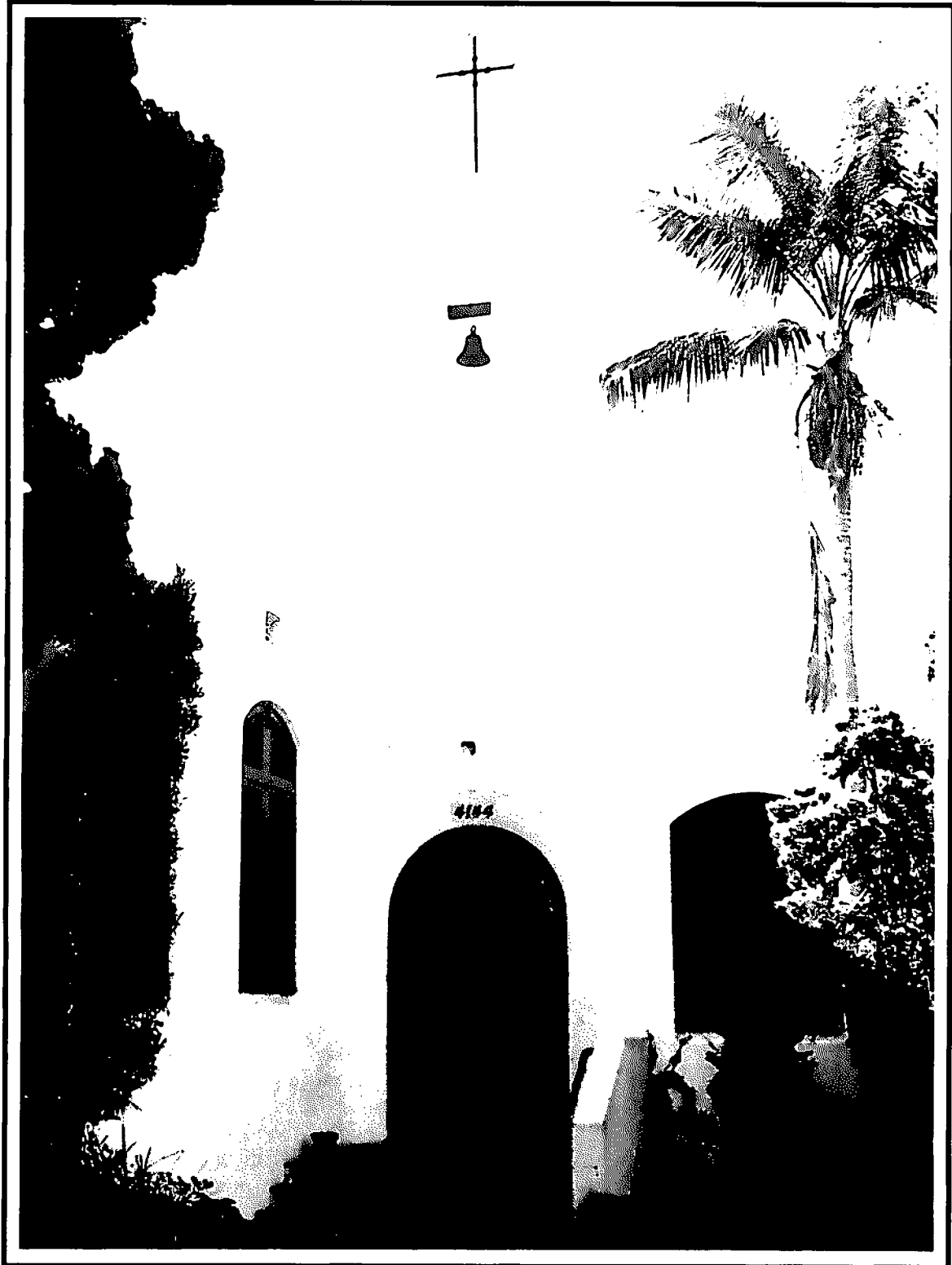


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of
North America

The Messenger

October 1992



The Swedenborgian Church of San Diego

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Our Cover: The Swedenborgian Church of San Diego, built in 1927.

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Moving Toward the Light

So You're Disgusted Again? Vote Anyway!

Guest Editorial by Jim Lawrence

National elections are upon us again, and once more the perennial American bewailing of the candidates is heard across our land. I write these lines in mid-August as the Republicans gather in Houston, and so I cannot know where the campaigns will have taken the American mood by October, when *Messenger* readers will be reading this. But the general tone of comments from our enlightened citizenry in this election season has an awfully familiar ring to it.

The candidates are insincere; they're motivated by a need to be power-brokers; they lack the integrity needed to be president. We are desperate for real heroes, people who seem like heroes while they're alive, and not just several decades after their death. The electorate is pining for a candidate with sincere compassion, certain moral fortitude, vigorous intellectual creativity, proven "can do" experience, and emotional toughness and tenderness in equal measure.

The American electorate seems to be eternally disappointed and cynical. But Swedenborg, who served in the Congress of Sweden (the Swedish Diet) for fifty years, had some spiritual insights into the workings of the Lord in political affairs that may help us to gain a deeper perspective even on our own media-driven zoo that passes for political dialog.

Himself a diligent member of the House of Lords who, it is written, never missed a session in half a century, Swedenborg urged that we not suppose earthly politics should be a playground for saints, and when it is not, then goodness and justice are necessarily thwarted. With the same penetrating spiritual insight that traced divine operations in other realms, he also saw that the Lord quite handily converted the zealous self-interest of politicians into public good. (This isn't to say that good men and women are not called into public service; they are, and Swedenborg was an example of one with noble motivations).

He also saw that the Lord's manner of providence had its greatest success in a democratic structure, because if the power of voting lay in the hands of the public, then there was a greater foundation for steering and shaping the goals and objectives of those who crave power. Just as surely as the Lord is active every second of every day making sure the birds of the air have a nest to stay in, the Lord is working through the talents and ambitions of those who aspire to the public arena, of whatever persuasion and from whatever secret need.

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Politics as Spiritual Process

Ernest Martin

In social conversations we learn to avoid the topics of religion and politics because people are inclined to become very emotional when discussing these subjects. Voices are raised, tempers flare, and bonds of friendship are threatened. Even when I watched a political convention by myself, I found my blood pressure rising. What would happen if I got into a discussion with someone with widely divergent political views?

We tend to be critical of fundamentalist Christians who are zealous in espousing their religious views and attempting to convert others to their faith. Swedenborgians, on the other hand, emphasizing freedom and responsibility, tend to the other extreme of saying little or nothing about their faith in their social contacts. When we think of fanatics, we usually associate them with religion or politics. Other areas that often arouse our emotions are abortion, homosexuality, reincarnation, and the fluoridation of water. All but fluoridation have religious overtones.

Can a marriage or other intimate relationship survive strong religious or political differences? A husband and wife may live to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary and yet belong to different churches and political parties. They may agree to disagree or simply avoid discussing religious and political issues. Political activist Philip Berrigan, a former Roman Catholic priest, and married to a former nun, declares that a true marriage depends on a couple sharing the same basic political philosophy. He would probably say the same thing about a couple's religious philosophy and orientation. Such unity of philosophy and purpose not only reduces arguments but forms the basis for joint decisions on the expenditure of time, talent, and treasure.

In *Marital Love*, Swedenborg dis-

cussing the causes of "colds, separations, and divorces in marriages," wrote that "The internal causes of colds are from religion: the first is rejection of religion by both; the second is that one has religion and the other has not; the third is that one is of one religion and the other of another; and the fourth is imbued falsity of religion." A similar case might be made for political philosophy and activity. Swedenborg wrote that "through a moral and civic life we accept a spiritual life. There is no other way spiritual life can take shape in us, no other way our spirits can be prepared for heaven."

