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# The Messenger

July 1992



GEORGE INNESS (1825-1894),  
*A Pastoral or The Meeting at the Edge of the Wood*, 1882.  
(See Art and Spirituality, page 105)

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Our Cover: GEORGE INNESS (1825-1894), *A Pastoral or The Meeting at the Edge of the Wood*, 1882. Among other Inness letters and documents on file with the George Inness Catalogue Raisonné Project is a letter from him published in the *New Jerusalem Messenger*, 1867, in which he discusses colors and their correspondences. Inness was, for a time, close to the artist William Page who may have introduced him to Swedenborgian thought.

## The Messenger

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## Moving Toward the Light

From the Editor

Three years ago, a reader questioned in the *Ask Swedenborg* column, "What would Swedenborg have said about a new disease such as AIDS?" The Rev. Dr. George Dole answered, in part, "fundamentally, I believe that Swedenborg would think it obvious that the ultimate cure for AIDS is that we begin to care more deeply and more constantly for each other. It is a sign of the fact that we are 'in evil' that it takes such tragedies to call forth our selflessness and our heroism, but as long as it requires disasters to awaken our caring, we may be sure that disasters will occur."

Before the L.A. riots, I had planned the July *Messenger* to celebrate those summer activities that renew our appreciation for life—art and spirituality, a book review, perhaps a movie review, and Ray Wong's lovely and empowering story about turning strangers into friends in an earlier, more innocent L.A.—and my article on conflict resolution. Then movietown, my home town, a city grown blasé about real-life earthquakes, best known for its daily output of reel-life celluloid spectacle, erupted into what may come to be seen as its most moving and significant epic drama, as simultaneous scenes of destruction were shot with human lives instead of film. In addition to the coverage, hourly bulletins poured in from my three children there, later the onsite reports from Lon Elmer and Carl Yenetchi. South Central L.A., an area not even named on the map, burned its way into the nation's consciousness inside of 48 hours.

During phone conversations with Kelly, my younger daughter, we moved through our fear for their safety—my offer of sanctuary in Indiana was impractical; L.A. was already cut off. LAX was closed, major routes out of the city were gridlocked, and phone calls into most areas could not be completed. Kelly progressed from discussing strategies of self-protection to, maybe she could do something to help. As we talked she laid out a detailed plan to organize a food drop. Within the next 24 hours she had mobilized her brother and sister and some 30 friends, three jeep-loads of food, clothing, and donations of over \$200. Due to the recession, she and many of her friends had been financially strapped for months, some jobless, but they put together everything they could spare. Hundreds, thousands of others from all parts of the city were doing the same. When they arrived at the designated collection place, the First African Methodist Episcopal Church, a joyful looking man in a Jesus T-shirt stepped forward whom some of them recognized as a former drug dealer. He laughed as they exchanged greetings and kidded, "I'm not takin' no cash, now, just checks made out to A.M.E."

Standing among the still-smoldering remains of

(Continued on page 106)

# Our Journey on Earth

Raymond Wong

All of us, regardless of who, where and how, started our journeys on earth from the moment we were born. Our destinies are not predetermined by others or even by God. Our destinies are the end results of a combination of our own ideas, objectives and goals, and circumstantial events which either help or hinder our efforts and progress. Our parents may give us guidance; our schools and colleges may provide us with the necessary knowledge and tools. But ultimately where we find ourselves at the end of our journeys depends on our inner strength and our faith in God, if what we seek to accomplish is just and noble within our own conscience, in the eyes of others, and in the final judgment of our Creator.

There are those who start off their journeys on paved highways, encountering little hardship. Others must find their ways through mountains, jungles and deserts. Whichever route we take, we can get lost, be detoured, stricken by disasters, whether man-made or natural. Can we rise from the ashes, pick up the pieces and continue our journey? Only our inner strength, our faith in ourselves and in God can answer that question.

As we pursue our higher objectives and distant goals, we tend to overlook what is near us, people we see on the streets, in a park, on a bus, or just about anywhere in our daily lives. In our present-day society, we tend to be suspicious of others and avoid contact with them. True, there are bad elements in every society; but by far, there are more kind and gentle people. If somehow a channel of communication can be established linking us to others, we may find many of them can indeed be our friends and companions when the

road is winding and the sea is rough as we journey through the unknown.

Years ago I was working for the *San Francisco Chronicle* as a research assistant. I had a ten-day vacation coming around Christmas time. I wanted to do something different than just relaxing at home or going

at the depot and wandered into town, having not the least idea where I was. Before leaving the depot, I picked up an old newspaper left on the bench by some passenger and glanced over the classified ad section. I copied down the addresses of several employment agencies. The nearest one was located on, as I recall, Olive Street. It was not too far from the Greyhound depot.

The man at the counter of the employment agency looked me over when I told him I was looking for a job. He asked me what I could do. I told him I would try anything that was legal because I was flat broke. He picked up the phone and dialed a number. Then I heard him say, "I think I have just the person you are looking for, nice and clean-cut." After he hung up the phone, he gave me the name and address of a restaurant.

It was in Hollywood, which was quite a distance away from downtown Los Angeles. There went another 15 cents of my limited resources for the bus fare to Hollywood. I found the restaurant and talked to its manager. After answering a few questions and giving him my Social Security number, I was hired. What was my job? Busboy. And my wages? Three dollars a day, plus meals.

The head busboy was an Afro-American. He was big and bossy, making me do all the dirty work. But I didn't mind, because I rather enjoyed my little adventure. I got off work after midnight and had to find a place to sleep. The cheapest hotel in Hollywood was about three dollars a night, and I had a little over four dollars left in my pocket of the five dollars. The next day before I went to work, I pawned my camera in a

(Continued on page 100)

▲

*"...we are not here  
to dictate, control  
and rule, but rather  
to understand,  
appreciate and help  
or be helped..."*

▲

somewhere as a tourist. I wanted to prove to myself that I could survive in a big city which I had never been to, where I knew no one, and I was without money. I bought a one-way ticket to Los Angeles and brought with me some toilet articles, a camera and some changes of clothes. The only money I allowed myself to bring was \$5, not a penny more and no credit card.

I left San Francisco in the afternoon and arrived at Los Angeles late at night. I spent about fifty cents and bought a hamburger. That was my dinner. Then I spent the rest of the night dozing off on a bench in the passengers' waiting room of the bus depot. The following morning I cleaned up in the public bathroom

## Our Journey on Earth

(Continued from page 99)

pawnshop. It was a good camera. They gave me ten dollars, with 20% interest charge when redeeming it.

Christmas was just around the corner and the restaurant was very busy. It so happened one of the waiters was sick. To my great surprise, the manager singled me out to take his place. He fitted me with a white uniform, and here I was, only my third day at work, waiting on the customers of a fancy restaurant in Hollywood. Quite a few of them were big-name movie stars. I was never trained to be a waiter; I couldn't even pronounce the names of some of the French dishes they served in the restaurant. But it didn't seem to matter. In fact, several of the customers appeared to be amused by my nervousness and frustration. I collected almost \$20 in tips alone that first night.

The head busboy resented me. He did not like the idea of a newcomer getting a better-paying job, even though I did not ask for it. For a while, he made things really difficult for me; but I felt genuinely sorry for him. On the second night after I got my new job, I gave him half of the tips I collected. At first he refused to accept it, but I put the money in his pocket anyway. From then on he became nicer to me; he even told me about his home and his girlfriend in New Orleans.

On Christmas Eve, the waitresses got together and bought me a present, a carton of Lucky Strikes. I was smoking cigarettes then instead of a pipe as I do now.

