

# The Messenger

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH  
NOVEMBER 1981

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## NOVEMBER

*The days are short, and will be  
shorter,  
And snow will come and gripping cold.*

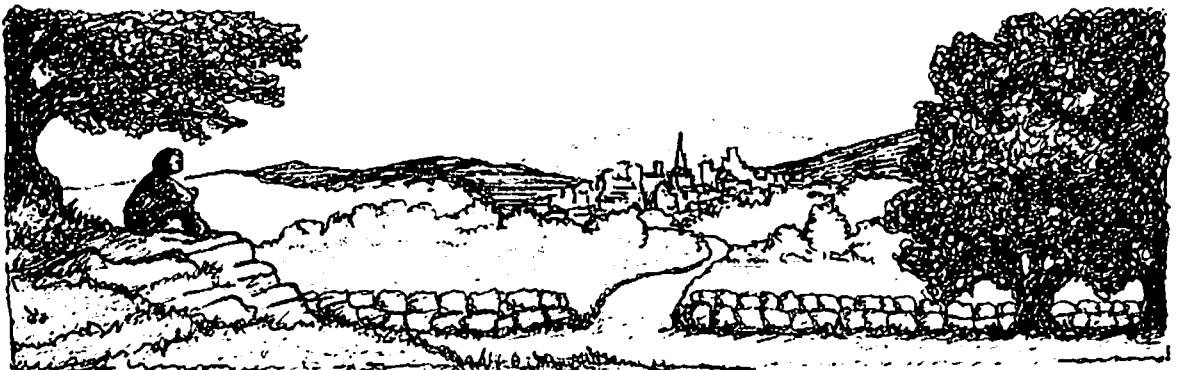
*The winter may be long: but we  
have faith  
There'll be another spring.*

*A spring, please God, not just in  
nature's realm,  
But a supernal equinox,*

*When there shall bloom through all  
the world  
The lovely flowers of liberty and  
tolerance and peace.*

*November comes—let us give thanks.*

*Susan Priscilla Holmes*



*Carolyn Judson*

## Thanksgiving Meditation

### The Nature—Creation Connection

Late every fall our thoughts turn to Thanksgiving. My guess is that most of these thoughts revolve around nature and/or natural blessings. We appreciate the beauties of the world around us; all of us who read the *Messenger* have adequate food, shelter and clothing; we look back over the last little while in our lives and for the most part the positive features far outweigh the negative items. We are aware that some monstrous dark troubling clouds are gradually taking shape on the horizon, but we can't do very much about them, so we carry on and the feelings of gratitude we have for present blessings is very sincere. Thanksgiving stops here for many people. But isn't this only the first step in a true appreciation of Thanksgiving?

We need to distinguish between "nature" and "creation." Nature is the sum total of the physical world around us, all its structures and processes; it is the "footstool of God." But creation is the ongoing gift of God's life pouring into everything that is, both material and spiritual. And when we view all of life from this perspective it makes quite a difference in the way we live.

Until comparatively recent times native peoples around the world recognized this intimate connection between the natural and spiritual levels of life. They tried to live in a sacramental relationship to creation as a visible expression of their gratitude to God. Everything was sacred. Their work, the times of birthing and dying, their food, all the splendors of nature. Everything was touched with divinity. It all came from God and they were deeply thankful. The concept that all of life is sacramental needs to be restored.

A small illustration: most Christians pray at meals. We partake of food to renew our strength, and it is a good thing to give thanks and ask God's blessing. Saying grace at the table is a very little thing, but it is a daily reminder to us that our life is sustained every moment by the constant influx of God's mercy and blessing. God's creative energy gives everything its form and vitality. Understanding this and living accordingly, moves us closer to a Holy Thanksgiving.

P. Z.

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# CLEAR AS CRYSTAL

*George Dole  
Sharon, Mass.*

My focus this morning will be on a particular feature of the Holy City. "And the light thereof was like unto a most precious stone, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." My immediate resource is A.R. 897, which deals with this verse (Rev. 21:11). The first statement in that section is that the verse in question "signifies that in that church the Word will be understood, by reason of its being translucent from its spiritual sense," and there is enough in that single statement to occupy us for far more than the hour at our disposal. So to keep some semblance of discipline in this presentation, I shall follow this statement section by section.

To begin with, we have the phrase "in that church." As the preceding paragraph (A.R. 896) makes clear, "that church" is the New Church, and there are two particular implications of this that may warrant our attention.

The first is that we are talking about something that happens on this earth. It is elsewhere stated that the literal sense of the Word is for people on earth, and the spiritual sense for angels in heaven. Make of such statements what you will—and the idea has been variously understood—the present passage is not talking about a new heaven, but about a new church. In this present life, the translucence described can, will, and does occur. We cannot legitimately use our present physical embodiment, our state of incarnation, as an excuse for not understanding. We may be able legitimately to trace the cause of our incomprehension to our materialism or our egoism—that is something else again, and something ultimately within our control.

The second implication leads us into the realm of standards of judgement. If this translucence is characteristic of the New Church, then surely we should not regard the New Church as present where this translucence is absent. To slip for a moment into the autobiographical mode, I think it is true for me to regard myself as a Swedenborgian who has times of Newchurchmanship than to regard myself as a Newchurchman. I am more and more convinced that we mislead ourselves when we use the name New Church to refer to an external organization; for in the writings themselves it refers consistently to a quality of life.

We do not achieve that quality of life by joining an organization. The organization can serve that quality of life only if it does not claim to be identical with it. To take a prosaic example, we are being Swedenborgians at the moment. That is, we are taking very seriously what he wrote, because we have a certain personal allegiance to the substance of that teaching. But if at some particular moment we catch a glimpse of the beauty and wholeness of the message, of the light that fills our minds and everything is abundantly clear, that is more than Swedenborgianism. That is a touch of the New Church. It is a moment of life qualitatively different from other moments, and supremely worthy of its own name.

Perhaps the point is most clearly stated in the negative. Where the qualities symbolized by the Holy City are not present, the New Church is not realized. Where there is anxiety, conflict, doubt, or distress, the New Church is not present. These may be necessary experiences in the building of the city or on the road to the city—they are no part of the city itself. Anything that is not radiantly lovely is not the New Church. If we fudge or hesitate on this point, we are in trouble.

The next phrase in the topic sentence of A.R. 897 is a familiar one—but then, so is "the New Church." The next phrase is "the Word." The writings leave us in no doubt as to what is meant. A.C. 10325 lists the books of the Word, beginning with Genesis and ending with Revelation.

Next week, this will be the focus of our attention, and I'll be using one session to deal with the wholeness and completeness of this particular revelation. For present purposes, though, some further consideration is necessary.

Like any phrase, "the Word" can be understood in a very precise sense, and in successively broader senses. There is a sense—attested in the writings themselves—on which absolutely everything is the Word. Everything comes ultimately from the Lord, and everything, rightly understood, testifies of Him. But this is not the usual meaning of the phrase.

In fact, "the Word" is normally used to refer to a particular subcategory of revelation, that specific set of books listed in A.C. 10325. There

have been other revelations. There still are, and will be, as long as the Lord chooses to reveal Himself. These revelations can be related to "the Word" in two possible ways. If we take "the Word" in its broadest sense, then all revelations are part of it. It includes everything the Lord says and does, and He is no less communicative and active now than He was two thousand years ago. If, however, we take "the Word" in its usual, more restricted sense, these other revelations are not part of it. There is no third Testament, and never will be. The Holy City is the fulfilment of the story. "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book."

