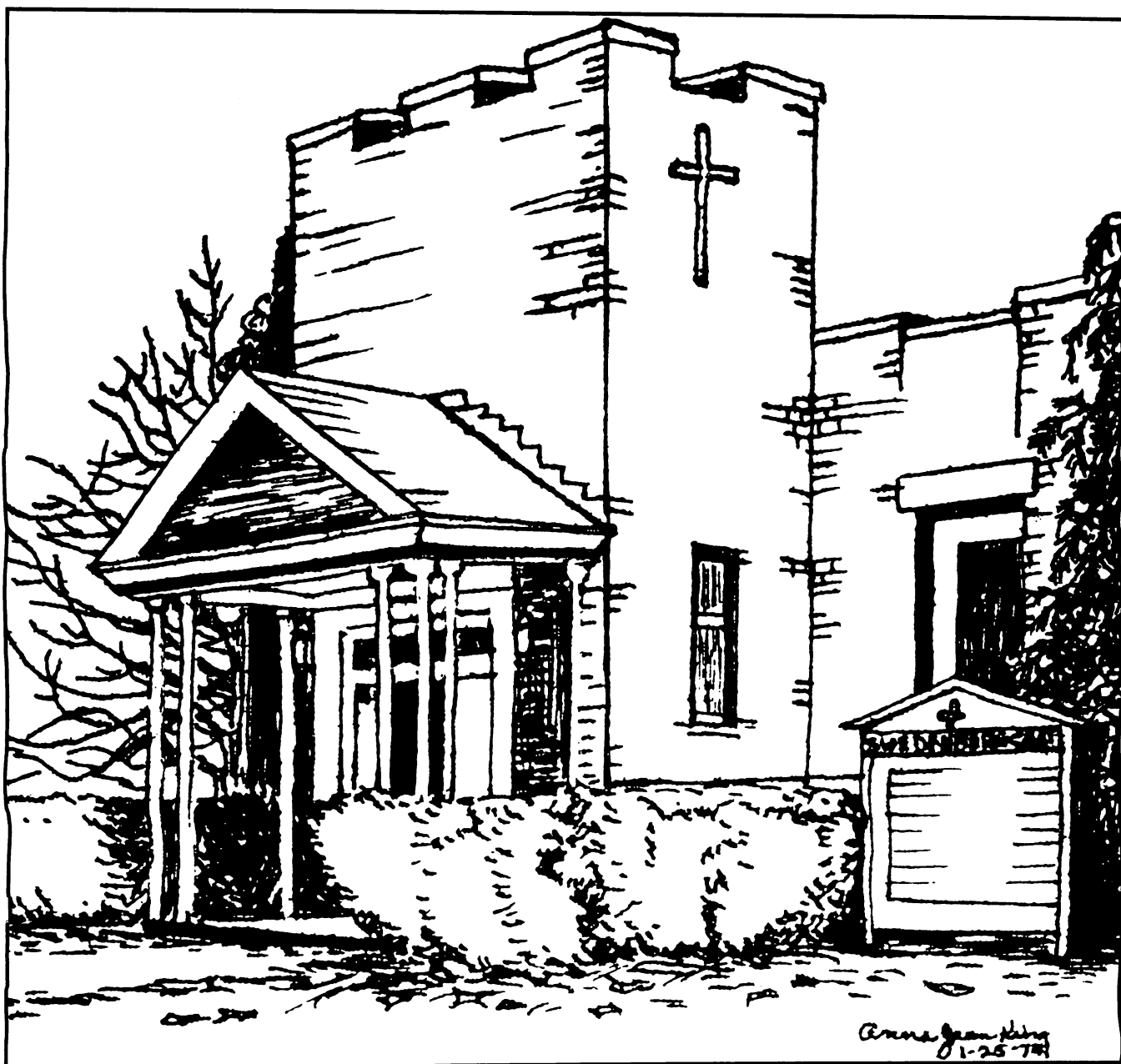


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# The Messenger

January 1992

## SPECIAL ISSUE: Church Growth and Outreach



The Swedenborg Chapel, Cleveland, Ohio

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### SPECIAL ISSUE: Church Growth and Outreach

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Cover: Swedenborg Chapel, Cleveland, Ohio (built in 1929).

### The Messenger

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## Moving Toward the Light

### About This Issue

*Guest Editorial by Eric Allison, PMSU Consultant*

In 1988 the Pastoral Ministries Support Unit decided that it had to offer greater assistance to our churches. In most cases the churches were declining or barely holding their own. It was clear that if our denomination was going to survive, changes would have to be made. PMSU began to explore ways of giving more support to the local churches. Funds were made available for lay people to attend workshops on church growth; Eric Allison was hired as a full-time consultant; congregations were visited by PMSU members; regular communication with our churches was established; books and other resources that describe what is happening in churches today throughout North America were reviewed; and a greater commitment was made to invite the Lord into our daily spiritual lives. It has been a learning experience for all of us.

Fortunately, we have gained some important insights and have made some headway. Many of our churches have willingly experimented with advertising, direct mail, new styles of worship, public events, neighborhood contact, community service, small groups, and a variety of minor administrative changes. There have, of course, been some failures and disappointments. It has been expensive, but we believe that investing in the future of the church is essential. There have been some significant successes and we are convinced that not only will our church survive, it will flourish. In some of our churches the growth has been dramatic. In others a slow but steady influx of newcomers has offered encouragement, and some have yet to experience any significant growth. The transformation of our churches will not happen overnight, but as we continue to invite the Lord into our churches and invite others to join us in forging a new model of spiritual community, we certainly will grow internally as well as in number.

This issue of *The Messenger* shows glimpses of what is happening in some of our congregations. Space does not permit a full accounting of every church. It is exciting to share with you this encouraging report. We are just beginning our journey and have already turned some corners.

#### From the Editor:

Some months ago, the Rev. Paul Zacharias, executive secretary of the Pastoral Ministries Support Unit, asked if I would agree to devoting most of one Messenger to the visions and progress reports from some of our churches that have been working successfully with PMSU on growth and outreach. We targeted January and the New Year as a most appropriate time to present these new beginnings and regenerative efforts. However, since space didn't permit all the designated churches to be featured in one issue, the Wilmington, Edmonton and Urbana articles will be included in the February Messenger.

A happy and fulfilling New Year to all!

Patte LeVan

# What's Happening . . . ? in Portland, Maine

*"What we have found here is happiness."*

Susanne Lorraine

Lately, a lot of people in Portland have been coming to the Swedenborgian Church to find the answer to this question. Since PMSU granted us money to publicize our church, we have had a steady stream of visitors, many of whom have stayed to become friends and members. Why are they coming? What are we doing that attracts them? What brings them back?

