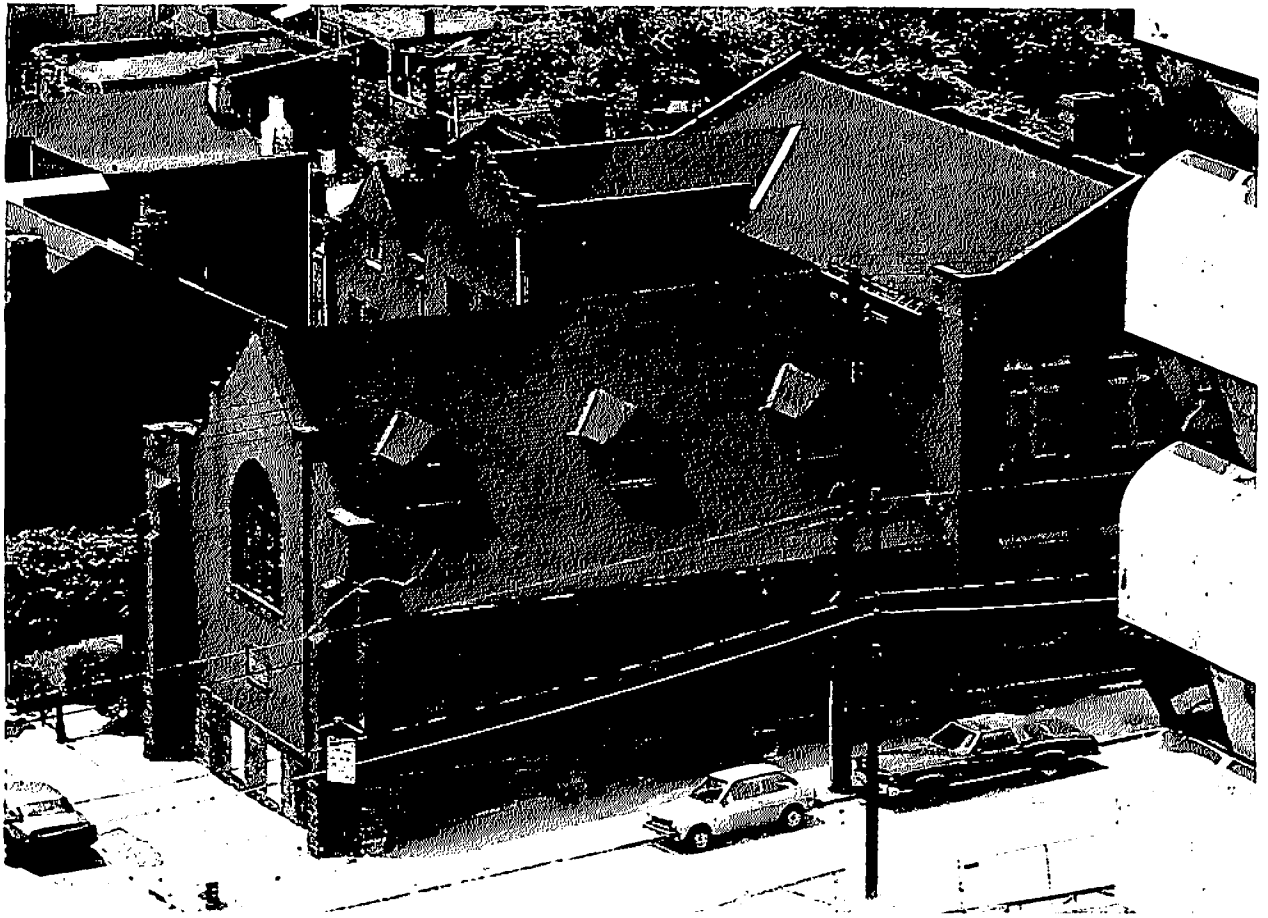


The Messenger

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH
SEPTEMBER 1981



**THE PITTSBURGH NEW CHURCH
1841 — 1981**

See articles on
pages 192 and 195.

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LABOR DAY REFLECTIONS

Many of you are aware that Canada has now entered its sixth week with no postal service, and, as of August 5th, there is still no end in sight to this labor impasse. Our inside post office workers now average \$21,000 per year; they are seeking \$24,000 annually, plus more paid vacation days and other benefits. Inasmuch as education, training and skill requirements for this type of employment are minimal, most citizens support the government in not buckling in to these excessive demands.

Many hundreds of small businesses which depend almost entirely on regular mail service are in dire trouble; everyone is inconvenienced in one way or another by this postal strike. Obviously, with no mail coming or going, getting out this issue of the *Messenger* has been something of a challenge. Fortunately I had a small backlog of articles, appearing in this issue, but if the strike continues much longer, the October issue will be lean indeed. My present plan is to send the July-August and the September *Messengers* in the same envelope from some point in the United States on or around August 26th.

As a young lad I was mightily impressed by the short story "Quality" by John Galsworthy. A simple, beautiful, profound story of an old cobbler who made shoes by hand—and superb shoes they were. Every pair was lovingly and carefully hand-crafted, with perfect fit and comfortable wear guaranteed. The man took great pride in his workmanship; his shoes were a visible expression of how he felt about himself and how he viewed his service to the general public.

In *Heaven and Hell* Swedenborg tells us of the great variety of employments in the spiritual world, where every inhabitant in heaven performs a use, a service which he or she most enjoys doing and which in some measure benefits the welfare of the public good. There is enjoyment in the process of doing our work well, and there is satisfaction in knowing that other people are being helped because of our efforts. This is the center of the heavenly life, both in the spiritual realm and on planet Earth.

Isn't this another clear picture of how our motives, our intentions, our goals in life influence everything else! When our work becomes drudgery and when we work only for a paycheck, then quality and productivity

always suffers. When we take justifiable pride in our labor and we do the best we can in our chosen vocation, then life on all levels is being enriched. The choice is ours to make.

P. Z.

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THE MESSENGER SEPTEMBER 1981

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Paul B. Zacharias, Editor

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*Opening Address
Convention '81*

FIDDLING ON A HOT ROOF

*Paul Zacharias
Kitchener, Ont.*

Our theme this Convention is "make a joyful noise unto the Lord", and what a grand theme this is. Here is a concept, a picture, that each one of us here can make our own — a very personal, intimate kind of theme. How much we need to strike this positive, upbeat note in this time of uncertainty and tragedy — it brings us back to what is real and permanent and true.

Nowhere in the Bible is this approach more evident than in the Psalms. Here all the passions, the dreams, the hopes and fears of ordinary people are spelled out so vividly and with so much feeling. You read the Psalms with an open mind and heart and there you find your own life written in large, bold print. Every human need and sentiment is expressed in the Psalms. Those writers were so thoroughly in touch with themselves, their own inner states, and everything spilled out. For them God was the most real friend in all the world; they told Him everything, their innermost secrets, their joys and sorrows, their problems, their victories and defeats, nothing was held back. And regardless of what happened, the bottom line was always a joyful note of affirmation and trust. They might argue and complain for awhile, but ultimately, without exception, the final note in the Psalms is always one of acceptance and obedience.

