

THE MESSENGER

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September 1995

Spiritual
justice is what
happens in the
light of God's
truth . . .
spiritual mercy
refers to the
love that
unites and
restores
to unity
that which
has been
sorted out.

Robert McCluskey



Doing Justice with Mercy: Where Heaven Begins

"... He has showed you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you, But to do justice, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" Micah 6:6-8

To do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God. What would it be like to live in this way?

The Division of Justice and Mercy

Swedenborg writes that the Divine Love and Wisdom proceed from the Lord as one, fully united, but are received by human beings as two; that is, there is a sharp distinction or separation between love and wisdom, good and truth, will and understanding. This division is divinely ordained so that we might experience genuine freedom. Our spiritual growth, our regeneration, involves our continually alternating between these two poles of our lives, between good and truth, and we generally need to emphasize one over the other. There are times when truth must lead, and times when we must follow our hearts. Heaven begins as these two dimensions merge and become one within us, and our words and actions reflect a balance between them.

This division of good and truth, will and understanding, also gives rise to the proprium: the development of a self-image based entirely on externals, on how things appear. This self-image, which we all have, tends to maintain the distinction between good and truth, to keep them separate, and thereby keep us from bringing them together into a new unity. This division is also reflected in our understanding and practice of justice and mercy. Our proprium, or natural self, understands justice and mercy as either/or; it accepts the appearance of exclusivity. We can see this separation at work just by looking at the definitions of justice

and mercy in the dictionary.

There we read that justice has to do with the administration of law, according to the rules of law or equity. It is the principle of rectitude and just dealings of persons with each other; also conformity to this principle; integrity, and rectitude. That is, justice has to do with compliance to an external standard; "just" implies fidelity to that standard: balance, fairness.

Mercy, we read, means the forbearance from inflicting harm, especially as punishment, under provocation; compassionate treatment of an offender or adversary. A disposition to exercise compassion or forgiveness; willingness to spare or to help. The power to be merciful; clemency, as to throw oneself on the mercy of the court. Any circumstance thought to be providential, and the compassionate treatment of the unfortunate. Finally, mercy implies "compassion so great as to enable one to forbear punishing even when justice demands it." And so we can say that mercy has to do with relaxing our standards, letting things pass; "merciful" implies sensitivity to differences, excusing faults, etc. Mercy has to do primarily with the exercise of compassion, as a legitimate concern in its own right.

Justice has to do with enforcing the rules; mercy has to do with relaxing the rules. To the proprium, it appears that justice requires the suspension of mercy, just as mercy seems to require the suspension of justice. How can we do both?

The proprium is usually characterized as emphasizing justice to the exclusion of

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• SPECIAL CONVENTION ISSUE •

THE SAN FRANCISCO CHURCH CELEBRATING ITS CENTENNIAL, 1895-1995,
HOSTS THE 171ST ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH
SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY, JULY 5-9, 1995

Letter from the Editor:

Dear Subscribers,

I hope that you enjoy this Convention '95 issue, especially with the added color that Town & Country Press has graciously given us for being longtime faithful customers. The gift of color takes on special significance this year in view of the win-win solution brought about for Temenos, which seems indicative of a spiritual maturity and growing "both/and" perspective supplanting old "either/or" attitudes. It did seem that all of convention this year was operating in a state of grace—or God's mercy.

And, speaking of gifts: Traditionally, *The Messenger* has been given at no charge to all members of the Swedenborgian Church. *The Messenger* ranked high in priorities in the 1993-94 Survey of *Messenger* readers. It's a pretty wonderful gift, isn't it? Ten free informative, timely newsletters that offer lay and ministerial views on our church issues, plus inspirational Swedenborgian insights to help each of us on our spiritual journey.

Would these issues be worth a \$29 subscription to you? That is the cost to the church, and certainly there is no plan to charge readers for their ten *Messengers*. But perhaps you would volunteer to defray some of the publication costs by paying for your subscription, as suggested in the *Messenger* Readers Survey.

Did you know that the denomination has a *Messenger* endowment fund, which has a current worth of \$73,500? The interest from these restricted funds can only be used for *The Messenger*, whereby the principal is not spent. In 1994, for instance, \$6,000 in interest was applied from the endowment fund to help pay for the cost of *The Messenger*. As we build up *The Messenger's* endowment, our church's publication could become financially independent.

We all like choices, so here are three options *The Messenger* can offer its readers: receive the publication free, pay up to \$29 for a subscription, or make a donation to *The Messenger* endowment fund. Whatever you decide, by all means don't stop your subscription! We would much rather you receive *The Messenger* free than for you not to know what is going on in the church. Your being a part of our readership is very important to us.

Many thanks again to those of you who have made contributions to *The Messenger* in the past; last year we received \$1,865 in donations. Your support and love for your church's *Messenger* are sincerely appreciated.

Blessings,

Patte LeVan



The Messenger

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Photos in this issue by Tracy Morris and Patte LeVan.

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 agree or 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.

Kingslake Memorial

To the Editor:

I was very interested to see the memorial article about Brian Kingslake published in the May *Messenger*, which was kindly forwarded to me, his eldest daughter. I would like to thank the author for his kind evaluation. It was much appreciated. It obviously focused on my father's work but I would like to correct certain inaccuracies therein concerning the history of the New Church in Southern Africa, and, in particular, to draw attention to the part played by that remarkable man, the late Rev. Obed Mooki and his wife Eulalia, who still lives near the church headquarters.

In the year 1909 David Mooki (Obed's father) first read Swedenborg's *True Christian Religion* and, as a result, formed the New Church of Africa in 1911. In 1917 he made a link with the New Church in England and the Conference adopted his
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Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$_____. I want my enclosed contribution to be used for:

- ☐ One-year subscription to *The Messenger*
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Please make your check payable to *The Messenger* and mail it in the enclosed pre-addressed envelope included in this issue, to: Swedenborgian Church, Central Office, 48 Sargent Street, Newton, Massachusetts 02158.

Doing Justice with Mercy: McCluskey

(Continued from front cover)

mercy: it is described as harsh, tyrannical, mercilessly enforcing the law in a judgmental way. But it is not enough to say that the proprium pursues justice and neglects mercy. The proprium, by definition, pursues or rejects whatever it wants, and uses justice and mercy, as well as semblances thereof, selectively, as means to its own ends. When the appearance of justice is called for, fine; when the appearance of mercy is called for, fine as well. Whatever works.

Justice without mercy tends to get caught in particulars and externals. All attention is paid to outer behavior and speech, and we feel obliged to apply the standard of the day according to the letter of the law, without regard for the inner, spiritual dynamics at work. Such an attitude, though, ultimately leads to an atmosphere of hypocrisy and competition, of hostility, fear and judgmentalism.

On the other hand, mercy without justice tends towards universals and internals to such an extent that allowances are made for everything; we become tolerant not just of differences, but of injustice and oppression; we become tolerant of intolerance. Unable to draw distinctions, invoke an objective standard, make a judgment, we eventually drift and become unable to impact the world in any concrete way. It is possible to become so merciful that we can't call things as we really see them.

Justice without mercy tends to be arrogant, harsh, and domineering. Mercy without justice tends to be wimpish, weak, and submissive. But there is a different way to understand the relationship between justice and mercy; that is from the spiritual perspective. Instead of the application of some objective standard of law, spiritual justice—or judgment—has to do with sorting out, separating good from evil, and truth from falsity, as a means of restoring balance and order to the individual. Spiritual justice is what happens in the light of God's truth. And, instead of an arbitrary exception to an established rule, spiritual mercy refers to the love that unites and restores to unity that which has been sorted out. Spiritual mercy is what happens in the warmth of God's love. In spiritual terms, justice and mercy, like truth and love, need each other in order to be genuine.

The Division in the Church

The division between justice and mercy is reflected in the history of the church, which has traditionally defined itself in terms of its priestly and prophetic functions. By its priestly function, the church understands itself as the medium by which God's grace and mercy, His forgiveness and love, enter the world. The priests are the keepers of the traditions, teachings, and rituals that reconcile humanity to God, promoting healing and wholeness. In its prophetic function, the church speaks out against injustice and violence, sides with the poor and oppressed, proclaiming God's judgment on those who abuse their position and possessions. The prophets apply the doctrine

to all of life, often risking their reputation and well being as they witness to God's Word in the face of corruption and power.

The priestly function affirms the goodness of God and life, and offers God's mercy to people. The prophetic function is critical of human intentions, and calls us to repentance and reformation; it calls us to God's judgment. It has been the lifelong effort of the church to keep these two connected; but it has been the lifelong history of the church that they have often remained apart. Some churches pursue arcane philosophies to the neglect of concrete and unified action on behalf of others, while others are active in countless social issues, with little or no theological or spiritual basis. The church continues to divide its focus and energy into these two functions. One task of the church is to live in such a way that these two functions inform and qualify each other, to pursue both justice and mercy.

This division can also be seen quite dramatically in two distinct contemporary religious movements: fundamentalism and certain segments of new-age spirituality. Fundamentalism represents an emphasis on truth, doctrine, and justice, in which the most important element of salvation is having the right answers, and practicing the right behavior. Here the focus is on externals and particulars. At the other extreme is "flaky" new age, which represents the extreme of mercy: love and forgiveness with little or no accountability or personal responsibility. Here, the most important element of salvation is to feel good as much as possible, and to avoid guilt and anxiety at all costs.

(The above is admittedly a caricature, but I believe it helps to highlight a dynamic that is at work in our own church on a much more subtle level).

We have a similar, if less dramatic, form of this same separation in our own church; a separation or opposition between truth and good, means and end. For some time now, there has been an ongoing debate in the church about the effectiveness of traditional forms of ministries as opposed to non-traditional or "alternative" forms of ministry. More recently, this debate has centered around the images of "parish ministries" and "retreat centers."

