

The Messenger

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH
MARCH 1980

LENT

Because we are surrounded by such an interesting, absorbing and demanding world, we tend to be unaware of our as yet unseen environment in which we go on living forever.

We forget that "Man doth not live by bread alone." We lose sight of life's priorities, of putting first things first. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and its righteousness."

We forget or merely give lip service to the reality that we are essentially spirit and live in a bigger world than that which we see and touch with our senses. We are too little aware that we are determining our permanent heaven or hell as we daily welcome either the one or the other into every thing we do and think and say and love.

Lent is the Call of the Church to "be about our Father's business." To set aside a part of each of these Holy Days to contemplate the Enduring and the Eternal. To take thought of the Angel within us. To remember the Heaven for which we were created and to which our Lord is calling us.

— from the Philadelphia
New Church bulletin



EDITORIAL

PARALLEL OR PARANOID?

The whole world has been stunned and outraged by the Russian takeover of Afghanistan. Shock - waves are still being felt as a result of this action: the 1980 Olympics are in jeopardy; trade embargos have been imposed or threatened; and American - Russian relations are at their lowest ebb since the end of World War II.

In reflecting on this painful and strained situation, four main elements come to mind.

1) The Soviets stoutly maintain that they were "invited" to invade Afghanistan. In this way they attempt to save face in the eyes of the world. But surely this is a total corruption of the word "invitation." Responsible friends and neighbours do not behave in this manner. Mutually agreed upon boundaries are respected by law - abiding governments.

2) The Russians have necessarily kept a very low profile in Afghanistan. Soviet armour rings the major centers, but, except for outlying skirmishes, business goes on much as usual. External observation indicates that little has changed.

3) The Russian system is authoritarian in nature. Decisions and policies are made by a small cadre at the top, and the people at the "grass roots" have little to say regarding governmental practices. In some respects centralized government is more efficient, though the "will of the people" is not always heard or heeded.

4) Why did the Soviet Union invade Afghanistan? For several reasons. The Soviets want to strengthen their influence in that vitally important part of the world. Ready access to oil supplies is an essential factor. And, in the fact of apparent Western weakness, perhaps the Russians have embarked upon an expansionist period in their history.

Shifting gears for a moment, does any of this sound even remotely familiar?

In DLW 319 we read, "Man was called by the Ancients a microcosm, from the fact that he relates to the macrocosm, which is the universe in the whole complex." In other words, *events taking place within us, and in our backyard, also unfold on the vast stage of world affairs.*

And vice versa. Recent happenings around us reflect — they correspond to — spiritual states and conditions.

And in the background, if one listens intently, the soulful music of Bach, Beethoven and Brahms is heard.

P.Z.

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THE MESSENGER MARCH 1980

Vol. 200, No. 3 Whole Number 5040

Published monthly, except for the one double issue in July — August, by the Swedenborgian Church (founded 1817, incorporated 1861 as the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America).

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The opinions of contributors do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or the Department of Publication, or represent the position of the church.

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Deadline for material: 5th day of the month.

Subscription free to members of the Swedenborg Church: non-members, \$5.00 a year; foreign postage .25 extra; gift subscriptions from a member, \$3.00: single copies, .50.

The Starting Line ————— by Eric Zacharias

We have amply demonstrated that we are capable of truly significant accomplishments. The following quotation is taken from Frank Higgins' book, *Urbana College 1950 - 1975*. "Soon after President Jones took office, the Trustees addressed themselves to the library problem . . . the architects estimated that the total cost of the proposed library would exceed \$400,000. Urbana officials led by Roger Paulson approached the Swedenborgian Church.

The Church responded enthusiastically . . . By the summer of 1966, the General Convention had already committed itself to the project, and three prominent Swedenborgian leaders, Stewart Poole, Philip Alden and Reverend Richard H. Tafel Sr., were mounting a \$300,000 fund drive. Within a year, Swedenborgians throughout North America had pledged nearly \$250,000 toward the library, and, with the trustees anxious to break ground, the General Convention agreed to provide . . . \$50,000."

Many of us fondly recall this valiant achievement. (Indeed, so effective was Dr. Jones in his presentation of need to the annual meeting of the Kansas Association that the Association contributed its entire treasury to the Library fund.)

Today, the Swedenborg Memorial Library with the invitational statement, "NUNC LICEAT INTELLECTUALITER INTRARE IN ARCANA FIDEI" above its doors, continues to serve the college community.

What is the state of current Urbana College enrollment? Let me quote from a recent News Release. Urbana College's on-campus student enrollment for the 1980 Winter Quarter is 282. Off-campus registration is 483, with a total college enrollment of 735 . . . Current figures indicate a 15% increase in enrollment over last year's Winter Quarter, a healthy sign." Also, in a recent News Release is this statement of commendation, "Dr. Ted Klein is to be congratulated for offering such an exciting Swedenborg course that people are fighting for a seat in his class."

All of us are now offered a new opportunity to enhance the successful efforts of 1966. At that time, by all of us working together, we

built a library, a physical plant. Recently, I discussed the nature of the most pressing library needs with Connie Salyers, the librarian. In a subsequent letter, she writes, "One of the most important areas of any library collection is the reference collection. Unfortunately, ours is inadequate. We lack many, many titles recommended for a basic collection. We cannot even consider maintaining current reference materials regularly reviewed in CHOICE and other professional reviewing journals until we acquire the basic titles recommended in *Guide to Reference Books* and *Books For College Libraries*."

The Church-College Relations Committee of which I am Chairman is proposing to all of our churches that Sunday, May 4th, 1980, be designated as "Urbana College Library Day", and that all of us, as part of our support of Urbana College and the philosophy of education which it promotes, make a contribution to this library fund. It is requested that all such funds be sent to the Central Office, 48 Sargent St., Newton, Mass., 02158. Well before May 4th a packet of promotional material will be sent to each of our churches.

The Committee on Worship under the leadership of the Rev. Richard H. Tafel Sr., has been making steady progress toward the completion of our new Book of Worship. This group of dedicated people is to be commended for its work as this massive project nears completion.

We tend at times to be strange and unpredictable creatures. It is difficult for us to adapt to what is new. We encourage our congregations to give the new Book of Worship an opportunity to serve to its fullest potential. Additional information will be sent to our churches as the book comes off the press.

A tour of Wellesley College indicates that we will be very comfortably housed and more than adequately provided with space for our 1980 convention meetings and display needs. We are fortunate, too, that long walks will not be necessary between the buildings assigned to us.

The Wellesley College campus is truly a beautiful one with its stately trees, small lakes, lawns and walks — a setting where we will find renewal and where all of us will enjoy the fellowship within our beloved church family.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD, TRULY WITHIN US?

David P. Johnson
Bellevue, Washington

It is time to open our spiritual eyes again to the truths so intensely sought by men like Emanuel Swedenborg! In our search for truth we have carefully tried to eliminate the subjective and deal with the objective, the "hard facts". The result has been and still is for the most part a mechanistic age, even penetrating theology, to make what we call spiritual, too often, a sterile intellectualism. But this is no longer satisfying to us. Increasingly we are becoming dissatisfied with the ideas that facts are facts, things are things, medicine is medicine, behavior is behavior, sex is sex and that is all there is to be said about them. All along men like Swedenborg, Lao Tse, Confucius and Jesus the Christ have been telling us that the spiritual is a realm other than the material and is not necessarily explainable and we have mouthed their words and tried to concretize their message as though it could all be contained in one's mind or the pages of books.

But human beings are protesting. They are investigating eastern religions, the occult, astrology, superstition, mysticism, hypnotism and other once rejected concepts. The interest in them may be disturbing to us — and at the same time we are almost unavoidably drawn to hear about them at least.

Swedenborgians, it is my observation, have spent many years being "scientific" about what Emanuel Swedenborg had to share with us. Deliberately I have chosen the phrase "share with us" because for the most part he offered a body of information, personal experiences and ways of exploration of the physical and spiritual worlds that are an introduction to the means to search, available to every individual, for the meaning and significance of the spiritual life. Too often it has been attempted to turn his offerings into dogma. When an ideal such as Swedenborg offered is turned into an ideology, it loses its inspirational power, its numenous quality, its open-endedness and its vitality.

"During the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth," M. Esther Harding observes, "when the most advanced thought was concerned in exploring the external world, and attention was directed almost exclusively to the objective realm, all subjective factors were considered only a hindrance to search for truth.