The local advertising we have been doing has given us a consistent presence over the past year. We have been running small display ads (under \$40) in a popular free weekly alternative paper called the *Casco Bay Weekly*. Our publicity committee, headed by Eli Dale, meets over dessert monthly. They have produced a series of provocative headlines which run over a standard informational format with logo, service times, address, phone number, etc. Some of our recent headlines include: "Labor of Love," "Soul Music," "Unity in Diversity," "Dance your own Dance," "Many Paths One Source" and "Life's a Miracle, Then You Live Forever." We have also run ads in *Journey*, the publication of the 12-Step programs, and other small local monthlies. In addition to these ads for the church we have also run free classified listings for our twice weekly yoga classes, bi-weekly "Spiritual Seekers" discussion groups and our monthly "Living Lightly" potluck supper. Here's what they say:



"STRETCHING THE SPIRIT . . . a yoga class of gentle breathing and stretching ending in deep relaxation. All are welcome to this creative approach to body, mind and spiritual well-being. Please bring a mat."

"DISCOVER AN ANCIENT GATEWAY . . . Have you lost interest in religion because you didn't get answers that made sense? Discover this scripture discussion group that makes the Bible relevant to everyday life—come to feel, share, explore, disagree, learn and grow. No one will tell you what to believe."

"LIVING LIGHTLY . . . Interested in sharing with others ideas about harmonious co-existence with the all of creation? Here's the place to brainstorm and support each other in bringing forth this dream. Come talk, listen and eat great food at our monthly *Living Lightly* potluck supper."

(Continued on page 4)

## Pastoral Ministries Support Unit

The Pastoral Ministries Support Unit—PMSU for short—helps to foster ministries within our church that focus on the spiritual well-being of people. PMSU, which was created under the organizational structure adopted in 1986, is the first board our church has had that works directly with individual church groups to develop programs.

One important component of PMSU's work is our pastoral ministries consultant, the Reverend Eric Allison. Eric spends in-depth time with local congregations, helping them develop their visions as Swedenborgian churches, identify their unique strengths, and to see how these might mesh with local needs to build a visible, contributing presence in the community.

To participate in PMSU's process, a congregation must first have taken concrete steps showing its intentionality to grow—such as making significant budget allocations to ongoing publicity and advertising efforts. Our church in Detroit, for example, voted to withdraw some of their capital funds to advertise their programs. Another evidence of commitment is members' sustained participation in follow-up contacts with visitors, fund-raising activities, and community service programs.

PMSU stays in touch with local congregations both formally and informally. It meets with congregations that request a visit. PMSU has held several of its regular meetings in different parts of the U.S. and Canada in order to meet with local groups. Such a meeting is often the first step that starts a congregation on a more systematic development of its programs.

Currently PMSU is implementing a five-year plan that emphasizes training for church boards and councils to function effectively. This assistance will be available to local congregations, and will also be used at the denomination level, beginning with the Cabinet and General Council meetings in January 1992.

## Portland, Maine (from page 3)

These other activities provide us with opportunities to expose the attendees to the Swedenborgian Church through our displays of pamphlets and our monthly newsletter, always conveniently available by the door. Our new professional looking, laser-printed newsletter has attracted a lot of attention and is distributed to over 150 members, friends and visitors. It provides news of upcoming events, church council and committee reports, inspirational articles, poetry and a complete calendar of activities held at the church. We have made many friends who first found us through attending functions such as the Dances for Universal Peace, the Portland Folk Club Song Swap, and Circle Dancing.

We have asked people what attracted them to attend our Sunday worship service for the first time. Some had picked up literature at one of the many events and found it interesting. Some were intrigued by the ad headlines; an ad executive came simply because he was curious about our creative talent. Others felt a kinship with the statement that we are "Celebrating the life of the Spirit through Worship, the Arts, and Community Service." One Sunday we asked everyone to write down how they felt about the Portland Swedenborgian Church. Here are some responses, from old friends, members, and visitors:

*I love this church. I love that the people here really care about the world; and especially that they support each other in the difficult struggle to become better spiritually and physically responsible citizens of the Earth.*

*This is my first time to be part of the worship—I am touched by the openness—the search for wholeness and sharing of each person with the community. The reaching out of spirit-to-spirit is wonderful.*

*Been looking to fill a gap in my life that I have been trying to do on my own through prayer and meditation but have realized that I need people to break away in part from*

*my hermitage and be with a spiritual community.*

*Common ground is a place to laugh and cry and go through Life trying to heal in the light of a higher order of mind and God from which that mind comes.*

*I am coming to this church because I am accepted and therefore can accept others, am respected and therefore can respect others, am loved and can therefore love others. We are the world.*

*The best part of the church, aside from the people, is the way Ken allows freedom to speak one's own mind. Very interesting opinions and thoughts. What a great bunch of people with fantastic views. Love truly does live here.*

*The freedom to seek, to believe, to defend, to enjoy, to play, to passion, to change . . . God's path.*

Simply speaking, what we have found here is happiness. And the wonderful thing about happiness is that it naturally spreads. As more people have found pleasure in the gathering to worship on Sunday mornings, the more happiness has been shared with visitors. We have a "pick what you want" singing session to open ourselves up at the start of the service. The pleasure of spontaneously singing songs close to your heart is there for anyone to choose. Our songbook has a variety of popular, classic, new and homegrown music. We have the trained accompaniment of Rev. Ken Turley on guitar and Laurie Turley on piano as well as the occasional impromptu addition of friends on drums, maracas, guitars, flute, bass guitar and wash-tub bass. We share the fun with the children and that leaves us with a warm relaxed feeling. After helping to light the candle and open the Word, the children are told a special story and then are excused. We bring ourselves into the moment with a quiet centering prayer before the reading and talk by our minister or someone else who has desired to share an inspiration. We call our ser-

mon a talk because sometimes it becomes just that. If time allows, observations and comments by the congregation are encouraged. Sometimes the few words offered by a parishioner are the beginning of a good talk and a new friendship during coffee hour. There is sometimes a special song chosen to enhance the message for the day or a performance presented by dancers or musicians. When the time of the service draws to a close, we push back our chairs and form our "closing circle." We have almost reached all four walls with the large groups we have had lately! In our physical circle of hands we form the connection we have built throughout the service. It is a circle of caring, sharing prayer concerns, thanksgivings and requests for blessings. There is honesty and openness in our circle of oneness before God. After we sing our benediction, we slowly part hands. Worship then becomes part of life as coffee perks and kids arrive.

Much happiness comes from finding a place where giving of ourselves is received in joy, appreciation and caring. The people who have found this happiness are gladly sharing themselves with others. All our gatherings are blessed as we humbly pray for and acknowledge God's presence in all our activities. We work and play, we learn and teach, we love and grow, together as individuals in a spiritual communion with God and all creation.

*Susanne Lorraine is secretary/ treasurer of the Portland, Maine Swedenborgian Church. The Reverend Ken Turley is minister.*

### PMSU Thanks You

The Pastoral Ministries Support Unit (PMSU) gratefully thanks the following churches/organizations for their financial support of our pastoral ministries consultant's travel expenses over the past two years:

The Swedenborg School of Religion (SSR)  
Pawnee Rock church  
Wilmington church  
The British Columbia New Church  
The Ohio Association

A special word of appreciation to the Riverside New Church for its very generous contribution to the Pastoral Ministries Support Unit Outreach Advertising Project.