By "parish ministry" is generally meant such identifiable forms as a church building, Sunday morning worship and doctrinal classes, and other activities that help to bind a community of like-minded believers together over the course of their lives. Proponents of this model tend to emphasize the "justice" aspect: conformity to an established, objective standard, namely, Swedenborg's Christology and the inner sense of the Word, along with many of the traditional forms of the New Church in America. The focus is not so much on making people feel good as it is on supplying people with models of spirituality that are more reasonable, better, if you will, than other models.

Contrasting with this is the model of bookrooms, spiritual growth and retreat centers. These models seek to serve a wider audience in less intensive mode, drawing

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Doing Justice with Mercy: McCluskey

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from the wide variety of spiritual growth traditions and techniques that are available. This model has tended to focus on those aspects of Swedenborg's system that are more universal and abstract. Proponents of "alternative" forms of ministry tend to emphasize the "mercy" aspect: the relaxing or letting go of formal structures and categories, an openness to newness and individual differences. The focus is not so much on supplying reasonable models of spirituality, but with helping people be in touch with their own unique spiritual journey, and trusting that a variety of models or "standards" are needed to do this.

Here again, we can trace this division in our church to the division of good and truth, justice and mercy, in our own lives. I believe our church can establish a harmony of good and truth, purpose and means, in this and other issues facing it. But first I believe we need to acknowledge that we ourselves are divided in precisely the manner Swedenborg describes. Until we can do that, I believe the same arguments and divisions and deadlock will endure.

Unity in the Church

Charity is defined as acting with prudence to the end that good may result. If we substitute justice and mercy for prudence and good, we can say that charity is acting justly to the end that mercy may be bestowed. It then becomes clear that mercy is the end or purpose for which we should act, and that justice should serve or support this end. We err when we make justice and truth primary, and try to make mercy and love serve.

Spiritual health requires that love must lead, love must come first; love, not truth or justice, must be the purpose for which we act. This is the essence of Christianity, and a stumbling block to those who will not grow. At the same time, though, Swedenborg's interpretation of charity makes it clear that love and mercy, without truth and justice, is empty and ineffectual. While mercy prohibits us from judging another's spiritual state, it obligates us to judge each other in moral and civil matters. We must judge and discriminate, we must hold each other responsible and accountable.

One of the clearest insights into the tension, and resolution, between justice and mercy is given in the parable of the Good Samaritan. The lawyer, seeking to justify himself, asks the Lord to identify, in an objective, external way, who the neighbor is to be loved. He wants a standard by which his acts can be evaluated and deemed just.

Jesus' reply, put most simply, is that *the essence of justice is mercy*; not conformance to some outward standard or appearance, but conformance to the inner standard of love. For the Lord, in whom justice and mercy are united, the right thing is also the good thing.

Cain asks, "Am I my brother's keeper?" I would suggest a simpler, and more revealing question: "Am I my brother's brother?"

Social Action

For many, the phrase "doing justice" is linked to what is often called "social action," or social justice." But "doing justice," of course, is a much broader concept. It refers to the purpose on which all of our actions should be based, on whatever level of life. Social action, or social justice, refers to a more specific, but no less important aspect of our lives: our responsible involvement with the larger neighbor.

According to one statement of faith in our Book of Worship, the larger the neighbor, the greater our responsibility to it. This statement of faith, along with the Writings themselves, make it clear that we must externalize and ultimate our spiritual values and beliefs in all levels of life, the moral and the civil, the interpersonal and the social, as well as the inner spiritual life. If we fail to attend to the larger social context within which our personal growth takes place, we can never fully come to understand what justice, or mercy, really means.

Many of the current social issues make it difficult to know how to respond in a meaningful or effective way. They are marked by the same divisions between justice and mercy, truth and love, that all human beings embody. One example that comes to mind is the current debate on welfare reform. On one side, we see justice urged to the exclusion of mercy. Proponents of welfare reform are suggesting harsh measures to deny benefits to as many as possible; individual responsibility and competence are stressed to the exclusion of the many real and difficult obstacles that face so many people in our society. We see the demonization of those who differ from the status quo. On the other side, we hear an equally uncritical call for continued support regardless of one's personal abilities or situation; the argument is even made that any monitoring or evaluation (judgment) of peoples' personal lives has no place in determining their eligibility for benefits. Here we see the demonization of all those who argue for fiscal responsibility. In this and in many other issues, we can see the absence of the true spirit of charity.

But if the issues are tough and poorly addressed, that is all the more reason for the church to speak out and act for what is truly right and good. A few years ago, a recent effort to establish a Social Action Concerns Committee was unsuccessful, largely due to the (prevailing) belief that the church should leave such efforts to the individual, and should not presume to speak for all its members. A letter to *The Messenger* at that time suggested that it would be controversial or divisive to take a stand on social justice issues.

How is it, then, that we read more recently of individual churches coming together as one, and finding some common ground on which to act together for the larger, common good of which we are all a part? If a group of individuals can do this on a local level, why can it not happen on a regional or national level? It can, and it should. Eric Allison writes that "each of us makes a difference. Sometimes the actions of a few people create a

grand impact." I would agree, and simply add that the combined actions of many people can create an even grander impact: if we were to act as one *church*, our impact would be that much greater, for others as well as for ourselves.

Social justice, or doing justice in reference to the larger neighbor, means, first of all, that each one of us must become intentional about the impact we have on social structures, policies, and justice issues. We are already impacting them because we live and move in society; unless we become intentional about it, we can unwittingly do more harm than good.

Secondly, I believe the church as a whole, as an entity, must do the same. It is absolutely correct that the church, as a church, must make the presentation of the doctrine its first priority. But I believe it is also correct to say that we must find ways to make concrete our vision and values; to fulfill our prophetic function. It is true that there are many issues about which the church is not able to speak with a unified voice, or take unified action on. It is also true that the church has contributed in many ways to make a difference in the world. But it seems to me that we could do a much better job of bringing our church's teachings to bear on the more urgent issues in society, the larger neighbor. Unlike most churches, we do not have a "national desk" for social justice issues; there is no line item in our budget for mission efforts outside of our denomination. If you're thinking that we are too small a church to support social justice issues on a national level, I would suggest that perhaps you are confusing cause with effect: our lack of involvement with social issues may be the reason, not the result, of our size. To have no ongoing social justice action within the church, to do nothing that impacts society, is more than a formula for eventual decline, it's not even prudent.

Where Heaven Begins

So how do we bring justice and mercy together? How can we begin to grasp their meaning in an entirely new way? How can we let go of our habit of dividing them, of seeing them as mutually exclusive? What about justice that is merciful, mercy that is just?

Justice that is merciful (that is, real justice), focuses not so much on the imposition of a fixed rule or law, but uses laws for the greater end of genuine balance; of giving others not just what we think they "deserve," but what is actually best for them as spiritual beings. As we have already noted, this usually involves a combination of forgiveness and accountability. It requires that we seriously consider the unique aspects of each person or situation we deal with; no more rubber stamping, generalizing, prejudice or stereotyping by externals. Merciful justice is discriminating and caring of inner differences and each individual's unique situation; it attends as much to the motivation as to behavior. It insists that we act according to order; consistently, and with integrity.

Real justice involves conformity to the absolute standard given to us by the Lord: the standard of love. Mercy insists that we allow our laws to be seen in the light of

God's truth, and not just in the light of what serves our immediate purpose.

When combined with mercy, justice becomes what the New Church is all about: sorting out and separating good from evil, and restoring to order, balance, and wholeness. It is taking a pro-active role in understanding and addressing the real needs of other people, the neighbor. It is not about enforcing rules and administering punishment, or about letting people off the hook.

How do we access this higher standard, the standard of Divine Love and Wisdom? By walking humbly with our God; and we all know that ain't easy! This is the crucial ingredient that is missing from our Convention theme, which articulates only two-thirds of the heavenly formula given in Micah: to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God.

Heaven begins as justice and mercy merge and become one *within* us; without this inner renewal or regeneration, our efforts to do justice, or to love mercy, will continue to exhibit the same division which we so instinctively operate from. We will end up doing neither because we cannot do both. Heaven, as a kingdom of uses, involves a marriage or conjunction of love and truth, will and understanding, such that justice and mercy clearly need each other. Heaven begins when our outward judgments and actions conform to the internal standard of love *and* truth, when our actions are both just and merciful. And for this we need to walk humbly with our God.

"The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law." Galatians 5:22

The Rev. Robert McCluskey is pastor of the New York Swedenborgian Church and a New Church delegate to the National Council of Churches.

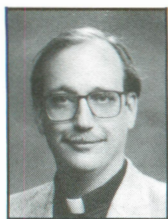
Editors Note: Due to space limitations, theme responses from the Rev. Dr. Wilma Wake and the Rev. Skuli Thorhallsson will be printed in the October Messenger.



Young Min Kim, new minister at Church of the Little Grain in Brooklyn, mingles with fellow ministers Rachel Rivers, Kinichi Kuniyeda, and Eric Allison.

The Shepherd's Just and Merciful Voice

Convention Sermon 1995



Carl Yenetchi

We have heard much over the last week about meanings of justice and mercy, and some of what we have heard is quite complicated. I want now to explain these concepts in a way so simple that even I can understand them.

Justice is when we keep the covenant; when we keep that sacred relationship with our Lord and Savior; and when we act according to what He has told us to do in the covenant. But, because the covenant is as large as our Lord and as broad in scope, in understanding, in love and in wisdom as our Lord, there are times when we mortals, we human beings, have to reach for it. We reach for it, but sometimes we do not reach it. And maybe we say to ourselves we have failed. We have sinned or have fallen short of the covenant. In other words, we have not acted justly.

Then mercy comes into play, for the Lord reaches out to us—the Lord who always keeps the covenant, the Lord who is always just and righteous then reaches out to us and says, “You know, it’s okay, I knew that was going to happen, and I have built into the system, mercy.” Mercy is our Lord welcoming us back into relationship without condemning us, so that we may again experience the Love that is our Lord Jesus.