Scientists, with few exceptions, paid attention to the inner psychical realm only that they might be sure to exclude it from their observations. In this way chemistry evolved from alchemy, astronomy from astrology, and geography from the dim fore - shadows of the picture maps, which made up a sort of pre - geography. The geologist with his instruments of exact measurement replaced the waterfinder with his witch hazel, the physician with his laboratory tests replaced not only the medicine man but the old family physician as well, whose skill rested more on a curious sixth sense than on exact knowledge." (Women's Mysteries' M. E. Harding p. 3)

However necessary this step was in further discovery of our objective world, it is becoming increasingly clear that we have laid aside, even denied the realm of the subjective, the intangible, the spiritual. Here, at this last word you may protest, but I submit that we are only now, once again, beginning to *experience* the spiritual instead of *talking* about it. We try to define it and describe it using words, even forms, that no longer stir our inmost hearts. These do not exhilarate us, lift us into a sense of ecstasy, bring tears to our eyes, sadness to our souls, awe to our minds and place us in the realm of the unknown which we "know" deep within to be valid, yet unexplainable in scientific or theological language. It is the experience of the "isness" of things about which, truly, no words can describe.

I recall a personal experience in which I stood for a long time contemplating a yellow rose. There was nothing I could say about it to the friend who stood beside me except "it is". Then, caught in my "knowledge" about flowers and my pride in knowing, I began to describe the calix and was about to go on when I burst into laughter. For in my desire to show my knowledge to my friend "an ego trip," I perceived how ridiculous it was in such a moment of perception, for in my speaking I had lost the deep sense of experiencing the "holiness" of all that was symbolized in that rose!

Allen Watts in his book *The Wisdom of Insecurity* points out that we can only experience the immediate moment. When we talk about what we saw or experienced, it is

already past, or if we talk about what we will see, it is in the future. The “magic” of lovers lies in this same phenomena in that each knows and perceives in the presence of the other without speaking. Some element of this must be kept alive in a relationship if love is to last else it too will become barren.

We have not found the scientific, objective way as satisfying as we thought it would be. “Our dissatisfaction has become emphasized by the world problems of the past few years,” Harding says, “during which it has become more and more evident that happiness and fulness of life are not to be found through mass production and the discovery of new sources of energy supply. This dissatisfaction shows itself not only in general anxiety but also in neurosis and unhappiness, and in a sense of frustration, a lack of any real enthusiasm. In particular, we are dissatisfied with the character and quality of our human relationships . . . The life of today is empty and sterile and we look for renewal, whether we want to or not, from the source of spiritual awakening which lies within. For our Science has proved itself strangely impotent in face of a threatened breakdown in our culture.” Ibid p. 7

Have we lost the sense of mystery of our spiritual lives? Do we feel we can define all religious experiences by doctrine or scientific explanation? What has happened to awe? Where has mystery gone? Can we accept as reality that which we cannot explain?

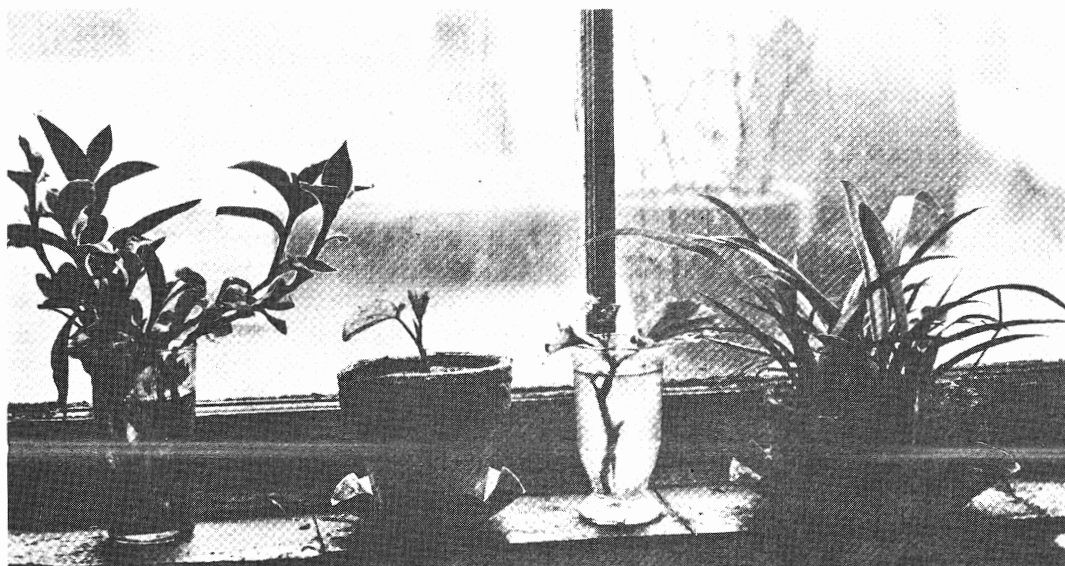
I am more aware than ever before that the very nature of Swedenborg’s search and spiritual discoveries were dependent on his willingness to accept the unknown, to explore the subjective (which we too often treat as though it were objective) and to acknowledge

that he was pointing the direction to a “way of life” and was not establishing a set of dogmas.

Is the Kingdom of God truly within us? If it is, how have we as individuals experienced it? Have we found it as a healing, renewing force? How has it transformed our lives? Can we honestly look within and see that the Kingdom is the inevitable, unending struggle with our own good and evil natures and that only through facing the struggle can the Kingdom bit by bit emerge? For my understanding is that Swedenborg tells us that this process continues even in Heaven!

I believe we need to ask such questions as “How is it that the Simontons have learned to use the inner resources of a person to fight cancer and other physical disorders?” “Why is it that creative meditation forms and practices have been developed by so many others than ourselves?” Gradually medicine is accepting the relationship between spirit (or psyche) and body. Robert Anderson, M.D. of Edmonds, Washington is another leader in the field of “stress management.” For him medication and surgery are additional “tools”. The question behind all these is, “What happened that followers of Emanuel Swedenborg have not been among the leaders in these areas?” Where did we lose the vision? In our fear of becoming or being thought of as visionaries, perhaps? Is it possible to have “vision” without at least sometimes being “a visionary”?

It is inspiring to know that there are healing ministries, healing circles, prayer groups within our church that are drawing on the inner resources of individuals and the healing love and wisdom and compassion of our Lord. What unknown resources are available to us that we have not tapped?



HELEN KELLER & JOHN HITZ

*Marion Priestnal
New York, N. Y.*

From earliest childhood Helen Keller possessed a compelling curiosity about everything. She wanted to know all about the world, its wonders and its frightening contradictions. As she began to develop powers of communication through her teacher, Annie Sullivan, her thoughts turned to God and she longed to understand Him. Friends tried to give her their ideas but she could not form a clear concept of the relation between Divine Love and the material world. One day, sitting in a library, she had a dazzling flash of insight. She had been thinking deeply about her study of ancient Athens and life as it existed there. Suddenly she turned to Teacher and said, "I have been to Athens all this time and I haven't left this room." Her whole mind was ablaze with the thought. She writes, "THEN I perceived the realness of my soul and its sheer independence from all conditions of place and the body Because I was a spirit I had vividly seen and felt a place thousands of miles away! How much more could God, the uncircumscribed spirit, reach out to his children This was the seed from which grew my interest in spiritual subjects."

At age 13 Helen met John Hitz, a devoted reader of Swedenborg. A friendship of complete communication and enduring affection began then and lasted for years, interrupted only the the death of Mr. Hitz in 1908. For 16 years they maintained a frequent, almost daily exchange of letters which Miss Keller called "a record of spiritual kinship".

John Hitz introduced her to Swedenborg by means of HEAVEN AND HELL. She says, "I opened that big book and my fingers lighted on a paragraph in the preface about a blind woman whose darkness had been illuminated with beautiful truths from Swedenborg's writings. She believed they had imparted a light to her mind which more than compensated for the loss of earthly sight . . . and that in a few short years the eyes within her worldly eyes would open to a world infinitely more wonderful than this. "MY HEART GAVE A JOYOUS BOUND!" For the first time, immortality put on intellegibility for me."

One afternoon several years ago we were able to read some of the letters written by Helen Keller to John Hitz in the Record Room of the American Foundation For The Blind. Access is

permitted if one can establish a reason for the privilege. Since it was known at the Foundation that Miss Keller had wished to have Mr. Priestnal conduct her resurrection service, this permission was granted.

We looked through the collection of about sixty letters, written in a fine Spencerian hand on thin now fragile paper, transcribed probably by Teacher or a secretary. We copied a few verbatim and took short excerpts from others. The collection was a great deal smaller than we had expected, explained by the fact that Miss Keller's home was destroyed by fire in 1946 and many valuable papers were lost.