## Cleveland Church:

# Moving Along; Finding its Way

John Billings

The Cleveland church has truly come to life. The people here perceive that there is such a thing as a spiritual (not just a psychological) journey that we call regeneration and that it is supremely important to undertake it. In this situation, a ministry can be very, very exciting. To be part of a group beginning to change, to come alive (perceiving and choosing the good and the true) is thrilling. To give you some sense of where we are:

- When people find value in dropping the pretenses and games and begin to 'come clean' with where they really are, especially with regard to their feelings, then the Lord's reality and role has a much better chance at *truly leading us*, as well as being the central force in the church's life that only the Lord should be. Many may recall Swedenborg's wonderful phrase that the Lord leads us through our feelings—our affections. That dynamic process, though often rocky, difficult and sometimes dangerous, goes very well with Swedenborg. It is the heart of what the Cleveland New Church is all about as we strive to move, to grow, to be. *How* we get somewhere—the internal basis of our choices—is just as important to us as *where* we are heading.

- If something doesn't feel right, (as well as think right) we pay very close attention to that. Why not? If freedom is good enough for the Lord, it is good enough for us! We *are* free, even if we don't always *feel* free. But we need to behave *as if* we are, even if we don't *feel* that way. There really are no rules; only love and truth within us that it is our honor, responsibility, joy and pain, to try and know; to try and face. It

is not always easy. But it is completely trustworthy. A lot of the trick is in knowing how honestly and knowledgeably to face and feel those feelings where the Lord is trying to lead us and then having the courage to stand up for what we genuinely come to know and believe. It is true we have the Word in the light of Swedenborg as a guide and a compass. But it is also true that both these things *must* come and go *through* us in order for direction and meaning to emerge. We are, in fact, always dealing with the Lord internally as we seek to continuously give birth to new life within and around us. It is important that we labor, that we do this kind of work: a still-born Lord is the death of the church.

- To become a true church in the sense Swedenborg means, *we* must be alive, caring, discerning, warm and real: True to our deepest feelings, our deepest selves, which is the only place where the Lord's will and our own will be the same. Without that essential element of real feeling (whether joy, sadness, pain, whatever) being invited in, expressed, shared and acted upon, the church will be lost because the Lord, ultimately, will not allow it to continue—no matter how well Swedenborg might be understood! Love is really the only subject we should ultimately be concerned about. Everything else is of secondary importance.

Our core-connection group meets in the sanctuary. On more than one occasion, with lights dimmed, I have heard members of that group crying their eyes out while lying in the chancel. I can think of no better place to cry. It seems so appropriate to me.

I personally believe the lack of feeling in our denomination is the sole reason it has gone steadily down hill for so many years—*as well it should*. Swedenborg predicts that this is exactly what will, and should, happen to any church. It is but another form of faith alone. Life trying to be lived on our terms, rather than how the Lord would have us live and feel it! It is heaven—literally—that modulates, times, and orders our feeling lives, so we need to know, honor, and learn from life, *on its terms*. It is not possible, ultimately, to be spiritual and think we can decide how or what we are going to feel. That is essentially arrogant. It is also not possible to be spiritual and be an internally cold (or even cool) human being at the same time. These two are mutually exclusive. Repression of deep and real feeling is hell's finest (and most devastating) achievement in us, and never exists in heaven. Divine heat—life—is the *first* reality in the Lord and must ultimately be our own as well.

These are some of the more central and important values and understandings we try to live by. I have asked some of the members and friends of the church to respond to the question: "What does this church mean to you personally at this time in your life?" Their responses appear at the end of the article.

We have grown numerically the past two years, due to our outreach and programming efforts. We have sponsored two successful showings of the John Bradshaw video tapes on family dysfunction—something common to us all. Personal counseling

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## Cleveland Church

(from page 5)

has been a major feature of our program, and is the purpose of the "core-connection" group that meets every Wednesday night at the church. The purpose of this group is for the participants to attempt to connect with their inner life and feelings, which often originate in childhood, by focusing on what is troubling or painful to them in the present. Once past initial embarrassments or other difficulties, it can be helpful to have a place where your struggles and hurts are thought of as sacred doors to deeper treasures.

We try to vary our Sunday morning worship services, both in content and form. We are not stuck in the Apostolic tradition so typical of many churches, Swedenborgian or otherwise. We try to let our deepest inner feelings and thoughts (the Lord in us) determine the content as well as the outer form. Last week, for example, the "message" was laced with music and constituted the entire

*might say or think or do—and how we might respond.*

It was a wonderful service, difficult to do, but nearly everyone said they liked it. We strive to have a lot of beautiful music in our services (taped as well as live—hymns, spirituals) but try and stay away from over-used and outdated hymns. We have many different group and individual prayers and, of course, a message of one kind or another—perhaps a poem that is appropriate for the day.

Another feature, new this year, is what we call "Swedenborg Dialogues." We may bring some aspect of our church's teaching and talk about it in an informal question-and-answer mode. Some of the subjects have been: the nature of the Lord; the nature and dynamics of the spiritual world; the overall meaning of life from the point of view of our theology; what is salvation in more modern, unchurchy terms; the issues and meaning of "marital love."

The most powerful part of human life is when the divine and the human come close together—in

Ideally, we would all have "fluid access," in a complete and feeling way, with our entire childhood, whether that childhood was painful or not. Why not? Is this not where the Lord has laid down "remains," the actual foundation of our very humanness, to say nothing of how this whole problem of repressed feeling impacts our actual ability to even perceive the Lord? Having access to deep feelings within us is not synonymous with spirituality, but without them spirituality is dramatically incomplete.

Deep feelings are very important at the Cleveland New Church. We have a genuine community emerging in Cleveland and it is within this context that we do fun things together as an additional part of our church life: Family style dinners every month. Sing fests. A new singing-performing group, called "Breaking Chains," getting under way under the able leadership of a professional musician and newest member, John Pyle. We also have a choir. And we are currently initiating a free-will pledge system in order to

*"A stillborn Lord is the death of the church."*

service. The message was about prayer and the internal sense, particularly as these relate to children and angels and how these two interact with the Lord's Prayer.

We have just purchased a high-quality sound system which includes the amplifier, mikes, speakers, etc. Classical and other kinds of music sound absolutely heavenly. Our prelude last week was the soundtrack from the movie "Somewhere In Time." With that playing softly in the background, John Bradley, our new lay leader, said (by means of the new cordless mike):

*When people are in church together, and move closer to their own internal places, the angels gather round to listen . . . They understand the language of internal feeling and thought, even better than we do, and know that it is really everything; and so are interested and excited by what we*

*human experience.* We try and cooperate with the ways the Lord would have that happen—and attempt to stay out of the way so it *can* happen. Sometimes we fail. It can be difficult, because getting close to the Lord often means getting close to our own feelings and losing that sense of inner control and, therefore, security. It really comes down to continuously working toward *true humility*. Part and parcel of that is *listening*—listening carefully for the gentler, but infinitely more powerful, voices of deeper feeling and thought.

We also have special, one-time events. We had a speaker from IANDS, the International Association for Near-Death Experiences, who talked about NDE's. We hope to have a men's workshop on grief. I think grief is men's number one issue—buried grief feelings, especially as they are connected to their relationships with their fathers.

become financially independent of Convention. We've got a way to go with that one, but it is important and necessary that we eventually make it. We have a lot of work ahead of us, to be sure, but I think we're genuinely under way, in a good way.