My vacation was about over. I had to return to San Francisco. I informed the manager about my impending departure. He did not seem surprised. Instead, he looked at me and said, "I knew you wouldn't stay here long."

Even within such a short period of time, when I left the restaurant for good, I felt a little sad because these people—the manager, the waitresses and waiters, the head busboy and the cooks had all become my friends. The head busboy handed me a sealed envelope and told me not to open it until I got back to San

Francisco.

I went to the pawnshop to redeem my camera. After I paid what I owed, the owner handed me back the camera and asked me, "Are you a student?" I said no. "Trying to get into the acting business in a movie?" Again my answer was no. I told him I loved to write and was exploring a new experience for a short story. "A young writer—I think my wife would love to meet you. She is also an artist. She paints," said the pawnshop owner. He insisted on inviting me to dinner at his home and to meet his wife.

I did have dinner at their home, a small but beautifully decorated house in a quiet residential section of L.A., and I met his wife, a very attractive and interesting middle-aged lady. We talked for a long time at the dinner table about writing, art and other subjects. Finally I told them the truth about why I was in Los Angeles and about the experience I had gained and the friends I had made during the past few days. Both of them thought the whole thing was so unique and interesting, they suggested that I write a story about the adventure and send it to the *Reader's Digest*.

My bus was leaving at ten o'clock that evening. The pawnshop owner gave me back half of the interest he had charged me, and his wife made a nice sandwich for me to eat on my way home. Then they drove me to the bus depot which was quite a distance from their home.

When I was in the bus, I opened the envelope the head busboy had given me. It contained a picture of him and his girlfriend together with a note which read something like this: *Sorry to see you go. I don't say that to nobody but my friend. I ain't gonna take your money for nothing. I used it to buy a present for my girlfriend. I'm gonna marry her and settle down in New Orleans. If you ever come that way, you got a friend.* And he left me his address in New Orleans on that note.

I returned to San Francisco and my job at the *Chronicle*, with \$50 more than I had brought with me when I left here. But more importantly, I brought back a memory which I treasure.

I have cited this seemingly insignificant little episode to show that we are not alone in this world, and that if we open our hearts to others, they will open theirs to us. When Jesus was on earth, he did not act in a haughty manner imposing the image that he was the almighty Son of God, nor did he distance himself from the mass of common people, be they humble in social status, poor in worldly possessions, or even sinners and criminals. As we try to achieve, to accomplish and to perfect, we must not forget that we are not here to dictate, control and rule, but rather to understand, appreciate and help or be helped as we journey along toward our respective destinies in balmy days or stormy nights together with God's other children. In our quiet moments, we must ponder what the true purpose is of our journey on earth. If dawn is the herald of new frontiers and hope, twilight is the time of reflection and remembrance. Dawn and twilight may never cross each other's path in the heavens; they do meet in our heart and soul at the end of a long journey.

*Show me the path where I should go, O Lord; point out the right road for me to walk. Lead me; teach me; for you are the God who gives me salvation. Overlook my youthful sins, O Lord. Look at me instead through eyes of mercy and forgiveness, through eyes of everlasting love and kindness. The Lord is good and glad to teach the proper path to all who go astray; he will teach the ways that are right and best to those who humbly turn to him.*

—Psalm 25:4-9

(In Contemporary English Version)

Raymond Wong is a member of the San Francisco Swedenborgian Church. He recently retired after many years as principal engineer for the Department of Public Works and has entered the Master's program in Creative Writing at San Francisco State University.

# Remembrances and Reflections on a Riot in the Home Town of “The Duke of Flatbush”

Carl Yenetchi

*Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire; strangers devour your land in your presence; and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers. (Isaiah 1:7)*

I live in the Rancho Dominguez section of Compton, California, the scene of much of the recent rioting in L.A. County which followed the acquittal of four L.A.P.D. officers in the beating of Rodney King.

All I knew about Compton until a few years ago, when I moved to California, was that it was the birthplace of Duke “The Duke of Flatbush” Snider, Hall of Fame center fielder for the Brooklyn Dodgers, L.A. Dodgers and New York Mets. When I came to California I discovered that Compton was a rough area of L.A. County that had a great deal of gang activity, drugs and related crime. It was an area that I avoided, especially after dark.

About a year ago I moved into a mobile home there with my wife and son. We were able to register Andy for school in Palos Verdes, where the Wayfarer’s Chapel is located. The park we are located in has a fence around it and a guard at the front gate. I have never felt threatened there—until April 29, 1992. I had just returned home from a trip to Florida to see my mother, who had recently suffered congestive heart failure. My wife, Betty, picked me up at the airport and as we entered our home Andy told us that the verdict in the Rodney King case was about to be announced. When I heard that the officers were acquitted I felt uneasy, and remarked that there was going to be trouble about this. We had our dinner and Betty and I went for a walk afterwards, as we do every night when I don’t have to work late. When we returned

home we were sitting on the porch when our neighbor came out and asked us if we had seen the “telly”; we said no, and she told us that a riot had broken out “downtown.” We went in and turned on the television, which was showing a helicopter’s eye view of a city on fire. As I plotted the fire on a map of L.A. County, I realized that we had fires north, east, south and west of our home. The violence was all around us. I stayed up quite late that night watching the coverage, hoping that the riot would not get any closer to us. (It eventually came to within four blocks.)

On the morning of April 30, I asked Betty and Andy to pack some clothes so that if we were unable to return home we could stay with someone. As we drove to Palos Verdes we saw rising columns of smoke just north of the 91 Freeway.

April 30 was the date scheduled for the beginning of Wayfarer’s Chapel Board of Managers meeting. We had several calls informing us of changes in flight plans and arrival times due to the riots. Despite the anarchy in the city, all board members were able to attend. One of the last to arrive was Karen Conger. Karen was scheduled to stay with Betty and me during the meetings. I had concerns about this as the rampage continued throughout the day. I mentioned this to Betty during a break and said that maybe we should make arrangements for all of us to stay somewhere else that evening. She responded by asking me if I thought it was right to

let fear drive us out of our own home. Remembering the Lord’s instructions in Isaiah 35:4, *Say to those who are fearful-hearted, “Be strong, do not fear!”* I felt suddenly quite peaceful about returning to Compton that night. Fear is the emotion that tells us what is important in the future; its presence in me was telling me that there was a future and that I should enter it with faith. Betty collected Andy from school and returned home first; Karen and I followed shortly thereafter. The meeting had broken up early because of the curfew that had been instituted in parts of the county.

As Karen and I drove up the 110 Freeway we saw smoke columns rising from Long Beach, and for the first time since I had come to California the freeway was deserted. The city had a surreal look about it as we headed home. Karen’s husband Stan is a police lieutenant for the city of Santa Monica. She was concerned about his safety that night and her concern dominated our conversation as we drove. When we arrived home, Karen immediately called him at work and left a message telling him that she was fine and was with Betty and me. Several minutes later the phone rang. It was Stan Conger. Karen explained to Stan that she was in Rancho Dominguez and they talked for a while and Stan told Karen that he was to be stationed inside for the rest of the night. A few minutes after they had hung up the phone rang again. It was Stan. When Karen got off the

*(continued on page 103)*

It's 11 P.M., Sunday, May 3rd in Los Angeles, and it's quiet—except for the birds outside my window singing like they think it's dawn. They seem to be enjoying the lack of traffic noise that would ordinarily make hearing their bird neighbors two blocks away an impossibility. Tonight they are calling out to each other, making contact through the stillness of a city under its third night of dusk-to-dawn curfew.