In those letters which we did see, the greater number were from Helen to John Hitz. Nowhere did we find a sequence that might have provided a dialogue — a letter and its direct reply, for example. But all were fascinating, allowing the reader a glimpse of a beautiful and astounding mind, a mind able to "see" this world vividly in spite of blindness; and though profoundly deaf, to imagine the sounds and the activity all around her with amazing perception and accuracy.

September 1896
Brewster, Mass.

"Dear Mr. H.,

You can never know what a comfort your letters are to me. They fill my heart with with sweet peace and gratitude, as the sun - shine fills the buttercup's chalice with its golden lights; and it seems as if you were sitting close by me and talking with me . . .

I have read the book of selections from Swedenborg over and over, and I understand it better each time."

Mr. Hitz regularly visited Helen and Teacher at their home in Wrentham, Massachusetts. In writing of their frequent walks together, Helen Keller says: ". . . always he brought me closer to the beauty and the deep meaning of nature . . . that is so precious a part of the music of my silence and the light in my darkness".

To John Hitz:

March, 1899
Boston, Mass.

"... But we have had beautiful weather for March. It was delightful to walk through the Public Gardens, to feel the soft earth once more, to see the trees swelling a little and to hear friends from the country tell of the early pussy willows and the robins they had seen..."

Your loving friend,
Helen

April, 1899
Boston

"... Thank you so much for your two kind letters and for the 'mental jewels' you have so kindly put into my hands. They are indeed lovely and I have read the lofty thoughts they contain several times, and each time I have taken in more of their meaning. How many beautiful thoughts Swedenborg must have strewn over life's pathway, even as the sun pours warmth and light upon the earth making all things grow and rejoice..."

Your loving friend,
Helen

John Hitz died in 1908. Helen Keller in a memorial to him wrote, "Only those who knew Mr. Hitz can realize what his friendship meant to me... I first met him in 1892 and ever since he has been like a father to me... At the age of 70 he learned Braille so that I could read his letters myself. Every morning he worked an hour before breakfast, transcribing whatever he thought I should enjoy reading... He said I never seemed deaf or blind to him and I could not think of him as old. Winter was on his head but eternal spring was in his soul!..."

Later she wrote: "I could not have borne the loss of such an intimate and tender friend if I had thought he was indeed dead. But his certainty of the life to come braced me with an unwavering faith that we should meet again in a world happier and more beautiful than anything of my dreaming."

John Hitz had led Helen Keller to an awareness and appreciation of Swedenborg but it was the special qualities of her mind that responded to the spiritual insights she found there. She was, though limited in the worldly sense, as free as the soaring lark in receptiveness to truth; free because the usual preoccupation of human kind with sense experience did not exist for her. This is the way she explains it.

"So I grew to womanhood... I took more and more to the New Church Doctrines as my religion. *Those truths have been to my faculties what light, color and music are to eye and ear.*

"They have lifted my wistful longing for a complete sense - life into a consciousness of the complete being within me. EACH DAY COMES TO ME WITH BOTH HANDS FULL OF POSSIBILITIES, AND IN ITS BRIEF COURSE I DISCERN ALL THE VERITIES AND REALITIES OF MY EXISTENCE, THE BLISS OF GROWTH, THE GLORY OF ACTION, THE SPIRIT OF BEAUTY."

* * * *

We enter into the celebration of Helen Keller's centennial with sincere joy. To know Helen Keller and all that her life represented is to see clearly the creative use she made of the very difficult circumstances she confronted.

Her perception of the doctrine of use, gained through a close study of New Church teachings, helped her to turn severe handicap into striking achievement. The beliefs of the New Church, she freely states, made it possible for her to view existence in this world as only a school for eternal life, and an opportunity for service to others, providing her with the resources for inner growth upon which she could rely.

By example and precept Helen Keller demonstrates that this life is a journey of the spirit. Although she has written of this journey in her book, *My Religion*, it is not general knowledge that New Church teachings played so large a part in her life. Perhaps we can, during this year, bring that fact more clearly and forcibly into recognition.

Marion Priestnal

*For the invisible things of Him
from the creation of the world are
clearly seen, being understood by
the things that are made.*

— Rom. i. 20

CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

To Be Voted On At Convention '80

At Convention 1979, in response to wide - spread reservations from the floor of Convention, the motion to "grandfather" active lay ministers into the ordained ministry was withdrawn, and at the same time Convention was informed that the proposed changes in Article V of Convention's Constitution would be reworked with the following ends in view:

To phase out in orderly fashion the office and title of Lay Minister, at the same time safeguarding the status of those now in the office, and in all other respects abiding strictly by the present constitutional provisions until they are amended.

To provide for a new upgraded status of Lay Leader involving a training program administered by SSR.

To propose other changes in language in Article V to take into account such matters as the ordination of women into our ministry and the trend to drop the name "society" to refer to our local churches.

Further, to undertake to submit such an amended copy of Article V to the winter 1980 meeting of General Council.

Attached is the proposed new wording for Article V which, it is anticipated, will accomplish the above - named goals. Changes were sufficiently spread throughout the article that what is submitted below is a proposed form for Article V in its entirety. (Note: Efforts are also afoot to work out orderly steps by which Lay Ministers who wish to do so may qualify for full ordination. This, however, we feel will not require any further revisions of Article V.)

Proposed amended form of Article V, Constitution of the General Convention, submitted to General Council with the recommendation that the amended form be adopted at the 1980 Convention.

ARTICLE V — The Ministry

Preamble. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

The office of the Ministry exists in order to keep the Divine among men, administer the things that pertain to "The Divine Law and

Worship," and to lead men to the Lord and to the good of life. The duties and the powers of the ministry are to teach the Holy Word and the doctrines of the Church, to administer the sacraments of the Holy Supper and Baptism, to administer the rites of Marriage. Confirmation and Burial, and to lead in worship. These duties and powers shall be vested in the ordained minister unless otherwise specified in this article. (The general principles of this office are taught in the treatise *The New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrine*, nn. 311 - 319; also *Doctrine of Charity*, nn. 130 - 135, 160.)

SECTION 1 — The Minister. A member of the General Convention of the New Church may be ordained into or enter its ministry at the request of a church or other employing body of Convention, or at his/her own request supported by approval of the Council of Ministers of a plan of ministry submitted to them, with the approval of the Council of Ministers and the sanction of Convention, when one of the following requirements has been met:

- (1) He/she shall have satisfactorily completed the full course of study at the Swedenborg School of Religion and shall be certified as a candidate for ordination by the Committee on Admission to the Ministry.
- (2) After preparation recognized by the Council of Ministers as adequate; and he/she shall have served as an Authorized Candidate for one year.
- (3) After preparation recognized by the Council of Ministers as adequate, a minister, ordained in another communion, who accepts the doctrines of the New Church and expresses allegiance to the Constitution of the General Convention in personal application to Convention, may, if certified for induction by the Committee on Admission to the Ministry, be inducted into the Ministry of the General Convention of the New Church and his/her name shall then be added to the Roll of Ministers.

SECTION 2 — The Ordaining Minister

- (a) For the spiritual welfare of the church it is advisable that ordination into its ministry be performed with high seriousness by a

senior minister recognized as a leader by the membership at large. To this end, a minister who is elected president of Convention shall be invested with the office of Ordaining Minister during his term as president.

(b) In the event that a lay person is elected as president of Convention, then the chairman of the Council of Ministers shall be invested with the office of Ordaining Minister, during his term as chairman.

(c) Any minister who is serving as General Pastor of a mission area outside of North America at the time the provisions of this section are enacted shall continue to be recognized as a Missionary Ordaining Minister for that area as long as he remains its spiritual leader as determined by the Board of Missions. In the event of the death, resignation, or incapacity of such Missionary Ordaining Minister, a successor chosen by that mission area, and on approval of the Board of Missions, shall be invested as Missionary Ordaining Minister for said mission area during his term of office.

(d) When the president of Convention is a minister and is therefore Convention's Ordaining Minister, the following procedures shall be followed in the event of his resignation, incapacity, or death. Should the President be adjudged incapacitated by Convention or its General Council, said Convention or, in the interim between Convention sessions, its General Council, shall direct that the Chairman of the Council of Ministers be invested with the office of Ordaining Minister until such time as the President is recovered. In the event of the death or resignation of the President, the investiture of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers shall be for the duration of his term of office, or until such time as Convention shall again have a minister as its President.

(e) In the event that subsequent to the invoking of the provision of section 2(d), or when the President of Convention is a lay person, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers should resign, become incapacitated or die, the Secretary of the Council of Ministers shall be invested temporarily with the office of Ordaining Minister, such investiture to terminate upon the recovery of the Chairman, or in the case of the Chairman's death or resignation, upon the election of a new Chairman of the Council of Ministers, or on the election of a minister as President of Convention.