◆
*... the road to
 holiness necessarily
 passes through the
 world of action.*
 ◆

These words of Swedenborg came to mind during the campaign for the presidency of the United States. How can we advance our spiritual lives through involvement in the civic life of our nation, e.g. participating in presidential and congressional politics? Our church emphasizes our responsibility to love the neighbor, and the larger the group the greater the responsibility. We are urged to exercise our right to vote, and that privilege involves careful judgment and discrimination. Swedenborg said that "wisdom is the eye of love," and love and wisdom are to be united in developing the spiritual life. To love wisely, or to make wise political decisions, is a formidable challenge. Our growth and maturity

as persons involves continued growth in love and understanding.

To decide what political candidates are the most qualified for public office is extremely difficult and complex. In the old western movies one could easily distinguish the good guys from the bad guys by the color of their hats, white or black. We still are influenced by external factors such as bodily figure, smile, hairdo, complexion, and voice. In choosing their anchor men and women, television networks invest millions of dollars in securing the most attractive newscasters.

Striving to win votes for their candidates, the political parties appeal to our religious and moral values and ideals—the American family, marital fidelity, prayer in the schools, adherence to the Judaic-Christian heritage, etc. What is not so clear is how the political candidates intend to foster or nurture these ideals, since it is generally recognized that political platforms and campaign rhetoric have little to do with a candidate's performance.

Swedenborg pointed out that we are ruled by our emotions, and campaign directors take advantage of this fact in designing campaign slogans and sound bytes. Issues such as sexual promiscuity, pornography, and abortion will impact the voter much more strongly than discussion of deficit reduction, arms control, and a national health plan. The Gospels have little to say about sexual ethics, yet Christian churches often act as if ethics and morality revolve around sexuality.

In an effort to win the religious vote, candidates for public office declare their opposition to homosexuality. The issue of homosexuality has dominated many sessions in recent conventions of mainline churches. Michael Kinnamon, dean

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Politics as Spiritual Process

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of Lexington Theological Seminary in Kentucky, was a candidate for the presidency of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and was recommended by the 169-member General Board of his denomination. He had strong support from church leaders, but had not reckoned with the consequences of a letter sent by a small Indiana congregation to all 4,000 Disciples churches. The basis of their opposition was Kinnamon's commitment, stated in an "information profile" to the "full participation of gay and lesbian persons in the life of the church and its ministry." This shows, they wrote, his disregard for "the primacy of the Bible as a Christian guide for values and living standards." When the day of voting in the General Assembly finally arrived, the affirmative vote fell about 70 votes short (out of some 5,500 cast) of the required two-thirds, and Kinnamon was defeated.

Dr. Kinnamon spoke of the entire process of his campaign for the presidency as "a time of enormous spiritual growth, for which I give thanks to God." He came to the liberating realization that being disobedient to the gospel as he understood it would be far worse than the threats and personal attacks that were a part of the nomination experience.

Whether we are candidates for public office ourselves, or we are working actively in the process to choose and elect the best-qualified candidates, we are preparing our spirits for eternal life. Swedenborg spoke of our lives here on earth as a seminary for heaven. Dag Hammarskjöld stressed that the road to holiness necessarily passes through the world of action. Whether our candidates win or lose in November, I hope we can feel that our participation in the electoral process is responsible and informed, consistent with our highest ideals and practices.

The Rev. Ernest O. Martin is director of Temenos Conference and Retreat Center, West Chester, Pennsylvania, a Service of the Swedenborgian Church.

"Be Still, and Know That I am God."

(Psalm 46)

Jill Kingslake

To do this is the secret of the healthy life, and the basis of all prayer. Sounds easy enough. We all know that God is God, and we know all sorts of things about God; but this is not the same as knowing God. Knowing about God is an intellectual exercise, and sometimes we indulge in it to quite a considerable extent because it flatters our ego. "Knowing God" on the other hand is an experience, and has nothing (or very little) to do with our intellectual grasp. It is more in the nature of a "happening," to use a current expression. When we come to "know" God in this sense, to experience Him in every fibre of our being, things do happen—a whole sequence of events. For one thing, as the rest of Psalm 46 points out, if God is God, then He is all-powerful; He is our refuge and strength, He takes away our fears, makes us glad, and causes us to praise Him. In the world around us today we find it hard to "know" this. It does not seem as though God is "making wars to cease unto the ends of the earth." It does not seem as though "God is in the midst of us," either nationally or personally. But this is so only because we often lose the art of being still.

Even on the quite literal plane, very few people today can sit completely still and silent for even a minute. Being still spiritually involves much more; and it needs faithful practice. We have to learn to concentrate so exclusively on God, and experience such an awareness of His Power and Love, that we can dare to lose our hold upon the reins of our life, dare to put away our ego, dare to stop trying to be our own salvation, dare to stop praying for our own will to be done; and trust that HIS will, which we talk about so glibly, really can be done in our lives, and that it will be the perfect thing for us. We need to have a new picture of what we are—

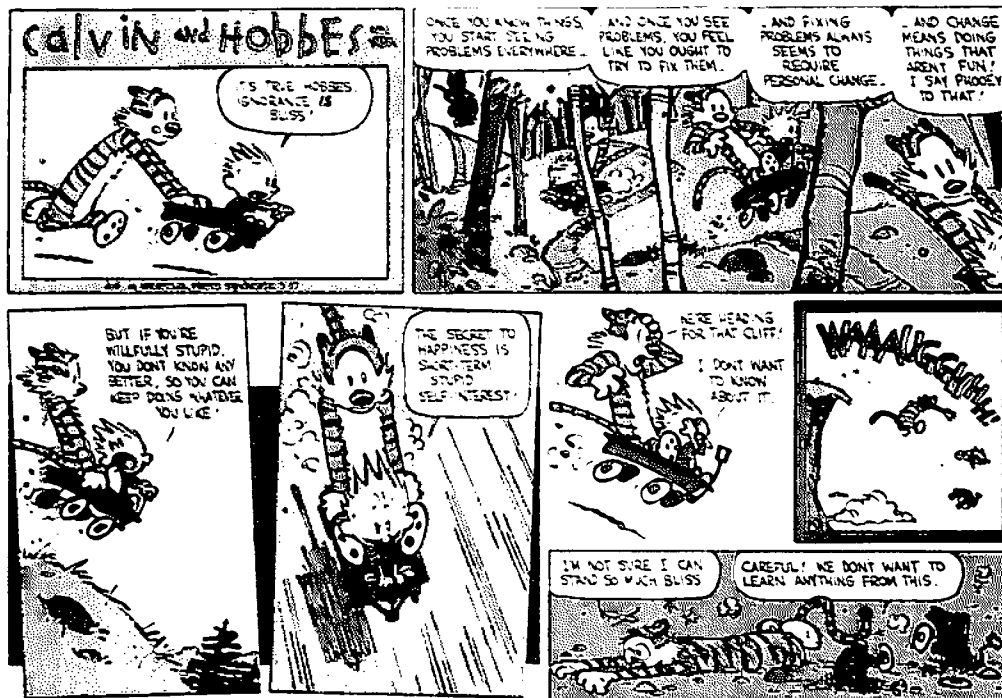
children of God!—glorious, perfect, and much-loved! The Abbe de Tourville maintained that, to say quite simply, with real conviction, "God loves me! and I truly love Him too!" would do us much more good than any amount of anxious striving. If God loves us, then surely we can love ourselves a bit more? "Love" in the sense of seeing ourselves as "lovely," or lovable. After all, we are God's creation, and "He saw everything He had made, and behold it was very good."