Everything closed at seven o'clock: food stores, gas stations, restaurants, video stores, liquor stores, fast food places, clubs, everything. Cancellations are the order of the day: sporting events, cultural events, concerts, plays, educational events, dances, movies and the lecture I came here to present. If you were hungry and hadn't stocked up, you had to wait until tomorrow.

Since I arrived here Thursday, the local TV stations have been going nonstop with live coverage of the looting, fires and military buildup. I watched, fascinated by the immediacy of the presentations: you saw it as it was happening. However, there was no world news until last night. For three days I had been in a limited informational environment which had led me to believe that half of Los Angeles was on fire ("The area on fire," the announcer had told us, "is larger than Kuwait.") and that there were major riots, looting and arson taking place in a dozen cities throughout the U.S. The picture being drawn was one of a war between "them," and the police and military who were in there protecting "us."

Earlier today, my host and I drove through the devastated areas of the city—the Crenshaw district, Manchester, Vermont and Pico. We passed the same businesses whose burning I had seen on TV two days ago: Crenshaw Center, the Black-owned medical clinic, an auto parts store, the furniture store, Taco Bell, Thrifty Drugs, banks, laundries and laundromats. Some were still

smoldering. All were totally destroyed. I thought of the young Black woman who had made our omelettes at brunch. She had told us that she had taken all of her clothes to be dry-cleaned on Wednesday morning. That night the laundry was burnt to the ground.

As we drove around, I noticed that no churches or schools had been torched, except for the Presbyterian Church on Vermont which had suffered damage from the fire next door. Most of the destroyed buildings were mini-malls and small businesses on corners. Many were reported to have been owned by Asians, especially Koreans who buy up mom-and-pop operations in Black neighborhoods. Between them stood rows of other small businesses which had not been touched. On their windows were signs—some hand-lettered, some computer generated, some painted directly on the

glass—which read "Black Owned Business."

Driving down Crenshaw, we came upon a block party. The people who had been cleaning up their neighborhood since Friday were partying. About 800 people were gathered in the parking lot of a large, block-long supermarket/shopping center which had been trashed on Thursday. Smoke was rising, but this time from the free barbecue. Local politicals carried signs for Proposition "F" (to clean up the LAPD) and for a councilwoman. People yelled from the sidewalk to passing cars: "Are you registered? You better get registered. We're doing it right here." Drivers shouted back: "Yes, I am," or "No. Where do I turn in?," or "Good for you, sister!," "Glad to see you, neighbor," or "We're gonna change things this November."

A group was selling the first T-shirt to rise from the ashes. "Live like a King. Stop the violence," it proclaims above pictures of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Rodney G. King. On the back it states, "Non Violence Not Violence." The man selling them to passers-by looked at me. "I want one," I said. "I need an XL." "Only one size," he said. "One size fits all."

The party was quiet, relaxed. The people were obviously tired. Yet, I felt a wave of energy pass from them to every one on the street; a cleansing wave of bonding and empowerment. They were clearly taking back their

neighborhood.

The few military personnel in the area were a couple of blocks away from the party. We did not see our first large concentration of armed and flak-jacketed soldiers until we got onto Manchester. Later, on Vermont—the border area between the Black and Korean communities—we saw teams of soldiers with machine guns posted on the roofs of buildings from which they could control the street. While still on

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## L.A. Notes

*Lon Elmer*

**I felt a wave of  
energy pass from  
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## L.A. Notes

(continued from page 102)

Manchester, we were passed by a group of speeding police cars—sirens and lights going—followed by a city bus and three Army troop carriers.

My host, a minister and therapist, told of how he had been escorted by six police cars—three in front, three behind—through the height of the orgy of destruction on Thursday night as he responded to a desperate call for help from the Crenshaw Christian Center. He had been needed to help deal with the growing number of people who could barely cope with the situation in the streets, and those who couldn't cope at all.

But, here it is, three nights later, and it's quiet—except for the birds. I think about a friend's dog's reaction to the quiet: she kept getting up and barking at the door because she was hearing neighborhood noises she hadn't been able to hear before. I think about the burned-out shell of the Korean-owned gas station two blocks away.

Considering the nonstop display of violence on TV and in the "mainstream" press, is it really surprising that some of our neighbors—the people who know only hate and violence, the people who don't care if they live or die, the people with no sense of investment in their community, the people who have been pushed away from the table of plenty because they look, act, think, live differently—that some of our neighbors react violently? Sports star Jim Brown, in an interview on Friday, said, "Going to jail for these people is a step up." Another of his perceptive comments was, "When there is gross corruption at the top, these people see it."

A helicopter flies over the house, its banging roar drowning out the singing of the birds. Its searchlight momentarily illuminates my window. I remember something Mahatma Gandhi wrote: "A democracy cannot survive if it looks to the police and military to solve its problems."

*Lon Elmer is a member of the Swedenborgian Church of Puget Sound, Washington, and the author of Why Her, Why Now, a man's journey through love and death and grief.*

## Remembrances of Riot . . . (from page 101)

phone she told us that Stan had looked up Rancho Dominguez and wanted to know if she realized that it was in Compton. "The Duke of Flatbush's" home town was having a bad night.

Shortly after that one of my neighbors asked if I wanted to join the neighborhood watch patrols that evening. I felt a little let down when I heard this because when we had entered the park that evening I had seen a sign at the gate that had said there would be armed patrol in the park that evening. I had pictured in my mind sheriff's deputies or National Guardsmen and now I realized that the patrols were made up of some of the local "anti-gun control cowboys" and I wondered who I was most likely to get shot by, them or the rioters. Undaunted by this setback and not being one to miss out on an adventure that seemed basically safe, I agreed to patrol. Arming

caused a disturbance at the local high school the day before so Andy came to work with us.

The Board of Managers meeting continued on, and I discovered that I was able to forget what was going on around us. The riots were winding down as the police, National Guard, Marines and Army presence was increased. A special dinner was planned that night for the Board of Managers at the home of Harvey and Mareta Tafel which went off without a hitch, and when we returned home I went out on patrol with my neighbor again. As we were patrolling, the irony of it struck me. I remarked to my neighbor that he and I must really be intimidating, because outside of our park fence there were four thousand U.S. Marines, ten thousand National Guardsmen, six thousand U.S. Army Soldiers and ten thousand police officers, and everyone who wanted to cause trouble was out there with them rather than bothering us. He said it wasn't us, it was the fresh batteries in our flashlights. (I think he was right.)

*If we can replace fear with love—  
we may see the fulfillment of  
the prophecy of Isaiah*

myself with a red flashlight loaded with the freshest batteries I could find in the house, my neighbor and I went to check in and start our patrol. Promptly at 10:00 P.M. the Park Staff greeted us and started to lecture us on our duties. We were to patrol the fence from the inside and report anyone trying to climb over the fence and we were to set our weapons on an empty chamber. The manager did not seem to appreciate my joke when I told her that if I set my flashlight on an empty chamber it wouldn't light. I guess she and I express our fear in different ways. Off we went around and around the park until 11:00 P.M., then reported back to the desk having seen nothing.

May 1 started very much as April 30 had. Betty, Andrew, Karen and I drove to Palos Verdes in smoke-filled air. One difference was that schools in Palos Verdes were closed that Friday because some gang members had

We did not patrol after that night.

Saturday I was scheduled to perform three weddings at the Chapel. One couple's reception had to be moved at the last minute because their original site closed due to the rioting, another couple had two of their groomsmen who were U.S. Marines unable to attend their wedding because they were on duty in Compton. Other than these two problems, the Wayfarers Chapel was unaffected by the rioting.