(f) The Ordaining Minister shall be empowered to ordain duly qualified candidates for the ministry (cf. Section 1), to authorize for one year Candidates for the Ministry (cf. Section 3), to confer upon suitable persons, at the request of the church to be served and in accordance with the provisions of Section 6 (below), the title of Lay Leader, and to consecrate as Worship Leaders persons selected by their congregation or group to provide leadership for public worship (cf. Section 6[g]).

(g) In the event of war or a national emergency, or if it is not possible for the Ordaining Minister to travel to a suitable place for the ordination of candidates for the ministry due to political, economic, or other reasons, the Council of Ministers may appoint an ordained minister to act as an Ordaining Minister, pro tem, for specific ordinations authorized by it.

SECTION 3 — The Authorized Candidate for the Ministry

(a) A member of the General Convention of the New Church, after preparation recognized by the Council of Ministers as adequate, may upon recommendation of the Council of Ministers, if sanctioned by the Convention, be authorized for one year by the Ordaining Minister of Convention to work within the jurisdiction and under the supervision of that office. He/she may lead in worship, teach the doctrines of the Church and officiate at funerals. Such persons shall be known as Authorized Candidates for the Ministry. Where authorization does not lead to ordination at the end of one year, the candidacy may be reviewed by the Council of Ministers.

(b) An Ordaining Minister of Convention may empower an Authorized Candidate for the Ministry or a Swedenborg School of Religion student intern to perform a marriage where the laws of the state or province permit and in specific instances may empower him/her to administer the Sacrament of Baptism and/or the Holy Supper.

SECTION 4 — The Lay Minister

(a) Any person consecrated as a Lay Minister under Article V, Section 6, of the Constitution of the General Convention, prior to the revision of said Article V in 1980, shall continue to be recognized as a Lay Minister of Convention so long as he continues actively to serve his local church. Such

persons shall be under the jurisdiction of the Ordaining Minister of Convention.

(b) In addition to the rights previously granted to him as an Authorized Candidate for the Lay Ministry, the Lay Minister may administer the Rites and Sacraments to the church for whose service he is consecrated.

(c) The Lay Minister shall be an associate member, without vote, of the Council of Ministers. He shall be eligible to serve in a lay function on boards and committees, and be eligible to serve, as a lay delegate only, to Convention.

(d) He shall submit an annual report to the Council of Ministers.

SECTION 5. — The Roll of Ministers

(a) Ministers ordained by authority of the Convention, or recognized and acting under the rules of Convention, shall be considered Ministers of Convention and subject to its jurisdiction, and their names shall be on the Roll of Ministers until their connection therewith shall be severed by voluntary act on their part, or by action of the Convention; whereupon their names shall be recommended for transfer to the Roll of Former Ministers.

(b) Ministers not serving actively as such and who wish to be retained on the Roll of Ministers shall be requested, in writing annually, by the Secretary of the Council of Ministers to signify their desire and their intention to render ministerial services wherever possible. Anyone failing to comply with this request for three consecutive years shall be recommended to the Convention for transfer to the Roll of Former Ministers.

(c) The names of Ministers retiring from active service shall be recommended to the Convention for transfer to the Roll of Retired Ministers.

(d) Lay Ministers shall be separately listed, with indication of the society which each serves. They shall be subject to the provisions of (a) and (b) of this section, except that their names shall not be transferred to the Roll of Former Ministers, but shall be dropped from the Roll.

SECTION 6. — The Lay Leader

(a) Convention commends the efforts of lay people throughout our church who have served in many ways and ministered to the needs of local churches.

Out of this experience, Convention sees the potential for even greater service to the church by trained qualified lay persons to augment the work of its ordained ministry.

(b) Henceforth the title "Lay Leader" shall be conferred only on persons (as prescribed below) who are (1) recommended by congregational vote and (2) who agree to enter on and complete a training program.

Thus, in order to meet ongoing needs of local churches, suitable persons may be recommended for consecration as Lay Leaders to serve particular congregations, or to serve within clearly specified geographical areas. Such recommendations are to be based on a congregational vote which recognizes the recommended lay person's desire to serve, demonstrated leadership ability, knowledge of the Church's teachings, character, and devotion to the Church. The letter of recommendation shall be directed to the secretary of the Council of Ministers.

(c) Upon vote of the Council of Ministers approving such recommendation, the person may be authorized by the ordaining minister to serve as a Probationary Lay Leader for a period of three years; provided the candidate agrees to undertake and complete during such three - year period a course of training to be administered by the Swedenborg School of Religion. During the probationary period, he/she may lead in worship, teach the doctrines of the Church and officiate at funerals.

If for good and sufficient reasons the person is unable to complete the prescribed training within the three - year period, the ordaining minister may extend the authorization for one year. Extensions of more than one year will require review by the Council of Ministers.

(d) Upon certification by the Swedenborg School of Religion that the training program has been completed, and upon recommendation of the Council of Ministers and favorable action on the recommendation by the General Convention, such person shall be consecrated as a Lay Leader by the ordaining minister in a public service in the area to be served and shall then serve subject to Convention's jurisdiction; his/her name shall be placed on the Roll of Lay Leaders and shall remain on the roll so long as he/she continues actively to serve as a Lay Leader or until connection therewith shall be severed by voluntary act on the Lay Leader's part, or by action of Convention; whereupon his/

her name shall be recommended for removal from the Roll of Lay Leaders.

(e) In addition to the rights previously granted him/her as a Probationary Lay Leader, the Lay Leader whose name has been added to the Roll of Lay Leaders may administer all the Rites and Sacraments to the congregation for whose service he/she is consecrated. This authorization will include the right to perform marriages where the laws of the state or province permit.

(f) Lay Leaders shall be accountable to and under the direct supervision of the ordaining minister of Convention.

(g) Nothing in this section shall in any way be interpreted to place restrictions on those lay persons selected by their congregation or group to provide leadership for public worship. Indeed, an appropriate service of consecration for such persons functioning as Worship Leaders shall be provided. Following consecration, such persons shall be known as Worship Leaders.

SECTION 7.

General Convention by a three - quarters vote may, in individual cases, dispense with limiting requirements outlined in Article V, upon the recommendation of the Council of Ministers showing the need or desirability thereof, such recommendation to be made only on the agreement of at least three - fourths of the members of the Council of Ministers present and voting at the Council session.

Additional changes needed or recommended:

Standing Recommendations (page 166, 1978 Convention Journal): Omit recommendation, "Concerning the Lay Ministry."

ARTICLE 1, SECTION 2, amend to read:
(Conv. Constitution)

SECTION 2. — Members of the Convention are recognized as such through their connection with Associations, Societies and other collective bodies which have been admitted by vote of the Convention, *or as members at large through the Rite of Confirmation, when admitted by vote of Convention.* (Added wording is in italics.)

**BY FEBRUARY 1st OUR ANNUAL
APPEAL HAD REACHED**

**\$13,600 . . .
AND GROWING.**

CONVENTION CALENDAR

March 13 — 15	Board of Education Almont, Mich.
March 24 — 26	Council of Ministers Exec. Comm., Newton
April 14 — 16	Comm. Adm. Ministry Newton, Mass.
May 4	Urbana College Sunday
May 16 — 18	Mid - Atl. Retreat
June 5 — 7	Board Meeting Urbana College
June 25 — 29	GENERAL CONVENTION WELLESLEY, MASS.

TAPPING A RE - NEWABLE RESOURCE

In these days of ever increasing concern over our dwindling non - renewable resources, Swedenborgians have a secret weapon against that feeling of being 'out in the cold'. The warmth, love and inspiration generated at convention and the PCC will produce a glowing coal of renewed life that you can take home to brighten your little corner of the world.

Come to Convention
June 25 — 29, 1980
See page 70

SOUL FOOD FOR LENT

SACRAMENTAL

Sometimes I get confused Lord.

First they say
you took this world
seriously enough
to embrace our humanness,
living and laughing,
spending money and eating food,
suffering, dying, like other persons.

Then they say
material things don't count;
money and things
shouldn't bother me;
only the spiritual is real.

Well, Lord, I need you now,
in the midst of this confusion,
to help me sort things out.
Help me to choose a way, a style
to express what you really mean to me.
Help me to use the wealth
you've given me
sacramentally
as an expression of your love.