Last month perhaps you watched on T.V., as we did, "Fiddler on the Roof". Such a warm, delightful, beautiful story of life in a Jewish village in Russia about seventy years ago. It tells the story of how those faithful Jews lived, and worshipped and played and died, and finally they had to leave everything behind when the government forced them to leave Russia. After it was over, I asked myself: "Why is this story so appealing, so moving?" And I think the answer is that it is so completely honest and genuine; nothing false here. It is so full of passion and zest for living and aliveness. Those people had virtually nothing, physically, but spiritually they had everything, and we wish we could be more like that.

Also, in my own case, my grandparents had to leave Russia under the very same circumstances; they too had this same convinced, living faith, all of which makes the story especially meaningful for me.

You recall how, in the movie, Teyve constantly argues with God. For him God is intensely real; he *expects* to be heard and answered. And despite some grumbling and raised eyebrows, whatever happens is finally accepted as being good — God always has the last word. Teyve lives in the certain knowledge that ultimately everything is going to be all right. So he makes a joyful noise unto the Lord all the days of his life. Every so often he bursts into song — he goes through life, and a very hard life it was, with a song on his lips. We can learn something from this old Jewish milkman. This evening I'd like to borrow several themes from the "Fiddler on the Roof," all of which could help us make a joyful noise unto the Lord.

You recall how Teyve had this habit of saying, "On the one hand so and so, but on the other hand, such and such is the case." "This young man who wants to marry my daughter is poor, but on the other hand, he is honest." How often, in Convention we talk on the one hand about the negative, depressing things going on, but we forget about the other hand — the positive side. And dear friends, this is killing us. This talk of gloom and doom is so insidious and pervasive and depressing — and this is precisely how the hells work. They insert into our minds all of these dark, pessimistic thoughts and for some reason we who call ourselves members of the New Jerusalem Church accept this as the last word. This is for the pits, and this is exactly where we are being led. Certainly we have to look at and acknowledge the harsh realities of life; we are faced with some real difficulties; but let's not overlook the many pluses, the many positive features of life as it comes to us moment upon moment from the good Lord. We could say, on the one hand, the college is going through some very trying times right now, but on the other hand, the Swedenborg

School of Religion has a full enrollment, with some very promising students coming along. On the one hand, we have lost some church groups and families in recent years; but on the other hand, those of us who are staying in have a clearer sense of purpose and loyalty. There was a popular song back in the 40's — "Accentuate the Positive" — let's look at and talk about the positive, not just the negative.

The central thrust of the "Fiddler on the Roof" and our church teachings is that God is eminently personal. And in so many ways this truth, this awareness, is growing all around us, in all sorts of faiths and creeds. Many of the old beliefs are rapidly crumbling; they are no longer seen as primary. Now, on all fronts, in religion and philosophy and science, most people acknowledge the presence of a higher energy or power, known by many different names and descriptions — but the important part is that the *Divine Presence in the world is now being acknowledged by an ever-growing number of people in all walks of life*. The Lord God is alive and real and approachable in this New Age, which truth has dozens of implications for daily living. We need to capitalize on this central fact of life.

In the "Fiddler on the Roof," Teyve, his family and friends were all caught up in the rampaging floods of a changing world. Most of the old values and patterns were crumbling; at times he was bewildered, frightened, lost, angry. But always he held fast to certain basic fundamental convictions, with which he could not and would not compromise. Some things in life are eternally true and valid, and each one of us must ask ourselves: "What do I cherish and treasure above all else? What will I live and die for? What is my pearl of great price?" And no two pearls are ever exactly alike.

Teyve, like many of us, lived too much in the past. So often I hear how our churches used to be filled and thriving; we had such

grand preachers in the good old days; they were well versed in the doctrines in that golden age. Can we see how this approach drains us of present energy and resources? Yes, those were good old days then, even as these are good new days now — and we need to let the dead bury the dead. Somehow we need an infusion of new goals and purposes, new directions, for the 80's and 90's, a new spirit of discovery and openness to all of life. Can we trust in the vitality and the good intentions of the Holy Spirit, which is as active in the world now as it ever was!

I am still essentially very optimistic and hopeful about this particular revelation for a New Church in this New Age. It is being picked up here, there, everywhere, by all sorts of people and groups. I have no idea what will happen to our little church organization in the next thirty or forty years. It may go out of existence — I don't think it will — but it could. Whether or not this happens is largely up to us and the following generation. If it does go under, life will continue, and the New Church faith and lifestyle will flourish under some other name and form — of that there is no doubt whatever.

In the meantime we can rejoice in the promise and the opportunity given us in our being together in Urbana this week. Let's make the most of these next few days and see what we can do for the cause of the New Church, working with the Lord in this time and place.

"For his anger is but for a moment, and his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning.

Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing; thou hast loosed my sackcloth and girded me with gladness, that my soul may praise thee and not be silent.

O Lord my God, I will give thanks to thee for ever."

Psalm 30:5, 11, 12.

A Sense of Eternity

*Our sense of immortality
lies in conscience.*

*It lies decisively in love,
that wondrous reality —
we are mortal when we are loveless,
immortal when we love.*

*Immortality does not happen
by itself.*

*One whose life is fulfilled
in the present — "immortal" —
bears the future in time.*

*One whose present life is empty
bears no future.*

Karl Jaspers

SCRIPTURES

Ps. 5: 1-8

Ps. 24

Jh. 14: 1 - 9

:18 - 21;

:27

REMEMBERING

PAUL DAVID GIUNTA

In our anguish and anger
 In our confusion and bewilderment
 How can we measure the stature of a man
 we loved so well?

In our sorrow and loss
 In our pain and grief
 How can we measure the depth - of -
 meaning we have received from a life
 that has crisscrossed ours and been
 shared with ours?

In our grief
 How can we measure the depth of stature
 of the man, Paul?

In the life and teachings of Jesus we find
 guidance.

Two teachings:

"By their fruits you shall
 know them."

Using the imagery of nature,
 He suggested that a good tree
 bears good fruit. (Matt. 7:20)

"This is my commandment, that you
 love one another . . . By this shall
 everyone know that you are my
 disciples, if you have love one to
 another." (John 15:12)

Let us use these two teachings as a guide
 in our remembering.

Paul loved the Lord!

Out of this love

He loved the Lord's people whom he con-
 sidered to be everyone

He loved his church.

The fruits of this love are all around us —
 and within us — right here.

The altar cloth

The work of Paul's hands.

The banners on the walls

The work of his hands.

The very floor your feet are resting on
 Scrubbed and waxed by the work
 of his hands.

The flower beds and altar flowers

The work of his hands.

At a memorial service for Paul at
 Convention his classmates shared
 how Paul had recruited all the
 students this Spring to spend a
 day here cleaning the yard and
 then

Served them all a gourmet meal
 The work of his hands.

All of this an expression of Paul's love of the
 Lord and his church.

The fruits of his love are all around us, but
 even more spiritually powerful, the fruits
 of his love are within us!