### Members' Responses

Lois Krebs: "My husband likes to joke that I was a comparative church shopper, since I've explored a lot of avenues in my quest for a spiritual home. I've found that home at the Swedenborgian Church, where I feel free, free to grow into my own personal, spiritual best, with never any pressure to conform to dogma, never any question about my politics or values; just a I Corinthians 13 kind of love."

Joyce Laggan: "Just recently I've  
(continued on page 15)



## The Stone House: A Swedenborgian Spiritual Growth Center

Paul Martin Grumman

### The Vision

For 20 years I have had a dream of establishing a spiritual growth center. Though not apparent to the casual visitor, Swedenborgianism would permeate the center. Swedenborg saw religion as life, not dogma, and salvation as the process of spiritual growth, not a judgment based on correct belief. The Swedenborgian Church's stated purpose is to facilitate the spiritual growth and well-being of people, and this is precisely what everything at the center would be geared toward—the atmosphere, the books, the staff, the classes and workshops, and the worship services.

Swedenborg experienced God as the source of all love and wisdom and recognized that people were created specifically to be able to receive that love and wisdom. We, therefore, trust people to know what they need for their own growth, if they can get in touch with deeper parts of themselves. Our task, then, is not to sell them, to judge them, or to convince them, but merely to support them on their inner journey to love and truth.

Receiving and expressing love and wisdom is the natural state. We do not have to force it (push the river), only provide the best possible en-

vironment for it to occur. We would offer an oasis from the superficial, external, material craziness of the outer world, a safe place to explore the blocks we have created which inhibit the natural flow, a Center where people can tune in to their own center where divine love and wisdom flow in.

Swedenborgianism is a perspective and a way of relating to God, the world, and each other. It would be important that all the center's staff and many of the teachers of the programs be Swedenborgian. Swedenborgian books and church literature would be prominently displayed in the library and the bookstore. Other books, programs, counselors and teachers would be "Swedenborgian compatible," that is, similar in values and perspective, and oriented toward facilitating spiritual growth.

It would be a community center because it would be a gathering place for compatible groups, organizations, and individuals on the spiritual path. They would find the center to be a safe supportive environment. There would be a comfortable place for visitors to sit and talk with the center's staff and meet other visitors. They would appreciate that there are books and classes geared toward their needs. Those

who chose to delve deeper would find a compatible theology in the teachings of Emanuel Swedenborg and the Swedenborgian Church.

### History

In 1982, upon graduating from the Swedenborg School of Religion, I, with my wife, Sandie and infant son Bow, moved to the Seattle area to begin my ministry. We chose Seattle because the congregation there seemed far more open to our vision of ministry

than others. They were used to an informal personal worship style and spiritual growth groups because of having been under the inspired and progressive leadership of Rev. Dave Johnson. The first three years were difficult because, in addition to settling in a new area with no friends or family and adjusting to being parents, we were not sure how to begin establishing the center. The church did not own a building and there were no funds to rent even an office. Our services and classes were all held in people's homes. The members were wonderful, friendly and supportive, but outreach, publicity, and programming were almost impossible. Then, in 1985, the Board of Missions, which had been supporting my ministry, suggested there might be some funds available for a bookroom. We sent in a proposal for a book room and spiritual growth center, and received assistance from both Convention and the Pacific Coast Association. The dream was finally becoming a reality.

The bookroom opened in December 1985, a few months before our second son, Shepard, was born. In the beginning there were very few books for sale. We did not have funds to buy many books and our primary purpose was not to be a book store. The largest room in the small building was used for a Swedenborg library and reading room, visiting with people who came in, classes and programs, and worship services. I worked in the store five days a week by myself and taught all the classes in the evenings (meditation, spiritual growth, and Swedenborg, as well as facilitating a video series). The need was obvious. People would walk in the door and say they felt like they had come home, or they would burst into tears saying how lonely they had been not knowing how to find other people interested in spiritual growth or even spiritual books. Despite few books, no publicity, and only a *Stone House Book Room* sign hidden up on the porch, the center started to grow.

In 1987 sales quadrupled to \$20,000. I hired part-time help in the store and found other leaders to

(Continued on page 9)



Interior of new book store with members  
Linda Bryant and Leann O'Connell

*Swedenborg House Chapel & Growth Center:*

# Growth Through Attraction

*Deborah Winter and Skuli Thorhallsson*



*Some members of the Swedenborg House Chapel and Growth Center (from left, back row): Lola Golden, Drake Downing, Helen Mitchell, George Mitchell, Skuli Thorhallsson, Lisbet Jonsdottier, Julie Cheney, Jack Cheney, Joan Bryson, Deborah Winter, Sola Thorhallsson, Martha King, Alice Fairfax, Dot Farnham, Victoria Staley, David Staley, Jaqui Cheney.*

Swedenborg House (The DeLand Society) was established in 1969 under the able guidance of Rev. Ernest L. Frederick. It is a large manor house in a beautiful and peaceful "old Florida" setting surrounded by large oak trees with Spanish moss, and year-round blooming shrubs and flowers, which has served as a regional center for Swedenborgians throughout the southeast. You will find it just north of DeLand (home of Stetson University) near horse farms and orange groves.

When Ernest retired in 1988 we accepted the call to serve the DeLand Society. Being newly ordained, we were full of hope and enthusiasm. This has been tempered by three years of hard work and a new baby! We now have hope, enthusiasm, and experience.

Faced as most churches are with the need to grow, we began to look at ways to foster growth. Our membership has been supportive and open to change, allowing us to streamline our Sunday service to: Prelude, Invocation/Meditation, Serenity Prayer, Children's Message, Scripture Readings,

Music, Offering, Minister's Message, Sharing/Discussion, Prayer and Healing Circle, Benediction/Song of Peace, Postlude. No hymnals are used. From the feedback given by our new friends, we believe this new format is working well.

We are fortunate in that the New Church is not an organization but a spiritual vision and a way of life. We are not confined to the Apostolic tradition as a means of sharing that vision. After all, to acknowledge that the first manifestation of the Divine is a Sun in the spiritual world (heaven) which is pure Love and Wisdom and out of which all of creation (spiritual and natural) has sprung forth, makes us something "other."

So what kind of people are we attracting? It seems that we are too liberal (lovers of freedom, especially in spiritual matters) for many "Christians" and too conservative (hold dear the Scripture and Christ) for many "New-Agers." Therefore we are on the Middle Way. People come who feel restricted by traditional Christianity but don't want to fall into the "fly-boy" syndrome (believing in everything, committing to nothing) that is often characteristic of New Age thinking. They want the best elements of both. Which means that they honor world and native religions and are concerned about the environment and world peace. They want to deepen their personal relationships and make a difference in the world; they want to take responsibility for their own spiritual growth without abandoning their Christian heritage.

Friends of Swedenborg House have come from small spiritual growth groups; weekly meditation and healing circle, inner-child retreat, women's retreat, men's group, Bradshaw videos on the Family and Homecoming followed by hearing and discussion, weekly 12-Step group, individual and group counseling, and spiritual direction.