On Sunday the Wayfarers Chapel celebrated Arbor Day. Rev. Harvey Tafel read a letter from the Heads of Communion of the National Council of Churches of Christ on the unrest in L.A., and the carillon rang out fifty-four times, once for each person who had thus far died in the rioting. Rev. Richard H. Tafel, Jr. was our guest preacher. I did not envy him the pulpit on that day. Attempting

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## Opinion

Dear Editor,

I would like to respond to Marilyn Turley's letters in recent issues of *The Messenger*, deploring the Swedenborgian church's lack of social involvement in the "real" world. There is much to be said for the picture she describes. We could be doing more than we are doing to alleviate pain and suffering in the world around us.

However, I feel a more balanced view is called for. The internal world of the spirit is as real and as important as the external physical world. Needs on both levels of life must be met. It seems to me that our Church teachings and the Bible make this very clear: inner spiritual development and authentic social action must—and will—work together hand in glove.

As executive secretary of the Pastoral Ministries Support Unit I am also aware that many, if not most, of our local churches are really quite active in serving local community needs, this in spite of our small congregations. I recently received the following Outreach list from our St. Paul church, and would like to share this with our *Messenger* readers. A number of other Swedenborgian churches could provide a similar listing of community involvement. Is this not putting "love into action"?

### Outreach in 1991

#### St. Paul Swedenborgian Church

- Wedding Ministry: We had 20 weddings in 1991—\$5800. Except for the minister and organist, it is handled completely by volunteers from our congregation.
- *Love and Marriage* pamphlets available to wedding couples.
- Two tour groups received church literature.
- *Five Smooth Stones*, a Sunday school paper, distributed to children of three church families and three nonchurch families.
- Member of St. Paul Area Council of Churches with Kathy Shaw a member of their nominating committee.
- The Alliance supports SPACCS Department of Indian Works.
- Clothing and household linens collected for Dayton Avenue Presbyterian's free clothing distribution center.
- Donation to Swedenborgian Church of Puget Sound.
- Donation to St. Mary's Antiochian Orthodox church following its destruction by fire.
- Support Bowman Brackin's Guatemalan project for starving children by providing access to our copier.

- Cooperated with Congregations Concerned for Children by providing gifts for children's Christmas party in the neighborhood—and two people, Ann Weldy and Sara Lange, to help at the party. Fifty gifts were purchased by members of the congregation.
- Ongoing collection of food for New Beginnings Center.
- Participated with others in the religious community in the Skyway Fair, celebrating the 150th Anniversary of the naming of the City of St. Paul. Our booth was very attractive and 150 pieces of church literature were picked up by the many visitors to the booth. This was a tremendous exposure to the St. Paul community. Six people were on duty during the two-day fair.
- Doctrinal classes conducted by the Rev. Edwin Capon on Sunday after the coffee hour.
- A Tuesday evening group started by studying *Unlocking Your Spiritual Potential*, a 12-step approach; it has continued with the study of other books.
- The Rev. Capon has prepared a bimonthly newsletter which is appreciated by all, but particularly by our members and friends living away from the Twin Cities and visitors. There is a sermon enclosed with the newsletter.
- An AA Group (non-smokers) meets in the parish house once a week.
- A block-by-block committee for making the community safer held a meeting in the parish house.
- A new timer provides lighting for the wayside pulpit and the round stained glass window. The public has noted this and has commented.
- World Day of Prayer was held at our church for the first time.
- Bowman Brackin continues to be our porte-parole for the Swedenborg Foundation.
- Our Christmas Pageant of the Nativity (73rd performance) was published in the newspaper and wayside pulpit—public welcome—at least 100 people attended!

Paul Zacharias  
Kitchener, Ontario

### Riots . . . (from page 103)

to address the issue of justice and order as the smoke was rising around us was intimidating. He told the people to look within themselves for solutions, stating that each person needed to contribute to the easing of tensions. He equated this to the planting of a tree, the preparing of the soil to the preparing of the soul. It was well received.

The Board of Managers meeting was over. The rioting was over. Now we could look to the future. There were many new homeless people now in L.A. County, and due to the burning of so many supermarkets, many hungry people. I contributed to every food collection box I ran in to for about a week, and then they disappeared as South Central L.A. and Compton came back to life. The

rebuilding will go on for months and probably years. Merchants announced one by one that they were either going to rebuild or get out. Many were getting out. Buildings still stand empty that merchants had vacated after the Watts riots of 1965. The loss of jobs will add to the poverty of this already devastated area.

The "Bloods" and the "Crips," the two largest of L.A.'s many gangs, announced a truce. They met with the local merchants and some agreements were made, so maybe some good will come from all of this chaos. George Bush came to town and blamed the rioting on Lyndon Johnson, many politicians and commentators blamed them on George, some talk about the guilt of Police Chief Gates or the jurors, some speak about the guilt of the rioters or the "gangs." No one seems to want to take responsibility for them, so we may have to relive them in a few years or maybe months.

If our problems are always someone else's fault, then we abdicate accountability and we can't do anything except wait for it to repeat in downward spiral until someone takes responsibility. *I am to blame.* When I moved to Compton I made sure that my son would not have to go to school there, thus contributing to "white flight." I had made no effort to become involved in the community of Compton. It is where I slept but not where I lived. I need to prepare the soil of my garden for growth. I am going to become more active in my community. My son, however, will continue to attend school in Palos Verdes (some fears are easier to conquer than others). I will accept my part of the responsibility for the rioting, and the fear, mistrust and racism that led to it. If we can replace fear with love—our concerns for the future with loving action in the present, mistrust with trust, and racism with equality—we may see the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah 61:4—*And they shall rebuild the old ruins, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the ruined cities, the desolations of many generations.*

The Rev. Carl Yenetchi is a minister at the Wayfarers Chapel, a Swedenborgian Church in Rancho Palos Verdes, California.



# George Inness Works to be Catalogued

The complete works of the Swedenborgian-influenced American painter George Inness (1825-1894) are to be documented in a catalogue of the artist's works now being compiled. By 1864, Inness moved to Eagleswood near Perth Amboy, New Jersey, site of the former Raritan Bay Union at the invitation of Marcus Spring who encouraged a number of artists to join his community. Primarily a landscape artist, Inness painted few overtly religious paintings. Yet the belief that material objects, in form and color, have a spiritual significance and correspondence was a theme that Inness pursued throughout the rest of his life. By the end of his life, the Reverend Dr. Ager, a New Church minister, said of him: "In Swedenborg, George Inness found the basis for his theory of art . . . To him all nature was symbolic—full of spiritual meaning. He prized nothing that did not stand for something. That was the secret of his theory of art."

Inness' earliest paintings reflect the influence of trips he took to Europe and his study of the Old Masters. By the 1860s he had developed his own style, exemplified in his best known landscape, *Peace and Plenty*, 1865 (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), in which he interpreted rural American scenery in the context of the Barbizon School of French painting. Constantly experimenting to achieve a more fully expressive style, he passed through numerous, brief stylistic phases. Inness is best known for the highly distinctive style of the last ten years of his life. More than before, in these paintings Inness sought to express a subjective, emotional response to nature. Using soft forms and rich colors, he attempted

to capture the spiritual dimension of landscape. The catalogue will recognize and group the paintings that belong to each period and phase, clarifying his stylistic development.

At the time of his death in 1894 and well into the twentieth century, Inness was considered to have been America's greatest landscape painter. His immense popularity led to the creation of countless forgeries, which will be identified and excluded from the catalogue.

The catalogue project is sponsored by the Martucci Endowment for the Arts, which was created exclusively for charitable and educational purposes and to perpetuate and encourage research on the spiritual expression of American, nineteenth-century artists, in particular, the works of George Inness.

