted a second seminar in September 1991, which produced many

innovative ideas for print and media ads. A committee was formed to create and choose ads and design an overall campaign. We are hoping for a more positive response from our efforts in this area. Throughout this struggle, PMSU has provided both moral support and financial assistance, for which we are deeply appreciative. Some of the important things we have learned are:

- Informed and focused effort is needed for growth to occur.
- The budget must reflect commitment to outreach and growth.
- Specific goals and priorities must be established.
- Convenient parking is a must for growth.
- Our church likes its "cell size" level of comfort and function; however, new cell groupings can create growth.

The church, for decades, has had a "small-church mind." Our mind set is changing. We are open to the changes that will occur. For example, new and varied worship formats, with printed weekly folders, are being used. We are seriously considering converting the backyard lot into parking.

We invested in a large-screen TV, a VCR, and compact stereo system

*(Continued on page 29)*



# SSR Students' Vision of Ministry

*Dorothea Harvey*

In its November 1991 meeting, the Massachusetts Association of Swedenborgian Churches enjoyed a panel presented by the six full-time students now at the Swedenborg School of Religion. Renée Morris, moderator, introduced the topic: each student's vision of ministry that had brought him or her to SSR for preparation for ministry.

Pavel Heger, in his second year, from Czechoslovakia, emphasized the new freedom for religious feeling present in his country since 1989, making this an important time for the future of religion for the Czech people. His plan is to go back to establish a missionary center to familiarize people with Swedenborg, publishing in the modern Czech language.

Eric Hoffman, in his fourth year, was raised in an ecumenical background, having experienced many different kinds of worship, ending with Spiritualist, and finally with the Swedenborgian Church in Urbana, Ohio. He found in the Swedenborgian Church an emphasis on worship to be carried out practically in each person's life. He looks forward to parish ministry. His interests include artistic modes of ministry, as well as the spiritual state of the animal world.

Kit Billings, in his first year, now from Ohio, comes from a long line of Swedenborgian ministers. His own personal search began when he was sixteen years old, with his wish to bring the Lord's ministry to others, his search beginning with his own therapy, and with a number of powerful dreams. His dream now is for a ministry which will provide spiritual leadership for the church. He emphasizes each person's uniqueness, a love for music, and a need for personal growth, as in small groups in the church.

Pam Shuttleworth, in her fourth year, coming from an unchurched background, discovered her wish to give service to others, especially in



*SSR students (front left): Renée Morris, Kinichi Kuniyeda, Pamela Shuttleworth, Kit Billings, Eric Hoffman, Pavel Heger.*

listening to others. She became aware of the Swedenborgian Church through her work for Carl Yenetchi, then Chaplain of Urbana University. She is interested in the parish, especially one with a team sense of ministry, with many in the church involved in the ministry, in a way that will give empowerment to all church members.

Kinichi Kuniyeda, in his first year, reported that Japan has a Christian population of only 7 percent. His choice to work in an educational lay ministry led him to Yuzo Nodo's workshops. He found these different from other religious experience, became Yuzo's assistant, led study groups, and shifted from the Baptist to the Swedenborgian Church. From Yuzo he came to be more deeply aware of himself and of his relationship with God. He has come to the school because of his commitment to continue the Tokyo New Church.

Renée Billings Morris, Kit's sister, in her first year, brings a vision of creativity fostered by two years in a private school in the early seventies. Dealing with her deafness in one ear, she had to go through her own emptiness before finding the Lord. Her ministry will involve listening with a sense that a church which listens to the Lord is a church which can grow. Her vision of ministry includes working with the deaf or with the terminally ill, as well as expressing her love of music.

*The Rev. Dr. Dorothea Harvey is currently serving as clerk on the SSR Board of Trustees.*

## Are Women and Men Equal?

(PART 1 OF 2)

*Don Rose*

In Swedenborg's *Marital Love* it is said that "It is insisted on by men, that superiority in all affairs of the house belongs to them because they are men, and that inferiority belongs to women because they are women. Such rivalries, familiar at this day, flow from no other source than the absence of any knowledge concerning true marital love, and the absence of any perception or sensation in respect to the blessings of that love." (paragraph 291).

