

# THE MESSENGER

Monthly Publication, Swedenborgian Church of North America

November 1994

At the 1993 annual convention of Swedenborgian Churches, an issue was raised from the floor that received wide support — that our denomination should establish its priorities for budgeting, since requests for funding exceed current income.

President Edwin Capon appointed an ad hoc committee to conduct a survey on several issues raised at the 1993 convention.

The purpose of the survey was to provide the church with members' priorities for program funding. Our first effort in this process provides us with groupings of those programs felt to be highly important for funding and those that have priority among related programs, as well as feedback on other issues, such as adoption of a deficit spending policy, the interval between conventions, etc. Preliminary results of church member responses were presented during the 1994 annual convention in Washington, D.C.

The survey was mailed to 1,200 recipients of *The Messenger* during the week of March 20, at a cost of approximately \$970. A total of 271 completed surveys were returned, for a total response of 22.5%. These results are, plus or minus 10%, representative of the entire church population at the 90% confidence level.

Results are presented under the original survey statements. Our hope is that through dialogue and thoughtful consideration, we will develop additional questions or statements that will further illuminate our future plans for program funding and fund raising.

## A. DEMOGRAPHICS:

Of the 271 respondents to the survey, 199, or 73.4% identified

## Findings of the 1993/94 Survey of Messenger Readers



themselves as members of the denomination and 12.5% of those responding identified themselves as independent readers of Swedenborg. Most of those remaining were members of other denominations, employees of independent Swedenborgian bodies or students at SSR.

Thirty-seven per cent of response from members was from individuals aged 50 years or less, and 63% from individuals of 51+ years. None of the members under 20 years of age returned a survey. This is likely due to the fact that only one survey was mailed to each household, except ministers' households, to which the Central Office mailed two copies. Very few requests for additional copies were received. As a result, *the majority of the response reflects the opinion of one member per household.*

A large majority of respondents reported being involved with the Swedenborgian Church for more than ten years, with 61.7% reporting twenty or more years of involvement. The gender ratio for member respondents is 63.6% female, 36.4% male. We cannot use the gender and age results to address how representative the sample is of the church population since no statistics exist on the age and gender distribution of the church.

## B. PROGRAM VALUATION

Thirty-three programs were rated by respondents in terms of their importance for funding by the denomina-

tion, from very high importance to very low. An option to indicate that the program funding was a concern of regional associations, and a "no opinion" option were also provided.

Breaking the member rating into three groups, of members 50 years or young-

er, members 51+ years of age, and non-members:

- All three groups have the following seven programs in their "Top 10": programs for church youth, salary funds for ministers starting new churches, nationwide publicity, religious education materials, *The Messenger*, assistance to children attending camps, and the ministers' pension fund.
- Older members (51+ years) rated ministers' travel expense to convention, support to book rooms, and home devotional periodicals higher in relation to the other programs, than did members 50 years or younger.
- Younger members and non-members rated the importance of a church growth specialist more highly than did older members, relative to the other programs.
- Younger members rated the importance of training for constituent bodies more highly than did older members.
- Younger members rated HIV ministries to be of higher importance than did older members and non-members. For younger members, HIV ministries does not fall in the "Least 10" list.

See Table 1 for the comparison of ratings for each program, and the percentage of members rating it to be of very high/high importance for funding.

(Table on page 131 / (Text cont.'d on page 132)

## Reopening Opportunities

In last month's *Messenger* we spoke about a rather remarkable book called *The Celestine Prophecy*, a spiritual adventure and guidebook that lends itself well to group study and is inspiring such groups all over the country. As I am moved to re-read and work with each of the nine *Insights* presented, I notice an immediate connection with whatever is rising to the surface in my life on a day-to-day basis.

The eighth *Insight* discusses how humans will eventually relate to each other. The premise being that we are all here to help each other in our spiritual evolution, there are, it says, no chance encounters. The people who cross our paths always have a message for us, and we have a message for them, thus it is important to slow down our interactions and consciously appreciate the beauty of the person, focusing on them until their shape and features begin to have more presence. This act of loving attention attracts the positive energy that brings about feelings of safety and peace, creating an atmosphere that allows the message to come forth—allows us, and them, to move on, enhanced and strengthened. If we have an encounter with someone who crosses our path and we *don't* see a message, it doesn't mean there wasn't a message; it means we somehow missed it. Of course, the more tightly we have become bound up in our day-to-day dramas with their consequent anxieties, judgments and control issues, the more we are going to miss what is actually put before us for our real nourishment.

The elder of my grown daughters wrote me a question recently, asking me what I would have done differently if I'd had, when they were growing up, the knowledge I have now of family dynamics and communication. What a complex question. Where do you begin? Of course, *everything* would have been done differently, wouldn't it—decisions and acts and thoughts and feelings and attitudes that caused a great deal of pain? On the other hand, wasn't I supposed to work through all that stuff and gain knowledge and understanding a little at a time? But looking back, there *were* those golden moments of grace in the soap opera, when things were slowed down, stilled, and the love that is always waiting to show itself came into awareness and was the dominant reality. Perhaps a simple answer after all: I would know that we all have the power to create more of these moments, these moments are what life is supposed to be composed of, and they can be created in any circumstance. And the pain has its place, not to be avoided, but to be put in perspective as a deepening influence rather than an overwhelming one. Ah, and then the trick would have been, once the insight was gained, to operate out of that understanding more often than not.

That eighth *Insight* brings a fascinating challenge to the Thanksgiving season, doesn't it? To look again at the people who are presently in our lives, with new excitement and expectation? Do they have a message for us that we may have missed because they have become dulled, tarnished, ordinary and invisible in our lives, as our drama made us blind to their splendor? Can we give them the cherishing and gratitude that will energize them and reopen the opportunity for those real messages to come through? And what of the new people, circumstances, and opportunities coming into our lives, often disguised as difficulties, roadblocks, disasters, irritations, and persons not worth our time? Might it not make our lives more interesting and fulfilling if we can thank them ahead of time, praise God for whatever is coming our way, and let our gratitude energize the atmosphere so that we won't be blind and deaf to what they're bringing us and what we can give to them?

—Patte LeVan

## The Messenger

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Typesetting & Layout

Linda Mahler

Town & Country Press

Plymouth, IN

Patte LeVan, Editor

### Editorial Address:

The Messenger

P.O. Box 985

Julian, CA 92036

(619) 765-2915, Phone FAX (619) 765-0218

### Business & Subscription Address:

Central Office

48 Sargent Street

Newton, MA 02158

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## Thanksgiving 1994



### A Time to Reflect on Our Blessings

(See poem, page 135)