Owners of works by Inness are encouraged to send information and photographs for consideration to the George Inness Catalogue Raisonné Project, Michael Quick, Director, 1223 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 401, Santa Monica, CA 90403-5440.

## *Gratitude to the Creator Within and Without*

*[Editor's Note] Last year I attended an art exhibit and lecture presented by Harriet Rex Smith. Although I had known Harriet and admired her work for several years, that day was the first time I realized that I was privileged to be witnessing an evolving spirit on canvas. Each time I saw her work, her consciousness was mirrored in her paintings, and they were becoming, for me, more spiritually uplifting every year. I was delighted to discover that she had composed a statement that echoed my thoughts, and I would like to share it with Messenger readers, along with a photo of her painting Updraft of Gulls, which does not, of course, do it justice.*

### Artist's Statement

It is perhaps helpful in looking at a work of art to know just where that artist has been, and what life experiences shape the mind of the artist.  
(Continued on page 106)

## Correction

In the Swedenborgian Church statistics, June 1992 *Messenger*, p. 95, Michigan and Middle Atlantic got reversed and the totals were typed incorrectly.

Associations	Societies		Ordained Ministers			Authorized Lay Leaders	Members			No. of Delegates
	Active	Inactive	Active	Inactive	Retired		Active	Inactive	Total	
Michigan	1	0	1	0	0	0	86	29	115	10
Middle Atlantic	3	0	4	0	0	0	119	56	175	13

Gloria Toot, Secretary

## Art and Spirituality

(Continued from page 105)

Harriet Rex Smith is a former midwesterner, now living near Ashland, Oregon, lured there by the beauty of the landscape.

She has done many things, been an art director for a large advertising agency, acquired a master's degree in painting, taught in three universities, had seven children, divorced and brought them up alone, and pursued a painting career that brought her a certain amount of recognition as measured by prizes and awards.

When she arrived at that point when the question is asked "Is this all there is?" she learned that there is indeed more, but it is inaccessible to that separated self we call the ego. Matthew Fox, a Dominican theologian, calls the path we walk on toward our spiritual homeland a fourfold one. The first is the Via Positiva, the way of original blessing. Perhaps this is the Garden of Eden. But most of us soon enter the second path, the Via Negativa, the school-room of suffering. Some of us stay there for a long time, but eventually we cry "uncle," and then enter the path of creativity. This is dandy, but still there is that path four beckoning which is the way of transformation. She wonders whether on that path she needs her sketchbook.

Art is, of course, one way of expressing what is on one's mind. What is on Harriett's mind is very largely gratitude. Gratitude to the fascinating earth, the mind-searing sky, the beloved trees, the dazzling flowers, to the loveliness within us all. To the Creator within and without which is the same.

This gratitude tends to express itself in the visible form of beauty. The search for beauty has become quaint in the art world. This opinion does not trouble this artist, who has discarded her need for validation, along with the Via Negativa.

—Harriet Rex Smith

## Moving Toward the Light

(Continued from page 98)

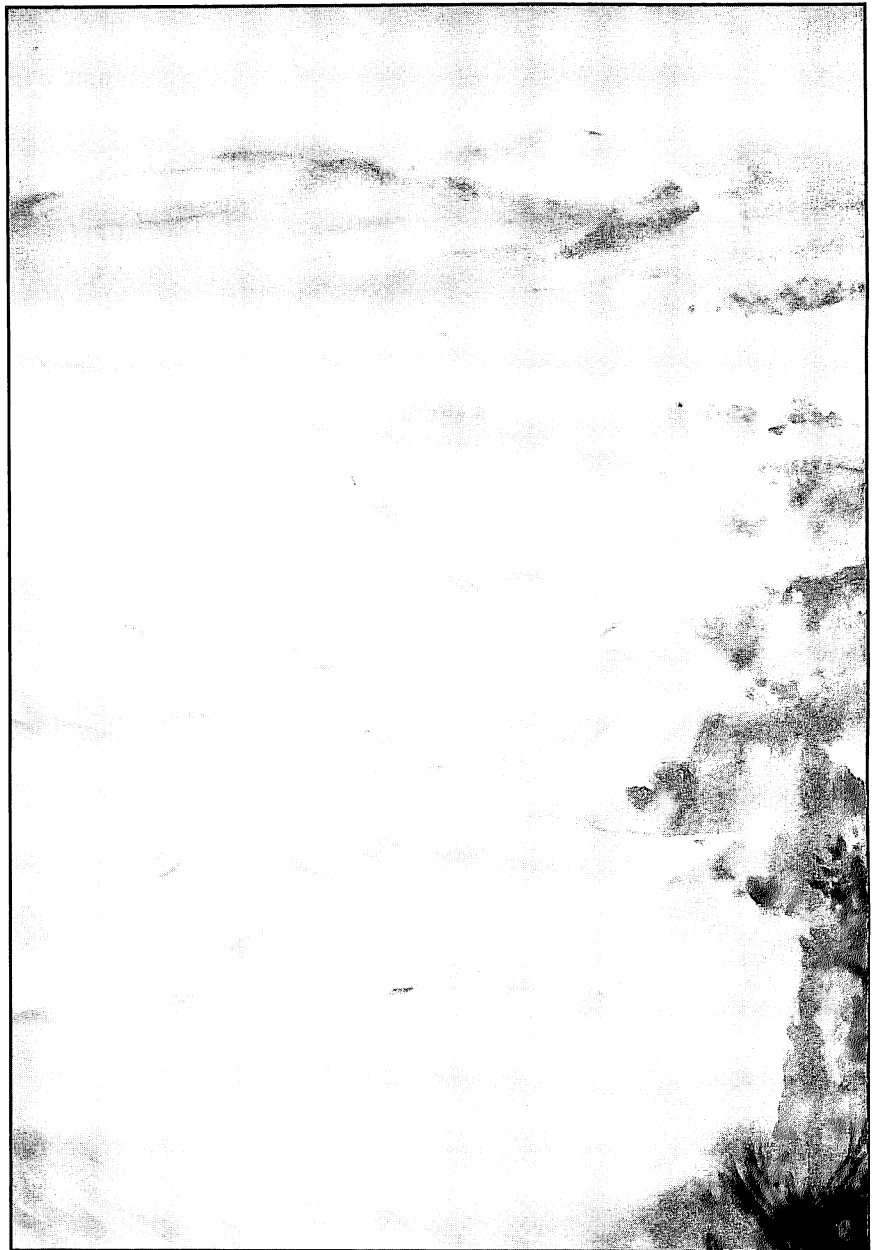
burned-out stores and shopping centers, NCC's General Secretary Joan Campbell called on all candidates for public office "to commit to a Marshall Plan for our cities focused on quality education, available health care, adequate housing, and jobs that, with dignity, put food on the table." The Rev. Campbell added, "Our nation has experienced a major shock in a nationwide social earthquake." I believe it is a social and spiritual earthquake and it is planet-wide.

Countless numbers of us are asking for healing, and when we ask God for healing, more things come

up to be healed. So it would seem that we may be in for a lot more chaos, the "cleansing crises" that are part of the process of becoming healthy from the inside out. *As long as it requires disasters to awaken our caring, we may be sure that disasters will occur.* But we are also seeing a massive movement toward knocking down the barriers to human healing along with the growing awareness that when we do violence to another we do it to ourselves, for we are one.

Let us learn to see all "disasters," large and small, as opportunities for healing as we focus on a response of ever-increasing, ever-strengthening love.