Real church growth can only happen through attraction, but we also have to get the word out. So we are very grateful for the help and encouragement of the Pastoral Ministries Support Unit and its outreach grant. Beginning this year we are using it to promote our groups and

*"Of all the trails there are to follow in this life,  
there is one that is the most important of all,  
and that is the trail of becoming a true human being."*



Sunday service by designing and printing flyers and brochures and distributing them around town and placing small tasteful ads in local papers. As a result we are attracting more and more enthusiastic people—then the best advertising becomes free: word of mouth. Growth through attraction.

Our hopes and dreams are that in the very near future we will become self-supporting. We are on the right trail. As the medicine man said to the lieutenant in "Dances with Wolves": "Of all the trails there are to follow in this life, there is one that is the most important of all, and that is the trail of becoming a true human being. I see that you are on this trail and that makes me very happy." There are thousands of people all around us who are on, or are looking, for this trail. We hope to be guides along the way.

*The Revs. Deborah Winter and Skuli Thorhallsson are co-ministers at Swedenborg House Chapel and Growth Center, DeLand, Florida.*

**Stone House** (from page 7) teach some new classes—Yoga, *A Course in Miracles*, Life After Death, while I taught meditation and spiritual growth, a teen meditation group, Bible study, an Introduction to Swedenborg class, and the video series, as well as leading worship services twice a month. We also had workshops on the Essenes, Health and Healing, Polarity Therapy, Dreams, Relaxation and Stress Management, and several concerts. We were not prepared for such rapid growth and, feeling overwhelmed and burned out, it was necessary for me to pull back.

In 1988 and 1989 we had a full-time store manager. We expanded our class offerings to one almost every evening. Some of the new classes included Tai Chi, N.L.P. (Neuro-Linguistic Programming), Intuition Training, Increasing Self-Esteem, Right Livelihood, Marriage, Parenting, Voluntary Simplicity, Creation-Centered Spirituality, a series on Health and Healing, an Interfaith series highlighting different religions, and a series on Earth Stewardship which got us involved in Native American Spirituality. I taught classes on *Heaven and Hell*,

## San Francisco Church:

# A Challenge of Public Popularity

*Jim and Rachel Lawrence*



*Wedding party in the garden, fall 1990.*

At the San Francisco Swedenborgian Church, our congregation has inherited one of the real architectural gems of the city; its popularity and fame seems to grow each year. Being actually the second Swedenborgian church built in the city, the Lyon Street chapel has been the wedding site of choice for hundreds of couples since the twenties (the church was built in 1895). During the fifties and sixties, it was common for the pastor to perform over 300 weddings in a year.

The energy and resources required to carry on this ministry are considerable, and our challenge has been to determine whether this is the best approach for us to place our central focus, since as long as we do this ministry, it will dominate our focus. In many ways it does seem to be an effective means of growth and outreach. We currently have a quite strong congregation by Convention norms, and a solid third, including much of our core leadership, have arisen from the wedding program over the years. An important ancillary benefit is the massive outlet this program provides for disseminating information about and exposure to the primary spiritual concepts of the Sweden-

*(continued on page 10)*

*"The image I like for the San Francisco church is that of a 'bucking bronc.'"*

## San Francisco Church

(Continued from page 9)

borgian denomination. It is not an overstatement to suggest that our church is one of the best known in the city. Our open door policy for weddings, baptisms, and memorial services not only serves vital pastoral needs of people at crucial junctures in their lives, but also brings in numerous visitors who read our literature and attend our worship services. Our extensive public ministry allows our "voice" to reach literally tens of thousands of people a year.

Nevertheless, there are certain frustrations attendant to this ministry. One is the high level of energy that must be poured into relationships that—by anybody's track record—will not continue past the prescribed event 95 percent of the time. Most ministers receive much more satisfaction from a relationship that will grow and develop. Even if the one event feels like a success, it is not the same thing as an ongoing relationship. The other major frustration involves the total amount of energy to keep this ministry working properly and the little amount of energy left over for other ministry strategies.

At the San Francisco church we try to maintain real excellence in our worship service, especially because we have visitors every Sunday and because Sunday morning is still the event the large majority of our people want to experience. Both of us, therefore, take part in every service, providing a greater complexity of "voice," and we work closely with the choir director, Ed Kurtz, to plan each service thematically. The architecture of our church is a real plus, and when great beauty in visual aesthetics and in music is combined with a thoughtful New Church message, the worship service seems to work well for many people. We have begun to advertise our worship service this fall in the Saturday edition of the major daily newspaper serving the San Francisco Bay Area.

As our congregation is fortunate to be strong in attracting people in their thirties and forties, we are at the time of this writing actively

pursuing a feasibility study to see whether we can reasonably expand our parish house for better children's programming.

The Pastoral Ministries Support Unit's church growth consultant, Rev. Eric Allison, made a visit last spring and has kept in touch with us through phone calls since. His primary suggestion has been to attempt a "small group" approach, in which classes are advertised to the public and to the congregation. Hopefully, a mix of new faces and veteran church members will come; the new will bond with the old, and suddenly you have some new people who feel as though they "belong." Also, the pastor is supposed to develop someone from among this group who can lead the same type of group with the same success. You advertise again, and get the same results, but this time without significant pastoral time invested. As this proliferates, one can see how the growth can be adding up quickly.

We have discovered some difficulty in pulling this off in just quite this way, but we do believe that small groups are an important forum to have on an ongoing basis in a church. We hold evening classes much of the year, and they help

people exploring our church to get an in-depth experience as an important complement to Sunday morning.

Working with Eric has stimulated us to identify areas that could benefit from some rethinking. More programming, such as marriage enrichment events, can be offered to our many couples. More promotion of the church can be extended to those who live within walking distance, since parking is such a problem in San Francisco. More advertising can be placed around the city. Even small efforts in advertising have shown positive results this year. A member, Nan Paget, has made some intriguing "arts 'n crafts" flyers and placed them around the city, actually leading to an increase in visitors. Our small Saturday ads have brought worshippers every time so far.

But these efforts require time and energy, and that is our big battle. We have focused on increased volunteer time given to the church, with excellent results, and this is helping. A new volunteer group, the Alliance, is in the making. A new office Macintosh is helping our printed items to look more professional.

Perhaps because of my (Jim's) Texas upbringing, the image I like for the San Francisco church is that of a "bucking bronc." The enormous energy of the program seems to yank the minister in several ways simultaneously, and I often have the sensation of flopping around on top of this wildly kicking program, barely holding on with one hand. Successfully administrating and directing this ministry feels analogous to taming the bronc and riding its forceful energy in a purposeful direction.

That is our challenge. We are grateful to PMSU's active interest in our well-being, making its services available to us in numerous ways. After one year in the saddle here as a team ministry (one full-time and one half-time), we aren't completely sure what this second year will bring. The only certainty is that it will present opportunities aplenty.