## Results of Survey — Program Funding Priorities

**Table 1**

<i>Program statement as it appeared in the survey</i>	<i>Importance Rank by age group</i>			<i>% of Group Rating of Very High or High Importance for Funding</i>		
	<i>20-50 years of age</i>	<i>51+ years of age</i>	<i>Non-Mem- bers</i>	<i>20-50 years of age</i>	<i>51+ years of age</i>	<i>Non-Mem- bers</i>
Financial support to programs for church youth.	1	5	6	78.1%	62.7%	59.5%
Providing salary funds for ministers starting new parishes in No. America, in locations where no established church exists.	2	2	4	74%	66.7%	62%
Development of greater nationwide publicity for our denomination.	3	7	3	67%	56.3%	62%
Funds to assist children in attending our camp and retreat programs.	4	4	7	67.1%	63.5%	58.2%
Development of religious education materials for church use.	5	6	2	63%	61.1%	64.6%
Publication of the church magazine, THE MESSENGER.	6	1	1	63%	67.5%	64.5%
Funds for the ministers' pension fund.	7	3	5	63%	65.1%	60.8%
Funding for the Council for Admissions to the Ministry to supervise candidates for ordination.	8	14	14	57.5%	40.5%	43%
Loans for building construction or repair of local churches.	9	16	17	52.1%	36.5%	38%
Church growth specialist to train church congregations.	10	21	15	50.7%	33.3%	40.5%
Financial subsidy to local churches to cover local operating expenses.	11	15	23	49.3%	38.1%	32.9%
Regular surveys of program effectiveness and resource usage.	12	23	18	49.3%	32.5%	38%
Continuing education for ministers.	13	12	8	47.9%	42.9%	49.4%
Funding for youth publications, such as CLEAR BLUE SKY.	14	13	10	47.9%	42.9%	45.6%
Financial & other resource training to aid Convention's constituent bodies in the management of their resources.	15	26	20	46.6%	28.6%	36.7%
Representation on Nat'l Council of Churches.	16	19	16	42.5%	34.9%	38%
Community-building skills training for churches.	17	18	12	42.5%	34.9%	43%
Ministers' travel expenses to attend annual convention.	18	8	11	45.2%	50%	45.6%
Funding for J. Appleseed publishing programs.	19	11	13	41.1%	43.7%	43%
Funds to support book rooms.	20	10	9	41.1%	44.4%	46.8%
Funds to support HIV ministries.	21	30	31	39.7%	16.7%	21.5%
Publication of home devotional guides, e.g. Our Daily Bread.	22	9	19	34.2%	45.2%	36.7%
Funds to preserve existing church buildings or property that would otherwise be converted to other use due to inadequate local funds to maintain them.	23	27	25	34.2%	26.2%	29.1%
Loans for building or repair of church camps/retreat centers.	24	22	22	34.2%	32.5%	34.2%
Audio-Visual lending library for use for local churches.	25	20	24	34.2%	34.9%	29.1%
Development of alternative forms of worship.	26	29	26	31.5%	19.8%	27.8%
Loans for building construction of new churches.	27	28	28	31.5%	24.6%	25.3%
Establish and maintain a church computer network.	28	25	27	28.8%	30.2%	27.8%
Travel expenses for representatives attending Gen. Convention board and committee meetings.	29	17	29	27.4%	36.5%	24.1%
Funds to distribute an annual Convention JOURNAL to churches and individuals.	30	24	21	27.4%	31.7%	35.4%
Funds for missionary efforts outside of North America.	31	33	30	17.8%	11.9%	21.5%
Funding participation in inter-faith activities at local and regional level.	32	31	32	15.1%	14.3%	19%
Funds for development of liturgical music.	33	32	33	15.1%	11.9%	15.2%
<b>SAMPLE SIZE OF THESE THREE GROUPS:</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>79</b>			

## C. HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PROGRAM PRIORITY RANKING SECTION

(From front cover)

In addition to the valuation section, a second set of questions presented 60 church programs in category groupings, to be ranked within their category. The programs were grouped in relation to seven key topics: development of religious communities, publications, education, excellence of quality, religious ecumenism and social awareness, resource management, and policies and procedures for internal management. The ranking section did not emphasize *funding*, but rather a more general "importance to our denomination."

**Ranking of Church Growth: Development of Religious Communities programs:** Most striking in the ranking, but not surprising, is the consensus that *linking Swedenborg's theology to life* is the most important of the 10 programs in the set.

**Ranking of publishing-related programs:** Among publishing activities, translating Swedenborg into easy-to-read language, and *The Messenger*, are the most important among this set of six publishing-related programs.

**Ranking of education-related programs:** Development of Sunday school materials and support to youth retreats stand out as having the most consensus of their importance to the denomination. In general, older members seem to place greater priority on education *materials*, as opposed to *training programs*.

**Ranking of Religious Ecumenism and Social Awareness programs:** Among these five programs, maintaining involvement in social issues ranks #1. None of the five programs exhibits strong consensus.

**Ranking of policies & procedure-related programs:** Maintaining a central denominational office had the highest priority. The annual convention was described in its current format, as a rotating annual one... it ranked second of 11 items, with a high consensus of importance.

**Ranking of excellence of quality programs:** Continuing education for ministers and Committee for Admission to the Ministry show a consensus as the most important of the five programs.

**Ranking of Resource Management programs:** Two items listed show more of a consensus of importance than do the others: Improving communication of resources to membership ranked #1. Aiding churches in managing resources ranked #2.

**Ranking of key topics:** "Church growth: facilitating development of religious communities" ranked #1 among the five key topics surveyed: Church growth, publications, education, excellence of quality, and religious ecumenism.

## D. DEFICIT SPENDING POLICY

*Question: "In your opinion, should General Convention spend only current income on programs, or a combination of interest and principal, if total program expenses exceed current income"?*

53.4% of our members feel only income should be used to cover program expenses, and 29% felt we should spend a combination of interest and principal. Many qualified the latter choice with a "when necessary" comment, or expressed that use of principal should be related to church growth programs. A frequent written-in comment by those choosing income and principal suggested using the gain on

principal, over a 3-4 year average, in years when income was lower than planned.

## E. MOST-IMPORTANT ACTION/PROGRAM FOR 1995

*What is the one action or program, above all others, that you'd like to see General Convention do or begin in 1995?*

Programs for youth, a focus on church growth, Temenos, and more Stonehouse-type of programs were most frequently mentioned, out of a total of 57 different programs or actions recommended for focus next year—that's a different priority from every 3.3 members who responded.

In an effort to discern differences in opinion between newer and longtime members, the written comments to this question were sorted into two groups: by individuals reporting that they had been involved for 20 or more years, and those involved less than 20 years.

Top action or program for '95, by years of involvement — most frequently mentioned	<20 yrs	20+ yrs	Tot
Focus on church growth	5	5	10
Programs for youth	3	6	9
Develop Temenos	1	6	7
More publicity	5	2	7
More Stonehouse-type bookrooms	2	4	6
Sell Temenos	1	4	5

## F. AID TO LOCAL SOCIETIES

In response to the question *Should General Convention use more or less of its available income to aid local churches and societies to pay their ministers?*, 50.8% of members felt that the denomination should use about the same level that it does now, 27% of members felt more money should be spent to aid local churches in providing salaries to their ministers, 15.7% felt less money should be spent and 6.6% had no opinion with regard to this ques-

tion. This result is consistent with its ranking in the "Church growth: development of religious communities" section, where it was ranked #2 of 10 related items, and in the program valuation section, where it received a 44.7% "very high/high" importance for funding.

## G. RESULTS OF OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE QUESTIONS

### *The Messenger*

*What frequency of publication would you prefer?* 50.8% of all responders would prefer receiving *The Messenger* on a monthly basis, as it is now: 50.5% of members and 53.2% of non-members. Twenty-eight percent of members were interested in receiving it every other month.