—Patte LeVan



*Updraft of Gulls, Harriet Rex Smith*

Art Barn collection, Valparaiso, Indiana

*People  
tend to  
trust  
only  
those  
whom  
they  
believe  
have  
listened  
and  
understood*

Patte LeVan

Last June, in my editorial, "Moving Toward Better Communication," I mentioned the existence of mediation and reconciliation services offered to churches by conflict resolution specialists. My discovery and subsequent research of mediation professionals specializing in church conflicts came too late to be of use in the troubled LaPorte church, but the idea intrigued me enough that when a four-day mediation skills training seminar was offered by the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center in the Chicago area, I attended.

The seminar was taught by Center Director Richard Blackburn and

## CAN WE TALK?

assistance Ed Nyce. Blackburn has been director of the Center since its opening in 1983. The goal of those who run the Center is to teach peace, preach it and live it. Mediation is a voluntary process which facilitates negotiations between people who have not been able to reach a satisfactory settlement of their differences, and the mediator's primary tasks are to help people discuss their concerns, identify specific issues that need to be resolved, and work out mutually acceptable agreements.

We began the first day of the seminar getting acquainted. There were approximately 30 of us from 11 different states, representing many church denominations and other human service fields. There were pastors and laypersons from churches that were currently experiencing conflict; some had struggled with past conflict and wanted to learn a better way. A pastor from a multicultural urban church wanted to learn more effective communication. A volunteer with a Victim/Offender Reconciliation Program (VORP) was happily discovered by a person working in the criminal justice system who wanted to start VORP in his own community. A woman from a child abuse prevention/domestic violence program wanted to teach mediation skills to children.

The remainder of the morning was devoted to exploring the nature and role of conflict, beginning with our own images and feelings about conflict. Most of us approach conflict with fear and anxiety due to our culturally conditioned negative view of conflict. It was interesting to note that in our Western world, "conflict" is rooted in the Latin word *confligere*, which means "to strike

together," leaving us with an image of heat, fire, collision. The Chinese, on the other hand, form the symbol for "conflict" by combining the terms *danger* and *opportunity*, a view that perceives conflict as a challenge, as a stimulus that engages our ingenuity.

So we started with ourselves. What does conflict *feel* like to us? How does my family "do" conflict? How do *I* do conflict? We did a written self-assessment survey designed to help us discover our own individual style in relating to others and responding to conflict situations. Conflict often results from the fact that people have different styles of relating to others. Some of us had combinations of styles—for example, my style of response was primarily "affiliating/perfecting," but I tended to move into the "achieving/directing" style under "storm" conditions. We spent several hours discussing basic characteristics of these personal styles—the strengths and excesses of each one, how they could impact negatively or positively on each other, tips for changing our approach and communication as we became more aware of how another's style differed from ours, how we tend to move into the "excess" or unproductive aspect of our style when feeling stressed or threatened, and how to become aware of those warning signs in ourselves and others. The idea was to identify conflict prevention strategies which grow out of enhancing the strengths of our own personal style and appealing to the strengths of others. We wore color-coded cards around our necks designating our different styles to help us learn to communicate with  
(Continued on page 108)

## Can We Talk?

(Continued from page 109)

each other with more awareness throughout our four days together.

In our daily lives, most of us walk around inside our own "culture bubbles" that consist of learned and habitual ways of perceiving, interpreting and making sense of our world that are unique to each of us. In order to effectively understand another's culture, we must first learn more about ourselves and our own cultural assumptions. It is possible to learn to step outside our behavior and thought patterns and emotional responses and become the conscious observer of our own consciousness. We can then extend that awareness to others.

But it seems we cannot move into that kind of understanding awareness until we learn to communicate in a way that allows each of us to feel heard and respected. Communication lies at the heart of personal interactions. Poor listening and speaking skills contribute to misunderstandings, separating instead of uniting us. Communication is central because it can cause conflict, express conflict, and be a positive or negative vehicle for transforming conflict.

Much of the second day was spent learning and practicing more collaborative communication, the kind of speaking and listening that is the basis of interpersonal peacemaking skills. We practiced turning "You" messages into "I" messages and worked on active (effective) listening. Those of us who had taken courses in Parent Effectiveness Training in the 70s remembered active listening and "I" messages, the two core components of effective communication. But judging from our struggles with the exercises, our skills were rusty, and to some, it was new information.

In conflict situations, most of us tend to speak about our feelings in a way that blames others for what we are feeling. The person who is blamed then feels the need to defend and protect himself, and it is not an effective way to gain cooperation. So, instead of saying, "You make me angry when you are late," one might say, "I get irritated when

I'm kept waiting because it upsets my schedule for the rest of the morning." The most effective "I" messages state the feelings of the speaker, the objectionable behavior, and the consequences of the objectionable behavior on the speaker. As we worked with these exercises we were astonished at how difficult it was to get out a good clean, straight "I" message, owning our own feelings, without a twist of blame or a thinly veiled demand creeping in.

The ability to listen is considered by far the most important tool for peacemakers, because trust must be built or rebuilt, and people tend to trust only those whom they believe have listened and understood. A powerful way to say "I'm listening" is to paraphrase or to restate in our own words what the speaker has said. A skilled reconciler can present the case for each side better than they themselves could present it, but paraphrasing requires much practice and can feel quite awkward at first. In paraphrasing, you need to focus on the speaker's experience, noticing both facts and feelings, and summarize emphatically (but briefly) without judging or evaluating. This is a crucial skill to develop, and well worth going through the beginning awkward stages. In conversation we often assume we've understood what the speaker said and meant without checking it out, and many a misunderstanding can be headed off at the pass by developing the art of paraphrase, along with congruent body language that says, "I'm interested in what you have to say." In contrast, our "typical" listening responses often include advising, judging, analyzing, questioning, and the kind of "support" that in fact discounts or trivializes the other person's problems, i.e., "Cheer up. You'll get over it soon."

The universal human need is for someone to acknowledge our situation, to stand beside us, to make the attempt to "walk in our moccasins" for a while. If we truly listen, most people are capable of coming with their own ideas and inner resources.

Building on and practicing these and other collaborative communication skills, we moved from interpersonal peacemaking exercises to

working with the full range of communication skills useful in resolving both individual and group conflict. Printed roleplays in the back of our 140-page manuals were based on case studies of actual conflicts such as "The Organ Dispute," "Fending Farmers," "Landlord vs Tenant," "Youth Sponsor vs Parent." We took a few minutes to memorize the pertinent facts of each case, then moved into doing conflict resolution in teams of four, with two persons in the roles of mediator and co-mediator, and two in each adversarial role. As we threw ourselves into our parts, things got pretty heated and loud. The task of those playing mediators was to help move the adversaries from a place of emotional hostility and personal antagonism to focusing their energies on generating solutions both could live with.

In a conflict situation, feelings need to be expressed. Skilled mediation provides a structure in which the emotional as well as the factual sides of conflict can be explored, but in a process that emphasizes fair standards and respects people. Mediators are essentially neutral and impartial *process advocates*. They do not decide who is right or wrong, nor do they have decision-making power over the participants.