Once there was a couple who had two children. At a certain stage of their development these children were passionately concerned with the equality of gifts and favors received from their parents. If one child perceived that his gift was in any way inferior to what the sibling received, there would be tears and recriminations.

This true story turned out happily. The parents learned through experience to make sure gifts to these children should always be identical. It worked. There was peace. And eventually the children grew up, and that intense concern about equality faded away. Now it is just an amusing recollection.

God had two kinds of children, male and female. If He had made them identical, perhaps some disgruntlement could have been avoided. But if they were identical there would not be two kinds. He made them different, not to cause strife but rather to provide a blessedness of life.

Swedenborg says that of all God's gifts, the happiest of all is the love that results from the coming together of two kinds, male and female. He emphasizes "that there is some love into which are brought by the Lord all things blessed, happy and delightful that can possibly be given."

*(Continued on page 27)*

# THE URBANA STORY

Linda Blosser

*The greatest strength we see in our group is the sense of community and trust that has grown out of many years of sharing our personal and spiritual struggles.*



*Urbana members and friends gather after service: (from left) Pat Sommer (back turned), Dick Sommer, Karen and Al Cowen, Janet Thomas, Betsy Ledingham, Carolyn Sterling, Linda Thornburg, Sue Kerrigan.*

The Pastoral Ministries Support Unit asked us (the Urbana Swedenborgian Church) to write an article describing what we are doing, including new directions and programs, and our sense of mission as a group. At first, the task seemed overwhelming. We wondered if we have much to offer since we often experience our efforts at change and growth as a struggle, as well as an exciting, growing experience. We decided that we simply would share how it has been for us and how we see ourselves now. Sometimes we feel discouraged, at other times hopeful, but most importantly, we know we are at a turning point and that we need to stay very close to our sense of spiritual purpose and what the Lord is leading us to do.

Probably the greatest strength we see in our group is the sense of community and trust that has grown out of many years of sharing our personal and spiritual struggles. We have done this through a number of external formats, including classes focusing on spiritual growth subjects, weekly prayers for healing where much personal sharing occurs, and a number of traditions that have developed over the years as part of our worship format. An example of one tradition is our yearly Halloween service in which we focus on the symbols related to All Saints and All Souls day, life after death, seasons and cycles of change. We honor and say the names of special people in our lives who entered the spiritual world. We encourage the wearing of

costumes to express aspects of ourselves and we celebrate with "soul" cookies, doughnuts and cider. The symbols and background of these foods are discussed. Another yearly tradition is our church camp-out at a local lake where we hold a sweat lodge as our Sunday worship format.

Other special services and activities have also become part of our group tradition, but what is most important is that they have each developed out of the needs and interests of our particular group. What we have learned is that we need to develop traditions, ceremonies and programs that express our unique group consciousness. As we change, we also need to be open to adding or dropping things that no longer seem to fit. This keeps us growing, rather than stagnating.

Out of these experiences, we began to think about how we could reach out more meaningfully to our community. Like many Swedenborgian churches, we have loved what we are receiving ourselves, but did not know how to share, communicate, or draw in others who might like to grow spiritually with us. After encouragement from the Revs. Ron Brugler and Eric Allison, we began to develop what we call "The Healing Connection." This was a program which would offer prayers for healing to people in the community. We have already been doing prayers for healing for ourselves and believe this has been a central and meaningful area of our spiritual life as a group. The program entails a time each week when people can call a number and ask for their name and their special need to be placed in our Sunday healing prayer circle. Their requests are to be followed with a return letter assuring

*(Continued on page 27)*

## Are Women Equal...?

(Continued from page 25)

That love is "a desire and a striving for conjunction into a one; for the male man and the female man were so created that from two they may become as one man or one flesh; and when they become one, then, taken together, they man in fullness."<sup>1</sup> Does this mean that the one is not whole without the other?