Robin E. Van Cleef

LITTLE THINGS

*One day,
weary from making galaxies,
planets, mountains, oceans,
and all the big things that
are a bit of a strain to create.*

*God took a break,
and while he was resting,
he fashioned a very small flower
and worked out a design
for the first tiny snowflake.*

*And he was very pleased
with the little things
and lingered with common care,
whether buttercups or milky ways.*

*Scientists tell us
God is still designing snowflakes
having a bit of fun perhaps,
looking for the perfect one.*

*I don't know about that, but
I am pretty sure
God isn't hung up on bigness.
In fact, he must be pretty free
of our provincialisms.*

*That's why Christ
was rather impressed
with a widow who gave two little coins
and a boy who offered his sack lunch.
That's why the lost lamb
mattered to the shepherd.*

*So I know
that the things you and I can do,
though they seem pretty small to us,
seem pretty big to God,
who has a better way
of keeping score.*

Norman Shockley

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS GOODNESS

You will recognize these sins, Lord.
You have forgiven them before — —
Not sins committed and redone — —
But the very sins you once forgave.

By withholding self - forgiveness,
I kept a grip upon these sins
And fed and nurtured proud old guilts
Till they grew strong and bred new sins.

There are some things I can't forgive.
I've got higher standards than you do,
Tough standards for my enemies
And tougher standards still for friends.
I judge myself against them both.

Lord, help me to enlarge my heart,
To stretch and make room to receive
Your Holy Spirit who forgives
And who alone makes possible
Acceptance of forgiveness.

Michael Becker

MEETING

*To meet
a human being
is an opportunity
to sense
the image of God,
the presence of God.
Abraham Heschel*

MEDITATION

leaves that were hungrily reaching sunward
 in the day
 now rest quietly on my window sills, arms
 folded in meditation
 as I sit here in light that rapidly jells into
 silhouettes
 I find among my plants and the smell of damp
 earth
 a little gift of sadness, wrapped in a tendril
 of peace.

Patricia Kelly

AND THEY WAITED

Jesus told them: Do not depart from
 Jerusalem. Wait as I have told you for
 the promise of the Father.

Wait. Do nothing, just wait.
 Be responsive, expectant, but wait.
 How hard it is to wait.
 There must be activity to keep us
 From searching our inner selves,
 From meditating,
 From reflecting,
 From praying,
 From God.

Teach us, Lord, to wait:
 Sometimes excitedly
 For the birth of a baby
 For the arrival of Christmas
 Sometimes longingly
 For the telephone to ring
 For a long - awaited letter
 Sometimes patiently
 For a light to change
 For a train to move on
 Sometimes anxiously
 Beside the sickbed of a loved one
 For healing or for death
 But always hopefully
 For spring and new life
 For a resurrection.

The disciples waited and waited,
 Waited for power and for strength.
 And it did come to them.
 They turned the world upside down.
 And it will come to us,
 The Holy Spirit,
 As we listen and wait and respond to God.
 And we, too, will perform miraculous things.

Shirley Rinehart

I CORINTHIANS 13 (BARCLAY)

Love lasts for ever.

*Whatever prophecies there may be,
 they will some day be ended;
 whatever utterances of ecstasy there may be,
 they will some day be silenced;
 whatever knowledge there may be,
 it will some day pass away.
 We have but fragments of knowledge
 and glimpses of prophetic insight;
 but when the complete will come,
 the fragmentary will be ended.*

When I was a child,

I had a child's speech;

I had a child's mind;

I had a child's thoughts.

But, when I became a man,

I put away childish things.

Now we see bewildering shadows in a mirror,

but then we shall see face to face;

now I know a fragment of the truth,

*but then I will know as completely as I am
 known.*

*The truth is that these three things last for
 ever —*

faith, hope, love —

and the greatest of them is love.

SPIRIT OF GOD

Spirit of God, descend upon my heart
 Come alive in me
 Awake me, for I am weary
 Illumine me, for I am in darkness
 Cleanse me, for I am corrupt
 Encourage me, for I am insecure
 Empower me, for I am weak
 Guide me, for I do not know the way

Spirit of love, possess my heart
 Spirit of wisdom, infuse my mind
 Spirit of power, occupy my body
 Spirit of joy, express yourself through me
 Renew me, fill me, use me,
 Today, tomorrow, always, forever

Robin E. Van Cleef



Marion Priestnal, Editor

THE BENEFICIENT MITE BOX

We think you will be interested in this letter intended for the Alliance and sent to Roger Paulson.

Swedenborg World Wide Publications (India)
St. Thomas Mount, Madras — 16
21st October, 1979

Roger Dean Paulson Esq.
The Alliance of the New Church Officers
General Convention of Swedenborgian Church
Massachusetts

Dear Madam,

Greetings to you in the most Holy name of our Lord and Saviour of our Holy Master.

This is just to write and intimate to you the good news that we are in receipt of a check for \$1300.35 sent by Mr. Roger towards the improvement and expansion of our New Church in India, for the worship of our village Christian congregation.

It may elevate your interest to know that when Dr. Larson was up in our area with his family during his visit to our country some time ago, he welcomed our good idea to establish a New Church in our place for the fellowship of poor Christians and suggested that we could go ahead forming one, as early as we could, on his kind assurance that he would put in his maximum efforts in encouraging us by collecting funds from good and philanthropists Christian friends abroad, to extend a helping hand in getting us the finance, by way of "Mite Boxes" for the New Church activities.

Accordingly, we prayed over his valuable suggestion fully resting on Divine help, since we as Indians are always left to the mercy of bad financial resources, to which fact you are no stranger as a foreigner!

As good as his word of honour, he has now sent us this amount, through your kind and noble help with Christian spirit, and I do not know how best I could express our gratitude to you over it, on behalf of our poor congregation, who thank you very much for it, excepting, of

course, our humble kneeling before the Throne of Grace that He should bless you and your endeavors in spreading His Gospel through our New Church in our poor land by way of your generous aid.

With our Christian love and regards;

Of the amount realized through the "Mite Boxes" we have set apart 50% towards Religious Educational Development for the poor girls and boys of the Sunday School and for their other activities; also, for the distribution of clothes, sarees etc., for the unfortunate widows, helpers, and the rest of the members in our group.

At present we have only a small group of persons because of the fact that we lack sufficient place for a good number of people to assemble in one particular place, for a greater fellowship and proper worship. We have therefore earnestly earmarked the other 50% for our Building Project purchasing a plot and put up a decent construction with some donations collected from Philanthropist like your goodself.

If persons like you are pleased to come forward in achieving our object, we can definitely put up permanent building, if financial assistance could be met through the Swedenborgian Church Board from the General Funds.

Since you have sent us some amount now, please do not presume that by this letter, we are trying to 'worry' you to oblige us again with some more money. I write this, just to give you our idea of how we have planned to utilise your kind financial aid. That is all.

Thanking you and with our united regards.

Yours in His Service,
David Samuel
New Church Centre
5/23 Seven Wells Street
St. Thomas Mount,
Madras — 16

THE "OTHER" DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BOYS AND GIRLS

from: *"The Brain: The Last Frontier"*
by Richard M. Restak

There is no denying it: boys think differently from girls. That will sound offensive to feminists and others committed to overcoming sexual stereotypes. But social equality for men and women really depends on *recognizing these differences* in brain behavior.

Anyone who has spent time with children in a playground or school setting is aware of differences in the way boys and girls respond to similar situations. For example, at a birthday party for five-year-olds it's not usually the girls who pull hair, throw punches or smear each other with food.

Typically, such differences are explained on a cultural basis. Boys are expected to be more aggressive and play rough games, while girls are presumably encouraged to be gentle and nonassertive. After years of exposure to such expectations, the theory goes, men and women wind up with widely varying behavioral and intellectual repertoires. Many people believe that if childrearing practices could be equalized and sexual stereotypes eliminated, most of these differences would eventually disappear. The true state of affairs is not that simple.

Evidence from recent brain research indicates that some behavioral differences between men and women are based on differences in *brain functioning* that are biologically inherent. One study found that from shortly after birth, females are more sensitive to certain types of sounds, particularly to a mother's voice. In a laboratory, if the sound of the mother's voice is displaced to another part of the room, female babies react while males usually seem oblivious to the displacement. Female babies are also more easily startled by loud noises.

Tests show girls are more proficient to fine motor performance. Females are also generally more attentive to faces, speech patterns, subtle voice cues. By five months, a female can distinguish photographs of familiar people, a task rarely performed well by boys of that age.

Female infants speak sooner, have larger vocabularies and rarely demonstrate speech defects. Girls exceed boys in language abilities, and this early linguistic bias often prevails throughout life. Girls read sooner, learn foreign languages more easily and, as a result, are more likely to enter occupations involving language mastery. A study of preschool children by psychologist Diane McGuinness of Stanford University found boys more curious, especially in regard to exploring their environment.