The next unit is really the whole rest of the sentence—it cannot be divided without losing its meaning—it is more than the sum of its parts. "... will be understood by reason of its being translucent from its spiritual sense."

There is no conflict between this and statements that the spiritual sense is for angels. This does not refer to the angelic state in which literal sense has vanished, so that there is no Moses or Elijah or John or New Jerusalem. It refers to a way in which the physical images become carriers of meaning for us, a way which is well within range of our normal human powers.

For example, after you've been married a while you can tell quite a bit from the way your wife or husband sets the table or closes the car door. It takes no particular analytic effort to figure out the meaning. In fact, it takes a tremendous effort to avoid the meaning. But this is not direct spiritual perception. It is a perception of the spiritual by reason of its effects in the natural, and without that natural, we would be quite lost.

To understand something because its spiritual meaning shines through is not to search or to analyse, but to see. And oddly enough, there is a very simple test of the difference. If you can logically prove something to someone else, and that is all that is required for your satisfaction, then that is not sight. Only when the other person presents his or her own perspective, and you realize that you are talking about the same thing, is there mutual sight.

You cannot prove to me that you see what you see, whether it is the piano in the corner or the flagpole on the lawn. If I see it, I see it: If I don't, I don't. I have my eyes, you have yours. The physical world is objective enough that there is usually no problem. But let me tell you

that I see a leprechaun on the piano or a unicorn in the garden, and unless you see the same thing, you simply won't believe me. And no matter how clearly I see the leprechaun or the unicorn, I will not be able to convince you, by words, of their presence.

That, I suggest, is rather like the phenomenon described in A.R. The spiritual sense is there, but we don't very often see it. We talk about it—at least we think we do—all too often in terms of something we have figured out.

That's simply not "understanding by reason of the translucence from the spiritual sense." What Swedenborg is describing is not our grasping but our being grasped. At night, we may bump into something, grope around and figure out that that hard object is a piano. In the daylight, there is no question. That's what it is. It seems to tell us, without our asking.

All of us have, I am sure, been "caught by meaning" in significant ways. We have seen. The message of A.R. is, in part at least, that we should recognize and prize such moments as moments of the presence of the New Church, qualitatively different from other moments. They, rather than our reasoned-out doctrinal arguments, should form the core of any personal theologies.

There is a very clear reason for this. Such moments come when we are receptive, not when we are trying to shape the cosmos to our preferred specifications. To be receptive is to be most genuinely ourselves, for we are not creators or shapers at heart, but recipient vessels. What we see because it jumps out at us is nearer to the truth than what we try to see because we want it to be there.

It all depends, I'm afraid, on where we invest ourselves. As finite beings, we cannot see everything. We are constantly, ceaselessly selective. We are already beginning to experience that fundamental characteristic of spiritual life, that our surroundings reflect our inner states, though not so completely as in the other life.

If, for example, our primary loyalty is to our church organization, then when we go to the local Methodist church in the summer, say, we can feel a virtual obligation to find it inferior to our own. But if our primary loyalty is to the Lord, then we do not want to miss any instance of His presence. Everywhere we go, we expect Him to be at work, and the more alien the

# Swedenborg the Mystic: Part II

*Paul Cressman  
Waterloo, Ont.*

Beginning in 1743, while working on *The Animal Kingdom*, Swedenborg began to have very unusual experiences. These were indications of the changes which were about to alter his life. Because the sensations and experiences were totally unlike anything he had ever encountered, Swedenborg did his best to study himself as a scientific observer, detached as much as possible from his imagination. He recorded his dreams and observations throughout his two year transformation in a personal diary, *The Journal of Dreams*. His accounts detailed many of the symptoms Bucke believes are characteristic of cosmic consciousness: the intense joy, the subjective light and sounds, the expanded perception, and the moral elevation.

In April 1744, his first mystical experience occurred. He dreamed one night of conquering a temptation and afterwards experienced a feeling of incredible bliss:

"I had in my mind and body the feeling of an indescribable delight, so that had it been in any higher degree the whole body would have been, as it were, dissolved in pure joy. In a word, I was in heaven and heard speech which no human tongue can utter, with the life that is there, with the glory and inmost delight that flow from it . . ."<sup>6</sup>

The next night he had one of the most profound spiritual experiences of his life. After having dozed off to sleep he heard:

" . . . a roaring noise as of many winds rushing together, and was immediately seized with a powerful trembling from head to foot, and he felt the presence of something "indescribably holy" which shook him and threw him upon his face."<sup>7</sup>

The words of a prayer were placed on his lips. Later:

"I then prayed for grace and love, since the work is . . . not my own . . . Every now and then I burst into tears, not of sorrow but of inmost joy, that Our Lord has been willing to show such great grace to so unworthy a sinner."<sup>8</sup>

From then on, Swedenborg experienced incredible dreams and visions and "extraordinary lights seen and voices heard." Most of his

visions came during the night, often accompanied by physical sensations—violent tremors and sweating. During these visions he slept for incredibly long hours, sometimes ten to thirteen hours per night. Yet throughout much of this time Swedenborg states that "no one could in the least perceive any change in me."

He noticed an increase in his perception at times, and in one of his more lucid states:

"I was elevated into that light interiorly by degrees, and in proportion as I was elevated, my understanding was enlightened, till I was at length enabled to perceive things which I did not perceive before, and, finally, such things as I could not even comprehend by thought from natural light."<sup>9</sup>

As these experiences continued, he had a growing feeling that many temptations and negative thoughts permeated his consciousness. He began to feel he was "only evil." He writes:

"I found that I was more unworthy than others and the greatest sinner, for this reason, that our Lord has granted me to penetrate by thought into certain things more deeply than many others; and the very source of sin lies in the thoughts I am carrying out; so that my sins have on that account a deeper foundation than those of many others; and in this I found my unworthiness and my sins greater than those of other men."<sup>10</sup>

Many times he felt that evil spirits had taken over his mind and were tempting him to join the forces of evil. He often prayed for help to deliver him. He received courage and guidance and began to see that discipline would see him through his turmoils. As he had little understanding of what many of his visions meant, he occasionally doubted his sanity. He writes:

"God grant that I do not mistake in this; I believe I do not."<sup>11</sup>

and after one particularly bad night of troubled dreams:

"I begin thinking whether all this was not mere phantasy. . . ."<sup>12</sup>

He persisted in his belief he was experiencing a spiritual awakening. He began to understand that becoming more humble would help him through the occasional bad experience:

# FEMININE CONNECTIONS

*Perry S. Martin, Editor*

*Sponsored by The National Alliance of New Church Women*

*We seldom consider how much of what we do and seem to be depends on our role in life—as wife, mother, teacher, nurse, administrator. Or how much of this role depends on someone else—husband, children, employer. Here two women tell their stories of how their lives changed when their husbands could no longer perform their accustomed roles.*

*Life is growth. Yet seldom would we choose those events that propel us out of our comfortable security into an inner strength we did not know we had.*

## DIGGING IN

*"It is by no means forbidden anyone to enjoy the pleasures of the body and of sensual things; that is to say the pleasures of the possession of lands . . .*

*The interior affections, which are living, all derive their delight from good and truth; and good and truth derive their delight from charity and faith, and then from the Lord, thus from life itself . . .*

*Because genuine pleasures derive their origin from this source they are never denied to anyone."*

A.C. 994

Someone once said that Kansas is the worst of things and the best of things. That is also true of farming. Nothing is more beautiful and devastating than to watch white and black cumulus clouds build and threaten a sea of waving almost-ripe wheat. One hailstorm can wipe out a year's income. The 100 degree plus heat in a dusty field has now been tempered with air conditioned cabs on tractors, with radios and even TV if you want it. I never had that. I came in at night choked with sweat and dust, only the whites of my eyes visible. Yet there was a beautifully worked field to show for my efforts. I've had milo crops dry up completely and I've had wheat come from nowhere to make a crop. There have been hard years where everything including pastures evaporated under the relentless sun, but we somehow got by. And there have been bumper years when one swelled with pride at the beauty and quality of the grain produced with the help of God, and everyone smiled.