The thought that an individual is not whole without conjunction with an individual of the opposite sex can run counter to the feelings people have about themselves. Swedenborg actually says that the individual by herself or by himself is "a divided or half man."<sup>2</sup> The male without the female is "austere, dry, unlovely; nor is he wise except for himself alone, and then he is stupid."<sup>3</sup> Are men expected to be pleased with this assertion that of themselves they are unlovely and stupid? Hardly. Once wives explained to some husbands that loving their own intelligence "is

to love one's own insanity." They said, "To you men it seems as if you love your wives." They were told that love does not originate in them. At this they were silent, but they muttered, "What is marriage love?" Certain husbands in heaven heard this discussion and from heaven they confirmed the conclusions made by the wives.<sup>4</sup>

This is not palatable stuff, and it doesn't help much to say that this was OK for the 18th century mind. It wasn't palatable stuff in the 17th or 18th century. But Swedenborg did not write it to annoy us. Rather the idea was to provide an insight into reality. And one such reality is the human condition of being divided into two genders.

So God made two kinds that are not the same. There are observable differences in their bodies. Swedenborg reminds us that the male has a bearded chin and is "less beautiful than the female," but he has "a stronger body." The beard may be

an inconvenience to the male, particularly if he has to shave daily, and the phrase "less beautiful" could diminish his self-esteem. But there it is. How does the woman feel about the man having a "stronger body"? The times that women athletes are clocking in the marathon in recent years are better than the times men were doing in earlier days of athletic competition. Perhaps if we wait long enough the stigma of having the weaker body can be eliminated.

Don't hold your breath on that one. In your lifetime and in the lifetime of your children men will be more suited to the National Football League than women. There are different kinds of strength, of course. The female body lasts longer and in that sense is "stronger." It is also better at withstanding cold. But speaking generally you can draw a sketch of a man's body and a woman's body as it was in the 17th century and will be in our lifetime. (Continued on page 30)

## Urbana (from page 26)

them we have placed their name in prayer and containing several affirmations for them to meditate upon from the Bible, Swedenborg or other sources. Persons who wish are also given the opportunity to mail in a donation, although it is made clear that we offer our prayers at no charge. An invitation to attend our Sunday service is also included.

Developing this project took many months because we have such a small core group and we were maintaining our ongoing church programs; we were able to finalize the proposal however, and we obtained PMSU's support. We were initially elated, but to date, have not been able to implement our program. This brought us to other lessons: we need to be careful not to overextend our energies, and we need to be patient. One of the realities is that our eyes are bigger at times than our appetites. We need to find that proper balance between overextension and stagnation. In recent months our energies have turned to planning and preparation for building repair and remodeling. We are also continuing to develop a wedding ministry. People in our group are typically on

several committees and that fact makes us acutely aware of the need for growth in numbers. At the same time, we need to lay our foundation in terms of planning for handling an influx of new people. Our physical building improvement has thus become a priority.

An exciting development in Urbana has been our lay-leader and visiting-minister program. Since we have been without an ordained minister for nearly four years, we have relied heavily on our own longstanding tradition of lay-led services. Two of our members have chosen to enter the lay-leader formal training program. This capability has afforded a focus of leadership and gained some acceptance in our community. We also schedule visiting ministers from the Swedenborgian and other denominations to lead services. This has been successful. We now have several "regulars" who tell us how much they enjoy leading services for our group.

We have been working on streamlining and updating our worship services to provide meaningful, focused worship experiences and to make them as relevant as possible in today's language and symbols. Rev.

Eric Allison has been helpful in providing creative ideas and materials with which to improve the worship experience. We have also added a time for sharing our personal response to the service theme within the format of the worship service itself. This has met with much enthusiasm by those attending. It has also attracted several new participants. Thus, we not only are fed by the worship leader's inspirational message, but we also are able to share with one another in a meaningful way, which adds to group cohesion.