There is evidence that some of these differences in performance are differences in *brain organization* between boys and girls. Overall, verbal and spatial abilities in boys tend to be "packaged" into opposite hemispheres: the right hemisphere for non-verbal tasks, the left for verbal tasks. But in girls non-verbal and verbal skills are likely to be found on both sides of the brain.

These differences in brain organization and specialization are believed by some scientists to provide a partial explanation of why members of one sex or the other are under-represented in certain professions. Architects, for example, require a highly developed spatial sense, a skill found more frequently among men. Thus, the preponderance of male architects may be partially caused by the more highly developed spatial sense that characterizes the male brain.

Findings by researchers at Stanford University on personality and intellectual achievement are the most thought-provoking of all. They show that intellectual development in girls is fostered among those individuals who are *assertive* and *active* and have a sense *that they can control* the events that affect their lives. These factors appear to be less important in the intellectual development of boys.

Recent studies even suggest that high levels of intellectual achievement in either sex are associated with the ability to express traits and interests associated with the *opposite sex*. This is called cross-sex typing.

In a twenty year follow-up (University of California) on individuals who exhibited significant IQ gains, those with the *greatest gains* displayed *less* dependency on traditional sex roles than those whose IQ remained the same.

And so the conclusion is, if we really want "social equality" for men and women, whatever that may mean, we should do something about these brain-functioning differences which demonstrably exist. Important changes in the educational methods both for the early years and in later years should be made, says neurologist Richard Rustak. For example, at present the classrooms in most of our nation's primary grades are geared to skills *that come naturally to girls but develop very slowly in boys*. Based on this new scientific evidence of sex differences in brain functioning we could restructure the elementary grades so that boys would find their early confrontation with education less stressful. Conversely, at more advanced levels, teaching methods could incorporate verbal and linguistic approaches to physics, engineering and architecture, three fields where women are presently under-represented; three fields where instruction now relies on the use of spatial concepts and thus presents learning problems for female students.

This summary of the recent findings by scientists about the nature of the "other difference" is at least supportive of the viewpoint that there are differences which have not come about through cultural expectations. Their conclusions partially account for the difference we have all observed, differences which are being explained away by today's extremists in the feminist movement as meaning nothing at all, being merely the result of conditioning, stereotyping, etc., etc. These studies give scientific backing to untrained but intuitive feelings that there are "other" differences.

But from a New Church point of view, scientific studies such as these never go far enough, and indeed they cannot probe as deeply as we would like. They are concerned with statistical results obtained through careful recording of facts. We have never encountered research findings on human personality which begin with, or end with, the conviction that man is a spiritual being created for purposes which reach far beyond this natural plane. Interesting as this article, "The Other Difference," may be, to use a cliché its writer is looking only at the tip of the iceberg.

We would welcome comments favorable or not on the conclusions expressed here, and will be glad to print any letter we receive. The article, part of a book by Dr. Restak, originally appeared in the November, 1979 *Reader's Digest*.

Marion Priestnal

CAN ONE DO MORE?

Throughout the New Church we enter into the celebration of Helen Keller's centennial with sincere joy. To know Helen Keller and all that her life represented is to see clearly the creative use she made of the very difficult circumstances which confronted her.

Her perception of the doctrine of use, gained through a close study of the teachings of the New Church helped her to turn severe handicap into striking achievement. The beliefs of the New Church, she freely states, made it possible for her to view existence in this world as only a school for eternal life, and an opportunity for service to others, providing her with the resources for inner growth upon which she could rely.

By example and precept Helen Keller demonstrates that this life is a journey of the spirit. Although she has written of this journey in her book, *My Religion*, it is not general knowledge that New Church teachings played so large a part in affecting the quality of her life. **Perhaps we can, during this year of commemoration, bring that fact more clearly and forcibly into recognition. In our women's groups we might**

plan a program focusing on the facts of her religious life — a program to which we could invite friends who are not members of the church.

Through such endeavors we might help to clarify incorrect impressions such as might be created by the following excerpt from a New York *Times* article on June 2, 1968, at the time of Miss Keller's death:

"Although she did not refer to it conspicuously Miss Keller was religious. While quite young she was converted to the mystic New Church doctrines of Emanuel Swedenborg. The object of his doctrine was to make Christianity a living reality on earth through divine love, a theology that fitted Miss Keller's sense of social mission."

This brief explanation in no way acknowledges that her strength of purpose and the meaning and significance of her entire life were derived from these "mystic" (!) teachings. We think she *did* refer to her religious belief conspicuously because she lived her life by it. *How can one do more?*

Ed.

ABOUT URBANA

The Executive Board of the Alliance has decided to sponsor the project of refurbishing the Interfaith Center in North Hall at Urbana College. Several alliance groups have made contributions toward this.

For your information we are reproducing a letter written by Dr. Dortha Harvey. Dr. Harvey will be very glad to give your group further details. Address her at Urbana College, Urbana, Ohio 43078.

From Dr. Harvey:

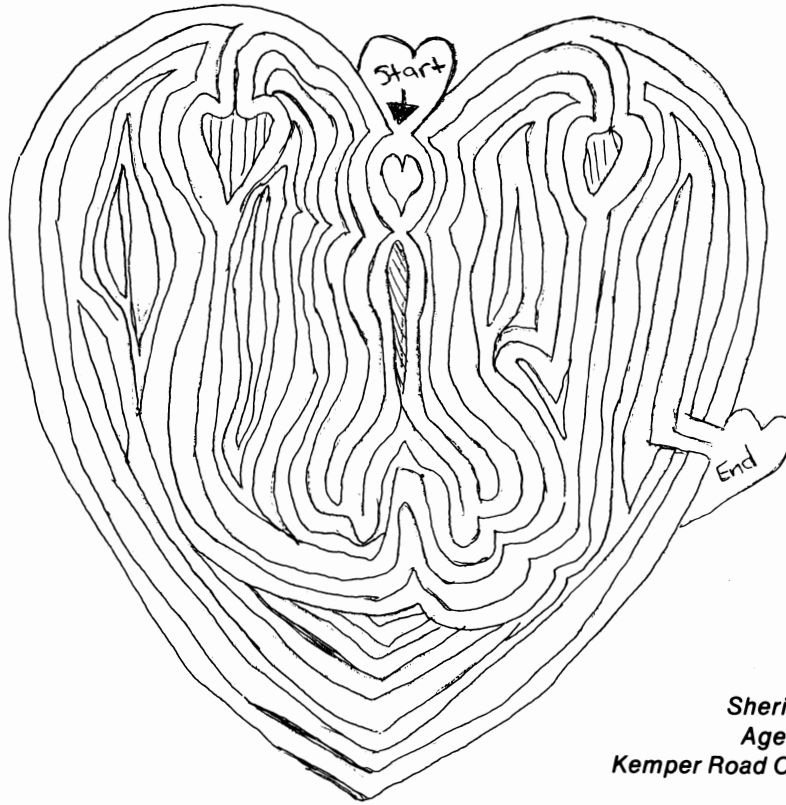
"Dear Mrs. Saul,

"The Interfaith Centre at Urbana College is a place for small group gatherings for discussion, Bible Study, worship, hearing speakers, or having other kinds of programs on campus. It is a room in North Hall, a classroom building. To create the atmosphere for occasions like those mentioned, we would like to have a carpet, curtains, and some more flexible furniture than the present classroom chairs. I have talked with Mr. Tom Snyder, our Director of Buildings and Grounds, about this. He tells me that carpet would cost about \$500.00 and that we should be able to do the rest for about another \$500.00.

"I am delighted to respond to your request for this information. Dr. Pendleton is anxious to have the church more visible on our campus. I support him wholeheartedly. I believe that such a room will be of use in making our church more effective with our students at Urbana College."

FOR AND BY THE CHILDREN

LOVE MAZE



Sheri Toot
Age 12½
Kemper Road Center

WORD FIND

These words are backwards, forwards, horizontal, vertical and any other way there possibly is!!

Q	L	W	A	P	Y	E	A	R	M	Z	L
S	L	A	Y	B	N	P	U	S	D	O	G
K	V	J	A	Y	M	E	C	A	E	P	H
S	M	P	D	L	D	C	S	D	C	L	T
F	U	C	S	O	W	Z	Q	K	F	G	C
H	T	N	E	E	T	R	U	O	F	R	U
L	O	V	N	L	V	A	L	E	N	O	P
F	D	E	I	B	O	U	R	H	A	B	I
C	E	U	T	D	I	V	D	E	G	N	D
H	R	E	N	A	R	T	E	A	S	E	P
E	A	F	E	B	R	U	A	R	Y	D	C
E	A	R	L	R	O	W	R	T	E	E	D
S	W	E	A	R	R	O	W	S	O	W	E
N	B	O	V	R	G	L	E	A	P	S	Y

- Words used:
1. Love
 2. Valentines Day
 3. February
 4. Fourteenth
 5. Cupid
 6. Hearts
 7. Peace
 8. Arrow
 9. Red
 10. Swedenborg
 11. Leap year

By Debbie Wood, age 14 yrs.
Kemper Road
Center, Ohio

(We regret this material arrived too late for the February issue. But it's always appropriate to look for things pertaining to LOVE.)