Your very presence is a witness to that
 reality

The depths of grief and distress we feel is
 a witness to that spiritual reality.

We can measure the stature of Paul
 by looking within and knowing the
 depth of pain we feel.

"By this shall everyone know you are my
 disciples, if you have love one to another."
 Paul had and has that love, and he is
 loved by us for his life blessed us.

As many of you know

Our Church was in national meetings this
 past week.

News came at 1:20 Tuesday afternoon

The outpouring of love and distress was
 beautifully awesome.

Council of Ministers recessed
 Three memorial services.

At a service of sharing

From New York and Seattle

The most kind and gentle man ever
 known

From Kansas, Saskatchewan and Ontario

Remembering a guided tour of Boston
 one bitterly cold night last January.

From Guyana

A hymn sung in love.

From older ministers

A remembering of Paul as a student in
Sunday School years ago and thought-
ful admiration of his courage-of-
faith throughout his life.

My own experience of sitting in the Urbana
Chapel overwhelmed with anger and
"un-belief."

Looking up and seeing the in-
scription on the stained glass
window.

(Ps. 37:23) "The Steps of a Good Man are
Ordered by the Lord."

Knowing a new depth of meaning
as I saw this Scripture *lived*
in the life of Paul.

Looking to the opposite window

(Jh. 12:32) "And I, if I be lifted up, will
draw all men unto me."

Many interpretations of that Scripture
but I perceived a new Living Word
That was what Paul had done. He had
throughout his life lifted up the Lord
and held Him before his face,
listened to the Lord's call forward,
and had followed Him.

Paul's life was a ministry!

Last evening his mother shared with me that
at five years old, Paul wanted to be a
"binister."

He was just one year from graduation from
the Swedenborg School of Religion.

As is our custom, a year before, each
candidate presents a "Plan of
Ministry."

*(Paul's entire "Plan of Ministry"
follows this memorial address.)*

You sense, I'm sure, the great loss to ministry
which we will experience and yet
Through his life and tragic death, Paul
has ministered to us all.

And we know he continues to do so.

On the Monday before we had learned of
Paul's death, one of our ministers, the
Reverend Susan Turley-Moore, during a
period of meditation, had a spiritual en-
visioning which she shared at a memorial
service in Urbana and which she desired
that I share with you here.

She experienced a tugging at her
shoulder, as it were, and in an altered
state of consciousness, became aware
of being in a most beautiful and peace-

ful environment.

She turned and saw Paul

His face was bright and shining and
reflected his constant love of life.

Sue, in surprise, said, "Paul, what are
you doing here?"

"I'm fine and I'm happy," answered Paul.

"Come, I want to show you something"
And he pointed to two beautiful
cathedral like doors.

"I can't go there," protested Sue. But
Paul reassured her it was alright and
he opened the doors for her.

Behind the doors was the most beautiful of
gardens with row upon row of flowers
and shrubs. "This is mine to tend,"
said Paul.

Sue noted the strength and health of all
the plants but she also noted that none
was yet in bloom. They needed Paul's
ministry of caring, which was his to
give, if they were to come into full-
bloom. There is meaningful ministry
yet to be done.

Paul's life was and is, a ministry to the God of
Love he knew so well.

If we would learn from the ministry of
his life.

If we would find guidance from the
sermon of his example

I believe he would call each of us
Each in our own style
Each in our own way

To hear and *live*
the message which guided and
sustained him:

"Go and do the love of the Lord."

EXPANDED NOTES FROM THE MEMORIAL SERMON FOR PAUL DAVID GIUNTA

PREACHED BY
THE REV. DR. CALVIN E. TURLEY
AT THE CAMBRIDGE CHURCH
OF THE
CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

JUNE 28, 1981

June 1981

PLAN OF MINISTRY

Prologue

On Sunday morning we recite a portion of Psalm 27, saying, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life; to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his holy temple." It is startling to reflect on the simplicity of the quest that is that statement and then to realize that in this century in the midst of this "New Age" that there are those in this country who are not in freedom to say this simple sentence. The Lord allows it to be said by each individual and still there persists in our church, we well as others who claim to proclaim the message of Christ, those who deny the right of alienated minorities to freely join in this statement. It is to these minorities and especially to the homosexual community that I know that I am called to serve.

It is not a call that I take lightheartedly, for I feel, and in a direct sense fear, the reaction that my call shall have on our beloved church as a whole. Yet, while meditating on this issue, my mind continually returns to a portion of A.C. 8788 "... For there to be a church, there must be with the man of the church faith in the Lord and also love to Him and to the neighbor; these things make the church." It is this sense of love to the neighbor in the highest form that must be addressed if we are to live our faith and become a true church. My major concern then is not of those within the church, but of those who stand outside and knock. Yet, in order to open wide the door, the house within must also be in readiness to receive. Thus I am also concerned with the people who comprise our present church membership.

If people are held down by false truths and forced to assume a false idea of their value and their worth and their potential can they act in freedom? No, they are merely puppets or worse, slaves to a graven and false image. In a letter to a friend Thomas Jefferson put this idea in a perfect form when he said, "The God who gave us life gave us liberty at the same time; the hand of force may destroy but cannot disjoin them." It is my firm belief that it must be the church which leads men to "true freedom" to the freedom to love the Lord and abide by his commandments and lead a life of charity that leads heavenward.

My ministry is clearest if defined in a dual time zone.

Part one is that which deals with the present historical time zone.

On one level, my ordination is a ministry of bearing witness for the church as a whole in dealing with the variation of the human spirit that exists within the Grand Man and an acknowledgment that our denomination is not one that is based on discrimination or prejudice. My ordination is an affirmation that the church is an inclusive body that operates out of love of the neighbor and understanding of the individual.

I am fully aware that at present there is probably not one parish in the church that would accept me as a pastor and therefore I seek a ministry of the streets, to work with the alienated and offer them our teachings as the viable process for their regeneration. This would be accomplished via acting as a personal minister to the various homophile organizations that exist in many of our major cities. It should also be understood that the one out of six Americans who are homosexual according to the Kinsey studies, need role models that are real and worthy of being sought out for guidance and direction. This is also a real and vital portion of my ministry, for it should be noted that amongst researchers who compile sociological data of the homosexual community that the normal church and pastoral relationship is highly suspect and derided by homosexuals as being deceitful, uncaring and unchristian.

To change this perception of the Christian church, I wish to bear witness amongst my own people and unteach the falsity that has come to be their religious birthright. I wish them to know that there are people who care about them. As they deal with the wrenching ordeal of the reality of their sexual orientation, there must be someone to turn to who can mellow the blow that hatred and bigotry leaves on the human spirit. They must know that even though there are those in each walk of life that will reject them and entice them to believe that they were created evil, to live a life of evil; that they are not rejected by the Lord. They need to be guided that it is to the Lord that they must turn and it is to Him that they should seek as a guide to live a life which emulates charity to the neighbor and love to the Lord. For this is the birthright of all.