Our plans for the future include increasing the number of members and programs we offer. We want to find a way to retain the sense of intimacy that promotes sharing and support, while incorporating new people and expanding our spiritual outreach. We see this as a great challenge and will continue using church resource people to achieve our goals. We believe the Lord does have work for our group to do and we continue to visualize and pray for openness that we may be led to fulfill our unique purpose.

*Linda Blosser is president of the Urbana Swedenborgian church and is a lay-leader-in-training, along with Betsy Ledingham.*

## 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.*

### Inner Light Examined

To the Editor:

Brian Kingslake's book, *Inner Light*, as Paul Zacharias points out in the October *Messenger*, is a good read. Kingslake's writing is very easy to follow (though there are too many exclamation points), and I learned a few things from his explanations of the Last Judgment and its significance. He added some thoughts to my collection.

But the book is not quite the long-awaited overview of Swedenborg's theology that can be safely handed out to people who are curious about Swedenborg. The biggest problem with *Inner Light* is that it doesn't tell the reader where Swedenborg ends and Kingslake begins. Since summarizers are normally expected to stay in the background, this guarantees that the new reader will blame Swedenborg for any weak thoughts and idiosyncrasies.

Kingslake's statement in the Forward, and on the back cover, is therefore critically important:

*I am presenting . . . my own personal interpretation . . . distilled from a lifelong acquaintance with Swedenborgian thought, but expressed in my own terms.*

In other words, this is not an objective overview, but a comprehensive personal vision. It can stimulate discussion and further thinking among people who already have some background in Swedenborg's thought, but anyone using it to assess Sweden-

borg for the first time should have a continuing relationship with a knowledgeable person or the local church.

In one place in particular, Kingslake can get Swedenborg into real trouble. Kingslake's explanation of the spiritual world makes it an invisible realm in material space (e.g., "We can walk right through its most solid objects," page 26). Anyone can find problems with this idea without knowing what Swedenborg tells us about the difference between spiritual space and time and natural space and time. If the two realms coincide in space, a train of embarrassingly plain questions follows: How do the two realms stay together while Earth revolves on its axis and moves around the sun, or while the solar system circles the galaxy? And what happens when people in Australia, down under, walk through the spiritual world; are they upside down with respect to it? Maybe even walking through the deeper hells? And so on. A new reader would address all of these questions to Swedenborg, not to Kingslake.

Kingslake's desire to make Swedenborg understandable can also lead to troublesome oversimplification. For example, the reader can get a wrong impression of the vastly different destinies of the celestial person and the spiritual person. Kingslake defines the former as one who thinks from his heart, while the latter thinks from his head (page 32). The problem with this is that it is too short, too uninformative. One is very aware that there are emotionally oriented people and intellectually oriented people all around, but Swedenborg should not be thought of as writing necessarily about *them*. At this point Kingslake should anticipate some puzzlement about why these cultural and congenital types should fare so differently after death just because of the way they were brought up or because of the way their genes were arranged. The *celestial* and the *spiritual* are much more subtle concepts.

Kingslake also repeats (page 61) an old misconception about *Conjugal Love*, n. 229, where a young man and a young woman are born for each other, grow up educated secretly for each other, then meet, recognize each other as mates, and betroth

themselves. Swedenborg uses it to illustrate how Providence provides marriages in the heavens. He overheard the angels tell this story (see n. 316), and it is therefore symbolic, as is angelic discourse and the spiritual world itself. But, since at least 1823, and periodically since, writers have taken it too literally and then have had to say that the couple must have died so that the marriage could take place in heaven as prescribed. But that converts the story into a tragic and atypical case, and atypical cases can't illustrate general points. Kingslake only adds more speculation about the tragic couple.

Nevertheless, everyone in the heavens marries (page 61). Not quite, according to CL 54; there are people there who have rejected any thought of marriage but are still spiritual. You still get what you want, even in heaven.

There are other things to look at, but the point is that *Inner Light* should be read critically before deciding what to do with it. It will educate, and it is an excellent example of how well modern English can address theological ideas. But it turns out to be an in-house book, best suited to readers of Swedenborg who can distinguish its two voices from each other and gather in whatever is helpful from a fellow Swedenborgian. You can hand it out to a new reader, but don't let him or her get too far out of sight. Point out Kingslake's own statement on the back, and encourage questions.