*What price would your household be willing to pay for a subscription?* A price in the range of \$11-15 appears to be acceptable to about 76% of members and 75% of non-members, and too high for the balance. Forty-seven percent of members and 41.8% of non-members would be willing to pay a subscription price between \$11 and \$15, and 26.9% of members and 33% of non-members would pay more than \$15 per year.

(The 1992 cost of *The Messenger* was approximately \$30 per subscription, including editorial costs. *The Messenger* is partially funded by a restricted-use fund.)

Many positive, unsolicited comments about the importance of *The Messenger*, especially to "isolated members" were received.

### *Convention Schedule*

*Do you feel that General Convention should continue to*

*hold a yearly convention?* Forty-two percent of the members felt the yearly convention should be changed to a bi-annual one, while 36.5% would prefer an annual convention, indicating a split in interest between a biannual cycle and the current annual cycle, when the survey error factor is taken into consideration.

### *Administrative Expense of General Convention*

In response to the question *Should General Convention use more or less of its available income for administration?*, 49.7% of members felt less should be spent, 39.3% felt the same level should be spent, 8.8% had no opinion, and 2.2% felt more should be spent.

## H. PARTICIPATION IN GENERAL CONVENTION'S ANNUAL FUND

*Do you usually contribute to General Convention's Annual Appeal fundraising effort?* More respondents did not contribute to General Convention fundraising than those that did. 57.4% of the members did not contribute; while 42.6% of the members and 38% of non-members report that they do contribute.

*Reasons Why Not:* Most members (47%) focused their giving to their local churches, 23.9% said they cannot afford to contribute, 8.9% of non-members reported not receiving a mailing.

## I. SUMMARY OF END-OF-SURVEY COMMENTS

Written comments found on the back of the surveys covered many areas of concern. Some individuals gave constructive comments on improvements for future surveys, some addressed a need to refocus on mission,

some contributed comments regarding management and financial priorities, including Temenos. Many comments praised or made suggestions for programs and publications, and some seemed glad to have had an opportunity to express an opinion, especially among isolated members. Limitations of space prevent us from publishing all of the comments. (Refer to the June, 1994 *Messenger* for comments in addition to those found in here).

## J. IMPLICATIONS OF SURVEY FINDINGS

### *Youth Programs*

1. Financial support to youth programs was rated in the top six programs for funding, with members and non-members. The survey demographic questions did not include a question regarding whether there were children under 18 years in the household, or an estimate of youth population of the member's church, so we cannot compare the importance of youth programs between families with children, and families without, or churches with few children and churches with many.

It is recommended that General Council review the existing youth-related programs, and the proportion of funding provided for this purpose. Since no *specific* programs were praised in the comment sections, it may be advisable to query both our professionals and members on the nature of programs they find effective for the youth of the church, and to develop a plan to expand and improve programs for the church youth.

### *New Societies*

2. Funding for launching new societies was rated in the top four programs for funding among members and non-members, and has implications

(continued on page 134)

(Continued from page 133)  
for the Swedenborg School of Religion. It is recommended that a program for testing launches of new societies be developed, as a cooperative project between General Convention and SSR.

### The Messenger

3. *The Messenger* was rated in the top six programs for funding among members and non-members, and received many positive write-in comments (note that *The Messenger's* subscriber list was used for the survey). The information on subscription price suggests that the denomination could promote a donation program of \$11 or more (sliding scale—as for non-profit organizations, museums, etc.). The funds raised would provide opportunity to improve *The Messenger*, beyond funding available from the restricted fund, and would provide a hedge against future postal increases, paper costs, etc. It is recommended that the monthly schedule remain as it is.

Converting to a paid subscription basis would be accompanied with new policy and procedure issues, such as how many efforts are made to renew subscriptions, whether subscriptions are cut off for non-payment, and when, etc. Efforts to collect and renew subscriptions will add to costs, although involvement at the parish level may reduce the cost of these logistics, e.g. if churches coordinated subscriptions for their members.

Given the importance of the development of religious materials as indicated by the results here, we may have an opportunity to use funds generated by *The Messenger* subscriptions to expand use of *The Messenger* to distribute education materials for adult

and Sunday school usage.  
**Aiding Camp Attendance**

4. Aiding children to attend camps was also rated in the top four programs for funding, among members. Planning funding for camp programs will require projections of future demand. It is recommended that camp directors and churches cooperate in creating a plan to develop the camp program further. Usage of facilities not owned by regional associations or churches is one idea to expand camp programs into regions where a church-owned facility isn't available.

### Nationwide publicity

5. Nationwide publicity was rated in the top seven programs for funding by members and non-members. Write-in comments encouraged a nationwide advertising program for titles such as *Heaven and Hell*. While a concern about the consistency of experience that would greet visitors to the Swedenborgian communities across North America was expressed, there appears to be a strong church-wide interest in raising the level of awareness of Swedenborg's theology. Our local churches, especially those in urban areas, may not have the resources to maintain a presence in their local media. The recommendation is that we explore opportunities, in conjunction with the Swedenborg Foundation, to increase the public exposure to our theology.

### Changing the convention

6. Changing the convention schedule from an annual event to a bi-annual event would have organizational implications for elections, and could impact constituent bodies, e.g. the Sunday School Association annual meeting, and SSR's annual graduation ceremony.

Given the split in opinion found through the survey, further exploration of the business needs of the institution and its constituent bodies, and the needs of the members, is recommended before changing the current convention interval.

### Easy To Read Translations

7. The high rank for easy-to-read translations of Swedenborg within the set of publishing programs suggests that General Convention should explore means to accelerate publication of updated translations, working with J. Appleseed and the Foundation.

### Continuing Education

8. Continuing education for ministers received a high rating (in the top 13 programs for funding.) It is recommended that G.C. work with SSR in developing a catalogue of potential programs for discussion with the Council of Ministers.

### Annual Appeal

9. For the Annual Appeal, the survey suggests that we may not be reaching all members, since 8% reported that they didn't receive a mailing. (Of course, they may be wrong about this, or, it may represent new members who aren't receiving *The Messenger* yet). The results of this survey certainly suggest targeted fund drives for the Appeal that are more likely to gain support, such as youth programs, *The Messenger*, funding for new societies, etc. It is recommended that General Council review the comments related to the Annual Appeal, and develop a plan to improve communications to the membership on our current use of funds.

(See Survey Comments on next page)

## Survey comments:

(See June 1994 *Messenger* for first sample comments)

•  
"As Dr. Van Dusen and Dr. John Hitchcock point out: the real members of the real New Church are the millions of spiritual seekers beyond our walls. We need to become spiritual seekers ourselves, to question and challenge Swedenborg's writings and find new ways of using them in contemporary terms, so that as individuals we become beacons."

•  
"On preserving churches: Design a local parish more like *Temenos* or the book room that draws people. Use the church for that purpose or purchase a more economical building for innovative programs."

•  
"For many years after I joined the Church, General Convention was a vibrant, forward-looking organization. Its leaders—some of whom were the theological "greats" we now revere—were well ground-

ed in New Church theology; and they reflected this in their work and in their writings. They made use of an excellent correspondence course (which I took); they also placed small ads in magazines (for example, advertising Heaven and Hell); if it hadn't been for such an ad, I never would have known anything about Swedenborg at all."