Farming is hard work, but it has its moments. Since Kansas was once an ocean bed, we still have sea gulls. In the early morning still cool and fresh, these beautiful birds fly and hover around the tractor, close enough to touch, white and pink in the first rays of the sun, to dive for worms unearthed by the plow. I've watched deer and their young going down to water; pheasants beautifully-colored startled into flight, quail and wild turkey, o'possums, survivors of an ancient age, and racoons. Meadowlarks sing and crows complain and profusions of sunflowers burst from fence rows and roadsides. Looking over my pasture I have watched a new colt frolic beside a grazing mare and a baby-sitting cow guard a lively group of playful calves.

My husband, Lee, and I had been married five years when he became ill. Due to a virus that inflamed his heart muscle and entire cardio-vascular system he spent five years in bed and thereafter in heart failure, a total of sixteen years. With an ill husband, two small children, Nancy and Lee, Jr., large debts on land and machinery, mounting hospital and doctor bills with no insurance, I became a farmer. I taught school, kept cattle and horses, even hogs for a time, repaired machinery, changed tires, farmed land on which we grew wheat, milo, alfalfa and barley, cooked, cleaned, washed and ironed clothes, spending eighteen hour days. I had help from family and neighbors when I got bogged down and could not afford to hire help.

My children at an early age took on adult tasks. Whenever decisions had to be made they had a voice. As a result they developed into unusually resourceful and competent young adults. For every action there is an equal and opposite action and reaction. This physical law applies to the spiritual and celestial realm. Because of my husband's illness we received compensation beyond anything we would have had had not this adversity occurred. We became a close-knit family, appreciative of the need for each other and for our diverse abilities. My husband died the way he wanted—out in the fields on a lovely August morning, in the arms of his son.

After sixteen years of being a farmer, suddenly in the eyes of all the farmers of the area I no longer was capable of farming. With my husband's death I began to hear, "it is not something you should have to do," or, "this is too hard on you," or, "farming is a man's work." Today Kansas farm women drive trucks, operate tractors and implements in the fields, operate a dairy morning and evening while husbands are busy elsewhere, weigh in wheat trucks at elevators, help work cattle and do all the heavy "male" jobs of farming. Many farm wives keep the books, order parts, pay bills, help make decisions for purchase of machinery, land, fertilizer and seed, and everything having to do with the management of an agri-business.

It has always seemed strange that labor done in the presence and supervision of a man becomes unseemly if done by women alone. Granted it is generally conceded by men that they need women to help run the business. Yet while bachelor and widower farmers are looked upon with pity, it is not considered unnatural for them to farm alone. It was accepted by the community for me to farm as they recognized the necessity of my case. However I never got past the opinion that it was too bad that it was thrust upon me. I did have too much to do without help in the beginning when the children were small, but farming has brought to me some of the most satisfying moments of my life.

Actually it was just as necessary for me to continue farming after Lee died as before. With Lee, Jr., just starting to attend Stanford, with Nancy at Kansas State and going on to three years of law school at Yale, it was imperative to farm and teach to help with expenses. Also Nancy and Lee took over much of the summer work. All that was left to me was to finish drilling the wheat unfinished when Lee left for school in the fall.

Few women aspire to agriculture as a career, but when they marry it they become very good at it, in spite of the fact that few husband farmers are patient in the teaching of the arts involved. It takes a good marriage to survive a wife trying to help start a stalled vehicle by pulling it with another vehicle under the loud and incomprehensible directions of her husband.

I no longer farm because the economics of agriculture have forced many of us out. My farm, large by older standards, is now too small for modern operations. I've joined my land with that of my brother-in-law and sister-

in-law to enable their son and daughter-in-law to farm. I am ambivalent about no longer doing it. The things I miss are many. But I also do not miss early morning cattle feedings in extreme cold and half frozen mud. Or never being able to enjoy the weather because of the worry of too much rain or not enough rain, or too much snow (danger to livestock) or too little snow (hard on winter wheat), or storms or wind. But as I no longer know the worst of it I also miss out on the best of it. And that impoverishes me.

And God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass and herb yielding seed after his kind and the tree yielding fruit whose seed was in itself, after his kind:" And God saw that it was good.

And the evening and the morning were the third day. Gen. 1: 11 and 13

Margaret Kraus  
Pawnee Rock, KS

## REACHING OUT

Last spring I decided to give a party for some visiting English friends who had been extremely warm and helpful to me. I sorted through my set of special people and gathered together a group of 16 friends who shared an enjoyable evening in my home. This fact, in itself, is not particularly noteworthy. I like to entertain and frequently have guests in my home. The provocative aspect came when a long-time friend remarked that she had enjoyed the evening but would not be able to find more than 4 or 5 people whom she would be comfortable inviting to her home. I was not only surprised, but intrigued. What was it that had created this difference between us? Basically, we were similar in many ways. She had lived alone for ten years. So had I. We both enjoyed theatre and musical backgrounds and seemed at home with people.

The subject arose again the next time we got together, and I began to get a handle on some of our differences. "You seem to be reaching out to so many different types of people in the active life you have chosen," she said, "while I find I have so few people with whom I feel closely involved." It is true that I have chosen at this point in my life to become involved with a variety of activities and people. I keep myself alert for new things to do and new ways to do them. It was, however, not always this way!

My mind travels back easily to the early days of my singleness after Bob's death. My sons had left home to develop their own lives. Being

a single 'mature' woman in today's culture does present some formidable social problems. Our generation is still basically couple oriented. After a few well-meant encounters one finds it is better to opt out of this kind of gathering and either go it alone or change your orientation to interests rather than social groups. I find myself today in a comfortable space. I enjoy a variety of interests and have developed social groupings of my own. However, this has come as a result of some hard-fought (and scary) battles which had to be won before I arrived at this active and comfortable state of existence.

I remember, for instance, the first stark realization that from this time forward, the buck stopped with me. No longer could I lay the blame for my discontent on someone else's allocation of time, money, understanding or lack of enthusiasm. Where I was, where I wanted to go and how I was to get there were now strictly—and solely—up to me. Wow!