It is in relationship to the Lord through the covenant, through our reaching, and maybe not always achieving, but then through our

reaching and grasping again that we are able to change and to grow. So justice and mercy together define our relationship with our Lord, and our experience of our Lord.

An interesting thing about the covenant is that it not only happens here in the written pages of the Holy Word as we study it, but it also happens deep within ourselves; it happens when we are willing to hear the Shepherd’s voice—to hear the voice of our Lord. Our Lord speaks to us very, very strongly, and our Lord speaks to us in ways that we cannot ignore, that we cannot miss, though sometimes we may not recognize the Shepherd’s voice for what it is. *For our Lord’s voice is the very emotions that we feel!* Each emotion that we feel is the sacred voice of our Lord and Savior calling to us; calling to us to come into the Divine presence, to seek the Lord, to turn inward, and rediscover that each one of us is an important part of the Lord’s flock.

Yes, I did say *each* emotion that we feel is our Lord’s voice, for in my study of Scriptures, I have discovered numerous emotions felt by our Lord as he walked with us, as the Incarnate Word, and because they were felt by our Lord and are recorded in the Gospels to have been part of our Lord’s life, each of these emotions is sacred and we need to pay attention to each of them.

Today, I want to look at four of these emotions. Fear, anger, sadness, and joy—and how they work in the call of the Lord within each of us.

Fear

In the Scriptures, it says:

The Lord came out and went as was His custom to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed. When He reached the place, He said to them, ‘Pray, that you may not come into the

time of trial.’ Then He withdrew from them, about a stone’s throw, knelt down, and prayed: ‘Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from me. Yet not My will but Yours be done.’ Then an angel came from heaven and appeared to the Lord and gave Him strength. In His fear, He prayed more earnestly, and His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground. When He got up from prayer, He came to the disciples and found them sleeping because of grief. And He said to them, ‘Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not come into the time of trial.’

Our Lord’s fear, and our Lord’s experience of fear, were the call of the Divine to the human. But for what was the Divine calling out? Fear is a prophetic emotion telling us that in our future, there is something that is grand and important coming up that we do not understand, and the Lord declares that to us with fear. When we experience fear, we are experiencing the presence of the Lord; the Lord is calling our attention to something important that is about to come to us, that we don’t yet comprehend. What are we then to do? Our Lord gave us an example. When the Lord experienced the fear in the garden, so that He sweat great drops of blood, He turned to the Divine, He prayed, and He asked for guidance.

Fear is the presence, the voice, of the Lord; it tells us that something important is coming, and that we are to turn to the Lord, turn inward in prayer, that the Lord may guide.

Anger

In the Gospel according to Mark, it is recorded:

The Lord entered the synagogue. And a man was there who had a withered hand. They watched Him, to see whether He would cure him on the

Our Lord’s voice is the very emotions that we feel.

Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him. And the Lord said to the man who had the withered hand, 'Come forth,' then He said to the people, 'Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath day? To save life, or to kill?' But they were silent. He looked around them with anger.

Our Lord experienced anger. Anger very simply is the present tense of fear. Fear is the Lord's call for the future, and anger is the Lord's call in the moment, in the here and now, that there is something of great importance, present with us, that we need to turn to the Lord to understand, to turn inward in prayer, to seek what the Lord would have us do. Anger is the voice of the Lord calling us.

Sadness

Later in the same story we learn about sadness:

He looked around at them with anger. And was saddened at the hardness of their hearts. And said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand.' He stretched it out and his hand was restored. The Pharisees went out immediately and conspired with the Herodians against the Lord.

Grief, sadness, mourning—we have a great promise in the Scripture about that, don't we? "Blessed are those who mourn for they will be comforted." Sadness is the past tense of fear and anger. It is through these emotions, these experiences of fear and of anger and of mourning that we come, as we see in the story of the man with the withered hand, to the point of healing. From fear, through anger, to grief, we may experience the voice of the Shepherd calling us and turning us to the Lord.

It's important to understand this language of emotion, to understand the importance of letting these emotions flow and of letting ourselves experience them. We cannot live in a constant state of fear. And this is what happens when we do not recognize fear as being the divine voice. We pull inward, and perhaps—like the disciples—we fall asleep to the world around us, so that we cannot grow and change and keep the cove-

nant. But, when we see that fear is the voice of the Lord calling to us and when we then turn to the Lord, the process of communication continues. It is the same with anger. Anger is the voice of the Lord, and it can lead us into healing, but when we hear that voice and do not recognize it as the Shepherd's voice, we may use it to hurt and to destroy others, to strike out. We may take anger and use it to attack, or to blame or to judge. How many times have you heard an expression like, "You made me angry." Well, I'm here to tell you that the only one who can make us angry is the Lord. And he's doing it for our spiritual health that we may pay attention to Him, and to have the adrenaline necessary to turn inward and find the direction the Lord would have us go.

It's a funny thing about anger. When we hold that anger, and do not move on from it, it does not go away; it becomes a grudge. Do you know what a grudge is? It's anger that has been aged in the soul. When you hold a grudge you can push a little button on the psychospiritual part of yourself and you can bring an event—which may be days, weeks, months, years, decades old—right into the room, can't you? So, if you're holding a grudge, if you haven't sought the meaning of the anger from the Lord, you may be physically present, but in time you are removed from those around you. And that's where the sadness and the grief come into play. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Sadness marks the time when we have learned the meaning of the anger, and discovered the Lord's purpose in giving it to us, and have let ourselves grieve. This leads us into the emotion of joy.

Joy

Joy is the voice of the Lord telling us why we are here, where we fit within the creation. Knowing what our purpose in life is, comes from this joy, which follows the fear, the anger and the grief. These four emotions are a complete cycle.

At the Wayfarers Chapel when I'm meeting with couples wanting to

be married, I tell them about these emotions. I figure they may experience them somewhere in their married life—and I tell them that as they approach the day of their wedding, they may become nervous, and fearful. They might find that they're snapping a little at each other because the future is becoming the present. And as soon as their wedding album arrives from the photographer and they look at it, they're going to cry, and feel the joy of the Lord's gift of marriage love. From fear, to anger, to sadness, to joy, in this experience of their lives. And it works in other ways too.

Moving Through the Process

I'm thinking very much today of our experience at this convention, as many of us were a little apprehensive about coming. We knew there was going to be a full discussion on Temenos, and there may have been some fear within us. I know there was fear within me. Questions like, "What is this going to do to our church?" and "What is this going to do to friendships?" haunted many of us. There may have been some anger for those people living a little closer to it than I have been. Thoughts such as *What about my ministry?* *What about my dreams?* *What about my friends?* But I want to celebrate our church because somewhere along the line someone thought to stop and to pray about this situation and the Lord led us through a process. Our Lord led us to a solution which leaves our church one body and not fragmented. Now there may be some sadness for what is taking place within this process. This is good! Because it marks change and growth and hopefully following that will come the joy of that experience.

It works in other ways too, this path of emotions, the Shepherd's voice leading us. Take an issue like HIV infection. This can be a very fearful thing, and I know many of us have experienced that fear within us. Fear: *What if I were to be infected?* *What if I had to be with someone who is infected?* *What if I actually have to thank about this?* All these

(Continued on page 104)

The Shepherd's Voice

(Continued from page 103)

various forms of fear surround us. And some may fall asleep as did the disciples—I don't think I'll worry about this. It can't hurt me. It's not my problem. You've all heard similar comments around this issue. Or maybe, like the Pharisees in the other story, we choose to remain silent. And others might turn inward, asking the Lord, *Why am I fearful? What is it I am to learn from this?* There may be anger around this issue. *This is your fault! Why do I have to deal with this? Why did I have to become infected? It's their fault; let them deal with it!* We can fall into blame and judgment or lovingly, as our Lord did, we can come to accept our fear and anger, and to go through the grief, so that we can come to the healing.

And that's what happened in the story of the man with the withered hand, isn't it? The Lord looked upon them with anger, *saddened* for the hardness of their hearts, and he reached out and made the man whole again.

How the Covenant Works

If we will accept these emotions, as the Shepherd's voice calling and leading us, not as something to back away from, and not falling asleep, nor remaining silent, but turning inward in prayer, finding what to do and then taking action as our Lord Jesus did in the synagogue; these emotions give us a great deal of power. For we know the presence of the Lord within us. We can seek the direction the Lord would have us take. And we, as Jesus did, can bring healing to all kinds of issues which confront us. Fear, anger,

sadness, and healing joy are all the voice of the one God calling us. The voice of the Shepherd, if we dare to follow and to be part of the Lord's flock. This is part of the covenant. It is the way the covenant works. Because the covenant is not a static document. It is not like the Constitution that has to be amended by act of Congress and ratification by the states. It is constantly evolving as the Lord, with us, leads us through it in all events of our lives.

The covenant is living, it is changing, it is growing. We as individuals are living, we are changing, we are growing.

And all praise be to the Lord God Jesus Christ who reigns in this new age, our church is living, and it is changing and it is growing.

The Rev. Carl Yenetchi ministers at Wayfarers Chapel in Rancho Palos Verdes, California.

San Francisco Welcomes Convention '95 and Celebrates Its Centennial



Above: Co-minister Rachel Rivers welcomes three busloads of visitors to the San Francisco church.

Below: The lighting of the candles.

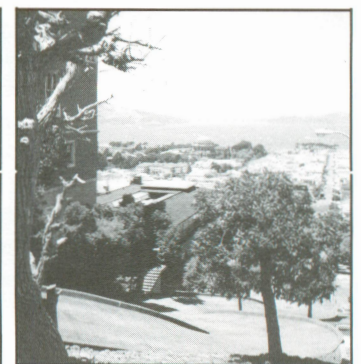


Archivist and Historian John Gaul, aided and encouraged by Jim Lawrence, spent months prior to Convention compiling a slide show of the San Francisco church as it was in the process of being built. The slides were made from century-old drawings and photos, found in the chancel area, which no one had seen or known about for 100 years. Subsequent research in the archives of the local library turned up more treasures. The slide show was presented for the first time to conventioners visiting the church on Saturday, July 8. John claimed that up to that time no one but his cat had viewed the final product. The show was preceded by a medley of classics plays exquisitely by organist and choir director Garrett Collins on the church's new digital organ. A reception in the parish house followed.