This is the great essential for all prayer—to be still until we know God: for we cannot talk effectively to someone we don't know; it is merely talking to ourselves. If we can truly do this, truly still our own clamour of anxiety, and busyness, and guilt, and an exaggerated sense of our own responsibility, and BE STILL in the presence of God, then miracles do happen. I am not saying this is easy—it gets harder, as Man gets more and more "clever," and apes God's Power without realizing where all power comes from. The great healing personalities of today are those who live a life of constant stillness and experiencing God. The consequent removal of fear, the increase of gladness, the impulse of praise—this is what heals, whether our prayer is for ourselves or our friends. We could take as our motto: "Glory—Joy—Praise!"

Bible Quotations to use when praying for help:

- "Ye shall not need to fight this battle. Stand you still and see the glory of the Lord revealed."
- "If God is with us, who can be against us?"
- "Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee."
- "Ye shall pray unto Me and I will hearken unto you, if ye search with all our heart."
- "In quietness and confidence shall be your strength."

Reprinted from Lifeline, Journal of the General Conference of the New Church, August, 1992. The above is one of the articles written by the late Jill Kingslake when she was director of the New Church Prayer Fellowship, during the time when she and her husband, the Rev. Brian Kingslake, were in the U.S.



Calvin and Hobbes
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A Clash of Absolutes

1 Kings 3:16-28
Matthew 5:33-37

Robert McCluskey

The issue of abortion, like several other issues that face us each day, has been usefully described as "a clash of absolutes," in which each side of the argument is understood to be both compelling and valid. That is, it is a situation in which the issue is neither simple nor unimportant; we must act, we must respond but at the same time, we cannot. A kind of ethical catch 22, in which each side is exclusive of the other, and yet neither can be ignored.

In the matter of abortion, we cannot simply compare the issue of choice to the right to life of the fetus; both are distinct and crucial needs of the human being. Separately, there is no problem; seen in their relationship to one another, though, the problem becomes insoluble—there seems no way to resolve the tension. Abortion is perhaps the clearest, most extreme instance of a clash of absolutes that we know of today. It is a perfect example of what goes on in more subtle ways in many of the issues, decisions, and

dilemmas that confront us each day. Other examples are the death penalty, euthanasia, and public funding for private schools.

One typical response that people have to difficult problems is to abandon any search for a solution, and "leave it up to the individual"; i.e., the tougher and more significant the problem, the less we feel compelled to arrive at a reasonable response—it's as if it no longer matters; it's as if only trivial decisions are worthy of our effort and time. When it comes to a clash of absolutes, in which both sides of an argument are valid and compelling, the issue is generally seen as a deadlock; since we can't reason our way to an answer, we tend to settle for everyone doing what they think is best—a kind of ethical roulette.

A resolution taken by Convention on July 2, 1982 addresses the responsibility of making statements on important issues.

This standing resolution was adopted in August, 1969: "That the General Convention support the legalization of abortion, in cases where it is responsibly applied for the physical and emotional welfare of those involved. Be it also resolved that

such therapeutic abortion shall be considered primarily a matter of concern between the patient, attending physician and person counselor."

But note: no spousal involvement; equating pregnancy with an ailment or illness (therapeutic, patient, physician, etc.); ambiguous ("reasonably applied," "those involved," "primarily a matter of . . ."). In addition, there is no theological basis cited to justify the resolution. It is as if the church is saying, "Not only are we not too sure about this issue, we really don't know *what* to say."

Let us be clear here. The issue is very tough; it is a clash of absolutes, and it cannot be resolved by practical reason and utilitarian schemes. It involves values, ultimate meanings; it requires us to reveal our subjective side, who we are as human beings; it prohibits us from hiding behind the false objectivity of statistics and economics. It cannot be isolated from all other values and beliefs that we hold. It cannot be dealt with separately, without involving and affecting us completely. ("Right to lifers" separate out the issue of personal freedoms, and "right to choicers" separate out the issue of

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Clash of Absolutes

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the status of the fetus. Here we can perhaps see that this clash of absolutes has resulted, as usual, in two very distinct, clear, but impartial responses. There's a lot of certainty and swearing on both sides.)

Consider the liar's paradox: Imagine you face two doors, both identical; one leads to struggles and difficulties, and the other leads to happiness and friendship. Two individuals, also identical, guard the doors. You must choose one of the doors. In order to determine which door is which, you are allowed to ask (only) one question of (only) one of the guards. Finally, you know the following information about the guards; one always lies, and one always tells the truth. What do you ask?

Answer: Ask either one of the guards: Which door would the *other* fellow say is the door to happiness?" Whatever the answer, it is the *opposite* door that will lead to happiness.

Solution: By asking that question, *both* viewpoints were brought into contrast/context with each other; each served to qualify the other in such a way as to make it useful in seeing the truth.

Now consider Matthew chapter 5: This passage is actually a description of the celestial or highest level of spiritual development (see *Divine Love and Wisdom* 427). A higher level of spiritual growth leads us from mere reasoning about life issues to a perception of their meeting: not figuring out what the right thing to do is, but *knowing*.

People used to swear by something valuable; the throne of God, the earth, Jerusalem. Such "swearing" can be understood as a kind of confirmation, a strengthening of one's position. But on a deeper and somewhat reversed level, such confirmation reveals doubt as well. That is, it reveals an uncertainty that longs to be made sure, as certain as God or the earth itself. As Christ transcended one law after another, so here he directs our attention to a level of being beyond the uncertainty of human reasoning and judgment, beyond even so-called ethical or moral behavior, to a level of direct and spontaneous perception of the

Divine will.

People do seem to have a hard time dealing with tough problems. The paradox is, though, that real issues, tough problems, are precisely those contexts in which we can make genuine spiritual progress. They are indications to us that we are treading in new, unfamiliar territory, that we must look for new criteria for truth; we must open ourselves up to a source of wisdom that is presently beyond us. Problems like a broken door or bounced check, purely natural problems, will always be best dealt with by using our reasoning powers, our will. Issues of the spirit, however, though they too will involve our reason and will, cannot be understood without appealing to a higher source of insight. Issues of the spirit, issues of human joy and suffering, if addressed by human reason alone, will inevitably lead to greater and greater confusion, distortion, and further problems.

*Real issues, tough problems,
are precisely those contexts
in which we can make
genuine spiritual progress.*

Solomon, the wise king, represented this celestial principle in its fullness. I should add that I did not select this passage as an image of the abortion issue *per se*. It was selected because it points to the need for wisdom to replace reasoning; it indicates the need for insight that is not deaf to the deeper issues and intentions that are in operation. It suggests a method for dealing effectively with a clash of absolutes.

Like the solution to the liar's paradox, Solomon was able to assume a different vantage point, a third perspective besides the two irreconcilable ones he was initially confronted with. A higher perspective grounded in God's love which allowed the deeper concern to emerge. By asking a deeper question, he got to the heart of the matter. Not who was the baby's legal mother; this could not be decided. But, who truly cared for the baby. He presented the situation in such a way that the only response on the part of the two

mothers was either yes or no.

The two women, that is, the two perspectives they represented, were put into relationship with one another. The question was changed from "who has the correct story?", to "who cares about what's really happening here?" It is an image of both sides being drawn to a higher level, where the truth could be revealed.

How can we, like Solomon, hit the nail on the head? How can we ask *the* right question? How can we view or understand the issues that face us in such a way that we force their hand, so to speak, instead of being defeated by them? What would it take for us to see a situation from a perspective which not only reveals a solution, but resolves the original tension or clash as well? After all, such insoluble clashes are only a product of human imagination and self interest; with God, nothing is impossible.