*The Revs. Jim and Rachel Lawrence are co-ministers to the San Francisco Swedenborgian Church.*



*Chancel, San Francisco Church*

## *Royal Oak, Michigan*

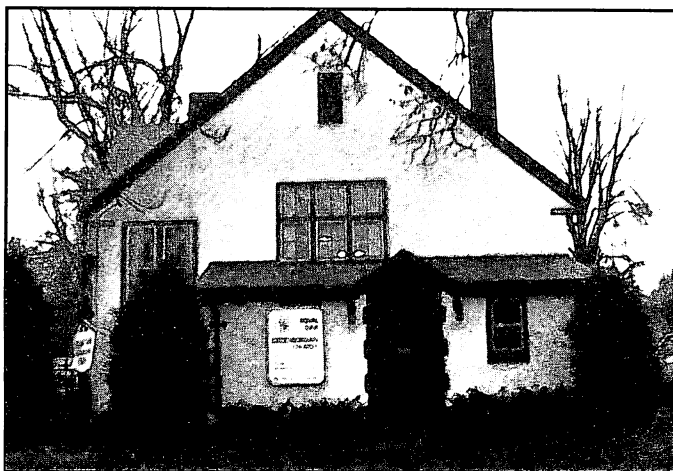
# Rich in Heritage, Flexibility and Optimism

Steve Pults

When a church's pastor writes an article about his or her church, it is tempting to give readers only the glowing good news and success stories of recent years. But if my sharing of one church's experiences is to be of use to other churches and pastors, I believe it is equally important to acknowledge areas of difficulty, confusion, and yes, failures. As the saying goes, we probably have learned as much or more from these as our successes.

One of the first things that attracted me to Detroit as its potential pastor was the flexibility and dedication of this church's long-time members. That was true five years ago. It is true today. I have been blessed with a group of people willing to try new things, willing to risk trying new ideas with the understanding that they might not work, and willing to share church leadership with new members. Today, the majority of our board of trustees are members who have joined our church within the last three years.

Change can be unsettling for any of us. And one of the tensions we work with is attempting to honor two different yet legitimate needs: maintaining traditions that have provided meaning for members over many years while at the same time offering worship that is relevant to today's world. Put in concrete terms, I have watched visitors come and go as they attempted in confusion to follow the First Order of Worship. Yet I see one of our important strengths being a church with a proud heritage of over 150 years in the Detroit area. Our solution to date has been a great deal of com-



*Royal Oak Women's Club, home of the Detroit New Church*

promise. A typical service may have both a traditional invocation and a poetry reading. Giving a single theme to each Sunday's service helps bring all the elements together cohesively.

We are indeed grateful for Rev. Eric Allison's visits to us as a pastoral consultant bringing with him his expertise in advertising and outreach. He has given us solid information to help us understand the dynamics of church growth. Prior to his visits, we were more or less trying the "shot-gun" approach to outreach. When I arrived in 1987, our visibility was almost zero. We do not own our own church building and are very dependent on visibility through advertising. We now have a permanent sign in front of the building we rent for Sunday worship, and a church office in an office-complex building where I can work and meet with people. We are listed in yellow and white pages in every phone book throughout the greater Detroit area, and in our local newspaper's church directory. Through our participation in the Royal Oak Pastor's Association and the Greater Detroit Christian Communication Council we are also well known and recognized.

At first we tried just a few hundred dollars per year with local-paper

advertisements that focused on what our church was about. We then increased our advertising commitment by trying a program where we direct-mailed a personalized invitation to every new resident within our zip code regions. Not one visitor responded—a very discouraging start. But through

my involvement in the community, my meeting couples who were looking for a pastor for their wedding ceremony, and through references from other people in the community who knew of us, we saw some early and steady growth. I found that when I shared our emphasis on a loving, intimate God, on the quality of one's inner self rather than what denominational badge one wore, and on heaven and hell being states of consciousness now rather than future rewards or punishments, people's eyes would light up, and they would often say something like, "I've always felt that way myself, but never found a place where I could share that."

After many long and helpful discussions with Eric exploring our deep conviction that strong emphasis on these ideas might be the most direct means of outreach, we developed the concept of "Life Questions", a four-part discussion series looking at "Who am I?", "Where am I going?", "Is there a God?", and "Is the universe friendly?"

With PMSU's support, our church board courageously voted to spend \$4,000 for advertising "Life Questions" to the public. Ads were created, scrutinized, discussed, revised and finally published Easter

*(Continued on page 12)*

## Royal Oak Church

(continued from page 11)

weekend and the following week. I personally prayed for and visualized 35 people calling to register. I can't tell you the anxiety I felt at potentially seeing this amount of money coming to nothing. But by the last day of the registration deadline 34 people had called to register! And some called back asking if they could bring friends.



*Outreach is not  
a one-shot effort  
but an ongoing  
process if a church  
is to remain vital  
and effective  
in ministry.*



Nearly all the registrants attended the first session. The next three sessions saw our attendance evolve into a small group of a dozen or so. Three new families have become an active part of our church as a direct result of "Life Questions." I remain in contact with others who attended but simply aren't interested in becoming part of a church community. We have also had the difficult-to-measure impact of thousands of people seeing our name in print associated with such qualities as openness, respect for individual differences and relevance. One young woman whose wedding I later conducted called and said, "I just read your ad, and I'm so excited about your church!"

Another advertising project that has worked well for us is a small ad each week that simply reads, "Look-

ing for a pastor who won't judge you if you are from different faiths or divorced, yet who will provide you a wedding ceremony both sacred and meaningful?" I meet an average of three new couples a month from this series and many express their interest in looking for a church home.

We will be putting an emphasis on small groups in the months ahead. We have seen wonderful opportunities for friendships to form in some of our existing groups such as the Appleseed Club where both children and parents get the opportunity to enjoy fun times together, the Tuesday Guild (newly formed last year), the Women's Alliance, and a Bible study/discussion group. Our hope is to see a new prayer group form this year and possibly offer an outreach program to families entitled, "What Do I Tell My Children?"

Our teachings are grounded in action as we continue to give of our resources and time to the local shelter program, CROP Walk and providing Christmas gifts to families unable to provide presents for their children.

One last observation: We have also experienced the sadness and loss of families who gave so much to all of us in our church community, moving away because of job and career requirements. It has been a reminder to us that outreach is not a one-shot effort but an ongoing process if a church is to remain vital and effective in ministry.

*The Rev. Steve Pults is pastor to the Royal Oak Swedenborgian Church, Detroit, Michigan.*

## Nominating Committee Seeks Candidates

The Nominating Committee of the Swedenborgian Church is seeking qualified and interested people to fill the following positions within our offices and support units.

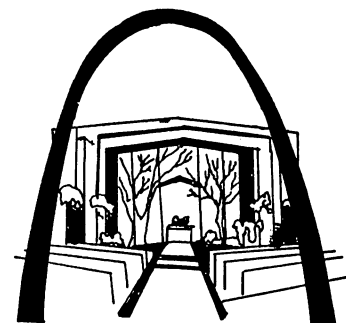
- President—for 3-year term beginning at Convention 1993
- Vice President
- Recording Secretary
- Treasurer
- General Council (1 minister, 2 lay persons)
- Communications Support Unit
- Education Support Unit
- Financial Planning and Resource Support
- Growth and Outreach Support Unit
- Information Management Support Unit
- Pastoral Ministries Support Unit
- Nominating Committee (2 members)
- Committee on Admission to the Ministry (1 minister, 1 lay person)
- Convention Nominees for SSR Board of Trustees (2)

If you are interested in having your name considered for nomination or wish to suggest a potential candidate, please notify the chairperson of the Nominating Committee at the following address:

The Nominating Committee  
c/o Annella Smith, Chair  
4144 Campus Avenue  
San Diego, CA 92103  
Telephone (619) 295-5662

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

See upcoming February  
Messenger for exciting details!