•  
"I hope that the results . . . will be used only as a beginning of a process of prioritization. Many of the programs/policies are inter-related, and must move forward together."

•  
"I feel strongly that money for expansion of any church building should come from within the need or demand first, then the funds will come. Do not hand out money on a silver platter. It is appreciated more if the congregation works together towards an end!"

*The Ad Hoc Survey Committee thanks all those who participated by returning their surveys!*

Survey Committee: Rev. Eric Hoffman, Karen Feil, Rev. Dr. George Dole, Rev. Dr. Wilma Wake, Norris Dale, with assistance from Cathy Laakko and Laura Vertz, research consultant. All labor related to the survey, including consultant's time, was donated.

Written dialogue on the survey is encouraged. We have more material than can be easily digested in one article.

If you have questions on the survey, forward them to *The Messenger*. Additional cross-tabulations can be generated, if you'd like a piece of information you don't find for your discussions.

### Editor's Note:

The survey summary as originally submitted with 11 bar graphs was too long to publish in *The Messenger*. Since the text states what the bar graphs illustrated, we omitted them. Those readers who wish to see the statistical analysis broken out in bar graphs may request a copy of the original summary by writing to: Karen Feil, 1560 N. Sandburg Terrace, Apt. 2012, Chicago, IL 60610. Please include \$1.00 for postage and handling.

## "Our Daily Bread" A Thanksgiving Meditation

"Our daily bread."  
A loaf, a slice, a roll?  
Some form of flour  
Leavened and baked,  
Delicious, life sustaining indeed!  
Yet how little, how confining  
How small this makes my God!

My daily bread is all the  
Love and care I meet each day.  
It is in the sky and clouds,  
The earth: sustaining flowers,  
Trees, animals and birds.

My daily bread is my spouse.  
It is my children and grandchildren  
And all the ways they feed  
And enrich my life.  
My daily bread is in  
The myriad ways my life is touched.

How completely God's hand  
Has filled my life  
With every manner of food  
Beyond any imagination and wish!

—David P. Johnson



# Living as People of the Book

Part 3 of a 3-part panel presentation on the theme of Convention '94 delivered at Marymount University, Arlington, Virginia, July 7, 1994.



*Dorothea Harvey*

I have spent a large part of my life teaching. I have taught the Old Testament and the New Testament at least once a year to many different groups of students. I have dealt with the Torah which says that "you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might," (Dt 6:4) and with the great prophets who say that God is not interested in our performing rituals in churches, but in our bringing positive justice into the whole of our dealings with others in the community in which we live, that we not just do good, but "love good," (Am 5:15) not just act with mercy, but "love mercy," and "walk humbly with" our God. (Mic 6:8) The prophets ask me to love the good, my neighbor's, my enemy's, just as much as my own.

I have taught the Psalms which speak to us of the faith to call on God in all the times of our lives, times of hurt, of fear, of joy, of guilt, of thanksgiving, or of special celebrations. I have taught Job with its wonderful statement of the faith to question God about anything, to the limit of any of our critical thinking, to trust God to be there in

response. I have taught the New Testament, the encounter with the Divine here, living in this world, in an actual human life, present with us.

I tend to teach all this with as much emphasis and conviction as I can. Can you imagine what this has done to my sense of guilt about living what I teach? That is the position from which I come in dealing with the subject: Living as People of the Book. We are not talking about a belief about, a "do you believe that" something is there, or a keeping of one particular commandment only. We are talking about living as people of the Book.

Is it possible to live as a person of the Book?

Yes, I believe it is. Dick Baxter was the one who gave us our theme. He said that he responded in that hospital room to a person who told him what he, in his church, took to be the one decisive command of the Lord. Dick responded that in our church we turn to the whole Bible. For me, that means turning to the history of an actual people, in an actual period of history, in an actual ancient culture, who came to the belief in one God who is Goodness itself, who does not punish, who is concerned for the salvation of all humankind, of all creation. They were a struggling people, survivors, beginning as migrants, going through basic survival issues, then also living through harder issues of dealing with having power and wealth in the world, and coming to the faith in one God.

Living as people of the whole Bible does not mean going only

to one example from one period of history. Do you remember Lamech in Genesis? The poem that celebrates him is there to celebrate him as a great, not an ordinary man, a hero.

Lamech said to his wives:  
"Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;  
you wives of Lamech, hearken to what I say:  
I have slain a man for wounding me,  
a young man for striking me.  
If Cain is avenged sevenfold,  
truly Lamech seventy-sevenfold."

Gen. 4:23-24

What stage of faith would you say that is? The two year old? The three year old? That stage is in all of us: my greatness related to my power to hit back, to show that I can do it. The beginnings are part of the story.

It does not mean going to one particular rule or role model from one period of history. When God said to Hosea to go and love a woman, the prophet says that he did. "So I bought her for fifteen shekels of silver" and other items. (Hos. 3:2) This does not mean that the Bible teaches men to treat women as property. The history does not stop there. It goes on to the statement of relationship of man to woman, person to person, instead of owner or master to possession. (Hos 2:16).

As I study the Bible, I see an actual people coming to the awareness of God, in touch with the Divine. I see it happening, the faith coming into existence that I believe was lived in this world in the life of Jesus. To me it means coming alive to the reality of process in my life. All those stages are still there in spots in my emotional, psychological, spiritual being. They are not exterminated. But, thank God, they are not the end

*(continued on page 138)*

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# Where are All the People?

## Swedenborg and NASA

Steve Koke

This has been the classic Swedenborgian puzzle. As a friend of mine once put it, "Where are all the people?" Swedenborg tells us in his small book *Earths in the Universe* (EU) that all stars have planets, and all planets, and even moons, are inhabited. He describes the people who live on the planets in our solar system, but modern exploration has drawn a complete blank. Not only are the other planets uninhabited, they were, for the most part, never able to support life.

Swedenborgians have tried to defend the book, but it is now the better part of valor just to recognize that the contrary evidence is truly overwhelming. What appears in the popular media is only the tip of the iceberg. If one looks at the more technical and specialized publications, the case for our aloneness is virtually complete.

What is now called for is an understanding of how he arrived at his conclusions. This is a somewhat sketchy summary of ideas from an article I wrote for *Studia Swedenborgiana*.\*

*Earths in the Universe* (an extract from the last volumes of his *Arcana Coelestia*), was published during a very optimistic time. By the end of the preceding century, a long debate about life on other worlds had finally been settled for most people in favor of life everywhere. In fact the literature of the time shows that Swedenborg's arguments for life on every planet are restatements of these old arguments, some of which went back a century or more. He told us that all planets are inhabited, but only on the compelling force of those old arguments, it would seem, not revelation. (n. 3).

Although it seems that EU is now in great difficulty, Swedenborg's only irreducible disagreement with modern science is his association of a particular planet with a given group of spirits. If Mars, for example, turns out not to be the home of his Martians (because not the home of anyone), then space scientists like those with NASA disagree with him about the choice of Mars for these people, not necessarily about anything else.

That simplifies our problem enormously. It tells us that we may be able to drive a wedge into it by trying only to understand how Swedenborg would identify the home planet of a particular people.