A second aspect of my ministry is to be a resource to the other ministers in Convention in dealing with the homosexual experiences that occur within the parish. For not only does

this require pastoral care with the individual but with care and nurturing of the parents and other immediate family members. This is a role to which I can bring unique understanding, care and help. I envision myself being able to travel to any parish in the United States to give pastoral care in this area when needed.

I would further like to serve the church by being active in the Committee of Worship and in the area of work on the National Council of Churches.

Part two of my ministry is in the future time.

I strongly believe in the organized church. As a part of that belief it is my hope that within a period of ten years after ordination, I would be acceptable to a parish to act as its minister and would then be happy to combine a street ministry while serving as a traditional parish minister.

ACCOUNTABILITY

It is not my intention to by-pass the Council of Ministers in proposing a street ministry and therefore thoroughly intend and hope that a select group within the council would be set up to offer me support and guidance in this exciting ministry. It would be a logical

process to have my ministry accountable to the ministers who are represented on the Board of Missions as my review group as my ministry most clearly is one of a missionary nature.

FINANCES

The ideal financial feasibility for this form of ministry would be the establishment of a store front operation via assistance of the Board of Missions in a large city such as New York. However, I am fully aware of the difficulties that my ordination will create and I am prepared to support myself via employment as a Dental Hygienist, a profession I am licensed in, until such time as I could more adequately demonstrate the worthiness of this form of street ministry.

POSTLOGUE

How do I adequately express the joy that lies within me on the challenge that lies ahead? Years ago I attended a lecture given by the late Robert Frost in which a response that he gave to a student conveys my feelings. He stated: "Why should I have remarried. I have a love affair now. It is with the World."

Paul David Giunta
Boston, Mass.

A.N.C.L. ANNUAL REPORT 1981

Three years ago the American New Church League's Executive Committee was an unorganized group of five Leaguers with a goal in mind, but no idea how to get there. But that has all changed, because two years ago, the A.N.C.L. Executive Committee came up with a solution to the problem: we divided the U.S. and Canada into five regions and elected a regional officer responsible for several specific activities for each of these regions. Basically, we became an organized, unified whole, with a means to our end. And so far, what those five unorganized Leaguers set up (with the help of our League Chaplain) back in March of 1979 has been so successful that there isn't much doubt that it was the correct move for the League.

This year, the A.N.C.L. has taken an equally major step. Three Leaguers worked at our Pre-Convention Executive Committee meeting, morning, afternoon, and evening for two solid days, drawing up a brand new League Constitution. The A.N.C.L. has been functioning without one for close to a decade, but we realized that if we didn't provide for

the continuation of what we've achieved so far, all could very easily be lost. Our constitution will help to ensure that all gains are permanent.

We also are working on an up-to-date version of the League Handbook, containing every possible nitty-gritty detail about ways the A.N.C.L. functions, so that Leaguers who aren't familiar with how we operate will be able to put on A.N.C.L. retreats, start local Leagues, guest-edit CLEAR BLUE SKY, and so on.

These three — retreats, local Leagues, and our magazine — plus our regional set-up with its regional officers, and our annual meeting at Convention are the five main functions of the League. Briefly, I'll fill you in on the past year of each of these.

We've had four retreats this year: two at Blairhaven, hosted by the Bridgewater, Mass. League; one in New York City, hosted by the New York Association and our annual post-Christmas retreat at Almont, Mich. We already have plans for several retreats for the coming year in the works.

Our local Leagues have continued to operate in their own ways at five of our churches. And something I'm very excited about — we've just started a *new* League in Urbana! There are a number of other churches which have three, four, or more Leaguers that we hope will also be starting local Leagues soon.

CLEAR BLUE SKY has continued to reach out to over 250 young people each month. It has been instrumental in enabling us to reach out to Leaguers all over the continent, no matter how isolated.



Trevor Woofenden reports to Convention '81.

I've already mentioned our Regional set-up, but let me add that I hope our new group of Regional officers will do an even *better* job than the last group. Our new Executive Committee consists of Nancy Little of Elmwood, MA. in the Northeast; I will be taking care of the Southeast and the Presidency; Corina Bishop of Urbana, Ohio has the Mid-West Region; Ben Unruh of Hutchinson, Kansas is in the Prairies; and Lee Woofenden, soon to be on Guemes Island, Washington, is our Regional Officer for Western Canada and the West Coast. Plus, the Rev. Dr. William R. "Pop" Woofenden is our new League Chaplain.

At Convention 1981, we worked hard on several projects: this year's beautiful A.N.C.L. banner, the Convention issue of **CLEAR BLUE SKY**, the Saturday morning worship service, in which we acted out the Garden of Eden story, and an A.N.C.L. display table.

During Convention we also had three people speaking to us on various topics: two on the Convention Theme and one on our continuing series on "How Convention

Works". A special thanks to Rev. David Rienstra, Roger Paulson, and Rev. Dick Tafel, Jr., for taking the time to do this for us.

I also want to thank the Board of Education for paying room and board at Convention for one Leaguer from each of the following Associations: Maine, Massachusetts, New York, Ohio, and Pacific Coast. Thanks also to these five Associations for choosing Leaguers to be sponsored by the B.O.E. We hope that next year we'll have League representatives from all *thirteen* Associations!

So that's the past year in brief.

Now, I'd like to bring up something that is a big concern of mine and is of major importance to the continued functioning of the A.N.C.L., namely, we need *more* help from the adults in Convention. There are probably fewer than twenty-five adults in all of Convention who have voluntarily helped out with the League in the past year. And I mean *voluntarily* — not those for whom it's part of their job. And to those few I would like to give out the biggest thanks possible — they have been close to indispensable. But I have this vision of a one hundred percent active League that holds onto our youth and provides active members for Convention when they become adults. Perhaps it's merely idle dreaming, maybe I'm foolish to think it's even remotely possible to have Convention's youth organization reach out in meaningful useful ways to our teenagers whenever and wherever possible, but I think it's a glorious picture! And I propose to you that it's very possible if we can get Convention's adult members to take an *active* interest in the A.N.C.L., if we can get our adults willing to spend time working for our youth, if we can get more of our adults to put a bit of effort into helping our A.N.C.L. programs.

The past shows a rather dismal record I'd like to leave behind. Too large a percentage of our clergy and laity have been apathetic when it comes to the League. But we need to keep a few poignant facts in mind. First of all, Convention has always had a small membership, and it also has a very poor record when it comes to hanging on to its youth. Too many of our kids leave the church behind when they leave the Sunday School or when they leave home for college or work. We obviously aren't reaching them in a way that's meaningful for them. Second, a surprising percentage of teens who are active in the A.N.C.L. do find something in the

(cont'd on page 199)

FEMININE CONNECTIONS

Perry S. Martin, Editor

Sponsored by the National Alliance of New Church Women

As the lady from Boston said, "I already have my hat." I don't need a new one, but the idea of editing a *Messenger* page on women's concerns, issues and perspectives became irresistible.

Women have always made connections. Part of what made mothering a large family hard for me was feeling disconnected with the mainstream of society, often with the whole adult world. Traditional women's work—with the poor, the ill, the elderly and the children—has not been given the dignity accorded to the value of "productive" work in the industrial age.