When we feel the tension of issues like abortion, the death penalty, and other clashes of absolute values that society deals out to us, we must avoid the temptation to simply choose sides. We must acknowledge that this tension exists to some extent within us, and can only be resolved, can only be seen from the right perspective, as we seek to transform ourselves into the image of God. What would it be like to be able to offer a simple "Yes" or "No" as we confront life's difficulties? What would *we* be like?

Prayer

Lord, help us to hear the concerns, the hopes and fears, of all our brothers and sisters. Make us quick to listen, to support as well as to confront, to heal as well as to challenge. Lord, we pray for the spirit of your wisdom to dwell within us, acknowledging at the same time our struggle against that humility and obedience which alone can unite us with your Divine truth. Help us to continue to the journey toward spiritual wholeness, so that we may more and more respond to your loving impulses with a simple "Yes!"

The Rev. Robert McCluskey is pastor of the New York Swedenborgian Church.



The San Diego Swedenborgian Church, 1932.

THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH OF SAN DIEGO

Annella Smith

The San Diego Society of the New Jerusalem was incorporated in the State of California and granted a 50-year charter in September, 1883. There were 13 charter members in this group: Philander and June Arnold, A. J. Chase, Mary L. Cheney, Caroline L. Perry, Dr. George W. Barnes, R. S. Clark, Mary E. Copeland, Margaret G. Fitzroy, Addie W. Haight, Thomas J. and Edith L. Cox and Pauline Rea.

This group met at the home of Dr. Barnes in June, 1883 with the Rev. Joseph Worcester of San Francisco and adopted a Constitution, Bylaws and the Principles of Organization. They continued to meet for regular worship services with worship leaders until 1899, when the records indicate they disbanded for a period of time.

In 1905 Walter Dibb, who came to San Diego from Toronto, Canada, contacted the members of the Society who were still in the area and others who appeared on the mailing list of *The Helper*. This group consisted of several interested people who once again organized regular worship ser-

vices. Walter Dibb's daughter, Ethel Swanton, is still one of the active members in the church.

During this early period the Rev. Joseph C. Collom came from Los Angeles to meet with the group periodically. In July, 1906, arrangements were made with the Rev. Joseph S. David to become the first pastor of the society. In October of 1907, the society dedicated its first church building at 4144 Campus Avenue.

In 1909, Mr. David accepted a call to serve the San Francisco church and Dr. Underwood was invited to serve as worship leader. At the May, 1910 denominational meetings in New York City, Dr. Underwood was ordained into the Swedenborgian ministry and served the San Diego Society until late in 1914.

His successor was the Rev. Howard C. Dunham, who served from 1915 until 1919, and again from 1921 until 1924. Interim services were led by Judge Thomas B. King and Mr. S. Frank. From 1924 until 1928, the Rev. Hoxsie Smith served the group. Under his leadership the society built

their present house of worship which was dedicated in September, 1927.

In 1928 the Rev. Paul Dresser came to San Diego and served until 1934, when he was succeeded by the Rev. John L. Boyer who left in 1943 to go to the Kenwood parish of the Chicago Society. The Rev. Robert L. Young came to San Diego in the fall of 1944 and left in early 1960. The Rev. John L. Spiers came to San Diego in November of 1960 and left in June 1964. The Rev. F. Robert Tafel served the society from August, 1964 until August 1969.

Visiting ministers and worship leaders served the church until August, 1971, when the Rev. Ivan Franklin became the minister. The first Sunday service of each month was led by a worship leader with Rev. Franklin leading the other services. Later during this ministry, the Rev. Franklin led two Sunday services with the other two being conducted by worship leaders. Rev. Franklin, who was in the Navy, took a year's leave of absence leaving San Diego in May of 1973, and returning in July, 1974.

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San Diego Church

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In January 1977, he went to Okinawa and the society was once again served by worship leaders.

In June of 1983, the society voted to have Eldon Smith become the probationary lay leader and follow the prescribed course of study from the Swedenborg School of Religion to become an authorized lay leader. Although the course is scheduled to take three years, it took longer than that as Eldon was the first candidate for this new program sponsored by SSR, and time was spent deciding which courses would be the most valuable for him to take.

small, they take care of many church needs, such as social hour following Sunday worship, providing salads for a luncheon held before each quarterly meeting of the membership, helping with communion, and sponsoring a June picnic and a Christmas party annual for the membership and friends. Since most of the Alliance members are involved in their own charitable projects, they voted some time ago to continue with their individual projects instead of having the group work on projects together, and this has proved to be a very satisfying way of helping in the community.

A prayer circle is convened the third Friday evening of each month.

chat. During one three-month period early this year, a tally was kept of those coming in to meditate, visit, or just to see the church because the doors were open. We were delighted to find that we had 87 visitors, and we are not located on what would be considered a busy street corner.

Study and doctrinal classes are presented according to requests received and the material used is also chosen by the group. These are open to anyone wishing to attend and are usually conducted during the daytime.

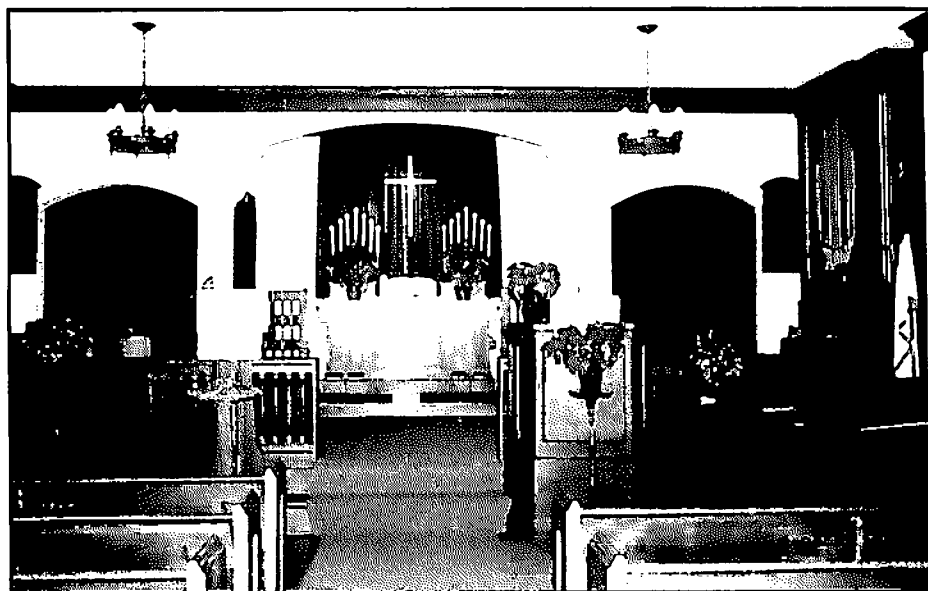
Special worship services during the year include: a renewal and rededication service the first Sunday in January; Palm Sunday; Easter Sunday; Mother's Day, with the women of the congregation participating; Father's Day; Flag Day; New Church Day; Worldwide Communion Sunday; Thanksgiving Sunday and Thanksgiving Day; the four Sundays of Advent and Christmas Eve. Last year following the Thanksgiving Day worship service, all those in attendance enjoyed a potluck dinner in the parish hall. Each Sunday during Advent someone from the congregation lights the candles on the Advent wreath and offers a prayer. On Christmas Eve we have our annual candlelight carol service.

We are fortunate to have Ethel and Henry Swanton provide flowers for the church every Sunday, often from their garden. Music is considered an important part of our worship service, and again we are fortunate. Our organist, Jill Coady-Smith, is a rare find who not only plays the organ and piano, but is a professional flutist and offers inspiring selections each week.