Above: Historian John Gaul rings the antique bell in the church garden.

Below: Guests and hosts chat in the chancel.



Below: Manon Washburn, president of the Los Angeles church, sketching the flowers in the San Francisco church. "... while drawing, your seeing is so intensified that the image that falls on the retina travels through every cell of your organism until it activates the hand and its extension, the pen, that traces—as if it were a seismographic needle—the tremors of the retina, to form the graph we call "a drawing." —Frederick Franck, "Behind the Mask," Parabola, Summer 1995.



Editor's Note:

Carole Rienstra was invited to be guest speaker at the Alliance of New Church Women's annual luncheon meeting. When Carole discovered that her new cancer treatments would prevent them from joining us in San Francisco, she and Dave made a video which was shown at the Alliance luncheon. It began with an introduction by Dave and a brief tour of the gardens at the St. Louis church. The following article is the script of her presentation. Thank you, Carole, for your courageous and thoughtful gift to all of us.



A Journey with Cancer

Carole Rienstra

It's so good to be able to be with you in some way and to have a chance for you all to see us and how much these gardens, which I love so much, have grown since you were last here in 1992. I feel so privileged to take care of them, to be a part of the beauty and joy they give to all who come here. They are a memorial to Kay Peterson, and I feel they reflect her spirit. Kay was a lady who also had cancer and managed to arrest her disease for sixteen years by developing her own special nutritional path, even to the extent of starting her own store, which I now visit weekly for some of my own tonics and herbs!

I'm so glad you can see that I am alive and well, and if it were not for this six-week treatment of radiation, we would be with you in San Francisco. Cancer is still such a scary word. This year in the United States alone, 183,000 women will learn they have breast cancer. One in eight has a risk of developing this disease. It has become an epidemic. Some experts suspect pesticide exposure, but more studies are needed. They do know it has something to do with genes. But when it is caught early, it is highly treatable. For most of the past six years I have managed the treatment quite well. I want to take the sting out of the statistics and replace it with serendipity . . . serendipity and hope.

A Persian fairy tale tells about the three Princes of Serendip. These three princes frequently journeyed to other countries and very often unexpectedly stumbled across things of great value. In 1754, Sir Horace

Walpole reflected on this tale and coined a word for this propensity for finding valuable things unexpectedly: *serendipity*. We might call it being in Divine Providence. And so I speak to you today from my own journals of my journey with cancer and share with you what I have stumbled upon—what it has really been like—the seasons of highs and lows, ups and downs, hopes and despairs, and always finding valuable things, unexpectedly.

Traveling as we all do on the road of life, we don't always have the choice of direction, but we do have something to say about how we will travel; I came across a quote which says, "Life is 10% of what happens to us and 90% of how we react." How will we manage if we become victim to a disease we certainly don't choose to have? How will we discover what gives our life meaning? As Swedenborgians, we are always *talking about priorities*. Well, my friends, *nothing* so concentrates experience and clarifies living as a serious, life threatening disease. Also, as a Swedenborgian, I feel selective for I strongly believe in life after death, so death is not as much my enemy as pain and suffering. Pain and suffering for me and for what it does to those who have to watch me. So in the decisions I have been faced with, difficult and soul-wrenching decisions about treatment, I have thought a lot about quality of life and not just length of it. And keeping these journals has helped me to be honest; to allow myself to be, and to say, *I am frightened*; to express the fear, for the fear is only an aspect of myself, not the total me, and expressing it gives way to what can come next, the laughter and joy. Expressing the pain and anger by writing about it has given me an op-

portunity to look at it and turn it around, or rather wait and let God turn it around, for I believe when we are in a state of chaos, only the Lord can regain order. So I have written and waited and always I have been visited by angels.

Let me give you a specific example. In the Metropolitan Square building, one of the largest in downtown St. Louis, where I work on the 24th floor at the law firm of Newburger & Vossmeier, there is a Wall Street Deli where I sometimes have lunch. It is a cold, dreary, rainy day and I am having lunch with my book on bone marrow transplant. Some of you may recall it was a year ago the cancer returned after a mastectomy in 1988 and six months adjuvant chemotherapy. I had regular checkups and almost learned to wake up and get through a day without thinking about the cancer returning! But last year at one of those regular checkups, I complained about a backache that wouldn't go away. This led my competent oncologist to order an x-ray, which led to a discovery of a spot on the rib and a quick visit to the surgeon for removal of a tumor and portion of my fifth rib and chemotherapy. This chemotherapy for me has not been a difficult way of life. They give you an anti-nausea drug first and I can honestly say I have never spent horrible times retching in the bathroom. I was probably much sicker when pregnant the first few months than I have ever been taking chemo. It does make me tired, and I did lose all my hair with the drug they gave me this time around. That was devastating for me, but I have learned that wearing a wig has advantages and my hair is almost all back now, so I can take
(Continued on page 106)

Journey with Cancer

(Continued from page 105)

this off and feel better about looking in the mirror.

But let's go back to that dreary day at the deli and reading this horrible book on bone marrow transplant. The description of how sick I would be for two months for a 30% chance of it even working at all, with no long-term statistics on whether the cancer might still return, and at the cost of nearly \$100,000, which at that time my insurance would not cover, really did make me sick! Sick and scared; it brought tears as I read what I really knew all along, that women with Stage IV breast cancer may not have very long to live. Until that day I'm not sure I realized what I was facing. Until that day I think I was only going through the motions. From that day on I started visiting the library regularly and joined the Wellness Community, a wonderful support organization for all cancer patients. The Wellness Community offers everything from participatory groups, which I attend weekly, to yoga, nutrition lectures, meditation groups, ask-the-doctor sessions—everything free of charge. Divine Providence, I feel, also sent a bottle of Essiac Tea from Canada, a tonic which claims to have healed or helped many cancer patients (I take it regularly along with a Chinese herb, Astragalus, good for the immune system, and LaPacho powder, which claims to aid the immune system.) The phone also rang with support calls from so many church friends and friends of friends and a nutritionist who counseled me and sent me just the right books to read. One book was about a woman whose case scenario was so much like mine. She had the bone marrow transplant, nearly died of pneumonia, and found the transplant didn't even work. Letters and cards began arriving that seemed to say just the right thing at the right time. We had our church retreat with a workshop on journeying, and I found a new friend, an angel guiding me to write just as the angel to John on the Isle of Patmos, who said *write*, and I did, and I finally came to my answer. So although Dave and I both went to the bone marrow transplant doctor and really gave it consideration, I came to know through my journal that somehow

it just wasn't for me, and I turned that treatment down.

We don't always
have the choice of
direction, but we do
have something to say
about how we
will travel.

Instead of two months in the hospital, we took some wonderful trips together, spending quality time, most of it free from any intense pain or suffering. I have taken time to read some incredible books such as Thomas Moore's *Care of the Soul*, *Remarkable Recovery* by Hirsburg, Norman Cousins' *Anatomy of an Illness* and *Hope First*, the *Mind Body Series* by Bill Moyers; *Perfect Health*, *Ageless Body*, *Timeless Mind*, *Seven Spiritual Laws* and the *Mind Body and Soul* video all by Deepak Chopra, M.D. (author of *Quantum Healing*) and learned there are many things cancer cannot do: "It is really limited; it cannot cripple love, it cannot shatter hope, it cannot corrode faith, it cannot eat away peace, it cannot destroy confidence, it cannot kill friendship, it cannot shut out memories, it cannot silence courage, it cannot invade the soul, it cannot reduce eternal life, it cannot quench the spirit, it cannot lessen the power of the resurrection"—not unless I let it—which I won't.

What this disease *has done for me* has made me define my belief system, for I believe healing is activated by one's belief. And so I have celebrated life. I have a deeper appreciation for every minute of it. I have spent more time enjoying music, poetry, art, gardening, loving the sky and the raindrops and children's faces and the smell of the seashore. We have danced at our son David's recent wedding and eagerly await with Katie the birth of our first grandchild in December. I witness daily the incredible love and devotion of my husband who shows just how much he cares in, oh, so

many ways, as do all of my family and friends. One positive aspect of this and other life-threatening diseases is that people are more aware of given opportunities to do or say something nice, of time to let others know they care, and what a difference it does make. Those are truly the greatest gifts you can give, letting the sick know you care and that their life makes a difference.

I have learned to accept that everything will not always turn out the way I wish, but that I will be able to make some sense of however it turns out, and that every thought is a prayer and the single most powerful tool I have is the combination of belief, willpower, and heart. I have need to stay part of the Western medicine establishment, but I have kept my doctor aware of my need for the spiritual dimension of me and my awareness of the use of herbs and nutrition and the study of alternative ways. Much like those persons who have made a spontaneous remission (in the book *Remarkable Recovery*), I have incorporated the three Cs into my life. I have remained *committed* to being responsible and aware of my illness . . . to rise to the *challenge* and to *control* the type of treatment I receive, not just submit without thinking through what is going on. And I am *committed* to having fun, to a spirit of competition with conquering this disease. I am *committed* to an excellent relationship with my doctor, my husband and family and friends, and to a childlike belief in prayer and sense of worth and purpose in life. I accept the diagnosis, but not the prognosis. I always try to see myself healing and believe in living until I die and then when I die it will only be my body, for this spirit of life, abundant life, that God has given me can and will always remain alive. As Goethe says, "We always hope, in all things it is better to hope than to despair. When we return to real trust in God there will be no longer room in our soul for fear."