After what I suspect was a normal amount of time devoted to feeling sorry for myself, I realized that I could only shape up and move out if I could honestly examine my priorities. The first dragon to be tackled at that time seemed to be the temptation to become house bound or a prisoner of my suburban surroundings. My declaration of intent materialized as I embarked on a 360 mile drive—solo—across the vast Los Angeles basin and the lonely and seemingly endless Mojave Desert to join my sons in the Sierra Nevada mountains for Thanksgiving. The dire projections of "what ifs?" from well-meaning friends, coupled with my own anxieties, almost did me in but not quite! I made it! I enjoyed it! And I proved that I needn't be city or house bound for the rest of my life. I had taken a big step forward toward an independent life.

Emancipation project #2 occurred when I confronted my desire to continue attending the evening concerts of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra. At that point I had not established a compatible music friend and it was either go it alone, or not at all. I opted to continue the concerts, drove 25 miles into the city, sat by myself and drove 25 miles back late at night to my empty home. I still attend the concerts, but no longer alone. However, I count that initial experience as an important factor in my struggle to carve out an interesting and stimulating life on my own.

Choral singing had always been enjoyable for me. Early in our marriage Bob and I had joined a civic chorus in San Diego and had thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Since moving to Palos

Verdes, however, we had not found time to pursue this activity. One day I decided I wanted to start singing again, pushed myself out the door, auditioned and became a member of a mixed-voice chorale. I still enjoy the pleasure of sharing music with these people.

During my somewhat structured days as a minister's wife I had often wondered how much of my activity was perceived duty and how much of it was of my own volition. I soon found that I had a personal need to continue my contacts with my church and to devote whatever talents I had to working in its behalf. There has probably been less change of emphasis in this area of my life than in any other aspect of it.

I'm sure I would have been less able to cope over the first difficult years if I had not had a profession which interested me as well as providing for my physical needs. For many months I tended to bury myself in my work, spending days, nights and most week-ends on educational projects. This high concentration of effort achieved some interesting programs for children. Much of what I then developed I still find useful in the classroom. However, I also feel that in many ways I offer more to my students since I have now allowed my horizons to broaden in many diverse ways.

Travel has always fascinated me. I have enjoyed many trips in pursuit of additional educational material. I have also travelled just for fun. Both experiences have opened new windows in my world.

My latest—and current—adventure has been to write a book with a friend. Last summer I traded my home for one in England where we spent six weeks on intensive research. We worked on the manuscript through the winter on periodic week-ends and, after a crash period of five and a half weeks this summer we have finished it. Now we are in the process of trying to market it. Working on this venture has been provocative, challenging and stimulating.

What lies in the future? Who knows? As long as I am blessed with energy and reasonable health I hope to be able to keep on reaching out. Truly it remains a fascinating world!

Betsy Young,  
Palos Verdes, Cal.

*Material for Feminine Connections may be submitted to Perry S. Martin, Editor, 31214 Marne Drive, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA. 90274.*



# WHITMORE NEW COLLEGE PRESIDENT

At the annual meeting of the Urbana College Board of Trustees, Dr. A. Perry Whitmore was appointed the 17th president of Urbana College. He has served for the past two years as Dean of the College, having been appointed to the position in August, 1979.

Dr. Whitmore brings to the presidency of Urbana College a rich and varied background as teacher, academic leader, and professional administrator. During his twenty years in college work, the new president has held every academic rank from instructor to full professor of English, and has been a department chairman, Division Chairman, Dean, and Vice President for Academic Affairs. He has held positions in eight colleges and universities, large and small, public and private, including the University of Maine, University of Colorado, University of Dubuque, and Simon's Rock Early College.

President Whitmore graduated from the University of Maine in 1958, with the B.A. in English with Highest Distinction, received the M.A. from the same university in 1959, and obtained the Ph.D. in English and Literature from the University of Colorado in 1966. He is a member of the honor society of Phi Beta Kappa and Phi Kappa Phi, as well as numerous professional associations.

The new president is 49 years old; he and his wife Kitty are the parents of two daughters, Emily 13, and Susan 11. The Whitmores reside at 158 Miller Drive, in Urbana.

Commenting on his appointment, president Whitmore remarks: "The challenges facing Urbana College are, indeed, great, as they are for all small private colleges. Urbana, however, has several extremely important advantages: the members of the college community (students, faculty, staff, and trustees) believe in the college; the support of the General Convention of the Swedenborgian Church has been, and continues to be, tremendously real and vital; the community of Urbana has always been a strong ally; and the many friends of Urbana College, both near and far, continue to believe in and support her.

"My immediate goals as president are three. The first, without which nothing else is possible, is to improve the college's financial situation. We must live within a very tight

budget; we must raise the necessary funds to reduce our indebtedness; and we must restore our endowment funds. All of these 'musts' are not only possible, they are, indeed, capable of being carried out. We must proceed with great dispatch and careful planning to assure that our financial situation improves.

"Secondly, and secondly only because of the extreme necessity to improve our financial position, the college must continue to improve and strengthen its academic program. We must constantly seek ways to assure that our liberal arts emphasis is being maintained, while also assuring that our curriculum provides proper opportunity for career education. There is a delicate balance between these two elements which must be properly maintained. Above all, we must assure that an Urbana College education is an exciting, challenging, and rewarding experience for both students and faculty.

"Third, Urbana College must re-affirm her belief in herself. My experience in a variety of colleges and universities has shown me that Urbana College is a more noble and worthwhile endeavor than some of us, at times, seem to believe. Let me assure everyone that Urbana College has a right to stand proudly in the ranks of colleges and universities. This college has survived many obstacles and overcome countless problems. But, more importantly, she has never lost sight of her commitment to the individual, and her commitment to assisting each person to develop to the fullest potential. We do this job well, and we have every right to take pride in our work.

"We must spread the word that Urbana College is, indeed, worthy of our best efforts and support. We must all work together to assist the college in maintaining her rightful place as a vital and important part of higher education in the state, the nation, and the world."

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## PLAN NOW FOR CONVENTION '82

Next year our Swedenborgian Convention will be held at the University of California, Irvine Campus from June 27—July 4. The picturesque Irvine Campus, set amid rolling hills, is located 40 miles southeast of Los Angeles, 80 miles north of San Diego, just five miles from the Pacific Ocean, and about a thirty minute drive from the Wayfarer's Chapel.

## SUPPORT FOR URBANA COLLEGE

The General Council has asked that the following names be listed in the *Messenger* in recognition of responding with gifts to Urbana College through the challenge gift of Charles McCormick during the 1981 June Convention at Urbana College. About \$4000 was given.

Mrs. Frank (Julia Vrooman) Anger, Dayton, Ohio

C. Fred Burdett, Boston, Mass.

Jean Heydon Hoyt, Yucupia, Cal.

Mrs. John (Elinor) Johnson, Mich.

Harvey Johnson, R.I.

Mr. and Mrs. David King, Okla.

Dr. and Mrs. Fred Laitner, Mich.

Mrs. Robert C. Munger, Michigan City, Ind.

Rev. F. Robert Tafel, Washington D.C.

Rev. and Mrs. Edwin Capon, San Francisco, Cal.

Mrs. Lewis Barrington, Falls Church, Va.

To each we say publicly **thank you very much** for your generous response to "Mac" McCormick's challenge made on the floor of Convention.