Misidentifying a home planet doesn't actually affect his thesis. The fact that certain spirits are from Mars, say, doesn't actually support anything else in his thinking; he doesn't make anything depend on it. He may even have tried to hedge his

bets this way, for there are some signs of hesitation in his work. We can just as readily think of his Martians as if they were from some other solar system, and that is probably the right thing to do.

Planets don't appear in the spiritual world, and the identities of home planets must therefore be inferred. In order to make the proper inferences, Swedenborg had to lean to an unusual degree on the existing astronomy. It was like a consultant brought in for help on a special project, and nowhere else in his books does he lean so heavily on another discipline.

He needed the current astronomy to tell him what forms in space would be analogous to forms and arrangements he had found in the spiritual world. For only correspondences between people and their planet could lead him from one to the other. Finding suggestive analogies was a way of making at least a close approach to the correct answer.

He had discovered that everyone from a planet is gathered in a huge area we will call a *planetary region*. Everyone from a planet shares the same general type of intelligence, or *genius*, and the spiritual world puts everyone of a similar kind together. Our planetary region was, in fact, part of a local group of planetary regions (n. 128). But that was as far as Swedenborg could go without some input from astronomy.

Astronomy could suggest only one form that could be analogous to that local group—a solar system. It was our solar system, obviously, since our planetary region was part of this local group. Consequently, the other planetary regions had to be connected with the other planets of our solar system. That left specific planets to be identified, and they were apparently tied down by more analogous reasoning linking the character types of various people with the relative positions of planets near or far from the sun.

The former inhabitants themselves didn't know where they came from. It was an irony of the problem that no other planet had developed the sciences, including astronomy. Only Earth had enough information about space to pursue this kind of inquiry.

The angels sometimes identified home planets for Swedenborg. But how much did they know?

Swedenborg tells us in a number of places that angels don't think in natural terms (e.g., *Arcana Coelestia* n. 1876). In the heavens, thought concentrates on spiritual realities, not natural or "scientific" ones. The ability to think about

(continued on page 138)

He had  
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meaning  
into the  
scientific  
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his time.

## Living as People of the Book — Harvey

(Continued from page 136)

point. They are part of a process of growth, of coming alive to new levels of faith.

I can sense the touch of God in my life. I don't take the Bible as a series of magical announcements about faith. It is the history of a people coming alive to its own real faith. If it can happen to Lamech, it can happen to me too. Swedenborg sees revelation happening in the Bible not in terms of content statements imposed on readers, but as happening in correspondences, in symbols to which I have to respond as I respond to a poem which touches me in my life experience, that brings me to life in a new way.

Jim Lawrence spoke of the Bible as "disappearing" from modern society's awareness. But then he said in the end that for him, it has not disappeared, that when he reads it something happens in him to bring him to a new level of awareness.\* Swedenborg, when reading the Bible, typically would find himself in heaven.

And so I think that living as people of the Book means coming alive to a power to touch the deepest levels of my being. It means taking some time every day to read it, to be in touch with it, to let the power of its symbols touch me. It means coming alive to the Spirit of the God who is creating me. It means finding that there is a power of the Spirit present in me, able to respond to God's creation, knowing myself as part of a process of coming alive.

*The Rev. Dr. Dorothea Harvey is a part-time professor at the Swedenborg School of Religion, is on the Council of Ministers Executive Committee and is general pastor of the Massachusetts Association. She lives in Gloucester, Mass.*

\* "Do We Want to be the People of the Book?" October 1994 *Messenger*.

## Swedenborg and NASA

(Continued from page 137)

natural things is even suppressed, hard to get to after death. That tells us that the angels may well rely on us for any natural information, and that they will only reinterpret it spiritually, as if it were symbolic myth or analogy.

Consequently, planetary names will be given new meanings: an angel saying that someone is from Jupiter will mean that the spirit is of the character (or region in the spiritual world) that has come to be labeled "Jupiter." Whether he is from the *planet* Jupiter depends on the accuracy of the analogies Swedenborg tried to set up between that particular planetary region and astronomy. We can now tell that not enough information was available for him to construct accurate analogies.

Consider the revealing case of paragraph 42. It describes the picture of the solar system that angels and spirits shared with each other. But it includes only the planets from Mercury, closest to the sun, out to Saturn, the most distant planet he knew. Only nine years after Swedenborg's death, William Herschel discovered one even further out, Uranus. Since then, Neptune and Pluto have been discovered. The angels therefore knew no more than we did at the time, and they could not anticipate the new discoveries. Just the discovery of Uranus would have forced them to reinterpret their picture based at least on the new numbers involved. We can only conclude that they get their astronomy from us.

In modern astronomy, a solar system isn't the only form that is analogous to a group of planetary regions. Another is an association of solar systems, all born from a single cause in the same region of space at the same time and possessing similar chemistry.

We now know that stars are

typically created in groups. A nearby star may go nova and send its material crashing into a huge cloud of gas and dust, causing new suns and planets to eventually condense out of the cloud. But all of these systems may eventually drift apart and become scattered all around the galaxy. Swedenborg's Venusians, Martians, Mercurians, etc., may now be drifting around the galaxy thousands of light-years away from us. But in the meantime, their planetary regions in the spiritual world would remain right where he found them, practically next door.

Why did he publish this material? *First*, he had a brilliant opportunity to pour spiritual meaning into the scientific views of his time, and he couldn't let it pass. That effort ran into trouble, but only when they did. *Secondly*, he writes in *Heaven and Hell*, (n. 417e), that *Earths in the Universe* shows heaven to be vast and wholly from a widespread human race, and that the Lord is worshipped everywhere. But what these points do is to show that his basic themes are truly *fundamental*. You can show that a theology is undoubtedly fundamental by showing that it is universal. You may then feel that it won't prove unstable or develop local exceptions. In his original use of the *EU* material, at the end of his *Arcana Coelestia*, he shows that his finished theology is universally recognized and therefore truly fundamental. It was an appropriate last point for the *Arcana*.

\*"Closing the Circle," January 1987, Vol 6, No. 2. For more details, please read that article. Copies can be ordered from The Swedenborg Library, 79 Newbury St., Boston, MA 02116, or the Swedenborg Foundation, 320 N. Church St., West Chester, PA 19380, at \$1.00 ea. plus postage.

*Steve Koke is a member of the San Francisco Swedenborgian Church, chair of the Information Management Support Unit, and an assistant editor with J. Appleseed. He lives in Rough 'n Ready, California.*

# J. Appleseed & Co.: A Publishing Mission Distinct from the Swedenborg Foundation

On a few different occasions recently, the query has arisen whether *J. Appleseed & Co.* publishing is merely duplicating efforts of the Swedenborg Foundation. At first glance, it is a natural question, for Swedenborgian books are Swedenborgian books, aren't they? Surely one publisher can handle it all—can't it? The answer is no, because the publishing needs of the church extend beyond what the Swedenborg Foundation is chartered to do.

To be sure, there are areas of occasional overlap. Certain book concepts can appeal to both publishers, and occasionally there is a little healthy competition, all the more entertaining since I also sit on the Board of Directors of the Foundation while directing at the same time the publishing program of *J. Appleseed*. But the Foundation's non-profit status is as an *educational* institution, not as a religious body. Any overt involvement with a church denomination legally imperils the Foundation's non-profit status, and the Foundation rather assiduously avoids any hint of serving as the publishing organ for a church. Even more than that, the Directors in general believe that for the Foundation to strengthen and broaden their readership in the larger culture, it is important that a non-religious and certainly non-ecclesiastical tone be maintained in its publications.