So trust in God, ladies, and do not fear the disease. Get your mammograms, do your self-examinations, and even if you are diagnosed with cancer, know that if I can manage to live with this disease, so can you! □

CONVENTION SCENES



Ordination



*Alliance President
Lee Dyer*



Linda Tafel (right, center) translates spouses' group discussions into French for Evelynne Duvivier.

Alliance of New Church Women Elections, 1995-96

President: Leone Dyer
1st Vice President: Mary Crenshaw
2nd Vice President: Brenda Hollweger
Secretary: Esther Nicasastro-Capon
Treasurer: Margaret Kraus
Mite Box Chair: Pamela Selensky
Religious Chair: Nadine Cotton
Round Robin Chair: Merrilee Phinney
Publications Chair: Phyllis Bosley
Nominating Committee 2000:
Jeanette Hille

*Nominating Committee Chair 1995
Josephine Covern*

<i>Barbara Penabaker</i>	'96
<i>Marty Mason</i>	'97
<i>Dorothy Webster</i>	'98
<i>Susan Poole</i>	'99



Evelynne and Patrick Duvivier with old Boston buddy Dorothy deB. Young.



From left: Dodi Donnelly, this year's leader for spouses' group; Perry Martin, Susan Poole, Elizabeth Johnson.



*A lighter moment at Alliance luncheon—
From left, back row: Verda and Deborah Winter (Deborah's Mom), Anne Perry Sharon Slough, Betsy Coffman, Muff Worden, Betsy's mother Elizabeth Johnson. Front row: Dorothea Harvey, Patty Thompson, Chris Laitner.*



Phyllis Bosley, vice-president and convention organizer (She was moving too fast to stay in frame).



*Part of local convention committee who helped make it all happen.
(From left) Linda McNerney, Ross Fish, Vivian Wood, John Gaul, Margaret Culver, and Lisa Daniels.*

Love is What Makes Us Happen

Commencement Address (Abridged) — Swedenborg School of Religion
July 7, 1995, San Francisco State University



Dorothea Harvey

We are celebrating tonight, with Kinichi and Renee and Kit, the completion of a theological education for ministry in our church. Theological education is not just an academic process. When I spoke here in San Francisco at Eric Allison's graduation in 1977, my next door neighbor in Urbana was dying. I knew then, vividly, that Eric's education was pointless if it could not help him find the personal strength to be present with a neighbor who was dying.

Preparation for ministry is not a matter of the intellect alone, but of course does not rule out the use of the mind. We have a tradition in our church and in our theological school of support for freedom of investigation, for rigorous scholarship with all the power of the intellect, for joy in the use of the mind. Solid study of our doctrines, of theological issues of all kinds, of other faiths as well as ours; the best of the academics is rightly part of Swedenborgian theological education.

So we are celebrating tonight also, with Kit Billings and Nadine Cotton and Jonathan Mitchell, the completion of their study for the M.A. in Swedenborgian Studies. This kind of use of the mind is rightly *part* of the Swedenborgian tradition—hopeless, of course, if we try to go with intellect alone. For Swedenborg, wisdom is not the basis for philosophy. For him the ultimate reality, the Divine, is love itself, and wisdom the expression of that love, which brings it into action, into existence in this world. Love is not just some kind of pleasant feeling. It is intention moving into actual happening

in order to be real. Thought or wisdom is not just technical skill or cleverness. It is the expression of a love or an intention. Without these two coming together, nothing would happen, and nothing could be understood. And so, I am thankful that we have a second tradition in our church and in our school: without love as the base, without the willingness to be present with God, with ourselves, and with our neighbor, no learning, no depth of thinking about doctrine, is of use.

And how can a theological education make love happen? It *cannot*, of course. It can insist that people work with people. Our students spend a great deal of time in every year of study, working in parish or other pastoral settings. But what technique can they learn to make sure that love happens? Obviously, none. If love is ultimate reality, love is what makes us happen. We can receive it. We can respond to it. But there is nothing we can do to put it under our control, to make ourselves or anyone else love.

So, how can we educate people to do a job which is humanly impossible to do?

Again I am thankful for our church's tradition. Swedenborg was an honest and careful enough recorder of his experience to let us know how he responded to this issue. Van Dusen's edition of *Swedenborg's Journal of Dreams*, shows Swedenborg's struggle with this side of experience. He says:

I stood behind a machine, that was set in motion by a wheel; the spokes entangled me more and more and carried me up so that it was impossible to escape. . .

Wilson Van Dusen comments:

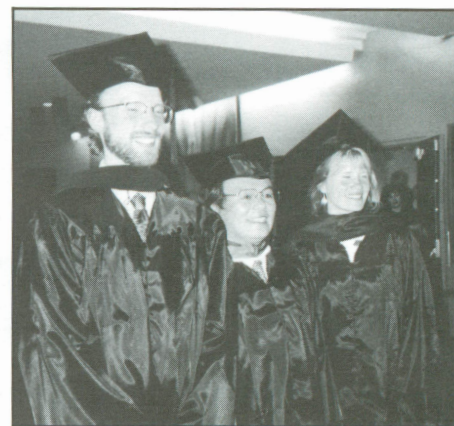
The implication for this mining engineer who designed machinery is that he could look at the machine

and study its workings . . . He only intended just to stand beside this big thing turning in him and observe it and write it down. But instead he is entangled and carried up against his will. It is more involving than he expected, and it sweeps him up against his will. He can't be both the detached scientist and also get involved and carried up. (Journal of Dreams 23)

Some months later Swedenborg recorded "a vision that fine bread on a plate was presented to me." He comments, "this was a sign that the Lord himself will instruct me since I have now come first into the condition that I know nothing, and all preconceived judgments are taken away from me; which is where learning commences: namely, first to be a child and thus be nursed into knowledge, as is the case with me now." (JD 156)

After long, serious effort to find the order in the universe, to put things into a pattern he could see and understand, Swedenborg was experiencing a new way of knowing. He says about his understanding of the Bible:

(Continued on page 109)



Kit Billings, Kinichi Kuniyeda, Renee Billings Morris

Dorothea Harvey:*(Continued from page 108)*

The Word is like a garden, that may be called a heavenly paradise, in which are delicacies and charms of every kind . . . The person who leads himself or herself forms an opinion of that paradise, which is the Word, from its circumference, where the trees of the forest are; but the one whom the Lord leads forms an opinion from the middle of it, where the trees of life are. The one whom the Lord leads is actually in the middle of it, and looks to the Lord; but the one who leads himself or herself actually sits down at the circumference, and looks away from it to the world (Apocalypse Explained 1072).

For him to express this difference poetic language is called for; the language of mystical experience, of direct encounter with the spiritual side. Swedenborg was no longer looking to find the order. The order had found him. Love is what makes us happen.

Students have asked before for some emphasis on this side of the learning experience. This side is one we are taking seriously at the school. All students take a course in spirituality, not so much to learn about other great Christian mystics, as well as Swedenborg, but to take time to read them, to be in their presence, to feel their spirit. We have offered also a course in Eastern spirituality, as compared with Swedenborg's. We are planning to expand this area, to do more with Swedenborg's own spirituality, and to add a course in helping our students learn to facilitate spiritual experience for others, to do more to bring it into the life of their churches.

How can we educate people to do a job which is humanly impossible to do?

I think there are four things we can do: We can use our minds to teach the distinctive doctrines of our church as clearly and intelligently as possible. We can let our students know the primacy of love in human understanding, experiencing and reflecting on their interaction with human beings. We can see that they encounter the spiritual experience of Swedenborg and other great mystics for themselves. And then we can do a fourth thing. We can stop trying to do. We can let go.

What I am saying is nothing new.

It is part of all Christian experience, and of world-wide religious experience.

Theological education is not something we can do. If we are open to it, we will know when the Spirit finds us. Ministers find themselves in positions of trust. We have been speaking in our Council of Ministers meetings of the awesome responsibility of leadership in something so much bigger than we are. I thank God for a fourth tradition in our church and in our school: Theological education is not something we do. We participate in it. And to that extent, it happens. Our use of our mind, our willingness to love, our awareness of the mystical, are grounded in the reality of Spirit as their base. We can stop doing long enough to let God's Spirit touch us. It is God's Spirit, God's Love that makes us and any education happen.

The Rev. Dr. Dorothea Harvey is part-time professor of Theology and Worship at the Swedenborg School of Religion.

On Love's Superhighway*Renee Morris*

Someone came up to me the opening day of convention and said that one day not long ago he was surfing on the internet when surprisingly he got a hot newflash—Renee Morris is going to the Royal Oak church!

I have not yet familiarized myself with this advanced form of communication, but it was quite a thrill to hear that news of my ministry was making its way along the communication superhighway.

It was a thrill because I realized that I belong to this church that I love so much and that my life is interconnected with all of your lives. We all belong to each other and we all belong to the Lord. What a wonderful thing.

Briefly, I would like to acknowledge a few of the people who deeply affected my life as I prepared for the ministry and walked my path of spiritual growth.

First of all, I want to thank my husband, Tracy, for his willingness to go through so much and to give up so much so that I could live my dream. I want to thank the SSR Board of Trustees and faculty—Mary Kay Klein,

George Dole, Dorothea Harvey, Ted Klein, Wilma Wake, and Bill Woofenden—and Pat Bowen, for her unique and valued contribution to my living understanding of what it means to care.

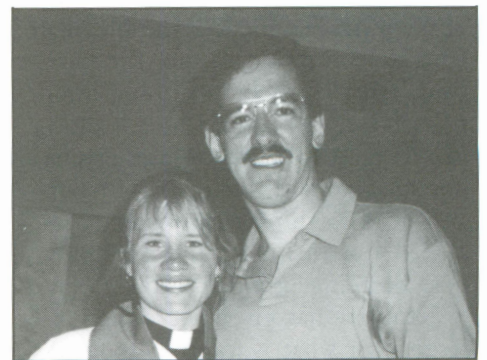
I am grateful for the care and training I received from my field education supervisors—Donna Keane, Steve Ellis, Sue Turley—Moore, Steve Pults, Gard Perry, David Sonmor and Joyce King, my community component supervisor at the Renewal House Battered Women's Shelter.