A similar appeal to members of Urbana College's Board of Trustees produced gifts totaling over \$10,000 from the trustees personally.

Roger Paulson

## News from Norway, Iowa

*by Rev. Richard M. Baxter  
St. Paul, Minnesota*

A crowd of about 75 people gathered at the picturesque white frame church on the hill, the Lenox Township New Jerusalem Church, near Norway, Iowa, to celebrate the 101st anniversary of the building and the 130th anniversary of the congregation. As the worshippers entered the church, the bell was rung 130 times in honor of the original group of pioneers who came to the Iowa prairies in 1851 to found the community of Jasper—the first building-stone in the wall of the New

Jerusalem—"heaven on earth." After thoroughly studying various communal groups already established, including the Shakers at Mount Lebanon, the Harmonists at Economy, the Zoarites, the Swedes at Bishop Hill, and the Perfectionists at Putney, they too decided on a communal property arrangement. When they voted to give up communism in April 1853, most of the group remained and many of their descendents still live in the area and constitute the nucleus of the Swedenborgian group at Norway, Iowa.

The first service in many years was held last October (See Nov. *Messenger* p. 235) and hopefully the service, picnic and program that was held on Labor Day weekend this year established a pattern. Rev. Dick Baxter, Presiding Minister of the Illinois Association, conducted the service and gave a sermon on Helen Keller, relating the spiritual questions she asked and the spiritual discoveries she made to our own similar questions and answers. This later resulted in some interest, discussion, and sales of her book *My Religion*.

The delicious pot-luck picnic took place on the tree-shaded lawn of the church overlooking the area of the original settlement. The afternoon program included discussion of several topics. First, some discussion of what to put in the corner stone or time capsule replacing the box that was opened last year at the 100th anniversary. Second, discussion of the wedding held in the church the previous day. This was the first wedding in the church in living memory—some were saying the first wedding ever! (The weddings were traditionally held at home.) The couple, from nearby Amana, were attracted by the picturesque church amid the tall trees. Since the daughter of a member is to be married there in October, the discussion turned to how the church could be used for the development of a wedding ministry as "The Little White Church On The Hill," similar to "The Little Brown Church in the Vale," which is located in northern Iowa. Thirdly, we wondered what possibilities the church has as a tourist attraction, since the Jasper Colony predates the near-by Amana Colony which thousands now come to see. Already this year groups of school children and scouts have asked for a tour of the church, offering an opportunity to portray its doctrines and approach to life at an impressionable time of life. This positive and forward-looking discussion was the capstone of a friendly weekend that was made even more enjoyable by the glorious weather.

## Book Review

# WHOSE WILL BE DONE?

**PRINCIPLES OF SPIRITUAL HYPNOSIS**, by Peter D. Francuch, Ph.D. Spiritual Advisory Press, Santa Barbara, Ca. 1981

Who will read this book? The reader who is curious about hypnosis and how it may be used for personal growth will get a perspective on what can happen. The therapist interested in the use of hypnosis as a therapeutic modality will get a lot of useful pointers. Although poorly edited and without an index, the book is readable. It purports to answer many misgivings about hypnosis; yet I finished my reading with many serious questions.

Dr. Francuch begins with a statement that hypnosis can become a "positive tool . . . to enhance man's ability to restructure, to rebuild, to change, and to renew himself to a degree far greater than we have hitherto dreamed possible".<sup>1</sup> The purpose of the book, he says, is "to put hypnosis in its true perspective."<sup>2</sup>

The author's insistence on constant communication with the subject's "inner mind" may provide some assurance that the hypnotist does not have the power to force the client to do anything undesirable. He says that hypnosis is not one person's will power over another, but that "one can become more aware, be more in control and with better understanding, insight, and freedom."<sup>3</sup>

Hypnosis, he explains is not a strange and unusual state—actually it takes place frequently when we focus our attention on driving, watching, or music, "we suspend everything else from our external and internal environment that would interfere with our proper understanding and full participation in the activity in which we are engaged."<sup>4</sup> This is not out of the realm of our experience. We hear of parents performing superhuman acts to rescue their children. We ourselves can become so compulsively involved in our work or so focused on some expectation of the future that we tune out the other realities around us.

Dr. Francuch maintains that his approach to hypnosis is spiritual, and thus that it may be used as a "tool for spiritual, mental, emotional and intellectual awareness, growth, progress, and betterment through direct contact with the various spheres of the human mind and its different dimensions . . . It is used for the realization of the place that human values have in our lives, and for exploration of our relation-

ship to various spiritual values—in the highest sense to God, the spiritual world, and the hereafter. Here hypnosis is used as the royal road toward self-actualization and self-realization . . . toward inner freedom and a deep sense of identity with the Divine purpose of life. . ."<sup>5</sup> Like meditation or dreaming, it is a mode of existence where space and time are irrelevant.

Various concepts of hypnosis are discussed and commented on. Then the author goes on to a useful statement of the theoretical basis of his position. Much of this discussion is based on Swedenborgian doctrine: a central belief in God as creator and sustainer; man was made in his image, "created from love to love, to give, to receive, to be happy, to be content, and to do good . . ." Man, Francuch states, is "the determinator of his own destiny and therefore is fully and without exception responsible for whatever happens to him in his own life" and has an "inborn ability to change."<sup>6</sup> This statement suggests that our freedom is absolute, and nowhere does he cross over into the subtleties of how much freedom we actually have, given our genes and our environment, and why some people do not seem able to change.

A prolonged and complicated explanation is set forth concerning the different levels of a person's mind, between which communication cannot take place directly but only through correspondences, symbols, images, dreams, hypnotic states and meditation. Although the reader may recognize the use of Swedenborgian terminology, it is not to be assumed that all of this theory is purely Swedenborgian in origin.

Most central to the premise of "spiritual" hypnosis is Francuch's definition of the spiritual or inner mind with which he claims to establish contact during hypnosis. This mind he defines as the "immediate seat of God in man, where God continuously abides and through which He influences everything in man."<sup>7</sup> He explains that in order to accomplish his goal of helping "man realize what he is, who he is, and what is the major purpose of his life,"<sup>8</sup> that various blocks must be removed. Here we get into more familiar therapeutic ground—the uncovering of masks, roles, and outside expectations, in short, the blocks which keep us from realizing the happy and useful state

toward which we strive in our regeneration. I must say that, as a therapist, I resent the implication that my kind of therapy is somehow less spiritual than Dr. Francuch's.

After the first three chapters, most of the book is addressed to the hypnotist. It explains the principles of establishing communication, technical procedures and rules for the conduct of sessions. In an interesting excursion, he deals helpfully with the problem of reincarnation which pops up in so many reports of hypnotism. He explains that in the hypnotic trance we experience our contact with other spirits or spokesmen for our inner feelings. "In accordance with these states with which we are in tune, we are in touch with all those people in those different worlds who are in similar affections, loves, wants, desires, etc., as we are . . . the spirits assigned to us at the different levels dwell in our different affections, and they do not otherwise know but that they are us."<sup>9</sup> Most hypnotists, Francuch explains, do not check out with the subject's mind if they are dealing with a reality of existence before birth or with the triggering of some long-forgotten memories. Reincarnation, he suggests, serves a need; it helps people who cannot comprehend spiritual realities. It is a distortion of the idea of returning as an angel or spiritual advisor. My own experience corroborates this point of view; it is as if those who believe in reincarnation cannot comprehend the idea of life continuing on a plane other than earth with its time and space.