The first Sunday in August, a barbecue at Mary Hodges' house following our service gives everyone an opportunity to share the adventures of their summer vacations. We have found it also increases our attendance at the first worship service of the season.

Efforts are being made to bring the church building back into optimum shape. During the past four years we've treated for termites, put on a new roof, new carpeting and chancel hangings installed and painting has begun outside and in. A new

(Continued on page 146)



Sanctuary

He was consecrated as the authorized lay leader of the San Diego Swedenborgian Church in November, 1990.

The San Diego society has always had members who were active in the community. For 38 years the Alpha Omega Players, a little theater group, gave two productions a year in our parish hall. This group finally disbanded in June, 1987, when they had their "Last Hurrah" which was a special program honoring two charter members who had also been two of their hardest working members throughout the years, Henry and Ethel Swanton.

The Women's Alliance meets once a month for business, study and social time. Though the group is

Each Sunday prayer request cards are put in the pews so worshippers can fill them out as needed and put them in the collection plate. All requests are then honored at the monthly circle meeting. After the prayer session, time is spent reading and discussing a paper on the power of prayer, etc., and the evening is ended with a social time of refreshments and visiting.

For the past five years since Eldon and Annella Smith moved to San Diego to be at the church on a regular basis, the front doors of the church have been open Monday through Friday during the day for anyone wanting to enter to pray privately, use the library, or drop in the office for a cup of coffee and

Temenos Fall Workshops

FEELING JOY:

The Spiritual Journey of the Inner Child

Dorothea Harvey

Saturday, October 10

9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Cost: \$45.

Bring a bag lunch; fruit & beverages provided.

RITUAL FOR HEALING GRIEF

Kathleen Gajdos

Sunday, October 11

3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Cost \$10.

DREAM SYMBOLS AND THEIR MESSAGES

Alice Adelman

Saturday, October 17

9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Cost: \$45.

Bring a bag lunch; fruit & beverages provided.

DIVORCE AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Pamela D. Blair

Saturday, October 24

9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Cost: \$55.

Bring a bag lunch; fruit & beverages provided.

HEALTH, HEALING AND SPIRITUAL

EMERGENCE: Dialog and Practicum

Conveners: Don Kauber and Perry Martin

Friday, October 30

7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.:

The role of values, attitudes, images, patterns, models; the conditions of disease and health.

Saturday, October 31

9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.:

The role of the center, centering, inner space.

Saturday, October 31

1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.:

The role of practices, movement, action, responsibility, therapy, taking on our own involvement.

Sunday, November 1

2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.:

The role of support and maintenance.

Cost: \$25 for one session, \$45 for two sessions,

\$60 for three sessions, \$75 for four sessions.

Limited overnight accommodations may be available

at \$30 for one night, \$35 for two nights,

double occupancy.

TRAILS WEEKEND: Patterns of Nature

Anne Perry

Friday, November 6 — 6:30 p.m. to

Sunday, November 8, noon.

Cost: Free. If you wish overnight accommodations, please let us know.

LISTENING, UNDERSTANDING, AND CARING:

A Marriage Enrichment Retreat for Couples

Howard and Betsy Friend

Friday, November 13, 7:00 p.m. to

Saturday, November 14, 4:00 p.m.

Costs: \$65 per couple, program and leadership: \$75 per couple, overnight and meals; Total \$140.

WOMEN'S JOURNEY BEYOND GRIEF

Kathleen Gajdos, Perry Martin

Saturday, November 21

9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Cost: \$45.

Bring a bag lunch; fruit & beverages provided.

MEN AND GRIEF: A Day for Men

Lon Elmer

Saturday, November 28

9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Cost: \$45.

Bring a bag lunch; fruit & beverages provided.

BOUNDARIES: Sacred Space, Sacred Body, Sacred Other

Jacquelyn Zee de Bray

Saturday, December 5

9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Cost: \$45.

Bring a bag lunch; fruit & beverages provided.

DANCES OF UNIVERSAL PEACE

Jeanne Ayesha Lauenborg

Saturday, December 6

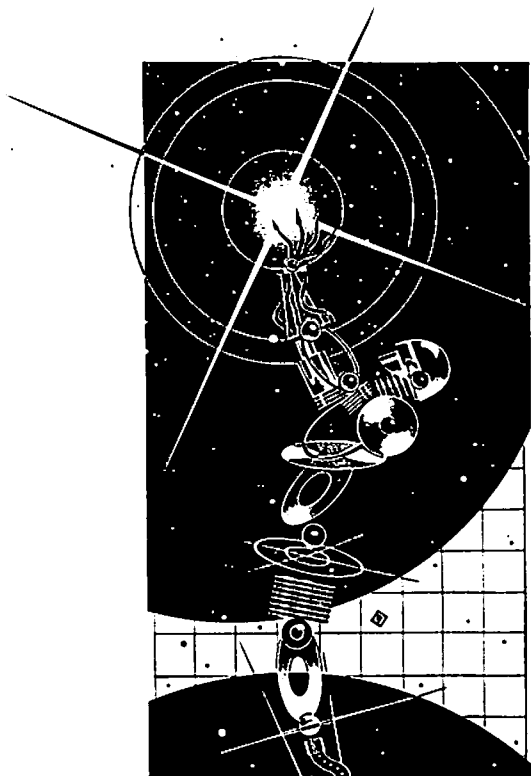
2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Cost: \$5. Refreshments will be served at the Farm House after the dancing.



This Hologram Called Creation

Eric Zacharias



I recently watched a national TV program, *Made in America*. Its message was: we are living in an interconnected world today, an interdependent global community. Some parts of a Buick are made in the U.S., some in Mexico, some in Germany or Brazil. The program advocated economic and political policies by which trade barriers would be lifted—and each nation given the opportunities to do what it does best.

There is something going on that is deserving of our attention. It is not simply that we are living in time of change. Change has always been part of the human experience. That which is taking place today might well be revolutionary in nature. It's dramatic. It's profound. Those concepts which defined the world—and even the church for hundreds of years—are no longer adequate. Mere revision, bandaid application, will not be adequate. The NEW is already emerging. Are we open enough to respond to it creatively?

Some of you may be familiar with the word "hologram." The dictionary defines a hologram as a three-dimensional picture—a picture of height, depth and breadth. *The Continuing Vision* has a chapter titled, "Swedenborg and the Holographic Paradigm," written by

Michael Talbot, a graduate from Michigan State University. Here the question is asked, "What is a hologram?" In part, the answer reads: "Imagine you have a shallow pan of water into which three pebbles are dropped simultaneously. Each pebble is the source of waves spreading evenly across the pan. The waves cross and interact with one another, creating a complex interference pattern. If you now quick-freeze the surface of the water in the pan and lift out the resulting rippled sheet of ice, you are then holding a record of the interference pattern in the waves. This is a hologram."

Amazingly, if you take the sheet of ice and break it into small pieces, and illuminate one of the chips, you will again see the image of all three pebbles projected in midair, just as each cell in our bodies carries all of the genetic information necessary to make an additional exact copy of our bodies. *Holography is nature's most compact information storage device.*

The implications of this holographic model are monumental. It implies that all the knowledge in the Universal Mind is available to anyone who can tune into it, because, as in all holograms, the information is totally distributed throughout the universe. Mystical aphorisms such as, "We are all one," "As above, so

below" "God is within you," and "The universe is in a grain of sand" take on new meaning when seen in the light of the holographic model.

If we draw a line and place dots on it representing individual consciousness, and from each dot draw diverging lines, representing expanding consciousness, we see that the higher the level, the more areas overlap. On the highest spiritual level, they will all blend into one, showing that on that level the consciousness of humanity in *one*.