ADVANCE CONVENTION REGISTRATION

Wellesley College, Wellesley, Mass.

June 25 - June 29, 1980

Name: _____

No. & Street: _____

City—State: _____, _____ Zip: _____

Accompanied by:
Names

Relationship

Age of Children
Attending

Boston Pops tickets wanted _____ at \$9.50 each. Total \$ _____

Mode of transportation _____

Arrival _____ (Date & Time) Departure _____ (Date & Time)

Please give date and time of arrival in Boston as well as mode of transportation, so we may anticipate your arrival time at Tower Court Residence Hall on Wellesley College's campus.

Please also advise us of any special medical or dietary requirements you may have. Convention registration will be in the lobby of Tower Court Residence Hall. An elevator is available to reach the rooms above.

RATES

Room and board will be \$20.00 per day, per person. There is no price break on double rooms. Double rooms are scarce as well, so book early. There is no charge for babies in arms. No cribs are available at the College.

REGISTRATION FEE

Registration fee is \$15.00 per person for those 18 years old or older until June 1st. After June 1st the fee is \$25.00. This fee helps cover cost of receptions, meeting rooms, and other activities. Convention's night at the Boston Pops Symphony is on Saturday, June 28th. Ticket reservations must be made at the time you send your advanced registration. The Boston Pops is a unique tradition among Bostonians and has a new conductor, John Williams, who replaces the late Arthur Fiedler. Tickets cost \$9.50. Please add this amount to your registration if you wish to attend. Tickets are available only on advanced sale basis. No tickets will be available after June 1st. Transportation by chartered bus to Symphony Hall from Wellesley College and return will be provided. Make registration and Boston Pops ticket checks payable to: "The Swedenborgian Church."

AUTO PARKING

Ample parking space has been made available near Tower Court Residence Hall for Convention cars. Lots are patrolled by campus police. Travel trailers cannot be accommodated unfortunately. No camping is permitted on the College grounds.

DIRECTIONS TO WELLESLEY COLLEGE

At the time we acknowledge reservations we will include travel information from airport, train and bus in Boston to the Wellesley College campus.

Send this registration form with your deposit and Boston Pops ticket request and payment to:
The General Convention Central Office, 48 Sargent Street, Newton, Mass. 02158

POST-CONVENTION VACATION WEEK POST-CONVENTION MINI CONFERENCE

*to be held simultaneously at the
Fryeburg New Church Assembly
June 29—July 4, 1980, Fryeburg, Maine*

The officers of the Fryeburg Assembly are generously offering the use of their facilities to Convention vacationers for the week immediately following Convention. The flat-rate cost which includes board and room is \$100 per person. Vacationers will be free to come and go as they please, taking advantage of the marvelous vacation attractions of Mt. Washington Valley as they choose.

The Board of Education is also offering a Mini Post-Convention Conference at the Fryeburg Assembly separate from and in addition to the vacation opportunity. The theme will be **SPIRITUAL RENEWAL: DISCOVERING INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL WONDERS**. This year the daily structured sessions will be shortened to leave the majority of the day free to relax, savor and explore Mt. Washington Valley.

Through a variety of structured experiences—prayer, art, music, doctrinal discussion, movement, etc. — we will discover ways to enrich meaning in our lives. Come and join new friends and old on the spiritual path. Your leaders will be familiar to most Post-Convention Conference goers. They will be Lorraine Sando and Cindy Gutfeldt, and they are looking forward to an exciting conference. Plan to arrive Sunday evening so we can start promptly on Monday morning, June 30. The conference will end after breakfast on Friday, July 4.

Please send a registration fee of \$15 with the form below to Nancy Perry, Executive

Secretary, Board of Education, 48 Sargent St., Newton, MA 02158. This fee will be nonrefundable after June 1. The balance of the fee (\$85 for vacationers, \$100 for Mini-Conference participants) will be due on arrival at Fryeburg.

The Fryeburg New Church Assembly was founded for study and instruction in the doctrines of the Christian religion as revealed in the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. The regular three-weeks session is held in August each year. It has long been the hope of the Assembly officers to make greater use of this wonderful facility, and we are pleased to be able to offer this post-Convention week.

The site leaves very little to be desired. Rooms will be provided with necessary bedding, but vacationers are asked to supply their own towels. All meals will be served at set times in the dining hall. The Saco River runs along the edge of our property providing clear, crisp and safe swimming and canoeing. The White Mountains are majestically in sight and easily reached, the woods are quiet and fragrant. On cool mornings and evenings, wood fires crackle in the two magnificent stone fireplaces. The carpeted lecture hall is climate controlled. Conversations can be shared on the porch, sun deck or shaded front lawn. Nearby North Conway and, in fact, the whole of Mt. Washington Valley, offers in addition to spectacular sightseeing a wide variety of excellent gift shops and exciting restaurants.

Please sign me up for the post-Convention week at Fryeburg.

Name _____ My \$15 registration
Address _____ fee is enclosed.

I wish ☐ to participate in the Mini PCC program.
I do not wish ☐ to participate.

ALMONT ANCL CHRISTMAS RETREAT

DECEMBER 26 — 29, 1979

Wednesday night after everyone had arrived, we gathered in the living room for an introductory session; that is the staff ran through what we were going to discuss, what the rules were, meal times, dishes and cooking crews, sleeping arrangements, etc.

Thursday morning the real input began. It started with a session by Rev. Eric Allison titled "Introduction to Relationships." Eric first gave a little talk, the gist of which was that we really can't *prove* that we have feelings and thoughts but we still know that they exist, and the same goes for the Spiritual World. He went on to say that our relationships, feelings, and thoughts stay pretty much the same after we die. We then did an experiment with dousing rods measuring the human aura around people. Next Eric led us in several activities aimed at getting to know each other better.

The next session that day was led by Rev. Gardiner Perry on the subject of "Patterns in Relationships." Gard pointed out that relationships (like almost everything else) come in clusters: we have different groups of friends with different characteristics. Different friends fit into different places — seen together they form a pattern. He went on to say that heaven also has a pattern, the heavenly pattern: the "Maximus Homo" which is Latin for the "Biggest Person." Heaven, therefore is set up like a person . . . not *shaped* like a person though, but rather, it has people who perform all the tasks in spiritual ways that the organs and cells of the human body perform in the physical world. Actually, the human body is modeled after the spiritual world — heaven is the prototype, or the pattern on which the body is based. After a few questions we all went into the dining room where there were crayons and paper. Our assignment was to make some sort of visual representation of how we saw our relationships at that point in the retreat and (if we wanted) how we think or hope it would be at the end of the retreat. When we were done we broke by age into three smaller groups to discuss our drawings.

The third session was led by Rev. Ron Brugler. Using the book *Heaven and Hell*, Ron gave us an overview of the World of Spirits, that place where we all go after we die before heading off for heaven or hell. Ron then gave us a reason to migrate off to the dining room again: we were all going to make masks of ourselves, one side showing how we would be in

heaven and the other side showing ourselves in hell! After everyone had completed their creative efforts (there was incredible diversity), we gathered in the living room again and did a few revealing activities with our masks on. And once more we broke into our small groups for discussion.

Friday we had one last session, and then a big question and answer period. Everyone had written down a question during the last session. Almost all the questions were about heaven and/or hell, which means to me that the staff should have spent a good deal more time explaining to the group the details from writings about the Other World.

Saturday before we left, we gathered one last time for a wrap - up session. And in our small groups we all wrote out retreat evaluations.

Trevor Woofenden

* * * * *

Leaguers from Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Ontario, Pennsylvania, Washington D.C., and W. Virginia gathered at the Almont New Church Assembly for their annual retreat.

The topic of the retreat dealt with Heaven and Hell and our relationships with others. We talked about what it means to be beautiful and ugly in the spiritual world. We also talked about how you must be honest when you are a spirit, whether you choose to go to heaven or hell.

The retreat began on Wednesday night, December 26th, with some introductions and a talk session. On Thursday we began to feel more comfortable with each other. There were activities set up to get to know each other better, in addition to the three sessions led by the staff. The most was accomplished on Friday. There was a very interesting question and answer period in the afternoon. Ron Brugler, Eric Allison, and Gardiner Perry (our three staff ministers), plus Trevor Woofenden and David Fekete answered anyone's questions the best they could.