One of the avenues that Francuch uses in his hypnotic treatment is the contacting of "spiritual advisors." "The basic function of these advisors is a continuous preservation of man's freedom . . ." They "thus represent certain aspects of man's personality and mind, to which they correspond."<sup>10</sup> He insists that the purpose is not to become dependent on them, since they come from different levels. Such dependence, I believe, is a real problem for people who get involved with any kind of advisors, but especially "spiritual" ones. People tend to believe that if they get a "message" or advice from a guru or prophetic leader or while in an altered state of consciousness that the content must be true and good. They surrender their freedom and their ability to consider the value of what they have received. This danger becomes uncomfortably apparent as the book proceeds. Given this *caveat*, I want to add that there is also a great potential in contacting the different levels of our personalities. The shadow, or negative side

of ourselves must be recognized, tamed, even put to constructive use before we can move on to a higher level of growth. My guess is that the higher we go, the stronger and more subtle these "negative" forces can become.

The use of hypnosis for therapeutic treatment and personal growth raises many important questions which for me go unanswered in this book. Is spiritual hypnosis that different from other uses of imagery, dreams and meditation? To what extent does the therapist's will determine what happens? Dr. Francuch dismisses this question by maintaining that hypnosis leads to freedom. But I know that in all kinds of therapy, and in fact in all kinds of human interactions, the personalities of both persons affect the outcome. Clients of Jungian therapists produce archetypal dreams. And I notice that this author seems to be able to get the answers he desires from the "inner minds" of his clients.

Another question: If the inner mind is the "immediate seat of God," why is it so necessary for hypnotist Francuch to instruct it with his long "philosophical talks," in which he explains the origin of so many of the problems faced by his clients, the fallacy of so many of their beliefs, and the steps they must take to overcome them?

The biggy: Does Francuch really speak with God, the Most High, as he suggests? For myself, I answer, yes, *in so far as he is able* to be in touch, to comprehend. So do we all receive as much truth as we are able. Jesus said, "I have many things to tell you but you cannot bear them now." We hear—from our fellow humans and from within—what we choose to hear and are able to understand.

Spiritual hypnosis may be a powerful tool to increase our ability to be in touch with deeper levels of reality. But we must always be aware of the temptation to take what we receive at our level as the literal, the absolute truth. We see this danger in the moral majority and in fundamentalist interpretation of the Bible to promote hatred and intolerance. We experience it when we accept Swedenborg's writings so literally and with such authority that we abdicate our own personal search for truth and the freedom and responsibility that he urges upon us.

In "Case Number Three"<sup>11</sup> the danger of such egotism becomes frighteningly clear. First of all Francuch states that he thought "this would be one of those easy cases that would be boring, dull." Would you like to be one of these cases? He also judges that the client lacks

spirituality. In a taped transcript a power struggle ensues. Francuch calls upon the Most High, commenting "He has the power . . . He knows what is best, of course." He thinks his patient will die unless the Most High "will listen to me and will change His mind." He tells the Most High the facts of the case, pleads with Him and finally instructs Him how to arrange things more appropriately. And we come to the conclusion that indeed our author has persuaded Him to change His Mind!

If we choose to make use of such powerful modalities as hypnosis, meditation and spiritual healing, it is essential to avoid that kind of egotism portrayed here. We must never believe that the truth we receive is absolute and therefore unquestionable.

When we open ourselves to the power of the spiritual world, we are entering dangerous territory, inhabited by evil as well as good. We

must be constantly on guard against the seductive belief that what we receive is the direct and unadulterated Word of God. We are mortal, we receive our truth through channels tuned to our level, and our understanding is always limited. Therefore let humility be our constant companion in our search for truth.

#### NOTES

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|--------------|--------------|
| 1. p VIII    | 6. pp 28 - 9 |
| 2. p IX      | 7. p 44      |
| 3. p 2       | 8. p 44      |
| 4. p 1       | 9. p 73      |
| 5. p 6       | 10. p 161    |
| 11. pp 201ff |              |

Perry S. Martin, Ph.D.

*Dr. Martin is a licensed Marriage, Family and Child Counselor and Director of the Wayfarers Chapel Center for Growth in Palos Verdes, California.*

## FROM CHURCH RECORDS

### BAPTISMS

The Rev. Gardiner Perry, pastor of the Detroit New Church Society, officiated at the following baptisms:

**BOSSHARD**—Cecile, daughter of Fritz and Gail Bosshard of Paw Paw, Michigan, at the Church of the Holy City on April 12, 1981.

**NEUENFELDT**—Heidi Grace, daughter of Tom and Betty Jean Neuenfeldt of Riverdale, Michigan on July 26, 1981, at Almont.

**GORANG**—Trevor Michael Gorang, son of Michelle and Michael Gorang at Almont on August 2, 1981.

**SPERRY**—Jaydee Jean Sperry, daughter of Kirk and Sally Sperry on August 2, 1981, at Almont.

**MOROLF**—David Morolf (adult) of Midland, Michigan on July 30, at Almont.

**MOROLF**—Max Robert and Levi Adam, sons of David and Jan Morolf of Midland, Michigan on July 30, 1981, at Almont, Michigan.

**CZUDYJOWYCZ**—Anne Nicole, daughter of Nick and Jeanmarie Czudyjowycz, was baptized into the Christian faith on Sept. 20, 1981, with grandfather Paul Zacharias officiating.

**KRIZOVA — KLESTILOVA**—Iva Ruth Krizova and Nina Rachel Klestilova, daughters of the Rev. Ivan Franklin, minister of the San Diego church, were baptized into the Christian faith by their father on June 7, 1981 in the San

Diego Church while visiting from Czechoslovakia.

**DREW**—Dennis Drew, young son of Magdalena and Dennis Drew Sr., was baptized into the Christian faith on Sunday, August 2nd, 1981 by Rev. Ivan Franklin in the San Diego Swedenborgian Church.

### CONFIRMATIONS

**LAURA LAWSON** was confirmed into the New Church and the S.N.A.P. Society on July 16, 1981 on the summit of Mt. Chicorua, New Hampshire, the Rev. Eric Allison officiating.

**GUTFELDT**—Michi Gutfeldt was confirmed by the Rev. Eric Allison into the New Church and the S.N.A.P. Society in Holy City, California on August 22, 1981.

### DEATHS

**BILLINGS**—Mildred Billings, 84, of Brookings, Oregon, passed away in late September, 1981, after a brief illness. Miss Billings was born in Cleveland, Ohio in 1897, but spent most of her adult life in the Chicago area where she faithfully served in the Chicago New Church Book Room for many years. Her brother, the Rev. Rollo Billings, is retired and resides in Oregon.

**DAVIS**—Ralph H. Davis, 75, died in Great Bend, Kansas on Sept. 18, 1981. The Rev. Eric Zacharias officiated at the Resurrection service, with interment in the Great Bend Cemetery.