In the dawning of a new age, women are making more connection with the mainstream. What does this exciting time require of all of us, women and men? What do women have to say to the church about the coming of a new age?

On this page we offer feminine connections—connections between women and the church, women and men, women and the world. What does it mean to be a woman with a Swedenborgian perspective of the world? What connections can we offer one another?

In this issue Sherry Fekete tells of her connection with two different organizations and wonders with us how to bridge the two. Carole Rienstra writes of our connection with our environment and possibilities for individuals to affect the world around us.

I look forward to hearing lots of ideas and new points of view. I expect we won't all agree with each other. I hope to make lots of new connections.

P.S.M.

WOMEN WORK FOR PEACE

Every woman must find her place in the world. For some 10,000 women in the United States and their sisters in 25 countries around the world, that place is on the streets marching against war, inequality and repression; in schools and meetings teaching peace and the need for universal disarmament; and in homes and offices writing letters to officials expressing their views on issues of peace and justice. For members of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, these matters are too important to be ignored or left to men and those women in positions of political power. Since its founding in 1915 at the Hague by 1132 women from twelve nations, some of which were at war with each other, the Women's International League has struggled non-violently for an end to military inter-

vention and confrontation, urging the peaceful resolution of conflict through negotiation.

Many of the "founding mothers", such as the U.S. delegate to the first meeting and first president of W.I.L.P.F. Jane Addams, were suffragettes who linked peace with women's rights. It was felt by many that women, as mothers and nurturers, feel a stronger desire for peace than men do, and that it was therefore crucial that their voices be heard above the din of the primarily-male war machine. This may sound sexist, and many peaceful men may take offense, but it is true that throughout the ages men have warred, whether because it is in their nature or because it was a learned activity, while women have been the healers and sustainers of life. Elizabeth Cady Stanton once said, in discussing women's equality and the implications for military service, "There is no force in the plea that 'if women vote they must fight'. War is not the normal state of the human family."

Although today the world's oldest women's peace organization also includes men, the experience of working together on something meaningful with an international body of women is one of the most fulfilling and special aspects of being a W.I.L.P.F. member.

I was lucky to come into W.I.L.P.F. the year that the triennial International Congress was held in the United States. In Connecticut last summer 500 women from five continents, including observers from the USSR, other Eastern Block countries and Cuba, met to discuss how we can more effectively act to move the world toward peace and equality. We attended workshops on issues such as the Arms Trade, Human Rights, Racism, the Middle East, and North-South relations to better understand the sources of conflict in the world today. This year at the national meeting of the U.S. Section, which was held the week before Convention, we also attended workshops, discussing subjects particularly relevant to U.S. members. We set our priorities for the next two years based on the goals of the international body, our responsibility being to pressure our own government to legislate and act for peace (and not profit, for there is no question that war is very profitable for some). We students and younger members attending the Congress held a session in which we wrestled with the issue of our own commitment to non-violence in view of the sympathy and support that we felt for certain armed liberation struggles. Recognizing that our own American Revolution was a violent one, we questioned whether there was ever a time when violence should be advocated or condoned.

One of the joys of attending WILPF meetings and conventions for me has been seeing, meeting, and working with women my grandmother's age and older. I've learned a lot from them about perseverance! Some of them have been with the organization almost since its inception, and although through the years wars have come and gone, they haven't lost their spirit or their hope that someday a lasting peace will come. They point to the formation and development of the United Nations, and the legislation that came out of the Civil Rights Movement as evidence of progress, as proof that positive changes have occurred and are occurring. That doesn't mean the "battle's" been won, or that the work is done. But with the ardent devotion to a cause that I see in a great-grandmother of 90, I can hardly fail to be inspired and motivated to continue the struggle for true peace and "justice for all".

Pondering my role as a Swedenborgian in the Women's International League, and wondering what WILPF has to do with the doctrines of my church, I can only say that I cannot find a better way to live my religion. The love and concern for the world and all its people; the understanding and discernment of what is right and wrong, good and evil in the world; the will to work for what is good and the faith that right will win over might in the end—this is what WILPF, at its highest level, represents to me. Many of its members are not church-goers, and some even scorn the idea of formal religion because it has not met their needs and doesn't do anything to help the world. Yet when I see the compassion they feel for those who suffer, the pain they feel when injustices are brought to their attention, and the work they put in and the sacrifices they make to bring about a better world for us all, I know that God lives within them and that His Love and Truth are received and known, at whatever level of consciousness. I also feel certain that no measure of New Jerusalem doctrine that I could give them would make them live better lives.

So, I go to a WILPF Convention one week to talk about how to bring about a more just and peaceful world, and the next week I go to Convention and pray for it. I don't know which will bring about the best results, and frankly I don't care to argue it. They are both equally essential to me.

I'd like to close with a quote from a wise woman, Virginia Taylor, which is as meaningful today as when she wrote it:

"God help this country and our
finite world if women with
conscience and even a modicum of under-
standing of our political institutions
do not now assert themselves
in taking responsibility in the life of this
community and nation . . ."

In Peace,

Sherry Fekete

For further information, write:

W.I.L.P.F.

1213 Race St.

Philadelphia, PA 19107

THINK ON THESE THINGS

"A person is in the midst either of the angels of heaven or of the spirits of hell according to his affections and lusts and the thoughts therefrom and to his actions which are good or evil uses."

Emanuel Swedenborg, Divine Love and Wisdom.

Our church teaches that the world around us corresponds to the world within; the external world responds to our thoughts and feelings. The way we think and feel . . . our general attitude and outlook on life determine not only *our* experiences but consequently world situations. "Precept upon precept, line upon line", we actually determine the state of the universe.

What a powerful thought! If we could become more optimistic there is no limit to the changes we could produce. Most Americans believe yesterday was better and tomorrow will be worse! They fail to see that the country is the best ever. Sure, we detest pollution, but during the horse and buggy days so many horses dropped dead in New York City every year some 15,000 bloated carcasses had to be hauled away. There was so much pollution from the horse manure, flies and fleas that 20,000 people in that city died from cholera. If people are really longing for the good ol' days it must be the kind all cleaned up on T.V. without the cholera, typhoid, pneumonia, dysentery, infant diarrhea, etc.

In just one generation we have conquered or at least controlled all these diseases. And believe it or not there is no time or place where there has been less social ferment, less labor strife, less disease than right here and now. Our children are taller, healthier, smarter, handsomer, more capable and more prosperous than ever before.

With all this to be thankful for, why are people so pessimistic? And if we continue to be so pessimistic we will cause the world to get worse, not better.

The seasons are turning, the leaves will soon be all ablaze with color and we stand on the threshold of a new church year—a bit apprehensive—in need of courage and strength to face the vastness of so many days and hours. We may be a bit apprehensive in this pessimistic population. But we only need to take care of one day at a time and *anyone* can spread some joy and guard the words he speaks and the thoughts he thinks for one day. *Anyone* can be kind and thoughtful and considerate for one day. And *anyone* can endeavor to learn something new each day—read and meditate—mark some growth for one day. For the supreme art of living is to strive to live "in the midst of the angels."