Steve Koke  
Rough and Ready, California

### A Change of Heart

Dear Editor:

Thirty years ago our national denomination had approximately 10,000 members. Today it has fewer than 2,000. We continue to ask why but fail to look inward to our own values and tenets to discover the reasons for this decline. One policy that needs to be prayerfully reviewed is: we study, but, as an organization, rarely act upon social concerns. The doctrine of charity applies here.

(Continued on page 29)

**Delaware Church** *(from page 24)*

for programs of personal enrichment, education and fun. We purchased some of the Swedenborg Foundation videos and three by John Bradshaw. The Tuesday evening advertised presentations include small group discussion and refreshments. A support group lasting several months developed after one series. A variety of other videos will be offered. We hope to develop small groups for various needs and interests as they become known.

We have worked hard to provide quality educational programs for the children. While our building is beautiful, space is limited. We notice this primarily in the educational programming. This is a challenge we need to address as we expand.

Throughout recent years our activities program has been ambitious for a church our size. We have made an effort to schedule one major activity each month in addition to our ongoing ministries of personal enrichment, community service (Adopt-a-Family, Emmanuel Dining Room) and study groups. Additional activities cover a broad range of interest: group attendance at sporting events, theater parties, Sunday brunch after church, square dancing and other social gatherings planned just for fun and getting better acquainted. These events are open to everyone.

One special evening was Heritage Night, celebrated on Swedenborg's birthday. Everyone brought a childhood photograph. We had to guess the identity of each. We played a trivia quiz on our church and its history (Architectural style? The first pastor? To whom were the three altar windows dedicated?) We enjoyed a delicious dinner of New Age appetizers, traditional main dishes and old fashioned desserts. We displayed pictures taken throughout the year. Senior members shared their memories of significant past events of the church thereby entertaining and educating the new members.

Other events are annual, such as our Sunday morning canoe trip down the Brandywine River in June. Those preferring not to canoe are encouraged to join us for a brief outdoor

worship service, a picnic lunch and an afternoon of fellowship which has taken place at Temenos for the last three years. Our men's September pancake breakfast is another eagerly anticipated yearly event. Especially by the women! And everyone looks forward to the December Wreath and Lobster Sale and the Emmanuel Dining Room Christmas celebration fund-raising costume dinner, open to the community and to church members.

Johnny Appleseed Day is celebrated in October. We show the Swedenborg Foundation film, present an organ concert (this past October featured "Phantom of the Opera"), and serve lunch and apple cobbler in between. Wonderful wholesome breads and other seasonal gourmet items are sold, as well as a small assortment of select crafts and used books.

All this takes great preparation and dedication. Because our church is so important to us, we continue to make the effort knowing that this is the beginning of a new phase of growth and service for our church. We have had many good times, and as our membership grows so will our activities to accommodate the interests and needs of others.

And what do we have planned for 1992? For one thing, six weeks of dance lessons! Won't you join us?

*The Rev. Randall E. Laakko is pastor of the Church of the Holy City (Swedenborgian), Delaware. Irma Reinhold is Program Committee Chair, and Major Travers is Growth Committee Chair.*

*End of coffee-hour crowd. Clockwise from lower left: Stephanie Dougherty, Candice Holland, Joyce Toner-Travers, JoEllen Smith, Jean Dougherty, Major Travers, Jeff Watt, Susan DeSantis, Rachel Poole, Audrey Watt-Serge, Christine Holland, Samuel Barton, Maria Rella, Jim Berthold, Mary Poole, Stewart Poole, Eugenia Rowe, Millie Laakko, Jerry Poole, Beverly Lewis, Ron Lewis.*

**Opinion**

*(Continued from page 28)*

I realize this is a scary process, especially as it could result in basic changes in how we expend our funds. However, if greed, ambition, and pride are self loves within our church, then perhaps our path of decline is understandable. I realize also that change cannot take place unless there is an inward change of heart. However, I would like to make three "act as if" suggestions:

- General Convention: Ten percent of its budget be provided to the Social Action Concerns Committee to be spent only on direct service to the needy in our country.