We were also privileged during this seminar to see videos of progressive school programs that teach conflict resolution to children. We viewed young children as well as high school youths acting as mediators in each other's disputes, and doing an excellent job of it. We also saw the Victim/Offender Reconciliation Program in action, as we watched the mediator who, working with the court, put together a meeting between two teenage house burglars and the woman whose house they had burglarized. We witnessed the turnaround in the young boys' attitudes as they listened to the victim of their crime expressing to them the terror she had felt, her feelings of invasion, her feelings of grief over stolen possessions that had sentimental value. The sessions provided the victim with closure, peace of mind, and an opportunity for forgiveness, and provided the perpetrators with a

(Continued on page 111)

## Book Review

**The Country of Spirit**

by Wilson Van Dusen

Reviewed by Patricia Bowen

In the brief foreword, editor Jim Lawrence explains that the nine sections in this recent offering from J. Appleseed & Co. are the result of a collaborative effort between Jim and Dr. Van Dusen to cull these selections from a corpus of some four-score articles, essays, and chapters in numerous publications going back to the mid-Fifties. Together they have produced a "gem" that I am sure will come to be considered a classic.

As an individual seeking resources for my own spiritual life and as a seminary professor attempting to persuade students that developing habits of self-care and spiritual practice is important, I appreciate this publication for my own personal use and as a resource to recommend to students in the first-year course at SSR where I emphasize the importance of spirituality for survival in the ministry.

In the foreword, Lawrence terms Van Dusen "a self-described mystic who has made his reputation by approaching Swedenborg's writings boldly and with a fearless reliance upon self-reference."

*The result has been a 'voice' in*

*Swedenborgiana emphasizing personal spiritual experience that has gained an enthusiastic following which appears to be even stronger outside the several walls of the organized Swedenborgian groups than within them.*

Reading this slim volume over a period of time, as I did, slowly savoring each section, purposely taking time to reflect, is refreshing, renewing, akin to a good worship experience.

Van Dusen affirms thoughts and feelings we hesitate to share. He is aware of our need for spirituality and offers access to a form that is profound in its simplicity. This volume is one to be read for spiritual awareness and insight rather than intellectual analysis. It is not a book to dissect, but one to appreciate for its affirmation of the reader's own spiritual experience.

The first two pieces, "A Mystic Looks at Swedenborg" and "The Mystery of Ordinary Experiencing" are so packed that had I been using a highlighter, the result would be every line highlighted.

Coming from the transcendentalist tradition as I do, I don't see how Swedenborg could *not* be regarded as a mystic, but I am aware that there are those who are not happy hearing that term used to describe him. What a delight to discover that Van Dusen accepts and advocates Swedenborg as mystic. In claiming Sweden-

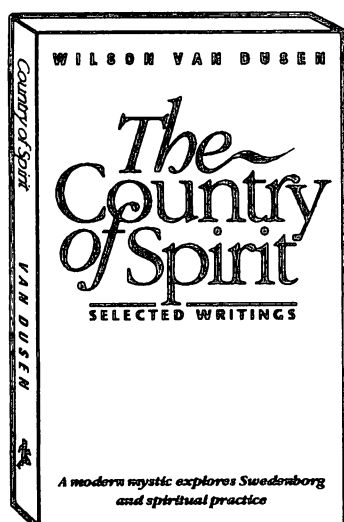
borg's and his own mysticism, Van Dusen allows and encourages the reader to make this claim for oneself, to admit to being a mystic and to enjoying it. In a world where everything seems to be working against individuals who want to experience God (Van Dusen's simple definition of mystic: one who experiences God), these sections provide support for the effort. These selections would be excellent as a beginning for a discussion group exploring spirituality and to introduce newcomers to Swedenborg.

After the "high" of these first two sections, I found the third, "Reincarnation: The Universal Return" confusing. It isn't that I quarrel with it. I think I agree with what the author is trying to say, but I have difficulty following him through the twists and turns of this particular presentation. Here the "reliance upon self-reference" is most evident, which makes this section an interruption in the flow of the other selections for this reviewer.

The fourth section, "The Soul, Hidden and Manifest," provides insight into Swedenborg's own struggles in search of the soul that is especially helpful to someone just beginning an acquaintance with Swedenborg. Van Dusen's own musings on the soul are helpful to those readers struggling with their own soul search, and who among us isn't?

*(Continued on page 110)*

## J U S T P U B L I S H E D



# The Country of Spirit

SELECTED WRITINGS

by Wilson Van Dusen



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

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

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(Continued from page 109)

One of the most powerful sections is the next, "Uses: A Way of Personal and Spiritual Growth." Here is an inspiring model for living daily with a deeper awareness of one's own actions. I am reminded of the work of Thich Nhat Hanh on mindfulness as I read and re-read this selection. The author's own enthusiasm for Swedenborg's concept of uses is obvious:

*If only one idea could be saved from his writings, this is the one I would choose, for it turns out to be the hinge pin of both personal development and of his whole theology.*

This selection alone is reason enough to keep this book as a bedside companion for reinforcing the way one wants to live.

The next three sections, "Self-Reflection in the Forging of a Person," "Exploring Swedenborg's Dream Journal," and "Meditation" offer a much-needed guide for spiritual practice. I plan to use the first of these to introduce the idea of journal writing to students.

In the second of these three, Van Dusen is at his most human as he reveals his own struggles with Swedenborg's Dream Journal and his hesitancy to make assumptions about Swedenborg's dreams and his own recording of them. Van Dusen's comments on the Dream Maker (a term he coined) and dream interpretation are helpful to all who dream and wonder what those dreams mean. What a privilege it would be to be able to work with Van Dusen in interpreting one's own dreams!

Meditation has become more popular and more widely accepted since this section was first written. Swedenborg's and Van Dusen's own views on meditation now have strong support from many. I particularly appreciated the author's approach to meditation—his willingness to consider a variety of formats and his admission that it is not for everyone. He does not allow himself to get caught up in the mystique of meditation, but takes a practical approach to it similar to that of Dr. Herbert Benson, author of *The Relaxation*

*Response*, whose research in this area came after Van Dusen's own.

The final selection, "The Psalm of What Is," is the weakest section of this book in my opinion. The first page with the psalmist speaking stands alone on its own, but when the writing continues, with a change in voice to God's, I had some difficulty staying with it, despite the good message Van Dusen brings from God.

I am aware that for the most part this is a rave review. I am delighted to have this book available and hope it receives the wide distribution it deserves. I hope for Swedenborg to be brought into the 21st century and made accessible to those who would be pleased to make his acquaintance. I feel Van Dusen does this as he invites readers into *The Country of Spirit*.

One problem I have with this volume, that pertains to bringing Swedenborg out of the 18th century and making him more accessible to modern men and women, is the seeming reluctance to use inclusive language, to make the changes necessary. It is a concern of mine that goes beyond this particular book. I am aware that Swedenborg and Van Dusen both wrote originally in a time when this language consciousness had not been raised, but for the past two decades it has been. I am so accustomed to the use of inclusive language that I stumble when I encounter heavy use of *man*, *he*, and *him* in current publications. While it does appear that some effort was made in editing that nodded to the need for inclusive language, it was insufficient in my opinion. I am put off by the boxed quotes from Swedenborg when *man* leaps off the page too often. This lack of inclusive language gets in the way of the flow between me and what I am reading; as these non-inclusive terms persist, the barrier they build looms larger. This need not be: it is a disservice most of all to Swedenborg himself to continue to publish his writings in non-inclusive language. I understand from some colleagues that the words *man* and *Grand Man* need not be used, but *human*, *person*, and *Universal Human* can be used in-

stead. Please do! Please find the permission needed within yourselves to do this in future publications. As a former English teacher, I am happy to offer my assistance for inclusive-language editing. Despite my obvious frustration with the meager use of inclusive language, I enthusiastically recommend this book.

On the front cover, the claim is made, "A renowned author and mystic presents a depthful view of Swedenborg and spiritual practice." I cannot find "depthful" in the dictionary, but I am most appreciative of the insightful view of Swedenborg and spiritual practice presented through this book. It presents spirituality for today within the Swedenborgian context, and thus provides a resource long needed to replace many other books on spirituality from which we've had to pick and choose parts and pieces. As I read each selection, I was sure each one should be made into a separate pamphlet, but now I would say no, these need to be presented as they are; they belong together in this one volume. Many thanks to Jim Lawrence for bringing about his publication!