*Alliance of New Church Women:*

## Mite Box '92 New Hampshire Spiritual Growth Network

The Alliance of New Church Women voted at its annual meeting in Kitchener, Ontario, this past June, to support the outreach work of the Rev. Dr. Wilma Wake in West Franklin, New Hampshire. Wilma writes us: *The New Hampshire Spiritual Growth Network has now been in existence for a year. It began in the fall of 1990 with a flyer announcing the creation of a new network for those interested in spiritual growth and holistic healing. Over 40 people showed up for the first meeting—a potluck and workshop with two nurses discussing the ancient nursing healing tradition of therapeutic touch. At a business meeting after the workshop the group decided to meet once a month, alternating educational presentations and meditation/discussions.*

*As we celebrate our first birthday as a group, we are proud that we have met every month this year. Between eight and 40 people have shown up for each session, with an average of 25 for workshops and 15 for meditation. Our educational topics have included many different forms of healing, including polarity and ayurvedic. Our discussion topics have included spiritual growth, good and evil, and Swedenborg's theology. We have a core group of people who are taking an increasingly active role in the many tasks that keep us going.*

*We are committed to allowing people of diverse beliefs, ethnicity, and lifestyle to come together to explore spiritual growth. We are encouraging our participants to explore a wide range of ways of being spiritual in the world, balancing inner growth with a life of charity, addressing issues such as the environment, homelessness, and discrimination.*

*It is a very gratifying experience to be a part of this group. So many people have said that they waited a long time for something like this, and it fills their spiritual needs in a way no other group has. The group has been growing throughout the year, and the response is overwhelmingly positive. We are encouraging a series of small spiritual growth groups to be meeting regularly along with the larger network meetings, and we are continuing to add smaller groups as we attract more and more people. Recently, the group voted to request membership in the Maine Association and to apply for non-profit status in New Hampshire. We are becoming increasingly organized and feeling much more settled in the community.*

*All of this is being done with a minimal budget. I am donating my time as a minister, supporting myself with a full-time job as a social worker. Our expenses are for room rental, publicity, mailings, and a small honorarium to speakers. Each \$40 ad nets us about half a dozen new calls from people interested in our work. Last year, we managed with \$200 from GOSU, \$200 in donations, and a small amount from the collection basket after each meeting. We need additional money to maintain our publicity efforts and keep up with our mailing list of over 100 people, as well as to pursue non-profit status and incorporation as an official ministry within the Swedenborgian Church.*

*We see ourselves as developing a model of ministry that can be duplicated in other areas—a ministry with strong outreach potential into the community, yet involving a minimal budget. We are pleased with the decision of the Women's Alliance to donate the mite box collec-*

*tions to our group and are most appreciative of any help that we receive.*

The Alliance also voted for continued support of Kei Torita's ministry in Japan, support for the Urbana University Library Fund, the Harvey Chapel Fund, our five church camps, the Youth League, *The Messenger*, and the convention baby sitter. We also contributed to Church Women United, and Church World Services (CROP). This year we are particularly pleased to have supported five former Urbana University students toward their undergraduate expenses through the Edith Blackmer Memorial Fund. As the fund specifies, all attended the University and are Swedenborgians.

The Alliance wishes to thank all of you who have contributed to these worthy causes and we appreciate your continued support.

I am also pleased to report, thanks to Mary Ebel, that we have a new supply of convention pins. These are available for \$4.00 plus 50¢ mailing through me at my address listed below. (Mailing cost may be higher for Canada.) The pins will also be for sale at convention in St. Louis this coming June.

Our annual appeal letter will be out shortly. However, contributions are welcome anytime. Checks made out to the Alliance of New Church Women, and requests for pins may be sent to: Nancy C. Perry, Box 156, Jackson, NH 03846.

*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.*

## Stone House

(continued from page 9)

taught classes on *Heaven and Hell*, *Divine Love and Wisdom*, *Uses*, and Introductions to Swedenborg based on *The Presence of Other Worlds*, and continued the video series. We got more organized, computerizing our inventory, etc., but we did not increase our inventory and our sales dropped off to \$16,000 per year.

Throughout this time the church had not increased its membership. In summer 1989 we took a long look at who we were as a church and what we wanted to be. We decided to focus on clearly articulating the Swedenborgian theology and creating spiritual community. We also committed ourselves to a church growth goal of 100 percent. In November 1989, we began holding weekly worship services, and Peggy Stansbury and Sandie organized a children's program. Within six months we had more than doubled our attendance and almost doubled our membership. Like the Stone House, the church was not ready for such rapid growth. We were not well-organized, the space was too small and not suited for services or a children's program, and the same few people were doing all the work.

In February 1990, we were blessed with our third child, Hilary. At the same time the Stone House lost its major funding source and had to let its manager go. With countless hours of volunteer help from Sandie, I took over managing the store. Business immediately doubled and we finished 1990 with over \$29,000 in sales. Our classes also continued to grow. A "Bradshaw On the Family" video series initiated two ongoing recovery groups. Once again we were not ready for the growth, however. I cannot do an adequate job managing the book store, coordinating the programs, teaching classes, leading worship services, and being a pastor to my growing congregation. Sandie and I began to seriously consider resigning and closing the center.

### Present and Future

In April 1991, I hired a business consultant, Candy Turrentine, to

help me figure out if, given our limited resources, continued growth and success for the center and the church (the realization of our vision!) was possible without totally burning myself out and neglecting my family even more than I had been. With her tremendous expertise, concern and support, we came up with a vision and plan that was endorsed by the Stone House board and the entire church congregation.

◆

*Our task, then,  
is not to sell them,  
to judge them,  
or to convince  
them, but merely  
to support them  
on their  
inner journey  
to love and truth.*

◆

Unfortunately, success required initial funding. Convention and the Pacific Coast Association have faithfully funded the center, allowing us to keep our heads above water, but not to a degree which would enable us to: rent or purchase a larger building providing room for services, classes, office, and book store; expand the store inventory (necessary to bring in more people and thus increase income); buy fixtures and furniture; increase our visibility via publicity; and hire adequate staff.

After careful deliberation (thanks to the moral support we received from so many people throughout Convention, and to the Los Angeles church for offering some funding), we took a step forward trusting that the financial support we need will materialize.

In November we moved into a larger space near the Stone House that has an office, a classroom, a worship space and room to expand the store. We will begin a children's program. We will be sponsoring two classes most evenings. The church will have a little more room to grow. We see this as an intermediate step, however, and as an experiment. We will know soon if we can afford to continue to grow.

To realize our vision the center still needs: a larger classroom and worship space (wider than 13 feet); two rooms (for the older and younger children); room for a Swedenborg library; a kitchen; a reception area; additional help in the bookstore (to maintain the quality of the inventory, enhance the appearance of the store, and improve customer service); and a second minister (to meet the needs of a growing congregation, expand the Swedenborgian presence in the center and provide additional Swedenborgian classes, programs, counseling, etc.)