Carole Rienstra

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

140th Anniversary of the Pittsburgh Society

“THIS HAS BEEN A LIVING CHURCH SINCE 1841”

by Henrietta Zehner

On Saturday evening, November 6, 1841, John Mellor, George Smith, Elizabeth Young, Anna Aitken, Mary Jane Foster and M. Coates were regularly instituted into a Society of the New Jerusalem Church in the United States by Rev. Richard DeCharmes.

These words describe the beginning of the New Church (Swedenborgian) in Pittsburgh. As you know, when Emanuel Swedenborg's theological works were published and distributed in England and elsewhere, they soon spread to the United States where reading groups were formed. "Johnny Appleseed" journeyed through Pittsburgh and down the Ohio Valley distributing tracts of Swedenborg's writings along with his apple seeds in and around the Pittsburgh area.

At first they met in the homes of members and as their number increased they rented a room in the Sunday School building of Mr. Tapsey. Attendance grew and they soon outgrew this room and rented space at the corner of St. Clair and Liberty Streets. The great fire in the city of Pittsburgh on April 10, 1845 forced them to give up their premises for the use of business establishments who had lost considerable during the disaster, so again the group searched for quarters, and found them across the Allegheny River on Federal Street for the sum of \$6.00 a month. By 1847 their numbers had increased and they found space in a fire engine house on Cedar Avenue for \$25.00 a year. The church members now felt they could afford to hire a regular ordained minister and the Rev. David Powell was employed at a salary of \$211.25. He conducted both morning and evening services and served the parish for two years and then moved to another congregation. The Society resumed services led by a reader. The congregation was growing and from time to time they moved to more commodious quarters and in 1861 took a two-year lease on the second floor of a building on the northeast corner of Wood and Sixth, across the river in Pittsburgh once again. On July 6, 1863 a charter was approved by decree of the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County. The first Sunday School picnic was held August of that year 1863. By 1872, due to the increase of membership and generous contributions, the

church felt they should now make plans to build their own house of worship. One of their members, John Pitcairn, pledged \$2,000.00, and Dr. Cowley guaranteed a contribution equal to half the amount subscribed and a lot was purchased in Allegheny City on the North Side of the Allegheny River. Construction began in the spring of 1874 and later in the year was completed, furnished and occupied. The women of the Society formed a Sewing Society and replenished the Library.

Two of Andrew Carnegie's Scottish aunts had been among the founders of the church in 1841. Andrew Carnegie attended the Sunday School as a boy, was a choir boy and librarian as he grew older and also served as a trustee. When the original church building was built in 1874 he donated \$2000.00 for the purchase of a pipe organ. At this time he remarked "I can vouch for what the organ will say, but I cannot vouch for what the minister will say." This was the first of several thousand organs donated to churches by Mr. Carnegie. The organ came from Philadelphia and when installed at the opposite end of the sanctuary from the pulpit in an elevated organ loft required some change in the roof. This prompted a joke around town to the effect that "Carnegie's organ blew the roof off the church and then put it back on." Carnegie's affection for the church ceased after he left Pittsburgh and lived in New York. He did send a check later to the treasurer, Albert H. Childs, commenting that it went against his conscience to subscribe to the church that had disagreements among the members, but hoped the contribution would be used wisely. Regardless of his terse statements the church appreciated the \$300.00.

The organ is still used at every service and to the worshippers its tones grow more beautiful with the years. Our 100th anniversary of the organ was celebrated in 1974 with professors from local universities as guest artists. The organ originally was pumped by boys, then converted to water power and finally to electric pump.

In 1875 the church became affiliated with the Pennsylvania Association. In this same year a German group asked permission to use

the edifice on Sunday afternoons. They could not pay rent for the privilege since all their contributions were used to purchase Swedenborg's writings. In 1884 the German Society united with the Pittsburgh Society bringing with it twelve members. By 1876, 90 to 100 people worshipped at the church services and the Sunday School had five teachers and 54 scholars under the superintendency of Mr. Vetterling. Mr. Vetterling was later ordained by the Pennsylvania Association and when the church voted to provide a robe it caused some friction and the resignation of a family from the membership.

The church was located a few blocks from the Allegheny River and the area was frequently in the path of rising water every spring. On these occasions the young men of the Society had to take up the carpets and the flood waters of 1884 damaged the building badly. However, the congregation continued to hold services there until 1905 when the property was sold. The group met on the second floor of McKnight's Hardware store on Federal Street until the new present structure was built.

Property was purchased in 1906 and building dedicated in 1906 at the present site about twelve blocks from the original building. The church was fortunate to have a member, Harry Markley, on the staff of the architectural firm of T. E. Bellquist and E. B. Lee who saw to it that the specifications of the church and parsonage were met. Another member, Samuel Wilson, was on the construction crew so again our wishes were carried out. Rev. John R. Stephenson designed the large and beautiful stained glass window behind the pulpit. It faces east and is most beautiful when the morning service is held on a bright sunny day. It depicts a beautiful sunrise scene in a mountainous terrain with several tiny flowers and an edifice standing alone at the bend of the road. At the bottom of the window is the quotation "Behold, He cometh with clouds." Pittsburgh had long been noted as manufacturers of stained glass and one of them was commissioned to execute Rev. Stephenson's exquisitely planned window. It means many things to many people as they look up at it on Sundays — to each it brings hope of reunion in God's own time — to the anxious it exerts a calming influence — to the serene it means "this is what I believe" — to the children, they see the flowers — and to all of us it means "home."

In 1912 the Pittsburgh Society withdrew from the Pennsylvania Association and joined the Ohio Association for geographic reasons, thus affording less travel to meetings and less expense for delegates attending annual meetings. It was a wise decision for there were many more churches in Ohio much closer to Pittsburgh than Philadelphia and the sphere of service was enlarged as well as our ties of friendship.

Through the years our members have remained loyal. One of our life time members Hilda Schoenberger Weidner had of necessity to move to Phoenix, Arizona. Last year our present minister and his wife visited her and some other New Church people in that area. We hope to repeat this visit soon. Like many other denominations, we have had ups and downs, and periods without a minister, but have never ceased to have services unless weather or an unforeseen emergency arises to make cancellation necessary. A recent emergency arose when the old gas lines entering the church leaked and had to be replaced.

For many years the Young Peoples League and Ladies Aid Society were active bodies of the church. However, during World War II the League declined when many of the young men returned from service and took jobs elsewhere in the country and of course their wives and children went with them. We lost a whole generation of potential members. The Ladies Aid continued to meet, hold rummage sales, serve suppers etc., until the general membership declined. It has recently reactivated and contributes to the church and National Alliance projects.