So here we are—all part of this great hologram called CREATION.

How beautifully this fits into the framework of our Church teachings. In *Heaven and Hell* no. 73, we read, "For in the most perfect form (which heaven's form is), there is a resemblance to the whole in the part and a resemblance to the part in the whole. The reason for this is that heaven is a commonwealth, actually sharing everything it has with each person there, and each member receives everything he has from the commonwealth. An angel is a recipient entity and therefore a heaven in smallest form."

The Rev. Eric Zacharias is pastor of the Swedenborgian Church in Pretty Prairie, Kansas. Reprinted from The Plains Banner, June 1992.

A Cause for Celebration?

Ted LeVan

It's the 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus' first landing in the Western hemisphere—do we celebrate or mourn?

Nearly 500 years before Columbus, Vikings were sailing up and down the eastern seaboard, building settlements and exploring inland. But they left so insignificant a mark upon the landscape that archaeologists debated for years whether they had even been here.

Why the contrast? After all, Columbus' objective was to find a shorter path to the Orient for European commerce.

One key difference between the attitudes of the Vikings and the Conquistadores can be summed up in the word *exploitation*.

For the indigenous people of the Western Hemisphere, Columbus' invasion led to slavery, genocide, and exploitation—the destruction of whole cultures and religions.

For Spain, it meant wealth, power and prestige. For other Europeans, it meant a great hope—an opportunity for freedom—a chance to live out one's dreams, particularly in North America, where the mind-set of successful living has developed that has no equal anywhere else in the world.

There is much to celebrate and much to mourn. The more we take action to acknowledge and correct abuses, both past and present, the more freely we can "move forward together into a shared future as God's creatures honoring the plurality of our cultural heritage."¹ When all who have been impacted by this event have something to celebrate, only then can we have a true celebration.

The Rev. Ted LeVan is a Swedenborgian minister-at-large in LaPorte, Indiana.

¹From a Faithful Response to the 500th Anniversary of the arrival of Christopher Columbus, by the Governing Board of the National Council of Churches.

Moving Toward the Light

(Continued from page 134)

It may be too much to ask that we never register our disappointment. It is surely good that we persistently and strenuously call for the highest standards in our public officials. But to become merely cynical is bad theology. Though our suspicions in certain cases may lead us to conclude that the private dreams of a given politician are less than inspirational, that doesn't mean that many a good work will not be brought about through them. Such is the nature of God's providence: to be bringing about the best possible good, without violating our freedom. And despite our feelings, let us bear in mind that the Lord works best in a democratic process, which means he needs our involvement.

By hanging in there and taking part in our political process, we play a necessary role in the means of providence.

The Rev. Dr. James F. Lawrence is the co-minister of the San Francisco Swedenborgian Church.

An Evening with Wilson Van Dusen

Available from J. Appleseed & Co.: a good-quality 90-minute video, *An Evening with Wilson Van Dusen* from his talk in the San Francisco church's candlelit sanctuary May 20, 1992. The evening celebrated the publication of his new book, *The Country of Spirit*, with the talk focusing on developing a personal spiritual path. \$10 postpaid. Make checks payable to J. Appleseed & Co., San Francisco Swedenborgian Church, 3200 Washington St., San Francisco, CA 94115.

Weekly Sermon Service Available

Available from the San Francisco Swedenborgian Church: a weekly printed sermon service \$15 per year to cover postage. Subscribe by sending your check to the church at: 3200 Washington St., San Francisco, CA 94115.

Alliance of New Church Women Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Alliance of New Church Women was held on the campus of Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, June 25, 1992. The following organizations and programs were chosen for our support: Church World Service, Church Women United, our five church camps, *The Messenger*, the convention baby sitters, and the Swedenborgian Youth League. New this year was the wish to expend funds for our young people at convention, who, with their leaders, devote a great deal of time, effort, and talent in their dramatic presentation.

Over the years it has become apparent that the participation of our youth and teens has grown to be an integral part of convention, and of increasing importance to the denomination's future. Continuing our support in this vein, we voted to devote Mite Box '93 to make it possible for more pre-teens and teens to attend convention '94, in Washington, D.C., supplementing their local churches' and Associations' funding for this.

I am happy to report that Mite Box '92 raised over \$1,200 for Rev. Dr. Wilma Wake's missionary mission in New Hampshire. We appreciate your continuing support for our Mite Box programs.

I will be sending out our appeal letter soon. We look forward to more much-needed financial backing from everyone. Checks may be sent to: Nancy C. Perry, Box 156, Jackson, NH 03846.

Nancy C. Perry, Treasurer

Archival Gold

Our rich Swedenborgian heritage comes alive with countless distinctive personalities, ranging from the merely quixotic to those great names who have made a real impact on American culture. Whether on the creative fringes of the organized Church of the New Jerusalem or toiling away smack dab in the middle of our always-too-small-local-church, the archives at the Swedenborg School of Religion yield highly revealing glimpses for those with a talent for spotting the real stuff amongst the yellowing tatters tucked into too many files, shelves, drawers.

Louise Dole Woofenden has been sorting through the archives for a few years now, and she knows what it is to come across some caveat and fall into another world for the next hour or two. She spends countless afternoons in the windowless fireproof vault room of the library turning over proverbial rocks, whose undersides haven't seen the light of day in who knows how long.

So the Communications Support Unit asked Louise if she would consider authoring a monthly series of nuggets, curiosities, and the more-than-occasional profundities entombed there. We have always been jokingly referred to as the church that believes in "salvation through publication," and more than one denominational historian has noted our per capita iron grip on this coveted category. In the following months, Louise will bring forth some of her favorite discoveries. Let us savor a bit our unique history. Perhaps there is something we still need to learn from it that we didn't get quite right the first time around.

—Jim Lawrence

TRACING OUR SWEDENBORGIAN ROOTS

Louise Woofenden

Coming to America

Johnny Appleseed had a spiritual forebear as colorful and eccentric as himself, whose history is also part fact and part fable.

James Glen, a Scot, sailed for South America in 1771. The principal landowner of the colony of Demerara (now Guyana) granted him a large tract of land, and in seven years he had a fine plantation, a large number of slaves and a sizable bank account.

In August of 1771 while visiting

on board a Dutch ship lying in the Rio River he noticed *Heaven and Hell* in the captain's cabin. From that moment Swedenborg's writings became his passion.

In 1783 during a visit to England, Glen saw Robert Hindmarsh's first newspaper ad announcing a group to study these writings. Glen joined the group and kept contact and made donations by mail.

On his way back home in 1784 he stopped in Philadelphia and placed

the first *American* newspaper ad—for a lecture on correspondences, to be held at Bell's book store. According to one report three men showed up: Meyers Fisher, Francis Bailey (whose publishing house became a center for distributing Swedenborg's works), and Judge John Young, who later supplied Johnny Appleseed with literature. Only three men! and yet through them the New Church spread across the continent. Glen is said to have traveled in Pennsylvania,

Kentucky and Virginia. We know that he lectured in Boston, converting Joseph Roby, the bookseller, who formed the nucleus of the Boston Society. Another hearer took the writings to Portsmouth and Dover, New Hampshire.

James Glen returned to Demerara, but as the years went on he did not prosper. Some reporters blamed his decline on his fanatical adherence to insane beliefs! Others conjectured that his extreme generosity toward his slaves, unexpected crop failures or other misfortunes caused him to find himself at the mercy of unyielding creditors. At any rate, he fled, leaving them his plantation to satisfy his debts. In a remote corner of the property of a friend he built a rude shelter, containing only a plank to sleep on, a shelf for books and a few dishes. He lived as a recluse, subsisting on dried fish and plantains, and studying and writing articles and letters to Swedenborgian friends. From time to time visitors would appear to meet firsthand this remarkable hermit, whose fame was spreading. These visitors found an old gray-bearded gaunt man dressed in a checked shirt and an old pair of stockings, who might take down a book of Hebrew, Greek or Latin and discuss his religion wisely and vigorously.