I still believe in our vision. I am confident that the center could continue to grow and move toward self-sufficiency. We have reached thousands of people and could reach thousands more. It is a perfect forum for exposing these people to Swedenborg's books and ideas, and for nourishing the growth of the Swedenborgian Church. The enthusiastic and ever-increasing interest shown in the center reinforces our belief that this vision is a viable model for facilitating the spiritual growth and well-being of people.

*The Rev. Paul Martin Grumman is minister to the Swedenborgian Church and Spiritual Growth Center of Puget Sound, Washington.*



**Cleveland** (from page 6)  
*realized how my relationship with my husband of 22 years has deepened and matured because of my involvement with the core-connection group at Swedenborg Chapel. It has helped me to separate the painful issues of my past from the vicissitudes of life, thereby helping me with my own spiritual journey. It took me nearly a year, but I'm finally seeing life in a more glorious way because of the not-so-glorious process of feeling some of those old feelings that hurt."*

●  
**Don Kennedy:** *"The Swedenborg Chapel is, for me, a warm, caring-for-people place, while at the highest level promoting, empowering and articulating one's spiritual growth free from any "doctrinal guilt."*

●  
**Isabelle Winfield:** *"At this time in my life this church has become a sanctuary that wraps its comforting arms around me with a spiritual reassurance that I especially need."*

●  
**Jane Dardzinski:** *"Swedenborg Chapel is a safe place to express your thoughts and feelings without being criticized and a place to grow at your own spiritual rate."*

●  
**Quint Billings:** *"The spiritual centerpiece from which I emotionally and spiritually regenerate."*

●  
**Linda Masek:** *"This church has helped me to see that the Lord is a loving God. In addition the members are caring, sharing, loving and very helpful in my spiritual growth."*

●  
**Doris Fasnacht:** *"Church is not just a building, but what is in our hearts and in His Word which we read daily and the teachings we use to understand the inner sense of His Word."*

●  
**Hilda McDonald:** *"At age 84 and having been born into a Swedenborgian family, I have always felt my church to be a sort of anchor and guide and mother, more so since my earthly mother passed away when I was 10."*

## Commencements

### Baptism

**LaPointe**—Stephanie M. LaPointe, daughter of Thomas and Susan LaPointe, was baptized into the Christian faith November 3, 1991, at the Church of the New Jerusalem, Fryeburg, Maine, the Rev. Gardiner Perry officiating.

### Death

**Link**—Jordan G.B. and Jarrod E.S. Link, stillborn twin sons of Victor and Anita Link, entered the spiritual world October 11, 1991, in Pawnee Rock, Kansas. Resurrection services were conducted by the Rev. John Bennett, with interment at Pawnee Rock Cemetery.

**Snow**—Everett F. Snow, Sr., age 89, entered the spiritual world October 22, 1991, at Norway Convalescent Home in Norway, Maine. Resurrection service was conducted October 24 at the Church of the New Jerusalem, Fryeburg, Maine, the Rev. Gardiner Perry officiating.

**Tutak**—Doris Irene Tutak entered the spiritual world October 20, 1991, in Pawnee Rock, Kansas. Resurrection services were conducted at the Pawnee Rock Swedenborgian Church, the Rev. John Bennett officiating.

**Whitten**—Andrew J. Whitten of Fryeburg, Maine, entered the spiritual world November 4, 1991, in Brighton, Maine. Resurrection service was conducted November 6, the Rev. Gardiner Perry officiating.

### Church Family News

**Mareta Tafel**, wife of Rev. Harvey Tafel, Wayfarers Chapel, California, had a second eye surgery in October, with resulting improvement in the position of her eye. At this mid-November writing, she is due to have two more operations. She can be reached at 25837 Oak Street #110, Lomita, CA 90717.

**Rev. Erwin Reddekopp** was operated on November 8 for a detached retina. At this writing he is recovering nicely at home: 1442 Inkar Road, Kelowna, B.C., Canada V1Y 8H7.

**Rev. Edwin Capon** has been in the hospital recently for two more angioplasty procedures. He is recuperating at home: 463 Viking Drive, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523.

Your prayers and other expressions of caring are greatly appreciated.

●  
**Sharon Billings:** *"The church is a place where I can openly share the joy and pain of spiritual growth with those who cherish this journey."*

●  
**John Bradley:** *"A place of love, guidance, spiritual growth, and understanding where we can all come and worship in our own way and express and experience the spirituality that lives in us all."*

●  
**Tracy Morris:** *"A place to battle my own personal devils, because the church experience is not easy for me."*

●  
**John Billings:** *"A place of human growth and celebration taking place within the broader context of each person's unique spiritual journey to seek and find the Lord in their life."*

The Rev. John Billings is pastor to Swedenborg Chapel in Cleveland.

RIGHT: Some members from the Cleveland congregation.



## The President Reports

# Wayfarers Chapel Update

The fall meetings of the board of managers of Wayfarers Chapel have concluded, and I want to share a few of the highlights of this very upbeat meeting.

In a special Chapel service and reception following it, we honored the members of the Los Angeles Swedenborgian Church and also Carl Lundberg.

The Los Angeles church made a special gift to the Chapel for the express purpose of putting in a new parking lot and drives. The old lot was fast becoming a safety hazard and roots of trees were causing further destruction. A new lot with underground root barriers was installed at the end of October. Without this generous gift from our Los Angeles church, the work could not have been done.

Carl Lundberg, longtime Chapel devotee, was honored for establishing a memorial endowment fund in memory of his wife Betty Pobanz.

While the fund is restricted to using only the income for Chapel projects, he made this an open fund and invites all interested in the work of Wayfarers Chapel to contribute to this fund.

In recognition of these two gifts, both of which will be more than \$50,000, two 20-foot trees recently planted on the grounds were dedicated to the Los Angeles church and to Carl and Betty Lundberg.

At the board meeting, considerable time was spent on the Chapel's five-year plan with emphasis on the 1992 and 1993 years. A capital funds budget of \$49,000 was developed for putting a slurry seal on the parking lot, lights for the medians in the parking lot, and replacing the temporary trailer now serving as the information center.

Funds are in hand for the slurry seal for the parking lot. Monies outside the operating budgets will

need to be raised for the parking lights and a new modular unit for the information center. The latter must be purchased, as the trailer was a temporary solution with temporary permits.

Following the board meeting, the ad hoc committee on planting a Swedenborgian congregation in the Palos Verdes environs met. Representatives from the Friends of the Wayfarers Chapel, the Los Angeles church, the board of managers of Wayfarers Chapel, and the denomination met to discuss hopes, dreams, possibilities and drawbacks of starting a Swedenborgian congregation. Many ideas were explored. A smaller committee will be meeting twice a month to explore this possibility.

I told you these were good meetings. I just measured my cup and behold! It was more than half full! I'll carry some of the increase to Houston, Texas. More about that next month.

Love and Peace,



Richard H. Tafel, Jr., President

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Newton, MA 02158**

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