- Swedenborg School of Religion: Ten percent of its budget be set aside for local community aid to the needy. The faculty to determine five percent, and the student body to determine how the other five percent will be spent.

- Local church: Each church to have an ongoing drive to feed the hungry within their community. Ten percent of the budget given for direct community aid to the needy. This to be determined by the local church council.

Do you find yourself feeling angry or threatened by this prospect? Perhaps so, but, just perhaps, it would lead to a basic change in our church, or at the very least we would go out as a caring people!

*Marilyn Turley  
Tumwater, Washington*



## The Family Connection

### Simple Lives the Bird

There is a song that was written and performed locally and played over a radio station in our vicinity titled "Simple Lives the Bird." The chorus that is repeated goes, "Simple lives the bird, Master of the sky, Doing what comes naturally, Barely flaps his wing, Sets a record high." The meaning of the verse, for me, is: by doing what it is designed by God to do, the bird can use just the right amount of effort to soar to a great height.

There may be a lesson in that. We are designed by God for a life in heaven, where we will, with just the right amount of effort, love others and the Lord, naturally. There, we will not carry any of the extra baggage that obscures that essential design.

There is a lot of support for letting go of extra baggage at this time of year. We diet, try to free up our calendars, cut out superfluous expenses, try to worry less. To discern what is extra and what is essential on our journey with the Lord in the process of regeneration is to exercise our freedom, which itself is a gift from the Lord.

Let's take a lesson from the bird, so that the phrase, "Simple lives the bird" applies to us.

*Rev. Gardiner Perry  
Fryeburg, Maine Swedenborgian Church  
Reprinted from the Church of the New  
Jerusalem Bulletin, January 1991*

## The Wee Small Voice

*Heather Harder*

Shh . . . Listen.  
Do you hear it?  
Can you hear that wee small voice?  
Listen.

There is inside each of us a wee small voice.

A very quiet still voice.  
all wise.  
all knowing.  
yet humble.

Only choosing to speak when someone listens.

There is a wee small voice hiding in each of us.

It speaks with such a small voice that normal activity,

such as reading a paper,  
listening to music.  
and even riding a bike can  
drown it out.

It is such a wee small voice that it can only be heard if . . .

we slow down.  
no, stop.  
Stop and listen.

Yes, we must stop.  
Stop all movement.  
quiet the mind.  
and listen.

Not listen hard, but listen soft.  
Listen relaxed, because even muscle tension can drown it out.

Soft, relaxed listening will cause the little voice

to grow stronger  
and more confident.

To feel like a welcome guest in our hearts.

This wee small voice is special.  
It can help you.  
It can comfort you.

And it can give you guidance.

It is a timid wee small voice.  
if it is neglected,  
if it is ignored,

If you create a hostile environment within yourself,  
Then this special wee small voice will go unheard.

It will shrivel up.  
It will go deeper inside.  
It will become softer, fainter,  
until it cannot be heard at all.

This special wee small voice retreats like a snail going inside its shell.

In order to come out again,  
you must get  
very  
very  
quiet,

And make it feel welcome.  
Sometimes this wee small voice is so soft you are unable to hear it.  
but if you listen  
you will know it is there.

Quietly waiting for you to breathe deep,  
to relax,  
and to listen.

There is a wee small voice, a special friend, waiting to be heard.

*Heather Anne Harder first appeared in the July 1991 Messenger. Dr. Harder is a professor of early childhood education at Governors State University, Illinois.*

## Sunday School Resources

*Come Unto Me, A Child's First Book About God.* Text by Joyce Fekete, illustrated by Betty Hill, published by The American New Church Sunday School Association. Available for \$2.75 from *Five Smooth Stones*, 115 Graham Street, Saginaw, MI 48602. For each set of two pages this book takes a theme and offers word pictures and explanations on one page and a picture children can color on the other. The themes are God, God's names, Heaven, angels, the Bible, care of the Bible, the ten commandments, the golden rule, God on earth, the Lord's prayer, work, and love. The text is based on sections of three theological works of Swedenborg (*Four Doctrines, Heaven and Hell, Divine Providence*). Recommended for home use and early years of Sunday school.