Van Dusen offers his bold insights in a gentle manner that reveals his own delight in both Swedenborg and spirituality. He writes with care and a caring that welcome the reader's own reflections. His voice enables me to hear my own. I am grateful for the opportunity to visit *The Country of Spirit*, a place I know I will return to often in my already well-worn copy of this much-needed publication! Don't miss this opportunity to sojourn in *The Country of Spirit* for your own renewal and refreshment.

*The Rev. Dr. Patricia Bowen is completing her third year as Associate Professor of Practical Theology and Director of Field Education at the Swedenborg School of Religion in Newton, Massachusetts. Ordained as a Unitarian Universalist minister, Pat also serves part-time at the Unitarian Church in Sharon, Massachusetts.*



(from page 108)

new perspective and awareness of the consequences of their act. Beyond that, these people began seeing each other as flesh and blood, vulnerable human beings instead of objects labeled "criminal" and "victim."

It has been documented that the most difficult task of mediating is persuading people to agree to take their conflict to mediation. However, once both parties have gotten together at the mediation table, there's an 80% chance they will arrive at an understanding acceptable to both.

The way of peacemaking begins with our own willingness to learn new ways, along with a willingness to let go of old ways which are not bringing us the spiritual satisfaction that we all truly want. Given the documented high incidence of church splits, fights, factionalism and interpersonal problems that plague congregations of every denomination, it is my opinion that no church leader, clergy or layperson, can afford not to include this training in their continuing education program.

#### General Description of the Mediation Process

1. Everyone involved is asked to agree on certain basic ground-rules, or guidelines.
2. Each party is given uninterrupted time to explain what is happening from their own perspective.
3. The mediators then help to define the key areas where there are differences, and these are examined one at a time.
4. Ways are looked for to enable both parties to come away with things important to them personally.
5. When the process is finished, a written summary of the things agreed upon is drawn up. Everyone signs it and receives a copy.

#### Resources:

Lombard Mennonite Peace Center  
528 E. Madison  
Lombard, IL 60148  
708-627-5310

The Alban Institute  
4125 Nebraska Ave. NW  
Washington, D.C. 20016-2700  
1-800-457-8893 or 202-244-7320

## Commencements

### Confirmation

**Bowlby, Watson**—Eden E. Bowlby and Anne-Marie Watson were confirmed into the life of the Swedenborgian Church April 12, 1992, the Rev. Ken Turley officiating.

**Brown**—Marjorie A. Brown was confirmed into the life of the Swedenborgian Church of San Diego February 2, 1992, lay leader Eldon Smith officiating.

**Dale, Jones, Turner**—William Norris Dale, Jr., Colleen R. Jones, and Peter S. Turner were confirmed into the life of the Swedenborgian Church of Portland, Maine, November 24, 1991, the Rev. Ken Turley officiating.

**Dunphy**—Betsy H. Dunphy was confirmed into the life of the Swedenborgian Church of Portland, Maine, April 6, 1992, the Rev. Ken Turley officiating.

**Hames**—Donna and Larry Hames were confirmed into the life of the Swedenborgian Church of Portland, Maine, May 5, 1992, the Rev. Ken Turley officiating.

**Wiens**—Colleen Irene, David Godfred, Harold Lloyd and Robert Dale Wiens were confirmed into the life of the Swedenborgian Church in Kelowna, B.C., the Rev. Erwin D. Reddekopp officiating.

### Marriages

**Jones and Turner**—Colleen Jones and Peter Turner were united in marriage, May 1, 1992, at the Portland, Maine Swedenborgian Church, the Rev. Ken Turley officiating.

**Pettersen and Paige**—Wanda Pettersen and Thomas Paige were united in marriage May 16, 1992 at the Portland, Maine Swedenborgian Church, the Rev. Ken Turley officiating.

### Deaths

**Emery**—Marcy Kim Emery entered the spiritual world April 17, 1992, in Portland, Maine. Resurrection service was conducted April 20 at the Church of the New Jerusalem in Fryeburg, Maine, the Rev. Gardiner Perry officiating. Marcy was an honor student at Fryeburg Academy, active in Sunday school, junior choir and sports. She developed leukemia in her junior year.

**Kingslake**—Jill Kingslake, wife of Rev. Brian Kingslake, entered the spiritual world May 7, 1992, in Bath, England, after a long illness. Mrs. Kingslake was instrumental in establishing the National Prayer Fellowship for the Swedenborgian Church in the Sixties. Memorial services were conducted May 14 at the Leatherhead Crematorium in Surrey, the Rev. Ian Arnold officiating.

**Unger**—Lisa Unger entered the spiritual world at Rosthern Hospital May 2, 1992, in Laird, Saskatchewan. Resurrection service was conducted May 5 at the Mennonite Church, the Rev. David L. Sonmor officiating.

### Church Family News

Galen Unruh was hospitalized in early May undergoing tests for possible prostate surgery. Cards and letters welcome: 2409 Nevada St., Hutchinson, KS 67502.

Rev. Dick Baxter is continuing experimental chemotherapy treatments as an outpatient at N.I.H. He is in good spirits and able to follow his normal routine. Dick, Polly, Bill and Kevin appreciate calls, cards: 4720 Bel Pre Road, Rockville, MD 20853.

## Study Circles

The Study Circles Resources Center encourages citizens to join together to study and debate the complex problems facing our society. Founded as a non-profit, non-advocacy program, the Center promotes the use of faith-based study circles on critical social and political issues. It is based on the premise that, in order to function at its potential, our democracy requires the participation of a concerned, informed public.

The Center is currently developing a special election year package designed to help people sort through the issues that seem even more important as we prepare to vote in November.

The Study Circles Resources Center provides information on discussion programs concerning a wide variety of topics including:

- Health
- International Security
- Economics
- Racism
- Crime and Punishment
- Drug Abuse
- and many more

For more information, write to:  
Study Circles Resource Center, Route  
169, Box 203, Pomfret, CT 06258.  
Telephone (203) 926-2616; FAX  
(203) 928-3713.

*Emanuel Swedenborg was born January 28, 1688, in Stockholm, Sweden. Although he never intended a church denomination to be founded or named after him, a society was formed in London 15 years after his death. This 1787 organization eventually spawned the present Swedenborgian Church.*

*As a result of Swedenborg's own spiritual questionings and insights, we as a church today exist to encourage that same spirit of inquiry and personal growth, to respect differences in views, and to accept others who may have different traditions.*

*Swedenborg shared in his theological writings a view of God as infinitely loving and at the very center of our beings, a view of life as a spiritual birthing as we participate in our own creation, and a view of Scripture as a story of inner-life stages as we learn and grow. Swedenborg would conclude, "All religion relates to life, and the life of religion is to do good." He also felt that the sincerest form of worship is a useful life.*

## After-Death Experiences

Have you been contacted by a relative or friend who died and came back to you? We're writing a book for the general public on After-Death Communication (ADC) experiences. ADCs range from "dreams" to full appearances. Have you felt their presence, heard their voice, or seen your loved one, etc.? Direct contacts only, not through a psychic or medium. If you've had an ADC, please call or write us, and we'll interview you by telephone (at our expense). You'll remain anonymous at all times. For more information:

Judy & Bill Guggenheim  
P.O. Box 536365  
Orlando, FL 32853  
Phone: (407) 862-1260

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