My love and thanks to Kit and Kinichi for their companionship and support throughout the past four years at SSR and to all my fellow students who shared their journeys with me and who loved me through my journey. I had the privilege of facilitating an SSR women's group this year and I would like to voice my love for the individuals in the group who helped to awaken and celebrate my feminine spirit in relationship with those around me and to my Creator.

I am grateful to my brother Quint, for being himself. His presence is healing to me. And finally, I thank my mom and dad for sharing so openly their spiritual journeys and for setting me free to discover my own. I have felt your love so clearly, and I thank the Lord for giving me you.

This love from my family expands into friendships and colleagues and now with my church. And the Lord is the source of all the goodness given to me and shared through my life . . . thank you, Lord.

The Rev. Renee Morris began her ministry at the Royal Oak, Michigan Swedenborgian Church in August.



Renee and Tracy Morris

Editor's Note: Kit began his speech with expressions of gratitude to his parents, John and Sharon, his grandmother Gwen Billings, and the staff and board of trustees at SSR for their support and encouragement. He also mentioned a special moment at Almont with the Rev. Steve Pults that was a turning point in his decision to enter the ministry.

Parish Life: Another Means of Facilitating Regeneration

Kit Billings

I'm called to parish ministry because a parish setting offers people several key forms of ministry, each impacting how we experience and express the two greatest commandments the Lord gave us to consider. Jesus said,

'You shall love the Lord your God with *all* your heart, and with *all* your soul, and with *all* your mind, and with *all* your strength.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And the second is like it: '*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*'

A parish offers an ongoing community where the potential exists to express real charity and engage in open, vulnerable relationships; it's a place for worship of the Divine, reflection, prayer, and spiritual healing; and it's an environment where practical religious education and learning may be organized and developed.

The theological reason I chose to become a member of the Swedenborgian Church is that it strongly addresses the depths of the Divine; the deep, inner experiences the Incarnate Lord went through in life; the beautiful, tantalizing and gripping internal sense of Scripture I love learning about; depths of the human psyche; our struggle with hell; and our gift and need to think clearly and rationally. All of this is for the final purpose of being useful to others.

Seminary has given me more respect for what is internal about people, young and old—such as passionate joy, mystically grounded peace, despair and loneliness, in-

tellectual precision, and wise productivity. Spirituality involves a *felt* sense of depth, engaging the feeling, deep "Self" God plans us to be; and our need to *connect*, and understand really painful experiences in life.

I promise to honor our basic need for personal freedom, which is our gift from the Divine for all time. I promise to honor our internal difficulties. Many of us may suffer from historic unhealed wounds that still persist in their fully alive state, meshing with our unregenerate affections that keep us concerned only for ourselves and material things. And, I promise to honor our playful, creative, and image-oriented spirit, which is deeply fed into our souls by the Lord Himself!

These subjects are the focus of my master's thesis entitled, "The Vital Role of Affections in Regeneration: A Dialogue Between Swedenborgian Thought and Primal Theory." Primal psychology is a "feelings-based" paradigm utilizing neurophysiological research, looking primarily at the effects of early physical and emotional trauma on the mind and body. Like Swedenborg's view, primal psychology looks at the importance of connecting feelings with thoughts, expressing them in behavior; i.e., to know the truth of our full life experience. (My approach will be as a minister, not a psychotherapist.)

Spiritual communities are in critical need of an atmosphere of safety so that we may relate what we truly feel and think inside. My vision of parish life sees it as another means of facilitating regeneration.

As communities discover courageous regeneration involving a passionate understanding of the two great commandments the Lord gave us, awesome and interesting things take place! My intention is to be a fellow traveler and responsible pastor in our church. I am in this for the long haul! Thank you, everyone, for believing in me. I'll do my best to speak honestly from love, and do only what makes sense to me in the light of the Lord's Word as seen through the teachings of the New Church.

The Rev. Kit Billings has been called to the Virginia Street Church in St. Paul, Minnesota, and begins his parish ministry there in September.



John Billings' grandson Reece views graduates from the best seat in the house.

Japanese and North American Swedenborgianism: Looking to the Next Generation

Kinichi Kuniyeda

Graduation speech (abridged)

I feel deeply the divine providence of having my ordination in San Francisco for several reasons. Many years ago, The Rev. Kei Torita, currently the only active Swedenborgian minister in Japan, stayed at the current vice-president Phyllis Bosley's house, where I stayed last summer for a Swedenborgian Center experience. My mentor, the third ordained Swedenborgian minister in Japan, the late Rev. Yuzo Noda, stayed in California for his final year in the United States. The second ordained minister, the late Rev. Yonezo Doi had as colleague the Rev. Othmar Tobish while staying in the New Church Theological School in Cambridge, Massachusetts. This relationship created an opportunity for the Tokyo New Church to build its building. And the first ordained minister, the Rev. Isamu Watanabe, established the first music school to teach Western music, through the donation of a San Francisco church member, just 70 years ago.

Many kinds of support for Japan have been given by the North American Swedenborgians in San Francisco, California. I feel that I am attending this commencement through these historical incidents.

These four years I have also received much support from many American people. Kit and Renee, who graduate with me, were very supportive peers while helping me to finish this ordination track. And Tracy Morris, the husband of Renee, tutored almost all my papers. Tracy studied deeply Swedenborg theology and philosophy with me, so I think that Tracy also can graduate from SSR and receive the ordination with me!



Kinichi with Ms. Doi, daughter of the late Rev. Yonezo Doi, Akido Noda, widow of the Rev. Yuzo Noda, and Kinichi's son, Kenji, who came from Japan to see him ordained.



Last November, I returned to Japan for three weeks for my research. At that time, one Swedenborgian meeting was held. There were about thirty people gathered from all over Japan. I talked with several Japanese Swedenborgian leaders. They asked me many theological questions. Surprisingly, I could answer all of them. While I had been in Newton, inferiority feelings always caught me, because theological and philosophical trainings were held by discussions, reading resources and writing papers. Among the native English speakers I struggled to speak my thoughts and points of view. So when I could answer all the questions posed by the Japanese Swedenborgians with self-confidence, I was surprised.

I will return to Honolulu because my Clinical Pastoral Education still continues at the Hawaii state mental hospital until the beginning of September. Then I will return to Japan and begin my mission in Tokyo. I will think of changing the order of worship, because I think that the current worship program which is now used in the Tokyo New Church does not attract young people. I will set up study groups and

prayer groups in the church. At the same time my friend and I have established a small school for the dropout children in the mountain area, 220 miles west of Tokyo. So I will manage this school. The families of these children will be invited to the church community. I am planning to establish some counseling workshops. I received two invitation letters to become a chaplain at a general hospital and a hospice in Japan. There are so many possibilities in front of me. So the most important issue will become the caregiving for myself, the caregiver!

As a Swedenborgian ordained minister, I feel my use is to raise leaders for the next generation. I wish, a few years from now, to send at least one young Japanese Swedenborgian to SSR. I hope SSR has more experience for receiving foreign students.

Finally, I promise you Kei Torita and I will send annual reports about Japanese Swedenborgian activities. I would like to seek a healthy relationship between the Japanese and North American Swedenborgian churches. I pray for North American Swedenborgian churches, so please pray for us.

Council of Ministers Report

The Council of Ministers met from July 2-5, 1995, at San Francisco State University attended by approximately 34 ministers, five students from the Swedenborg School of Religion and several guests including Bishop Joseph and Virginia Vredenburg from the St. Thomas Church who shared a Liturgy to Swedenborg followed by a presentation on their tradition.

Other highlights included a session led by the Rev. John and Sharon Billings on facilitating the sharing of spirituality within congregations; a workshop on conflict management by the Revs. Eric Allison and Ron Brugler; a presentation by the Rev. David Johnson, the Rev. Dr. Ted Klein, and the Rev. Dr. Wilma Wake on basic concepts about clergy ethics, and the Rev. Patrick and Evelyne Duvivier provided a devotional in the style reflective of their ministry in France.

The Procedures Committee presented a second draft of the Suggested Procedures for Handling Allegations of Misconduct Against our Ordained Ministers or Lay Leaders. It was adopted for one year with the agreement that further revisions are needed to be presented for final adoption next year.

The following motions were passed:

A committee, named Spiritual Life Enrichment, be formed with at least three members to explore how the COM might assist Swedenborgian ministers to help congregates develop a spiritual life in the home.

The COM shall recommend to General Council that a member of PMSU be added to the Ministerial Placement Committee to serve along with the president of the denomination, the president of SSR and the chair of COM.

After a presentation by the Rev. Dick and Linda Tafel on their trip to Korea, specifically their visit to the Swedenborgian Church, the following was passed . . .

To endorse our expression of our gratitude for the Swedenborgian Church of Korea and their leadership's devotion in the form of a plaque or certificate to be presented on the floor of Convention.

The Rev. W. Comptom English to serve the Guyana Society for one year under his present ordination while pursuing recognition of his ordination by contacting SSR and CAM.

The COM reaffirms Rev. Patrick Duvivier as a valued minister, whose ministry we support and who remains in good standing with the Council of Ministers.

The ExCOM request of the Cabinet clarification on placement in the Support Unit system of Convention foreign ministries.

Responding to the many questions concerning the denomination's relationship with foreign ministries the following was recommended:

We have an immense amount to discover and learn about how our theology is lived in other cultures and we believe that it is the responsibility of our denomination to help our sisters and brothers in the foreign field where possible. We recommend to General Council that it takes such steps as it deems best to improve reliable and ongoing communication with and support of affiliated Swedenborgian bodies overseas. One possible means would be to facilitate establishing sister church relationships with those who traditionally have had ties with our denomination. We also request that General Council investigate the availability of restricted funds for this purpose.