Reviewed by Rev. Dr. Ted Klein, *Sunday School Newsletter*, September 1991.

### Are Women . . . Equal?

*(Continued from page 27)*

The man has the brute strength. The woman is and will continue to be more beautiful.

The bodily differences that are obvious and measurable are one thing. What about differences of the brain? In the past few years research has shown identifiable differences of masculine and feminine brains. Dr. Michael Stanley in England is working on a paper that discusses these findings. But what about characteristics beyond body and brain? If there are differences does this imply that one sex is in any way superior to the other?

It makes good political sense to say that neither is in any way superior to the other. Like the two children in our true story, men and women might be pacified by such a politic approach. There is also the possibility that—like the children in the story—men and women may come to a point where they look back with amusement on the feelings they used to harbor, feelings of envy and resentment.  
**(TO BE CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE)**

*The Rev. Donald Rose is pastor of the Bryn Athyn Church of the New Jerusalem, Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania.*



## Swedenborg on the Sexes

(continued from page 23)

they are not the complementary pairs aggressiveness and receptiveness, objectivity and intuitive thinking, etc., that traditionally have defined those two words for us. Swedenborg doesn't deny that one has all of these qualities, but he moves the primal source of sexuality away from them to an organizing principle, a ruling love, deeper within, that makes them look more symptomatic than essential. This is a new approach and a clarifying move, for many of these qualities are vaguely defined and hard to pin down in specific situations; they have largely been handed down to us by tradition and anecdote.

In Swedenborg's psychology, what organizes determines the nature of the whole. A ruling drive or interest controls and organizes all aspects of the personality below it—intellect, feelings, individual interests—in a way that (often unconsciously) serves its own life at least over the long run. It is of course more of his top-down thinking.

The flexibility of such a hierarchal psychology is enormous. Without sacrificing its central motives, it can put forth new personalities to meet current needs, employ many different life strategies, and even empathize with the other sex. In other words, it can change its psychological shape without disturbing its center. Men can be house-husbands; women can be scientists or managers in business. Everything must at some point down the road build or educate the ruling masculine or feminine love; but at any one moment on that road we may seem quite different from any traditional masculine or feminine pattern.

I don't think, therefore, that Swedenborg would find our wide open, experimental century a great challenge to understand; basically, he would suggest that we look for the driving force of our sexuality deeper inside than most psychologies or behavioral studies would take us.

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

## Commencements

### Baptisms

**Brandle**—Llanna Victoria Brandle, daughter of Robert and Zoe Brandle, was baptized into the Christian faith November 2, 1991, at the Church of the Holy City, Edmonton, Canada, the Rev. Henry Korsten officiating.

**Cash**—Erin Lee Cash, daughter of Perry and Tammy Cash, was baptized into the Christian faith November 3, 1991, at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada, the Rev. Ron Brugler officiating.

**Gehl**—Kirl Don Gehl, son of Stephen and Debbie (Klassen) Gehl, was baptized into the Christian faith September 8, 1991, at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada, the Rev. Ron Brugler officiating.

**MacTavish**—Samuel Bruce MacTavish and Jack Donald MacTavish, twin sons of Robert and Christine (Hemmerich) MacTavish, were baptized into the Christian faith May 12, 1991, at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada, the Rev. Ron Brugler officiating.

**Mikkelson**—Sanna Rae Mikkelson, daughter of Doug and Cindy Mikkelson, was baptized into the Christian faith September 8, 1991, at the Church of the Holy City, Edmonton, Canada, the Rev. Henry Korsten officiating.

**Uhrmann**—Loving Lee Barrette Uhrmann, son of Robert and Rohna Uhrmann, was baptized into the Christian faith November 10, 1991, at the Church of the Holy City, Edmonton, Canada, the Rev. Henry Korsten officiating.