*J. Appleseed & Co.*, on the other hand, is explicitly a religious publisher serving the needs and aims of a specific religious denomination (The Swedenborgian Church of North America). To the extent that I want to get fresh, contemporary Swedenborgian works into our churches and into the hands of those who conduct our ministries (with ministers and laity alike), I may sometimes produce a book that the Foundation also might have published. Wilson Van Dusen's *Country of Spirit* is one such title; the *Awaken From Death* adaptation from Swedenborg's *Heaven and Hell* is another. But Brian Kingslake's *Inner Light*, which promotes a very church-oriented view of the writings and which explicitly promotes the New Church, not only as epochal revelation but also as an organizational vehicle for same, is not appropriate for the Foundation and would not even be considered.

Furthermore, *J. Appleseed* is committed to developing the voice and theology of our church's current leaders in developing the spirituality of a specific church. To this end, I pursue manuscripts with many of our most promising writers as a church objective. My latest title, *Sorting Things Out*, by George Dole, would not have flown as a book concept at the Foundation. The same is true for other titles currently under development with faculty members at our seminary, as well as with other denominational writers. *J. Appleseed* wants to develop our "church" voice in a way that is simply off the chart for the Foundation.

Our church has a glorious history of publishing in North America. Our theology is the great treasure that we have to offer the world, and publishing is a primary means of preserving, developing, and sharing it. We need our own publishing voice to maximize our communications opportunities. Like Johnny himself, we need to be free to declare unabashedly—and without careful and politic restraint—that here, in Swedenborg's writings, is "Good News—right fresh from heaven!"

*The Rev. Dr. James F. Lawrence is co-minister to the San Francisco Swedenborgian Church and manager of J. Appleseed & Co., a small-press publisher of books and pamphlets promoting contemporary expressions of Swedenborgian spirituality.*

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July 5 – 9**

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## Charles Holbrook Mann (1839 – 1918)

Louise Woofenden

A boy heard a lady caller tell his mother about a young pastor, recently deceased. She could not say enough in his praise. "But," she said, "he became so fascinated with the writings of Swedenborg that he had to compel himself to lay them aside lest they lead him astray." If the books were so bad, wondered the boy, how could they fascinate such a good person?

The boy, Charles Mann, made no comment, and seemingly forgot the incident, but when he was 19 his eye caught Swedenborg's name on the back of a volume in the Beloit University library. The story of the minister came back to him and he took out the book. It was Volume I of the *Arcana*. Though he did not understand the basic text, he eagerly read the interchapter material on the other world. Little did the lady think, those many years before, that she was planting a seed that would produce a New Church minister!

Mann kept at Swedenborg, raising every objection he could, but finally accepting the doctrines completely. In 1865, knowing nothing about the church except that there was a society in Chicago, he wrote there for the location of the New Church Seminary. There was no such institution. Ministerial hopefuls studied with settled pastors. So in the summer of 1865 he went to Chicago to learn under Dr. J. R. Hibbard. Mann, a natural teacher already steeped in Swedenborg, began that very fall to give Sunday evening talks and to preach when Hibbard was out of town. The next spring he preached in New York and Brooklyn. That June he attended Convention in Boston, and was invited to Orange, New Jersey, to preach at a parlor meeting. A society was promptly established. Ordained in 1867, Mann served the growing society from 1867 to 1905, ministering also in Newark for 19 of those 38 years.

He was active in the Swedenborg Printing and Publishing Society (now the Swedenborg Foundation) and in 1878 became editor of the *Messenger*, to which he had been contributing articles for over ten years. An article on Mann in the September 25, 1901, issue, says that he wrote between one and two thousand editorials during his 24-year tenure. He also published books and pamphlets. Among these are *Psychicis; or Healing of the Body through the Soul*, *Spiritual Sex Life*, *The Life Within Life* and *Five Sermons on Marriage*, which were ahead of their time, and are still exciting.

In his writing, teaching and ministering, Mann

reached out to people in all conditions of life. His office was always open to anyone with a question or problem.

With a schedule that included three week-night doctrinal meetings and three Sunday services, Mann had various secular occupations. He had had bank training from his father, and had been chief clerk of the quartermaster's department in the Civil War. But his first business venture was a rather unlikely one. He invented and patented the "reactionary lifter," a weight-lifting machine without weights, the man himself being the weight and lifting himself. Several thousand of these machines were sold. He was principal of a large private school and served on the Board of Education for the local public schools. He was noted for his civic work in race relations and industrial improvement.

From 1906 to 1908 he served the Elkhart, Indiana, Society, his last ministerial post. A letter dated 1912 locates him in the University of Chicago physics department. In 1917 (he was now 78!) he was at the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in New York, finishing a three-year study of engineering schools and preparing to go to Boston to be a professor of education at M.I.T. He died before he could make this move.

Mann did not agree with many points of contemporary church policy. He thought that the writings were not prescriptive for church government and that the form best suited to a given situation was the one to adopt. And he said in one letter, "I am sorry I cannot share your enthusiasm over the role the New Church is to play in higher education, though I can acknowledge with frankness my indebtedness to the writings for my educational ideas." In declining to run for the Board of Urbana College, he noted, "I still lack any wild enthusiasm over a distinctly New Church education. According to my philosophy, . . . the more we mix with the rest of the world, the better for all concerned." He had a number of little skirmishes with fellow ministers over points of doctrine. We can conjecture that his decision to leave the ministry in 1915, when it was really too late to make much difference, was a symbolic one, expressing his disposition to stick to his principles and carry each thought to its logical conclusion. A truly remarkable man.

Louise Woofenden is a writer and retired SSR library archivist.

# Temenos Program Calendar

## Fall-Winter 1994-95



### Coming Alive Through Conscious Loving

Andrew and Barbara Seubert

November 4, *Overview*,

November 5, *Workshop*

### Women's Group

Perry Martin

Wednesday evenings,

October 12 through December 14

### Yearning for God

A Time of Quiet Reflection

Betsy Friend

Wednesdays, October 26 thru November 16

### Healing Power of Breath

Laurie Weaver

October 22 to 23

### Storytelling Magic

Annie Hawkins

October 23

### Gay Spiritual Maturity

John J. McNeill

October 29

### Poetry: A Language of the Soul

Reading/Discussion

Devon Miller-Duggan and Judith Adams

October 30

### Rediscover Your Creativity and Welcome

Images from the Inner Source

Bernardine Abbot

November 6

### Listening, Understanding and Caring: A

Couples' Enrichment Workshop to Deepen

Communication

Howard and Betsy Friend

November 11 to 12

### Follow Your Dreams

Alice Adelman

November 19

### Chaos Theory and Spirituality

John Hitchcock

December 2 to 3

### Dances of Universal Peace

Jeanne Ayesha Lauenborg

December 4

### A Polarity Experiential

Nancy Mattila

January 15

### Reflection on the Mother-Daughter

Relationship

Betsy Friend and Julie Spahr

January 21

### Light and Shadow

Kathleen Gajdos

January 22

### Life, Death and the Survival of Consciousness

Ernest O. Martin

January 29

*Temenos  
Challenge Co-  
Chairs Carol  
Lawson and  
Howard Friend  
enjoy the  
beauty of  
Temenos. ►*



For Further information, call 610/696-8145, or write to: Temenos Conference and Retreat Center, 685 Broad Run Rd., West Chester, PA 19382.