Glen became adept at herbal medicine, with which he successfully treated his native neighbors. He made Swedenborgian disciples of a few of them, who met as a group for some thirty or forty years. Glen died in 1814.

On Uses

What natural philosophers name *final causes*, Swedenborg calls *uses*. Those who study natural history advance towards the science of correspondences, for correspondence is use. That is, everything in nature is a form exactly adapted to its own use whether celestial or infernal, those most excellent being celestial uses, and those which are mean uses, such as carrion crows, thistles and weeds, belong to infernal degrees. Yet they are of a certain use, just as all the hells are in certain uses of equilibrium and purification. Only ignorant

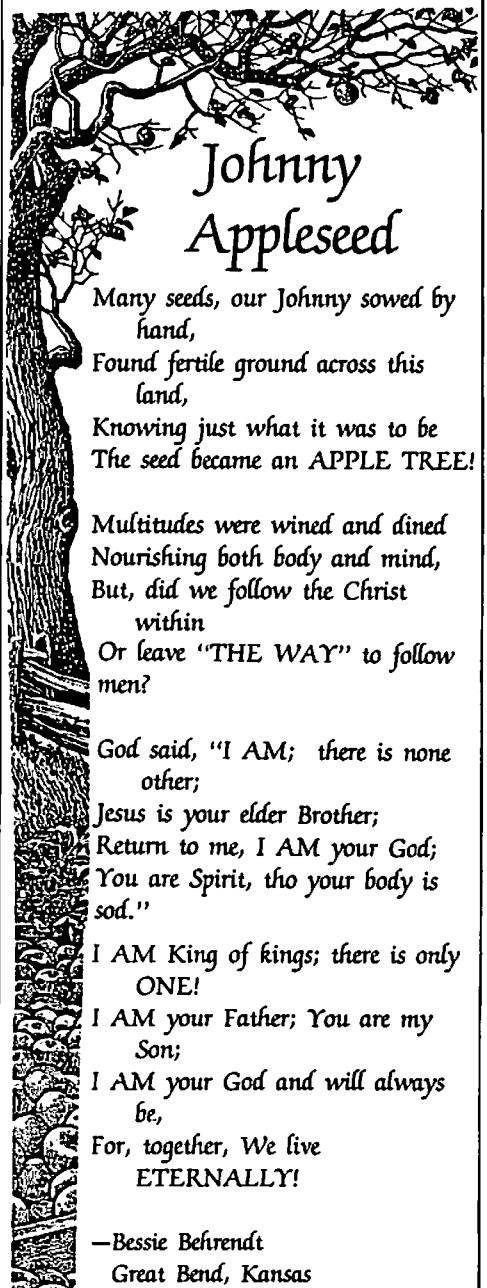
people proclaim certain animals, plants and minerals as noxious. Every year some valuable qualities and properties are discovered in these, which were not known before. These discoveries will go on *ad infinitum* and a thousand ages hence discoveries will be made which will abundantly repay all careful and laborious research. If, then, the natural world is an exhibition of an infinite variety of uses, every form is a form corresponding with its own use. Thus the science of uses advances easily to the science of correspondences. As every inquiry and experiment into the objects of nature constantly discovers something wonderful and useful, the influx of a spiritual cause becomes clearer and clearer to the eye of man—so clear that it is a matter of surprise that anyone can deny a spiritual cause. For what are zoology, botany, mineralogy, meteorology, anatomy, physics without the light of correspondences shining upon them?

I am not at all surprised at the gods of the Greeks and Romans. Ceres, Bacchus, Neptune and Mars represented the omnipresence of God, according to the various states of reception, in the uses of corn, wine, navigation and fishes, and in the use of a martial spirit which secures to a nation liberty and independence. I hold it no idolatry if a person should fall down and worship a blade of grass or the legs of a butterfly. For even these contain such exhibitions of wisdom and love that philosophy will never be able to unfold them. Infinite is within finite, though it is ordered by the Divine that we in this life have only a poor, external and general idea of things, and see not the wonders within wonders which a blade of grass contains. But surely that person's feet are where the head should be who can walk the streets of London, or even a village, without seeing a variety of useful things, some administering to the necessities, some to the conveniences, some to the ornaments, some to the elegances, and some to pleasure and philosophical inquiry. The animal, vegetable and mineral worlds are, from their origin, full of uses. People whose industry, science and labor find employment in perfecting these uses—where do they find their untiring af-

fection for useful arts and sciences? Also why, in all good governments, are the most useful people the most honorable? Because uses proceed from the Divine Human, who is the center and source of all uses.

Since, then, every object is a form corresponding with its own use, and the science of correspondences teaches the representation of uses in their external forms, it follows that whoever are in uses are *near*—if not *in*—the science of correspondences. And this I hope will, in some few years, be the state of scientific people on this earth.

J. Glen



Johnny
Appleseed

Many seeds, our Johnny sowed by
hand,
Found fertile ground across this
land,
Knowing just what it was to be
The seed became an APPLE TREE!

Multitudes were wined and dined
Nourishing both body and mind,
But, did we follow the Christ
within
Or leave "THE WAY" to follow
men?

God said, "I AM; there is none
other;
Jesus is your elder Brother;
Return to me, I AM your God;
You are Spirit, tho your body is
sod."

I AM King of kings; there is only
ONE!
I AM your Father; You are my
Son;
I AM your God and will always
be,
For, together, We live
ETERNALLY!

—Bessie Behrendt
Great Bend, Kansas

Dedicated to the Rev. Dr. James F. Lawrence

Opinion

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

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

Heaven? Hell? . . . Our Choice

I felt Steve Pults' convention sermon (September 1992 *Messenger*) was "right on"! As I think back to the thirties when I began to be involved with the workings of the national organization and I heard the stories of earlier conventions, I realize that we have almost always operated in an *attack* mode—victory to the more strong-willed!

We feel the results of this attack mode today. Will it lead to our demise as a church organization? It is up to us to decide.

There will, no doubt, be many solutions offered. My contribution follows:

The most important thing we have to do as individuals is to LISTEN! When there is need for dialogue between or among individuals with differing points of view, we need to ask how the other person perceives the differences and we might add "Why?" The critical element in our questioning is our tone of voice. We need to communicate a genuine interest in what the other person says and our tone of voice shows our interest far better than any words.

Before we begin with this dialogue it is essential that we ask ourselves the above questions. Do we really mean what we say?

It was interesting that Ann Westerman, who shared her expertise with the ministers' wives, com-

municated the same perception of the church as did Steve Pults. She shared her perception that the whole of the organization is surrounded by "emotional violence" and she indicated that if we do not come to grips with this we will continue to be a dying church.

In our confrontational dialogues we need to feel our own and the other person's hurt, and our fear of letting go of something we "know" is right. In compromise, each must be willing to give, knowing that the solution may not be what we each want, but, it can be a *workable* solution. We can put the solution to the test for the sake of the whole; namely, our church. The church organization can then serve the church, rather than catering to individuals within the organization.

I have used the phrase "church organization" rather than church, as the genuine live church will not die—the organization can. Is this what we want? Perhaps it is. The choice is ours.

*Martha King
DeLand, Florida*

Thanks, Los Angeles!

Dear Editor:

It became apparent last spring when we had more rain than usual in San Diego, that if we wanted to keep our building usable, something had to be done about the roof. Minor patching had been done for years, but that was obviously no longer adequate.