That CAM be the COM body to handle applications of induction into our ministry.

That ExCOM begin the process of establishing guidelines for CAM to use when considering applicants for induction into our ministry.

That the COM recommends to General Council the implementation of the enclosed agreement (in principle and after legal counsel review) between our denomination and the Swedenborgian Church at Temenos at the earliest moment. (See insert at right)

The following closing paragraph for the Vision Statement of a Healthy Swedenborgian Church was adopted:

The Council of Ministers is grateful to General Church for the challenge to think through what the priorities are for our church. We give you this response to your challenge, hoping that it will be helpful to you in your thinking about using the church's resources in the most productive way.

In response to the request for guidance concerning the celebration of same-sex unions, the COM offers the following:

In accordance with the principle that "charity is acting with prudence to the end that good may result," each minister is called to the most honest assessment possible of the probable effects of her or his decision and to acceptance of responsibility for those effects. These include effects on the local church as well as on the couple and the minister; and the one specific boundary we can presently identify as universal is that the church premises should not be used without the fully informed consent of the congregation.

Since legal status of such unions is presently under debate, ministers are urged to keep accurate records of any such ceremonies performed.

Mr. Lee Woofenden's Vision of Ministry was accepted and Mr. Kit Billings, Mrs.

Renee Billings Morris and Mr. Kinichi Kuniyeda were approved for recommendation for ordination.

ELECTION RESULTS:

Executive Committee of COM:

Rev. John Billings

Committee on Admission into the

Ministry: Rev. Skuli Thorhallsson

1996 Convention Preacher:

Rev. Dr. Horand Gutfeldt,

Rev. Robert Kirven, alternate.

—Rev. Susan Turley-Moore, Secretary

Temenos Agreement

The following agreement was drafted by the Council of Ministers and submitted to General Convention July 5, 1995. The vote by Convention was to authorize General Council to negotiate wording of a final agreement based on this draft. General Council voted to delegate this task to the Executive Committee.

TEMENOS AGREEMENT

AGREEMENT Between the Swedenborgian Church at Temenos (aka the Philadelphia Swedenborgian Church, aka First New Jerusalem Society of Philadelphia), hereinafter referred to as the Swedenborgian Church at Temenos, and the Swedenborgian Church (aka the Church of the New Jerusalem in the United States and Canada, Inc.), hereinafter referred to as the Denomination.

INTRODUCTION

Three intentionalities were the driving force behind this written agreement:

1. to have no more funds of the Denomination invested in the Temenos project.
2. to enable the Temenos project to proceed.
3. to build on the Proposal of the Swedenborgian Church at Temenos dated June 17, 1995, and continue the process of reconciliation within the Denomination.

PREAMBLE

1. The Denomination supports the Swedenborgian Church at Temenos' vision and involvement in the Temenos project, started and supported up to this date by the Denomination and by the Swedenborgian Church at Temenos.
2. The Denomination recognized the generosity of the Swedenborgian Church at Temenos in its several gifts to the Denomination, such as the American New Church Tract and Publication Society (\$326,752.99), the Library Fund (\$52,242.52), the Blake Bell Fund (producing income of between \$16,000 and

(Continued on page 113)

Temenos Agreement (Cont.)

\$23,000 annually) and certainly the funding, both past and promised, for the Temenos project.

3. The Denomination recognizes and welcomes the latest proposal from the Swedenborgian Church at Temenos regarding the Temenos project, dated June 17, 1995.

4. The Denomination recognizes the eagerness of the Swedenborgian Church at Temenos to get the Temenos project moving forward.

Therefore, the Denomination responds affirmatively and sets forth in writing this agreement with the Swedenborgian Church at Temenos regarding the Temenos project:

AGREEMENT

1. The Swedenborgian Church at Temenos shall assume all funding for building and operational expenses from this date [date agreement is signed], forward, using its own funds and financial resources from the sale of its church property in Philadelphia, and will request no further financial support from the Denomination for operational or capital expenses for the Temenos project. This commitment, together with other pledges and bequests, will enable the Temenos project to approach major foundations for capital grants to complete the "Temenos Challenge" campaign.

2. The Temenos board shall be appropriately reorganized and the governance, structure, and operation put in the hands of the Swedenborgian Church at Temenos.

3. The separate legal standing of Temenos shall be merged with the Swedenborgian Church at Temenos, or eliminated, leaving one legal entity governing Temenos: that is, the Swedenborgian Church at Temenos.

4. The Denomination will render the services of its good offices to the Swedenborgian Church at Temenos in the same manner as to any of its other church congregations.

5. The Denomination will hold a recorded first mortgage on the Temenos property in the amount of the Denomination's equity as of the date of the signing of this agreement.

This mortgage shall initially be interest-free, the repayment schedule to be established through negotiation. As long as the Swedenborgian Church at Temenos remains an active Swedenborgian Church, the Denomination will not call or foreclose on the mortgage, nor interfere with the internal operations of the Swedenborgian Church at Temenos. The title to the property at Temenos shall be held by the Swedenborgian Church at Temenos.

6. The Swedenborgian Church at Temenos may not encumber the Temenos property or buildings with any other mortgage or debt without prior written consent of the General Council of the

Denomination.

7. In the event the Swedenborgian Church at Temenos wishes to cease its operations at the Temenos property, the Temenos property shall be sold, with the proceeds of the sale used first to pay off the mortgage held by the Denomination. Or the Denomination may negotiate with the Swedenborgian Church at Temenos to purchase the equity position of the Swedenborgian Church at Temenos.

8. The provision by the Swedenborgian Church of Temenos for disposition of its assets, "that if the Philadelphia Church should close or become inactive, its assets shall revert to the General Convention," (language taken from "Proposal" of June 17, 1995, by the Swedenborgian Church at Temenos), is made part of this agreement.

CONCLUSION

The Denomination expresses its appreciation to the Swedenborgian Church at Temenos for its generous offer to assume responsibility for and proceed with the Temenos project. □

GENERAL COUNCIL REPORT

General Council met July 5 (pre-convention) and July 8, 1995 (post-convention). Actions taken:

- Authorized the Executive Committee to renegotiate and expedite an appropriate agreement with the Swedenborgian Church at Temenos on the basis of the agreement approved by Convention on July 6. (see previous page).
- Accepted an invitation from the Kansas Association for Convention 1997.
- Confirmed President Capon's committee appointments.
- Approved a one-time grant to Temenos for the Director's salary in 1995.
- Scheduled the next meeting of General Council and Cabinet to coincide with a meeting of the Trustees of the National Church in Washington, DC, December 2 and 3, 1995.
- Adjusted certain budget lines and designated certain funds for restricted uses.
- Voted to seek legal advice regarding the Bissell Lease in Joliet, Illinois.
- Authorized a study of by-law and procedural changes that would be necessary for Convention to change from annual to biennial meetings.

Betty Yenetchi, Secretary

Swedenborgian Church Election Results

Vice President

Phyllis Bosley

Recording Secretary

Betty Yenetchi

Treasurer

John Perry

General Council

(Minister) Rev. David Rienstra

(Lay Person) Lawrence Conant (One-Year Unexpired Term replacing Larry Young)

(Lay Person) Perry Martin

(Lay Person) John Titus

Communications Support Unit

Dr. John Hitchcock

Educations Support Unit

Lorraine Sando

Financial & Physical Resources Support Unit

Rev. Richard Tafel, Jr.

Barbara Penabaker

Growth & Outreach Support Unit

Rev. Carl Yenetchi

(One-Year Unexpired Term)

Betsy Coffman (Three-Year Term)

Information Management Support Unit

Steve Ledingham

Pastoral Ministries Support Unit

Rev. Paul Martin

Committee on Admission to the Ministry

(Minister) Rev. Deborah Winter

(Lay Person) Marilyn Turley

Board of Trustees,

Swedenborg School of Religion (SSR)

Karen Feil

Dr. Tom Pebbles

Dr. Bob Reber

Nominating Committee

Rev. Robert McCluskey

Election Note:

The Rev. Deborah Winter was nominated from the floor for CAM. The Rev. Steve Pults, Nominating Committee nominee, threw his support to Deborah in his campaign speech, commenting that he felt that the Committee on Admission to the Ministry needed a strong feminine role model.



Secretary Betty Yenetchi and COM chair Ron Brugler hard at work with the laptop.

Opinion (from page 98)

church as an overseas mission. David Mooki was ordained by the Rev. J.F. Buss in 1921. Subsequent superintendents sent out from England were the Rev. E.J. Pulsford (1924–29), P.H. Johnson (1929–35), E. Fieldhouse (1935–50) B. Kingslake (1950–62) and J. Booth (1962–67). The Rev. E. Jarmin visited from 1967–69 during the independence transition.

Toward the end of my father's period, in 1961, after many negotiations, the New Church amalgamated with the Ethiopian Catholic Church in Zion with a large increase in membership.

The Mooki Memorial College had its origins in the late 1920s. David Mooki died in 1927 and the Rev. E.J. Pulsford pursued the idea of the formation of a college honoring his name, to be built in Orlando near Johannesburg. Thereafter, the Rev. P.H. Johnson's vision, academic background and teaching skills laid a firm foundation. By 1938 (the 21st anniversary of the Mission) the headquarters consisted of the Mooki Memorial College, a church building and a school.

David Mooki's son, Obed, was ordained in 1940 and, until his death in 1991, he, together with his wife, Eulalia, played the major part in the development of the church. He worked ceaselessly with great devotion and skill, becoming the general superintendent when the Mission achieved independence in 1968; to be known henceforth as 'The New Church in Southern Africa.'