## What's a Presbyterian Minister Doing as Co-Chair of the Temenos Challenge?

Dear *Messenger* Readers,

My wife Betsy and I are a part of the resident staff at Temenos; she and I conduct a number of programs here at the retreat center. I have recently founded the Parish Empowerment Network based here at Temenos and I have served on a number of committees and task forces here.

But most important, I co-chair the National Fundraising Effort—the Temenos Challenge—with the goal to raise \$600,000 to build a new retreat house.

In that vein, I would like to share a wonderful recent experience. I went for one of my frequent long walks down the gravel road beyond the Farm House at Temenos. About a mile down the road I happened upon a house painter climbing off his ladder for a mid-afternoon iced tea break. I sat beside him, and in the midst of the conversation I mentioned that I lived at Temenos, down the road. "Oh," he said, his eyes quite wide, "you live at a temenos. How wonderful!"

Maybe it was because English was his second language. He was, as I guessed by his accent, Greek. (Remember, "Temenos" is Greek for "sacred space"). But the sentence seemed a bit strange. "You live at a temenos," I repeated, curious. "Well," he explained, "when a village in Greece is founded, the elders and wise ones discern where the temenos ought to be. Where the ground is holy. Where the Spirit is lively. No one can build a house there. Not even a church. But people do bring plantings; someone may bring a bench or two; others some stepping stones, or tasteful statuary," he went on.

But the best was yet to come. "When you are feeling

discouraged, or troubled, or confused, you go to the temenos. You sit quietly. And soon your mood will change. You'll become settled and clear. Or, when you and a friend are arguing, fighting, speaking harshly to one another, you go to the temenos. There your respect will renew and your conflict will resolve. Or, when you have a decision to make, and you feel uncertain or torn, you go to the temenos. You sit on a bench or wander by the stream, and soon you will become clear."

Ah, yes. That's it. What a joyful coincidence—that "Temenos is a *Temenos*"! These are exactly the qualities that cause me to love living here on the grounds. And they are the qualities that I think most draw people to our programs and events. It is the clearest reason why I am so committed to the life and future of Temenos, and am working diligently that it might expand by building a new retreat house to accommodate another 16 overnight guests.

Perhaps I will meet you in the future. I am, by the way, a Presbyterian. (But don't whisper a word of this to my denominational executives!) I simply feel closer to Emanuel Swedenborg than I do John Calvin, theologically and spiritually. I am proud to serve Temenos and your General Council as co-chairperson of the Temenos Challenge. And, with the financial support of Swedenborgians throughout the nation, I am sure we will achieve our campaign goal and build this wonderful and needed building at our Temenos.

*The Rev. Howard Friend, Co-Chairperson  
Temenos Challenge Campaign.*

## What about Bob?

Reviewed by Susanne Lorraine

Bill Murray is a popular comedian, but the appeal of his portrayal of Bob Wiley in *What about Bob* is that he is believable as the representative of the inner self of "everyman." The story of Bob's encounter with psychiatrist Leo Marvin has archetypal appeal as the fears and loves of the *inner self* of "Bob" come into conflict with the control and self-centeredness of the *ego* of "Dr. Marvin."

Bob begins with just enough awareness of his problems that he readily seeks advice from the doctor. He starts toward the door of repentance. His initial desire is for the doctor, (read ego), to take control and make the changes he needs to overcome his fears. The doctor's book, *Baby Steps*, guides Bob to make small changes and set short-range accessible goals on his own. The ego's rationalizing and managing of the inner self can be a com-

fortable relationship where each can rest secure and avoid drastic change.

The extremes of Bob's incapacitating fears amplify the fears we all have that are challenged as we seek to mature and begin regeneration. At the other extreme, Leo Marvin is the epitome of the ego at its most satisfied. He is rich, respected, sought after and on the verge of becoming famous. All the goals of his life of ego satisfaction have been achieved.

As the doctor attempts to leave Bob to go on vacation, Bob steadfastly makes attempts to keep the doctor (ego) in control of his fears. Along the way, Bob becomes friends with Dr. Marvin's family and reaches outside of himself with love and friendship. He teaches the son, Siggy, to overcome his fears of death and diving. In the process of expressing himself and his love through these friendships, he loses the identification with the fears that he formerly thought of as his "self." At the doctor's suggestion, Bob takes a vacation from his problems.

But to Dr. Marvin, who represents the ego in its struggle to remain in

control, this release of Bob's identification with his fears threatens Leo's definition of his identity as the "Doctor" (ego). He explodes into a hysterical fit of homicidal mania as Bob reads meaning for himself in the doctor's actions and effects his own "cure." The final straw for Dr. Leo Marvin is brought about by Bob's acceptance as "one of the family." The doctor goes into a state of withdrawal when his control is thwarted. When faced with the integration of the fears and loves as part of the whole person, the ego must compromise its position to remain an active part of the awareness of the person. This awareness only comes for Dr. Leo Marvin when Bob marries his sister, fully integrating himself with the "family." He returns with a shock to the unpleasant awareness that Bob is now his brother-in-law. Not an easy merging but a satisfactory completion of this archetypal storyline of the human struggle for personal and spiritual growth. Enjoy!

*Susanne Lorraine is a member of the Portland, Maine, Swedenborgian church and a part-time student at the Swedenborg School of Religion.*

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## Rotch Fund Trustees Adopt Guidelines

In 1863, when Lydia S. Rotch died at the age of 80, she left a legacy of \$14,250 to be used for the benefit of Convention. Over the years her legacy has funded many projects featuring the publication and distribution of books and information about Swedenborg, such as the "Rotch Edition," complete sets of Swedenborg's theological works, and the organization of the Swedenborg collection at the Urbana University library. In recent years the Rotch Fund has contributed to such undertakings as the *Swedenborg Researchers Manual* prepared by Bill Woofenden, the "Swedenborg, Scientist" museum exhibit and publications sponsored by the Swedenborg Foundation, and the re-printing by Les Sheppard in Australia of such "classic" collaterals as *The Invisible Police*, a novel by Louis Pendleton, and two works by Julian Smyth, *Footprints of the Savior* and *Holy Names*.

The income from the Rotch Fund is approximately \$6000 a year. The fund is administered by three trustees, Walter C. Chapin, Alice B. Skinner, and F. Gardiner Perry. The trustees have adopted the following set of guidelines in order to foster growth in the denomination through the Rotch Legacy.