As in most Swedenborgian Societies, there are descendants of the pioneer families active in the local churches. In Pittsburgh they are fourth, fifth, and sixth generations of the Rosenfelder, John Schoenberger and George Weckesser families. From the beginning, members of the church rarely intermarried, thus bringing in new blood and new ideas from their spouses when they became members. We do not evangelize, but believe that prospective members must reach a decision themselves knowing that they will be welcome and given the opportunity to serve when ready. Our present membership is small, but everyone shares in the work in whatever capacity they can. All are very faithful in contributing on a regular basis. Through the years we have survived during long periods of being without a minister by

having visiting ministers coming to us for baptisms, confirmation, marriages, resurrection services and Communion. Lay leaders have faithfully conducted services and in some cases funerals. Our present membership is 25 with an average attendance of 18 each Sunday. Most of our members travel many miles to services. Our organist is also a specialist in repairing and rebuilding pipe organs and keeps our historic organ in good order.

"Outreach" was in practise in the Pittsburg Church long before it had been the "in-thing" to do. When Chicago suffered from the Great Fire Pittsburgh members raised money to send for relief of New Church people in that city. During Rev. Mathias' pastorate the Ladies Aid served lunch occasionally to the North Side Ministerial Group. He also had a group of young men of the neighborhood meeting regularly in the gym. However, the group was dispersed at the advent of World War II.

Rev. Leon LeVan now serving the St. Petersburg church also worked with the children of the neighborhood. One of Rev. LeVan's most effective programs was the Telephone Message program. There were New Church messages on a phone 24 hours a day. At the end of each message the name and address of the church was given for the request of literature. Thousands of calls were recorded over a two year period, the greatest number during the nighttime hours.

We are happy to support our present minister Rev. Ronald Brugler, in the volunteer chaplaincy at Allegheny General Hospital, our nearest neighbor across the street. The hospital is completing a large expansion program and conducts a Life Line service consisting of two helicopters and a small plane within a radius of 150 miles for transporting accident and emergency victims to Allegheny General and other Hospitals. Ron serves two days a week and will be writing about it in this issue of the *Messenger*.

Through the years we have had many members whose devotion and willingness to share their talents — LIVING — not just quoting, "All religion has relation to life and the life of religion is to do good." This has kept us going through crises which have developed from time to time through our 140 years of existence. We are grateful for them and thank God that the spirit which prevailed when the Society first began is still with us and pray that it will continue.

Church Officers:

President — Thomas B. Zehner
 Vice President — Forest Swiger
 Secretary — Suzanne Schnupp
 Treasurer — John R. Mucka, Jr.
 Librarian — Henrietta Zehner
 Sunday School Supt. — Gilbert Heddaeus
 Trustees — Mary Carey
 Elizabeth Trautmann
 John Mucka, Sr.
 Minister — Ronald Brugler

MINISTERS, PASTORS AND LAY LEADERS OVER THE 140 YEARS.

Rev. David Powell	1847 - 1850
Rev. W. H. Benade	1862 - 1876
Rev. H. C. Vetterling	1876 - 1880
Rev. John Whitehead	1880 - 1895
Rev. H. V. Crownfield	1895 - 1899
Rev. W. E. Brickman	1899 - 1903
Rev. John R. Stephenson	1903 - 1913
Rev. William G. Stockton	1914 - 1920
Rev. G. J. Brown	1922 - 1923
Rev. George E. Morgan	1924 - 1934
Rev. Charles Mathias	1934 - 1944
Harry H. Heer, Lay Leader	1944 - 1949
Rev. Leon C. LeVan	1949 - 1967
Gilbert T. Heddaeus	Authorized Lay Leader
Adolf Liebert	Authorized Lay Leader
Thomas B. Zehner	Authorized Lay Leader
Henrietta Zehner	Authorized Lay Leader
Katherine Swiger	Authorized Lay Leader
Rev. Ronald Brugler	1978

CONVENTION CALENDAR

Sept. 24-26	Dept. of Publications, Philadelphia
Oct. 9-11	Pac. Coast Ass'n S.F. Bay area
Nov. 2-3	C.O.M. Exec. Com., Newton
Nov. 3-5	Com. on Adm. to Ministry, Newton, MA
Nov. 5-7	S.S.R. Bd. of Managers, Newton, MA
Jan. 28-30	General Council, Newton

WE NEED MATERIAL

We welcome all types of material for the *Messenger*: Letters, poems, features for young people, articles on current events, theological studies, the story of your local Society. This is YOUR New Church magazine.

THE PITTSBURGH NEW CHURCH REACHES OUT

*Ron Brugler
Pittsburgh, PA.*

Imagine in your mind right now the typical Convention Church. I doubt that any of you have pictured an inner-city building, located in a deteriorating neighbourhood, having a heliport within fifty feet of the sanctuary, and towering beside it an eighteen storey hospital which is undertaking a major construction project! In reality this accurately describes the environs of our Pittsburgh Church.

Now stop thinking to yourself "how depressing," and instead join me in saying "Praise the Lord!", for it is to this area and to the people who live and work here that the Lord is asking us to serve, to teach, to create, to minister. An exciting and fulfilling ministry is in the making. Our Pittsburgh Church is alive, well, and looking forward to our next one hundred and forty years.

"What?" you might be saying. "Optimism for a church with an average attendance of twenty people? How can this be?"

Consider first our most recent ministerial accomplishment, the sponsorship of a two day a week volunteer chaplaincy at the Allegheny General Hospital. I started having a very strong recognition last year of a sinful situation in Pittsburgh. The sin was our failure to mold our church life according to heavenly design. By this I mean our lack of concern by our actions, for the community in which we are located. It was this realization that helped us as a church to really see for the first time the hospital across the street as an opportunity for "use" fulfillment.

In January I contacted the chaplain at A.G.H., Rev. Hugh Crawford, (a Presbyterian), and offered my services. On that day a very special relationship was born. I discovered then that not only was our offer appreciated, it was both needed and wanted. A.G.H. is one of Pittsburgh's largest hospitals, having over 650 beds. The hospital offers the best services in Western Pennsylvania in the areas of oncology, cardiology, and trauma, along with the other services of an institution of its kind. Yet the hospital has only one chaplain, thus the offer was accepted.

My volunteer work there brings me in touch with seventy to one hundred patients each week. Most of these people at some point in our visits ask about the Swedenborgian Church, and their questions are readily answered. There is also a ministry to the staff, for being caring people, while helping patients they too find themselves in need of support and ministry. Here too, questions about the church across the street are often answered. The belief once held by many of the staff that our church had been closed is being dissipated.

Most importantly, the A.G.H. - Swedenborgian connection is a morale booster for our congregation. The sponsorship of this ministry provides us with a concrete example of something we can do for our community. And being of use does a strange thing to an organization — it makes you feel worthwhile. Yes, Praise the Lord for His goodness — we know now in Pittsburgh that the Lord can work through us regardless of size! This is the reason for our optimism.

The volunteer chaplaincy is only a beginning however. One project does not make a successful church. But within our church new growth - oriented projects are in the making. These include a variety of goals, for "variety is the essence of heaven!"