**Woeller**—Nicole Marie Woeller, daughter of Jeff and Annmarie Woeller, was baptized into the Christian faith November 3, 1991, at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada, the Rev. Ron Brugler officiating.

### Marriage

**Tafel and Pegouske**—Elizabeth B. Tafel and Eric J. Pegouske were united in marriage September 28, 1991, at the Community of the Good Shepherd in Cincinnati, Ohio. Elizabeth's father, The Rev. Dick Tafel, Jr. and Father Lou Guntzleman officiated. Eric and Beth now reside in Charlotte, North Carolina.

### Deaths

**Cuthbertson**—Hilda Lorraine Cuthbertson entered the spiritual world August 26, 1991. Resurrection services were conducted August 28, 1991.

**Fricke**—Walter W. Fricke, member of the St. Paul Society, entered the spiritual world November 29, 1991. Resurrection services were conducted December 9, 1991 at the Virginia Street Church (Swedenborgian), St. Paul, Minnesota, the Rev. Keith Tussing officiating.

**Kern**—Florence Kern entered the spiritual world November 11, 1991. Resurrection services were conducted November 14, 1991, the Rev. Paul Zacharias officiating.

**Scott**—Hope Scott entered the spiritual world May 11, 1991. Resurrection services were conducted May 17, 1991, at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada, the Rev. Ron Brugler officiating.

### New Addresses

Rev. Ronald Brugler  
489 Franklin St. North  
Kitchener, Ontario N2A 122  
Phone (519) 748-5322

Rev. Jaikoo Lee  
329 W. Springfield Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19118-4034

Stone House Books  
7805 Leary Way, NE  
Redmond, WA 98052-4338

### Church Family News

The cancer for which the Rev. Dick Baxter was treated last spring has recurred in his lungs. Your prayers and expressions of care and love to the family are appreciated. Dick, Polly, Bill and Kevin can be reached at 4720 Bel Pre Road, Rockville, MD 20853.

## The President Reports

A visit to greater Cincinnati's Kemper Road Swedenborgian Church in December was uplifting. Besides seeing a number of new faces, I was greeted on Sunday morning before church with a group of seven people rehearsing an anthem: A choir! Something that we never got completely off the ground in all the years I was minister there. Here's yet another of our churches finding that music adds so much to its worship.

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Our upcoming denominational convention in St. Louis will focus on the church and the family. The people in the Church of the Open Word in St. Louis have already done a lot of hard work to ensure good convention meetings. The sessions will be held at Washington University, with a special trip planned to the Church of the Open Word and a Saturday night outing on the Mississippi River. Details will be appearing monthly in *The Messenger*.

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And now some thoughts about our funds drive. The church's capital funds drive is moving into high gear. For our church to be relevant in the 90s and into the next century, we must modernize our outreach capabilities and grow. To this end, we have set goals and priorities for the church in accordance with the guidelines established by the *ad hoc* committee and approved by the delegates when they passed the denomination's new structure several years ago.

We need new monies for work with our youth, for ministers' salaries and pensions, for establishing new programs and advertising efforts in our local churches, for training clergy and lay people to be more effective leaders in the decade ahead, for publishing new literature about our church, to complete the retreat and conference center at Temenos, and to cover the ever-increasing costs of doing business as a church organization.

You can help in this effort! Please contact Duane Beougher or me so that we might help you maximize

your current or future gifts to the church.

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There are two other specific small projects that you may wish to support: the chapel building at Urbana University, which provides an ecumenical setting for a wide variety of uses, and the Minority Bail Bond Fund of the National Council of Churches of Christ (of which our church is an active member), which assists those financially unable to raise bail for their release while awaiting trial. Both of these programs show the church in action with the community and are worthy of your support. Contributions may be sent to the Central Office in Newton, Massachusetts, clearly designated for the project you want to help.

If we all work together, the cup will soon be more than half full.

Richard H. Tafel, Jr., President

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