When we made the major decision to put on a new roof, the call went out to members and various friends that we could use some monetary help.

The response was generous and amazing, particularly from our Los Angeles Society. They gave a check for \$5,000 towards the cause, and individuals chipped in with their own private contributions. It is so good to know that our sister church is so willing to help.

Thanks, Los Angeles.

*Annella Smith, Secretary
Swedenborgian Church of San Diego*

San Diego Church

(Continued from page 140)

split rail fence across the front of the property has been completed and a gate has been installed at the back of the property.

Our advertising or public relations budget is small—our whole operations budget is small—so we mostly use the "freebie" publications in the area to do our advertising when we want to place an ad, and the local newspapers have been consistently cooperative in publishing short articles about our coming events.

To cope with the rising operational expenses of the times, we share our facilities. Five different groups conduct worship services in the sanctuary during the week, and an acting class meets in our parish hall three nights a week. The regular contributions from these groups enable us to stay in the black and we also feel that we are offering a community service. All of these groups are small and cannot afford a facility of their own, but they really do feel that our church is their church and treat it accordingly.

For the past two years our rummage sales have proved quite profitable. Anything left over is given to a local charitable organization. Several concerts were given in our sanctuary recently and we hope to have more of these in the future.

While our membership doesn't seem to grow—we gain one and lose one—we feel that we are growing in our community service and in our love and concern for each other, and we have great hopes for our future.

Annella Smith is secretary of the San Diego Swedenborgian Church and the wife of lay leader Eldon Smith.

Alcohol and Drug Abuse Committee

The Council of Ministers has appointed a subcommittee to address alcohol and drug abuse problems in our church. The committee grew out of discussions among some of the trained alcohol and drug abuse counselors in the denomination—Patte LeVan, Betsy (Leddingham) Coffman, and Wilma Wake. They felt that such a subcommittee could address some of the following issues:

- Helping convention planners organize recreational events that do not emphasize alcoholic drinks and helping them to have local meeting lists available for those who wish to attend Alcoholics Anonymous, Al-Anon, Overeaters Anonymous, or similar groups while at convention.
- Making literature and resources available to parishes for educational programs.
- Offering help and resources to church members who may feel they or someone they know has an addiction problem.

The subcommittee will have a primarily educational function, and after becoming established may be transferred to the Education Support Unit.

The subcommittee consists of Patte LeVan (chair), Wilma Wake, and Betsy (Leddingham) Coffman. The subcommittee hopes to offer assistance to next year's convention planning group in terms of providing services for those in recovery from addictions.

Commencements

Baptism

Beckham—Alexander Crow Beckham, infant son of Don Beckham and Nancy Petrisko, was baptized into the Christian faith August 2, 1992, at the San Francisco church, San Francisco, California, the Rev. Dr. James F. Lawrence officiating.

Leach—Logan May Leach, daughter of Melissa Leach, was baptized into the Christian faith August 16, 1992, at the Church of the New Jerusalem, Fryeburg, Maine, the Rev. Dr. Gardiner Perry officiating.

Moran—Isaiah Andrew Moran, son of John and Susan Moran, was baptized into the Christian faith July 12, 1992, at the Church of the New Jerusalem, Fryeburg, Maine, the Rev. Dr. Gardiner Perry officiating.

Confirmation

McElroy—Beverly (Mrs. James) McElroy was confirmed into the life of the Swedenborgian Church July 26, 1992, at the Church of the New Jerusalem, Fryeburg, Maine, the Rev. Dr. Gardiner Perry officiating.

Marriage

Reed and Angevine—Lori Ann Reed and Brent Curtis Angevine were united in marriage August 8, 1992, at the Church of the New Jerusalem, Fryeburg, Maine, the Rev. Dr. Gardiner Perry officiating.

Waters and Lundberg—Julia Waters and John Lundberg, son of Merle and Pat Lundberg, were united in marriage August 1, 1992 in Nicasio, California, the Rev. Dr. James F. Lawrence officiating.

Dunham and Ela—Robyn Leigh Dunham and Allen Richard Ela were united in marriage July 11, 1992 at the Church of the New Jerusalem, Fryeburg, Maine, the Rev. Dr. Gardiner Perry officiating.

Deaths

Charles—Albert C. Charles entered the spiritual world June 30, 1992. Resurrection services were conducted at Wood Funeral Home on July 5, 1992, the Rev. Dr. Gardiner Perry officiating.

Miller—Lois Miller, 71, of Kalama, Washington, entered the spiritual world July 16, 1992. Lois was a long-time member of the San Diego Swedenborgian Church, and the daughter of the Rev. Harold and Alice Gustafson. A memorial service was conducted August 14 near Klamath Falls, Oregon, Eldon Smith officiating. She is survived by her husband, Jack Miller, a daughter and two sons.

Change of Address (again)

Karen Duffey
Box 46
Center Conway, NH 03813

On Humility

A recent computer search by a prominent university determined Emanuel Swedenborg to be one of the three greatest geniuses in history. He exhibited extreme pride in his earlier years in search of scientific truths. However, after Swedenborg was convinced he was called by the Lord, he became a man of utmost humility, calling himself only "a servant of the Lord."

Swedenborg Foundation Appoints New Executive Director



Dr. David B. Eller

Dr. David B. Eller has been appointed new Executive Director of the Swedenborg Foundation, effective September 1, 1992. A native of Roanoke, Virginia,

Eller has held research, editorial and management positions in publishing for over 18 years. Since 1988 he has been Senior Editor for Social Studies with the Glencoe Division of the Macmillan/McGraw-Hill School Publishing Company. His responsibilities have included development, project management, and content editing of textbooks and teacher support materials in American history, American government, state histories, and economics.

As director, Dr. Eller will be the chief operating officer of the Swedenborg Foundation. Since its incorporation as a nonprofit organization in 1849, the Foundation has been the primary U.S. publisher and distributor of books by Emanuel Swe-

denborg, the eighteenth-century Swedish scientist, mystic, and theological writer. The Foundation also publishes books, videos and other materials about Swedenborg and his ideas, a triannual journal, *Chrysalis*, and a triannual newsletter, *Logos*. In addition, the Foundation sponsors colloquia, research, and operates a bookstore in Manhattan. In April 1992, the Board of Directors voted to relocate the Foundation offices from New York City to West Chester, Pennsylvania.

Prior to his work with MacMillan, Dr. Eller was Editorial Director for Brethren Press in Elgin, Illinois, a publisher of church resources, peace studies, devotional, and general interest religious books. Eller began his career in publishing in 1971 with the Scripps-Howard media organization in Cincinnati. Between 1976 and 1984 he was professor of history at Bluffton College, a Mennonite-related college in northwest Ohio. While on the faculty he was awarded fellowships from the Smithsonian Institution, the Newberry Library, and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Dr. Eller holds degrees from the University of La Verne in California and Bethany Theological Seminary in

Oak Brook, Illinois. His doctorate in American history is from Miami University, Oxford, Ohio. He was ordained to the ministry in the Church of the Brethren in 1978 and has served on various denominational boards and committees. Eller's writings on Protestant religious dissent and the American frontier have appeared in *The Brethren Encyclopedia*, *The Dictionary of Christianity in America*, *the Old Northwest*, *the Illinois Historical Journal*, and the *Indiana Magazine of History*. He is also editor of *Servants of the Word*, a collection of essays on ministry in the Free Church tradition.

Dr. Eller and his wife Barbara have moved to West Chester, Pennsylvania, from their home in Westerville, Ohio. The Ellers have three children: Laura, Timothy and Anna.

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.

**The Swedenborgian Church
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