I hope these notes prove interesting. The facts have been taken from the book, *A History of the New Church in Southern Africa 1909–91 . . . A Tribute to the late Rev. Obed S.D. Mooki*, which I recommend to readers who wish to learn more of this fascinating story, together with the political history of South Africa and the effects of apartheid. It is written by Jean Evans who draws on her personal knowledge as well as extensive research. The book is available from: The New Church College, 25 Radcliffe New Road, Radcliffe, Manchester M26 9LS, England (Price £7 plus post and package).

Many people gathered in Derby on March sixth for the celebration of my father's life, and others were there in spirit. We went to the crematorium first and then returned to the church for a service. A highlight of the event was to hear a recording of my father's voice booming out, introducing Mrs. Mooki and the Orlando Church Choir whose singing brought back so many memories!

Margaret Newall
Surrey, England

Editor's Note: See the June, 1995 Messenger for an abridged review of the above-mentioned book, reprinted from the April 1995 Lifeline.

Who Am I?

I sit here on the grass, wondering who I am, what I am.

I observe myself critically.

Yes, I consist of 162 pounds of flesh, bones, blood.

Folk could eat me, if I were roasted and served up attractively.

My feet are in leather boxes;

most of the rest of me is wrapped in cloth.

My head sticks out on top; it is like a coconut full of copra.

I can wave my arms, and touch the ground with my fingers,

3 feet in every direction.

One day I shall be placed in a box 6 feet 6 inches long

and buried in the ground;

I shall rot and be eaten by worms and turn to dust.

No, it is not like that—nor am I sitting here on the grass!

I am with my memory in strange faraway places;

Watching the midnight sun glaring crimson over a

silent Arctic lake;

Listening to the raucous laughter of a hyena in the African bush,

Or a kookaburra in the Australian outback;

Whistling a duet with a Tui bird in the mud of a

fern forest in New Zealand;

Bathing in the Sea of Galilee beneath the snowy crown of Mount

Hermon.

I am where my memory is.

No, it is not like that at all! I am where my love is:

In the ever-fresh companionship of my wife,

wherever she may be;



With our daughters and grandchildren in England;

With my spiritual family in Washington,

Cleveland, Philadelphia and elsewhere.

With our Africans in their sleepy villages,

worshipping God in brown mud churches on the veldt,

And all whose lives I am involved in, throughout the world.

I am not in this flesh body! I am a spirit in the realm of spirit. I am light as air, I can dance like the waves of the sea; I am elusive as the scent of thyme, fitful as the sun in

the storm clouds.

I am with the angels in the glorious uplands of heaven;

Or sometimes, alas! in the dark sterile slime-pits of hell.

I am with my sweet mother, and all the dear ones gone hence.

I am beyond time and space, in the magical reality of

the Eternal Soul.

Who am I What am I?

I know now. I am a child of God, Living busily and joyfully on many levels

of His multifarious universe;

At peace within the warm embrace of His loving arms.

—Brian Kingslake

(Written some years ago in America at a church retreat.)



George Dole and Muff Worden

entertain with Gilbert and

Sullivan at Bohemian Club.

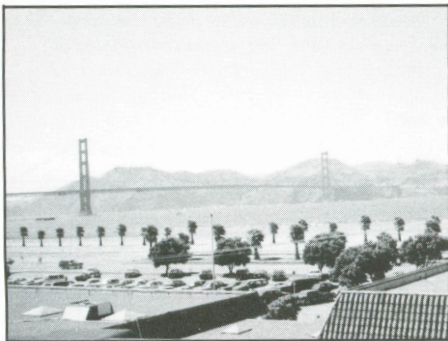


Bishop Vredenburg, St. Thomas Church, shares some laughs with Alan Thomsen, treasurer of Living Waters HIV Ministry.



YOUTH LEAGUE

From left: Andrew Scordato-Yenetchi, Dan Conger, (CA); Susan Hulcher (W. Canada); Rachel Bazzano, Lauren Conger (CA); Arianne Halle (IN); Sage Currie (at lectern, ME); Kevin Baxter (MD); Kevin Klein (MA).



Passages

Baptisms

Woofenden—Lee and Patty Woofenden and daughter Heidi announce the arrival of Christopher Woofenden, 6 lbs., on July 19, 1995, in Sharon, Massachusetts.

Stamhuis—Nathan Andrew James Stamhuis was baptized into the Christian faith July 9, 1995 at the Church of the Holy City in Edmonton, Alberta, the Rev. Henry Korsten officiating. Nathan is a grandson of Audrey and Andy Milot.

Confirmations

Buchanan, Daly, Field, Schwartz—Beth Buchanan, Jack Daly, Ellen Field and Ralph Schwartz were received into full membership April 9, 1995, at the Boston Swedenborgian Church, the Rev. Steve Ellis officiating.

Darling, Glanders, Koch, Post—Lynn and Terry Darling, Alan J. Glanders, Mollie and William Koch, and LoAnn and Robert Post were confirmed into the life of the Swedenborgian Church April 9, 1995, at the LaPorte New Church in LaPorte, Indiana, the Rev. Eric Hoffman officiating.

Epp—Lisa Dawn Epp of Laird, Saskatchewan, was confirmed into the life of the Swedenborgian Church June 11, 1995, at Rosthern New Church in Saskatchewan, the Rev. David Sonmor officiating.

King—Kristine (Hall) King was confirmed into the life of the Swedenborgian Church April 30, 1995, at the Fryburg New Church in Fryeburg, Maine, the Rev. Dr. Gardiner Perry officiating.

Strauss—Willmer (Bill) Joel Strauss of Dalmeny, Saskatchewan, was confirmed into the life of the Swedenborgian Church June 4, 1995, at Saskatoon YWCA, the Rev. David Sonmor officiating.

Marriages

Hopper and Moore—Heidi Hopper, a member of the LaPorte New Church, and Donald Moore were united in marriage May 6, 1995, at the LaPorte New Church in LaPorte, Indiana, the Rev. Eric Hoffman officiating.

King and Gould—Kristine L. King and Stephen F. Gould were united in marriage May 13, 1995, at a home wedding in Fryeburg, Maine, the Rev. Dr. Gardiner Perry officiating.

Mowat and Tanasichuck—Gillian Mowat and Daniel Tanasichuck were united in marriage April 8, 1995, at the Church of the Holy City in Edmonton, Alberta, the Rev. Henry Korsten officiating. Gillian is a granddaughter of Dorothy Mowat.

Deaths

Abrams—Henry E. Abrams of Altona, Manitoba, entered the spiritual world January 17, 1995. A resurrection service was conducted January 20, 1995, the Rev. David Sonmor officiating.

Dolibar—Marian Kendig Dolibar entered the spiritual world June 13, 1995, in Florida. Mrs. Dolibar was the wife of the late Rev. Julian Kendig, who served Swedenborgian churches in Maine and Kansas.

Jordan—Lydia S. Jordan, age 91, entered the spiritual world May 7, 1995, in Fryeburg, Maine. A graveside service was conducted at Pine Grove Cemetery, the Rev. Dr. Gardiner Perry officiating.

Kempton—Aylmer Stantial Kempton, 87, longtime active member of the Boston Swedenborgian Church, entered the spiritual world April 12, 1995. Remembered by many as the denomination's number one photographer, she served on several church committees over the years and as president of the Ladies Aid. As a social worker, she was instrumental in the development of the Foster Care program in Massachusetts.

SATURDAY NIGHT AT THE BOHEMIAN CLUB



Cathy, Randy and Karen Laakko Feil with their dad, Michael (left).



Dinner and dancing.

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 crea-

tion, 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.



Wayfarers Chapel Executive Director Retires

Barbara Norris began her 20-year career at the Chapel August 1, 1975, "the same day Erni Martin arrived," she said. "I started as business manager when Annella Smith retired, then over the years, the title changed to Chapel administrator, then executive director. "If I had continued on,

who knows what I might have become," she commented with typical gentle humor. "Of course, I didn't know I was going to be here 20 years, but they have been wonderful, challenging, sometimes trying, always interesting and changing, always a growth experience."

Barbara was honored for her years of service at a retirement dinner given July 25. Among the gifts she received were a paving stone engraved with her name and dates that she served at the chapel, to be planted in the Chapel walk of honor; a lovely watercolor of the Chapel by artist Manon Washburn, and a metal-sculpture rose created by the late Paul Garcia, artist and former buildings and grounds manager. The rose was presented by his widow, Linda.

Following her departure August 1, Barbara plans to travel a bit, spend some time at her mountain home at Shaver Lake in the southern end of the Sierras, visit with her grown children and two granddaughters, and eventually get into some volunteer work. Barbara was formerly a music teacher with the Retarded Children's Foundation, and is interested in possibly working in the area of adult literacy or with Habitat for Humanity. She plans to continue her work with the fledgling Chapel choir and on the Building and Grounds Committee.

The Rev. Ted LeVan has been training with Ms. Norris during the month of July and is taking over some of her duties at the Chapel as well as assisting the Rev. Carl Yenetchi with general ministerial tasks.



The Revs. Edwin Capon, Randall Laakko, Jerry Poole, and the Rev. Drs. Dorothea Harvey and George Dole were honored by COM for (respectively) 45, 30, 30, 20, and 35 years of service as Swedenborgian ministers. (From left: Capon, Dole, Laakko.)



Lee Woofenden receives Richard H. Tafel Award. (Dr. Jonathan Mitchell received the American Bible Society Award. We regret that photos of Dr. Mitchell and Nadine Cotton, who received their M.A. in Swedenborgian Studies, did not turn out.)

Important Church Calendar Dates

September 14-16
September 28-30
Sept. 30-Oct. 3
October 1-3

PCA—Issaquah, Washington
SSR Board—Boston area
EDSU—LaPorte, Indiana
Retirement Committee—
Newton, Mass.
Wayfarers Chapel Board

November 3-5
November 11-14
December 2-3

January 12-14

PMSU—Grand Bend, Ontario
C.A.M.—Newton, Mass.
General Council/Cabinet/National
Church Trustees—Washington, D.C.
FPSRU/AFC—
Ft. Myers Beach, Florida

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