### Guidelines for Uses of the Rotch Legacy

Income from Rotch funds shall be used for tangible products and programs concerned with ministries, personal and ordained, and with presentations of Swedenborgian thought. Such products may be conferences, research, or publications in print, film, or other media which aim to make Swedenborgian ideas accessible through ministries, libraries, performances, conferences, exhibits, or other means. Rotch Legacy funds may be used to underwrite or sponsor projects selected by the trustees according to the following criteria:

1. Projects should have a demonstrable connection to the purposes and priorities of the denomination as defined in the statement of "The Purpose of (General) Convention," adopted July 3, 1986. (Printed in each edition of the *Journal of the Swedenborgian Church*).
  2. Preferred projects will include products that assist growth in number of people, or growth in the spirituality of people currently involved in the church.
  3. Projects will be favored which expand the understanding and interpretation of Swedenborg, reflecting serious
- (Continued on page 143)*

## Rotch Guidelines

(Continued from page 142)

scholarship about implications of Swedenborgian thought in relation to contemporary needs and issues.

4. Preferred projects will be on the "growing edge" in order to extend knowledge of Swedenborg and Swedenborgian ideas beyond people presently involved in the church.
5. Projects should have an ecumenical quality, relating Swedenborgian theology to the broad-based search for insights into spiritual dimensions of living.

Readers of *The Messenger* are invited to send inquiries or requests for funding by the Rotch Legacy to Dr. Alice B. Skinner, Box 282-B, St. George, ME 04857.

### CORRECTION

It was reported in the October 1994 *Messenger*, under "SSR News" that Ellen Smith of Wichita had moved with her family to the Boston area this past summer to attend SSR. Ellen was unable to make the move in the summer, but still plans to attend SSR at a future time, as yet unspecified.

## Passages

### Baptism

Ross—Jade Larain Ross, daughter of Barbara Tempa Ross, was baptized into the Christian faith August 28, 1994, at the Fryeburg New Church in Fryeburg, Maine, the Rev. Dr. Gardiner Perry officiating.

### Confirmations

Hulcher, Mazer—Susan Rae Hulcher and Catherine Dawn Mazer were confirmed into the life of the Swedenborgian Church September 4, 1994, at Paulhaven in Alberta. Susan was confirmed at the request of the Calgary society, and Catherine at the request of the Saskatoon society, the Rev. Paul Tremblay officiating. A representative of each society presented a gift and welcomed Susan and Catherine into membership in their respective societies.

### Deaths

Fox—Susan L. (Harnden) Fox, 43, wife of Alan R. Fox and daughter of Calvin and Sally Harnden of the Fryeburg New Church, entered the spiritual world August 9, 1994, in Standish, Maine. Resurrection service was conducted August 13, 1994, at Fryeburg Congregational Church, the Rev. Robert Loring officiating.

Hachborn—Flora Hachborn, age 79, longtime active member of the Church of the Good Shepherd in Kitchener, Ontario, entered the spiritual world July 24, 1994. The resurrection service was conducted July 27, 1994, the Rev. Paul Zacharias officiating.

Kiesman—Howard Kiesman, age 79, entered the spiritual world August 15, 1994, at his home in Fryeburg, Maine. Graveside service was conducted August 20, 1994, at Pine Grove Cemetery, Fryeburg, Maine, the Rev. Dr. Gardiner Perry officiating.

Mitchell—George B. Mitchell, longtime member of the Swedenborgian Church in DeLand, Florida, entered the spiritual world August 12, 1994. Resurrection service was conducted at the Baldauff Funeral Home August 17, 1994, the Revs. Deborah Winter and Skuli Thorhallsson officiating.

Siegner—Emma Siegner, age 99, the last surviving child of J.M. Schneider, entered the spiritual world June 15, 1994, in Kitchener, Ontario. A resurrection service was conducted June 17, 1994, the Rev. Ron Brugler officiating. Emma was active in the Church of the Good Shepherd Women's Group and attended Urbana College.

Tuck—Edward (Ted) Tuck, age 88, longtime member and church treasurer for over 20 years, entered the spiritual world June 25, 1994. A memorial service was conducted July 21, 1994, at the Church of the Good Shepherd in Kitchener, Ontario, the Rev. Paul Zacharias officiating.

### Hello from Keighley

Bev Johnson, editor of *The Plough*, the magazine of the British New Church Federation located in Keighley, West Yorkshire, writes that she would welcome letters or articles from America. Her address is 20 Minnie Street, Keighley, West Yorkshire, BD21 1HT, Great Britain.

## SSR Receives a New Matching-Gift Opportunity

The Boston Society, the Chicago Society and the Swedenborg School of Religion's trustees have pledged funds totalling \$25,000, which will be matched against new pledges received by SSR before Dec. 31, 1994.

The trustees have pledged \$7,500, the Boston Society \$7,500 to student aid, and the Chicago Society \$10,000.

Donors gifts contributing to the next \$25,000 received by SSR before December 31, 1994, will be 100% matched. Donations are encouraged for any of SSR's funds, including student aid, the library, building & grounds, to mention only a few.

The Swedenborg School of Religion will establish designated memorial funds with the contribution of \$1,000. To discuss establishment of a new fund, contact SSR President, Dr. Mary Kay Klein, at (617) 244-0504 or Rev. Jerome Poole, Chair, SSR Board of Trustees, at (207) 832-6289.

Send contributions to:

The Swedenborg School of Religion  
48 Sargent St.  
Newton, MA 02158

Last year's matching grant, initiated by the Chicago Society, raised \$60,624 for SSR.



Emanuel Swedenborg was born January 29, 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 General Convention of Swedenborgian Churches. 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.

## Writing Contest 1995

- **First Prize \$200.00**
- **Second Prize \$150.00**
- **Third Prize \$100.00**

This year the New Church Sunday School Association Outreach Committee is again sponsoring a writers' contest. The response to our 1994 contest gave us some very good stories which we will put into an anthology. We plan to have this ready in time for the 1995 convention. The three 1994 prize-winning stories will be published in *The Messenger*, beginning with the December issue. Look for the first one next month!

Now, we are certain that there are many creative people out there who could write a short Swedenborgian story that could be used as Sunday School material. So, put on your thinking caps again and start writing.

In 1994 we received many stories that were good stories but were not Swedenborgian. Remember, we are hoping for stories that either explain a particular Swedenborgian concept in story form or are consistent with our beliefs.

### Rules:

- The story must be mailed to Eric Allison at 12-180 Highland Crescent, Kitchener, Ontario N2M 5K5 no later than May 15th, 1995.
- The story must explain in story form a particular New Church teaching or have a lesson of moral value that is consistent with our teachings.
- The story should be no longer than six double-spaced typewritten pages and no shorter than two double-spaced typewritten pages.
- The story should be written for children five to ten years of age.
- Participants may enter more than one story but may win only one prize.
- The Sunday School Association has the right to edit all stories submitted.

*The winners will be announced at the 1995 convention  
in San Francisco*

## Important Church Calendar Dates

November 4-6	Transitions—Almont, Michigan	November 19-21	General Council/Cabinet at Central Office—Newton
November 4-6	PMSU—Kitchener, Ontario		
November 5	Investment Committee—Newton, Mass.	January 20-21	Temenos Board of Managers—West Chester, Pennsylvania
November 6-8	Retirement Committee at Central Office—Newton	May 5-7	SSR Board at Temenos—West Chester, Pennsylvania
November 17-19	Council of Ministers ExCom at Central Office—Newton	May 19-29	Temenos Board of Managers—Temenos Convention—San Francisco
		July 2-9	

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

Forwarding Address Correction Requested

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