## From The Riverside Newsletter

### **"GONE, BUT NOT FORGOTTEN"**

Recently, I attended the memorial service of a dear 99 year old lady. Time had run out for her. She may be gone, but it will be a long time before she will be forgotten. This made me think of the changes that have taken place not only in the lives of my family and in the lives of friends, but also I thought of the changes that have taken place at our own dear little white church. As many of you know, 50 some years ago Mrs. Perry, Alice Van Boven's mother planted several trees in the yard of the church. Some of these trees and plants are like those mentioned in the Word.—the alive tree, the cedar of Lebanon, the pomegranate and the carob tree, are four of the ones that Mrs. Perry planted. The carob tree was referred to in the story of the Prodigal Son, found in Luke 15: 11 - 32. Verse 16 says "and he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him." Those husks were carob pods. The carob pods have been called a St. John's bread.

Time has run out for the carob tree which has grown tall and has given much shade to the cottage on the church grounds. It grew in a small area between the garage and the cottage. The tree is infested with termites, and it must be taken away. It will be gone, but it will not be forgotten. We hope to replace the tree, and as we watch the new tree grow, we will again think of Mrs. Perry and the tender loving care she not only gave to the people of her church, but to God's earth.

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## **THE SYDNEY SOCIETY OF THE NEW CHURCH**

**HAVE YOU A SPECIAL INTEREST IN  
THE OUTREACH AND MISSIONARY  
ACTIVITIES OF THE CHURCH?**

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO WORK FULL  
TIME EXPANDING AND DEVELOPING  
OUTREACH PROGRAMMES?**

The Sydney Society of the New Church requires a full-time Manager of its Library/ Outreach activities under the bequest of the late William Moore. Up to this point the position has been covered by our minister, but its growth and future potential are such that a separate person is now required.

The position offers a challenging and exciting opportunity for someone with particular interest and ability where the advertising and promulgation, generally, of the truths of the Second Advent are concerned. A flair for administration, imagination, and a capacity to use (or a willingness to learn to use) all forms of media, is required.

The appointee will work in co-operation with the minister of the Society and new initiatives and directions, within the framework of the Moore Bequest, will be encouraged.

Initial enquiries should be addressed to the Secretary, Mr. F. A. Hall, The Sydney Society of The New Church, 55 Clarence St., Sydney, 2000, Australia. When writing please state details of age, work experience, years of association with the Church and experience, if any, with outreach/missionary programmes.

## **A.N.C.L. UPDATE**

The American New Church League has some very exciting news! For one thing, we've passed a brand new constitution. We've been without one for at least six years, and with all the structural changes we've made in that time, the Executive Committee decided it was time for a new one. At the Ex. Com.'s pre-convention meetings, we spent most of our time working on the final copy from the rough draft our president drew up. It wasn't easy work, but it was well worth the effort. And it was passed unanimously at convention by the League at large. You can find it printed in the October CLEAR BLUE SKY.

Another exciting event is that in June, a new local League was started! I am just thrilled to be able to announce the formation of the Urbana New Church League!!! We got together with the Urbana Leaguers both before and after convention and worked long and hard to set up this new local League and get it rolling. And now there are plans to set up a few other new Leagues as well; notably, in Edmonton, Alberta and Cincinnati, Ohio. So the ANCL is still moving ahead!

We are now in the process of our annual address request. All our churches are being asked to send to their ANCL Regional Officer an up-to-date mailing list of all the Leaguers (13-college) in their areas, especially any who are isolated, so we can update our mailing list for CLEAR BLUE SKY and keep them notified about any League retreats. It would be a big help if each of you makes sure your

church responds to this plea. And anyone who knows of any Leaguer who has so far been missed is certainly welcome to send in the name and address personally.

Thank you.  
For the ANCL,  
Trevor George Woofenden,  
ANCL President

## New Book by Gwynne Mack

A new book, by Gwynne Dresser Mack, is being published jointly by the Connecticut and Massachusetts New Church Associations, and will be ready for distribution early in November. Entitled *The Story Which Has No End*, it is a compilation from the author's articles and editorials written for the MESSENGER during the past forty years. The Massachusetts New Church Union (79 Newbury St., Boston, Mass. 02116) is handling distribution and sales, so all orders should be sent there. The price is not yet fixed, but it will be moderate. *The Story Which Has No End* might be called a postscript to the author's previous book *Talking With God* which for the past twenty years has been distributed all over the world by Arthur James Limited, a British publishing house.

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## CLEAR AS CRYSTAL—

(Cont'd from page 234)

surroundings, the harder we work to understand how He is working.

But we are often given to more partial loyalties. We must invest ourselves in particular positions, declare our allegiance to particular groups, and then find ourselves looking for evidence to support our position, to justify our investment. We narrow our receptivity and, I'm afraid, make it awfully hard for the Lord to tell us anything but what we want to hear.

How different this state is from the state of the New Church imaged in this eleventh verse of Revelation twenty-one! "In that church the Word will be understood: not by reason of our manipulation of it, but 'by reason of its being translucent from the spiritual sense.'"

*The above address was delivered by the Rev. George Dole, Swedenborg School of Religion faculty member, during the 1981 Fryeburg, Maine summer session.*

## We Get Letters

### MORE BOUQUETS FOR FILM

Dear Paul:

The Helen Keller CBS film has now been shown 1,000 times by groups ranging from high schools to camp grounds. For some reason the Department of Interior even viewed it. The same for Appleseed. There are 1,000 future bookings for CBS which go into the Fall of 1982. From the feedback we are receiving it is most popular with residents in nursing homes and patients in hospitals. Students in senior high schools and colleges are also enjoying learning that Helen Keller was a Swedenborgian. The interest in this particular film is much higher than the *Appleseed* or *Swedenborg* film. In the 7 months since its release over 35,000 people have seen it. One curious statistic is that groups in Houston booked it 13 times in August alone. Modern Talking Pictures lists all three films in their promotional literature.

The North East Ohio Instructional Media Center requested permission to tape all three films for distribution to high schools in their area and were granted permission for the two Foundation films, but CBS has a policy of not granting permission to tape their productions. All of this plus the production of our next film on Blake and Swedenborg keeps us very busy.

Darrell Ruhl,  
Executive Director,  
Swedenborg Foundation, New York, N.Y.

*(We have just received word in early October that the Johnny Appleseed film has been awarded the prestigious CINE GOLDEN EAGLE prize in the field of religion, which opens the door to international film competition. Recently this film also received honorable mention at the Columbus Film Festival. Ed.)*

## A POSITIVE NOTE

Dear Rev. Zacharias:

Just a word of appreciation for the last two *Messengers* (July-August and September) which I felt could have been written just for me—there was so much in them that I could respond to.

The optimistic feeling in Eric Allison's Convention sermon really warmed my heart. Also, his explanation of the rise of fundamentalism and cults was enlightening—the rise of these groups does not mean that we "are spiritually regressing, but that more people are

(Cont'd on page 239)

## *Rev. Yonezo Doi*

Our friend Yonezo Doi has been called to the Higher Life. Those who knew him will remember that he was for many years our missionary in Tokyo in his native country of Japan. He came to the United States several times—the first time to the New Church Theological School in the early Twenties, and was ordained May 16th, 1926. He returned to Japan for over fifty years of faithful and dedicated service. It was a great satisfaction to him to be able to build a church with a small parsonage in a well-regarded suburb of Tokyo. This was made possible through the generosity of a member of the San Francisco society.

He later had the joy of seeing this building become a central rallying point for the New Church in Japan.