Ruth Brandeau and Sherry Fekete were the cooks and the meals were super!

Thanks to all who helped make this retreat something to remember!

Cindy Taubitz
St. Clair Shores, MI.

AN IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

DUE TO CONSTANTLY RISING COSTS, WE NEED TO UPDATE AND CORRECT THE ENTIRE *MESSENGER* MAILING LIST.

YOU CAN HELP US.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO CONTINUE RECEIVING THE *MESSENGER*, PLEASE INDICATE THIS ON A LETTER OR POSTCARD, WITH YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS, AND MAIL BY

JUNE 1, 1980

IF WE HAVE NOT HEARD FROM YOU BY THAT TIME, WE WILL ASSUME THAT:

- a) YOU ARE NO LONGER INTERESTED IN RECEIVING THE *MESSENGER*, OR
- b) FOR SOME REASON THE *MESSENGER* IS NOT REACHING YOU.

THOSE NAMES NOT HEARD FROM WILL BE REMOVED FROM OUR MAILING LIST.

(We are assuming that the **Messenger** is worth a 15 cent or 17 cent postage stamp.)

CONVENTION MINISTERS AND SPOUSES, MEMBERS OF ALL CONVENTION BOARDS AND COMMITTEES, AND PEOPLE WHO HAVE ALREADY SUBSCRIBED, MAY DISREGARD THIS NOTICE.

ALL OTHERS SHOULD RESPOND BY JUNE 1, 1980.

Your *Messenger* costs Convention \$9.00 per year. If you feel so inclined, you might want to contribute, say, \$5.00 toward this amount.

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FROM CHURCH RECORDS

BAPTISMS

ARMSTRONG — Andrea Leslie, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Leslie Armstrong of Cleveland, Ohio was baptized on December 2, 1979, by her great, great uncle, the Rev. Richard H. Tafel, in the Philadelphia Church.

BENNETT — RaDell Jesika, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Gordon Bennett, of Edmonton, Alta., was baptized into the Christian faith at the Church of the Holy City on November 19, 1979, by her grandfather, Lay Minister John Bennett.

SEARLE — Colgate Metcalf Searle III, son of Colgate Jr. and Cecilia (Guiu) Searle, grandson of Mr. & Mrs. Ray Guiu, was baptized into the Christian faith on December 23, 1979, the Rev. Dr. W. R. Woofenden officiating.

SMITH — Kelly Jean, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Roger Smith was baptized into the Christian faith in the Fryeburg New Church on December 2, 1979, the Rev. David Rienstra officiating.

TAFEL — David Michael, son of Mr. & Mrs. James Tafel was baptized on December 30, 1979, by his great, great uncle, the Rev. Richard H. Tafel, in the Philadelphia Church.

ZACHARIAS — Brian Eric, son of Mr. & Mrs. Ames Zacharias, was baptized into the Christian faith at Pretty Prairie, Kansas, on January 6, 1980, by his grandfather, the Rev. Eric Zacharias.

CONFIRMATIONS

FRIBERG — FRIBERG — JOHNSON —
McCLUSKEY — Adele Friberg, Eino Friberg, Pauline L. Johnson, and Robert McCluskey, were confirmed into Church membership at the Cambridge, Mass., New Church on January 6, 1980, the Rev. Wilfred Gould Rice officiating.

DEATHS

BETTY — Anna (Unruh) Betty, Arlington, Texas, passed away on January 11, 1980. The Rev. Galen Unruh, of Pawnee Rock, Kansas, conducted the memorial service for her in Larned, Kansas, on January 15th.

DIBB — Charlie Dibb, a good and dear member of the San Diego Society died on January 17, 1980. A memorial service was held in the church on January 27th, the Rev. Dr. Ivan Franklin officiating.

DURHAM — Ira Durham, Pretty Prairie, Kansas, died on January 17, 1980. The resurrection service was held in the Pretty Prairie church on January 19, the Rev. Eric Zacharias officiating.

GUSTAFSON — Claes Theodor Gustafson of Visalia, California, 84, a member of the Los Angeles Church, died on December 16, 1979. The resurrection service was held on December 21, the Rev. Andre Diaconoff officiating.

SHAW — James Frank Shaw, 66, died January 10, 1980 in Brownsville, Texas, after a brief illness. Born in Fryeburg, Maine, Shaw was a retired industrial engineer, having taught for many years at the Wentworth Institute of Technology in Boston. He studied for 2 years at the Swedenborg School of Religion, and was consecrated to serve as lay-leader in the Manchester, N.H. Society in 1968. After a brief ministry there he served as minister of a United Church of Christ in Rochester, N.H. The Shaws moved to Texas in 1973. Frank Shaw is survived by his wife Peg, a son Norman, and a sister, Mrs. Ruth French in Fryeburg, Maine. The resurrection service was held on January 14, 1980.

VAN MEER — Ernest Van Meer, a long time and faithful member of the Chicago Society, died on December 25, 1979. The resurrection service was held on December 29, 1979, the Rev. Thornton O. Smallwood officiating.

PHOTO CREDIT

The excellent photographs of our National Church in Washington D.C. featured in the February *Messenger* were taken by Sue Kohler for the U.S. Commission on Fine Arts and are featured in the book *16th St. Architecture #1*.

JOY

For our heart shall rejoice in Him, because we have trusted in His holy name. (Psalm 33:21).

He who has God and many other things has no more than he who has God alone.

— C. S. Lewis

THE UPPER ROOM

A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART

by Leon Le Van
St. Petersburg, Fla.

Even before David became Israel's king, the prophet Samuel said of him'; "The Lord hath chosen Him a man after His own heart."

An extraordinary statement. It is safe to say if you or I were to attempt to delineate a "man after God's own heart" we would feel it necessary to draw the picture of an ideal man — a man of faith — a man of stainless integrity. Ah yes! we would say, that means a man outstandingly good and true; a man who never falters no matter how steep or treacherous the way.

We would picture a man who never doubts, never feels himself "sinking in deep mire;" a man who readily avoids or quickly breaks every snare of temptation which evils put before him. We would want to say a "man after God's own heart" must be proof against discouragement; must never give way to any surge of anger when crossed or thwarted or wronged.

We would probably make him a man never embittered — one who could always meet pain or misfortune with a smile — one who could always travel in the sunshine of the Divine Presence.

But how different was David from all such rarified idealism. To be a "man after God's own heart" does not mean that a person necessarily lives a blameless or saintly life. If he sometimes fails, it does not follow he is necessarily a hypocrite. If he makes occasional bad decisions, he is not on that account wicked or perverse.

There was much in David that was beautiful and stirring. But just as truly there were dark and sinful chapters. A man does not need to be wholly without sin during his journey of life. Indeed, he cannot always have been sinless to be a "man after God's own heart." Sinlessness is not the test. The test for a regenerating man — a "man after God's own heart" — is motive, desire, and the quality of his spiritual endeavors.

Neither David nor any of the *Old* or *New Testament* characters can be judged to be blameless or sinless. But there is one unique respect in which David stands as high spiritually as anyone else, and that was his steadfast and lifelong conviction that all his thoughts,

intentions, and actions were continually before the Lord. Even though he "took the wings of the morning, and dwelt in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there would God see him, and the right hand of the Almighty uphold him." That was "David" in his representative role in the *Scriptures*.

To be a man or woman "after God's own heart" means essentially to be one who sincerely desires to live as a spiritual person. It means to "put first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness," and to live the natural life from spiritual principles and motives.

All of us must live a natural life. We have natural employments, natural occupations, natural duties, amusements, and works. A spiritual life makes no attempt to avoid the activities of the natural plane. The New Church doctrines point to the futility of fleeing from the practical world in an effort to become righteous or saintly. Such a course merely excites the natural mind with "delusions of righteousness," which greatly impedes the way to Heaven.

The natural plane of life is given by the Lord to use, and not to run away from. The natural plane is the "womb" in which the life of Heaven must be engendered. But the womb of the natural world brings forth a life for the Kingdom of God only if we desire and choose the Heavenly kind of life now.

To live as a spiritual man or woman in this natural and practical world with all its complexities, problems, and difficulties — that is to be a man or woman "after God's own heart."

You are not required to be faultless. You are not required to be saintly or sinless. The Lord knows full well that we continually fall short of our best possibilities. There are "spots" on our garments and "thorns" in our crowns.

But if you continue (despite all failures, setbacks, and difficulties) breasting towards the heights, facing towards the sunrise, pushing your steps towards the good "land of Canaan" — it may finally be possible for the Angels to say at the end of your journey: "Here was a man — here was a woman — chosen after God's own heart."

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