His functions in the church included: translating Swedenborg into Japanese, and later supervising other translations; issuing periodicals, preaching at his church, and visiting individuals and groups throughout Japan.

He faced a task that was not easy. Only a very small percentage of Japan is open to Christianity, and the local religions are deeply entrenched and interwoven with the whole Japanese culture. Yonezo was fortunate to have the moral support of his wife Fuji, who survives him, and later of other members of his family, who supported his endeavors. He also saw several other directions of the New Church develop independently, and tried to establish communication with them.

To this I want to add a very personal note: It was my privilege twice to be the guest of the Doi family after their retirement, the last time as recently as January 1981. Together with Rev. and Mrs. Yuzo Noda—the successors of Yonezo, we were invited to a typical Japanese meal and enjoyed their company. Yonezo himself was very quiet—not as vigorous as three years ago, when I heard him preach in his church. Of course, I could not follow the sermon itself, as it was in Japanese, but I was aware of his sincerity and commitment, and was told afterwards that it had been a thoughtful sermon.

My warm feelings go out to his wife and other members of the family whom I have met, and I am confident that his legacy is ably continued by his successor.

Horand Gutfeldt

## *THE UPPER ROOM*

# THE NEW NAME

*Leon Le Van  
St. Petersburg, Fla.*

Jacob's name was changed from Jacob to Israel, and it came at a climactic point in that Patriarch's life.

The first event to transpire at that time was Jacob's vision of angels at Mahanaim. Since Jacob was burdened with a deep sense of guilt for having stolen his brother Esau's birthright, we can only speculate on how he interpreted the sight of that angelic host. Were the angels a sign of Divine protection? Or a sign of judgment? It is hard to read this portion of Jacob's history without feeling the great burden of guilt and fear that Jacob experienced as he approached the border of Canaan and confrontation with his brother Esau. Esau had at least 400 men, which probably meant men equipped for war. "And Jacob was greatly afraid."

That night Jacob remained by the river Jabbok alone. He had sent all his host (both humans and animals) across the river into Esau's country. But he himself remained unattended through the long hours of darkness by the banks of the lonely stream. You and I need no great knowledge of correspondences to realize the nature of Jacob's spiritual struggle. It was a struggle of conscience and truth on the one hand with terror and guilt on the other. As he wrestled in spirit it is said that there "wrestled with him a Man till the breaking of the day." That night—long wrestling in the lonely darkness is described by the New Church writings as a "temptation combat."

## IN TEMPTATIONS ANGELS DEFEND

In temptation combats you and I experience the struggle between good and evil as if it were our own. But on the invisible side of every temptation there are angels who defend us as far as our good permits, while evil spirits assail us according to our evils and falsities. Such "temptation combats" are unavoidable necessities for regeneration. We must be "born again," and we are "born again" or reborn through victories in temptation combats. The Lord permits such combats (indeed cannot prevent them) so that our evil and selfish qualities may be removed and be replaced by qualities of Heaven.

Thus, Jacob wrestled with the "Man" by the river Jabbok. That "Man" seemed to be an



angel. Yet—somehow—he also seemed to be God. The “wrestling” continued all through the night. Finally, with the approach of morning Jacob’s heavenly antagonist said: “Let me go; for the day breaketh.” Jacob answered: “I will not let thee go except thou bless me.” The Man asked: “What is thy name?” Jacob replied: “It is Jacob.” And the Man said: “Thy name shall no more be called Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince thou hast power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.” And the sun rose upon them.

### NEW STATES OF LIFE

That turning-point in Jacob’s life (which also represents a turning point in any person’s life) gave Jacob a new name. Scripturally a “new name” signifies a new quality in the soul, a new state of life. Names in Heaven portray the true quality of every angel. Spiritual names are not given arbitrarily, nor in accordance with anyone’s choice or whim. Every name in Heaven is an “index of the soul”—just as one’s face in Heaven is the “window” through which the soul looks out and discloses itself. In heaven you will find your own true “name” waiting for you—in much the same way as you will find your “own life” waiting for you. Even now (today, tomorrow, next week) as you lay up your spiritual “treasures in Heaven” your “new name” is being formed.

Abram received a new name. Sarai received a new name. Jesus is known by a name which identifies Him as the One and Only God of Heaven and earth,—the Divine Love and Wisdom, the Divine Human. “Jesus” is the “New Name” of Jehovah.

### NAMES IN HEAVEN

You and I, too, will receive a “new name” as our qualities of life change from earthly to Heavenly. If we fight against our evils in “temptation combats” because we know they are sins against God, the Lord will continuously give us new states of character, a new birth, a new life, a new name—a “name” we shall have in Heaven.

As you continue through your earthly life, may the Lord lead you continually through such ways as He knows, and through such “wrestlings of the spirit” as He understands; until the “morning shall break”, and you may enter the life of love and wisdom, the promised “Land of Canaan.” Such a life, and such Heavenly character, will be your new mind and heart—your new name “which the mouth of

the Lord shall name.” It will be the “new white stone,” with its “New name written which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it.” “And I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem. And I will write upon him my new name.” May the Lord in His loving kindness and tender mercy give His “new name” to you.

### WE GET LETTERS — A POSITIVE NOTE

(Cont’d from page 237)

seeking something new and meaningful.” Also, these groups offer a supportive and warm atmosphere of acceptance which other churches have not always provided. This is so true of the church I attend in Cedarville—it is very fundamental, but has such a great feeling of love and caring.

I do hope that in the coming months there can be more written about *Holography*. I’ve experienced it, but never knew it had a name! What a wonderful truth to know that there is no time, nor space where God is not fully present! And that Divine Love and Wisdom is the energy that sustains every atom.

Equally meaningful to me was your opening address at the Convention (Fiddling on a Hot Tin Roof). It too is optimistic. When there is so much talk about all the depressing things going on, we forget about the positive side. I was glad to be reminded that it is the hells that infuse those dark, pessimistic thoughts, which is what they delight in doing. Keeping a positive optimistic attitude is not only good for us individually, but also helps bring heaven closer to the whole world.

Thank you again for all this wholesome food for thought.

Jeanette Ryan  
Cedarville, Mich.

### Coming TV Religious Programs

Nov. 1, 8, 15 on CBS—“Faith Without a Sanctuary”; a three-part series on the un-churched in America.

NBC Specials: Nov. 1—“Migration”

Nov. 29—“The Terrible Secret”

Dec. 13—“On Aging”

(See local listing for time and channel. If these programs are not shown in your area, please call your local TV station.)

**THE MESSENGER**  
**Box 2642, Stn. B**  
**Kitchener, Ont. N2H 6N2**

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## **A WORD ABOUT MESSENGER MAILING**

Every issue of the *Messenger* leaves Kitchener on or before the 25th of each month. We are told that it requires three or four weeks for delivery, sometimes longer, and we regret this poor mail service. (Do we have your zip/postal code? If not, this adds about a week for mail delivery.)

Beginning with this issue we are using a new, improved addressing system, with the *Messengers* going out in envelopes, and this may improve the mail service. We hope so.

If you would like to receive your 1982 *Messengers* by FIRST CLASS MAIL, please send \$10.00 to: The Messenger, Box 2642, Stn. B, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada N2H 6N2. This offer good until December 31, 1981.