One goal will be reached this year in the sponsorship of a community recital on our organ, a gift from Andrew Carnegie. We will also be on the tour of the Pittsburgh Chapter of the Organ Guild this fall. A second goal will reach fruition as our ads re-appear in the Pittsburgh Press, after many years absence and new ads appear in the "Holistic Events" newspaper. Remember, Allegheny County has a population of over one and one-half million people. Our ads might only be a



Ron and Val Brugler.

"whisper" in the wilderness, but we know that it will be heard!

A third goal for the year builds upon our advertising the establishment of a weekly forum, an idea borrowed from the Washington D.C. Church. We hope to begin this project this winter as an effort to bring new faces into the church and thus spread the

teachings of the New Church.

With these goals we begin our 140th year of existence and I hope I've conveyed to you some of the reasons for our optimism. The Lord commanded us to do many things. In Pittsburgh we're glad to say "Lord we're trying!"

ON STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE

*Priscilla Garrett
El Cerrito, CA.*

We have many inherited resources. How might we use our theology to apply to contemporary situations? As an example, is it enough to resort to the traditional "shun evil as sin and lead the life of charity," or does the psychology of Regeneration found in Swedenborg's work yield a more sophisticated approach to the transformation of evil? Every day we are bombarded from all directions with stories of crime and violence. How are we to respond? Block it out as too much to tackle? Send a check to our favorite organizations to relieve a little guilt and feeling of helplessness? Join a group to fight for a cause? Growl and complain to our friends? Get a headache or an ulcer? Is dealing with evil a simple matter of punishing the criminal and pitying the victim—overcoming evil with good? Does shunning evil by overlooking it transform it, or does transforming it require a more sophisticated approach: accepting the healthy parts of ourselves that have become evil through repression (e.g. anger, sex, envy, resentment, the desire for a whole life, the power drive)? Can a modern depth psychological understanding in conjunction with Swedenborg's teaching about regeneration help us here? Might it not be a vigorous, exciting, viable church if people are related to each other through growth and transformation rather than blood kinship?

One of our inherited resources is our church buildings scattered throughout the United States. When they were built they made sense as they were filled regularly and used in various capacities related to church programs. Now, how many are used at all or for more than Sunday morning worship? Some have been sold or are shared with other groups. Could this not be done with more of them? Worship could be held in rented halls

or homes of various members. With the proceeds from the sale of these buildings, regional centers could be developed as has been recently suggested. Here church people could be in contact with one another and perhaps find stimulation for their congregations back home. In addition, the time and energy going into maintaining a church building could go into projects such as centers for youth, child care facilities, or day care centers for the elderly—putting the teachings into practice according to the needs of various communities.

Another resource from the past is our money. Have you any idea how much is spent yearly by Convention on air flights, etc., for meetings of various committees and boards, plus the yearly Convention gathering? Thousands of dollars without exaggeration. What would happen if this was spent on people for their personal growth and spiritual development as was done in the '50s and '60s? Many felt this experience revitalized the church then. Could it not happen again and free us from some of our ingrownness?

The deepening and widening of a religious life encompasses more than perpetuating a church building and maintaining the status quo. It requires constantly renewing the inner and outer areas of our lives and not remaining perpetually locked in the ways of our forbears.

Countless opportunities for increased awareness come to us from within if we listen, really listen, to our dreams, our fantasies, our persistent thoughts and spontaneous images. This new knowledge from our depths can be incorporated in creative ritual, new ways of teaching, religious seminars, growth groups, preparation for marriage, couple counseling, musical offerings, artistic expression, and using money to transform lives rather than in

some cases doggedly carrying out the by-laws.

Moving on from the past does not necessarily mean abandoning it. We are richly endowed with resources left us by previous generations. The challenge is to use our inheritance with the same imagination for contemporary needs as was effectively done in the previous century. If the church's golden age of the 1870's to the 1890's has

relevance for our time, perhaps it is to match and surpass it in the 1980's and 1990's.

To have a church life based on excellence, creativity, and vision might make it possible.

Priscilla Alden Garrett is an Adult Teacher in the field of Geriatrics in the San Francisco-Bay Area. As the wife of a Swedenborgian minister she was active in parish life for seventeen years.

THE NEW CHURCH IN THE OKANAGAN

*Erwin Reddekopp
Kelowna, B.C.*

I suspect your first question might be: "Where in the world is the Okanagan?" Well, from the Okanagan Valley of central and southern British Columbia come some of the best, the largest and the sweetest apples ever grown, not to mention the peaches, cherries, apricots and grapes that have made this valley a delight to visit or to live in! (No, I am not working for the Chamber of Commerce.) The Canadian part of the Okanagan Valley (it starts in the state of Washington) is about 130 miles long, running north and south and is seldom more than 12 miles across at any point. Okanagan Lake is about 90 miles long. It rarely freezes over in the winter, due to the relatively mild winter temperatures. It is located between the Monashee mountains and the Cascade Range. The Valley is the only part of Canada in which one finds a "true southern desert." It has been described by Eric Sismey as "a peaceful country, irrigated and fruitful, rich with peaches, apples and grapes—a playground for swimmers and fishermen in the summer, for skiers in the winter, and for horsemen all year round."

Our decision to move to the Okanagan Valley of British Columbia began about 1977 when I was still serving the Church of the New Jerusalem in San Francisco. While I was contemplating a kind of retirement, preferably back in western Canada, our native land, I could not see myself completely removed from some type of church work, so long as I was well and healthy. The church in western Canada needed help. Our two ordained ministers at that time, Henry Reddekopp and Harold Taylor, though serving in emergency situations, were retired. The church in western Canada primarily was under the ministration of lay

ministers, who served the church well and faithfully, but mainly in Alberta and Saskatchewan. In the summer of 1979, when my services to the San Francisco church terminated, Lisa and I moved to Kelowna, British Columbia, which is a favourite retirement area and has a year-round population of about 60,000, almost doubling in the summer.

By this time (summer of 1979) we had decided to work for the church in western Canada under the auspices of Convention's Board of Missions and the Western Canada Conference. This would be for a period of one year. At that time we did not anticipate the eventual development of our group in the Okanagan Valley. (Will speak of this later.) My formal work for the Mission Board and WCC would consist of visiting all or most of the Societies and groups in western Canada as often as was practical. Our headquarters were in Kelowna, rather distant, but a choice spot for us to settle in. It was also closer to Vancouver if I was to do any kind of regular church work there. Besides knowing that this



1980 Palm Sunday service in the Reddekopp Home, Kelowna.

part of British Columbia was a desirable place to live, we were encouraged to make this choice by our good friends, Lois and Wilson Smith, who had been members of our Church of the Holy City in Detroit when I was pastor there. Kelowna had been their choice for retirement. So here, in July of 1979, with the Smith address as ours, temporarily, we started our year of "ministry" as noted above. At that time I could not anticipate that we might start a group here in the Valley which I have now designated the "New Church in the Okanagan." Later that fall we were to move into a duplex, owned by our son and his wife at 1442 Inkarn Road, Kelowna, B.C.

We had already discovered that, besides Lois and Wilson, there were three other New Church connected families in the Valley. We held our first "home service" at the home of Harry and Della Runka at Armstrong, about 50 miles north of Kelowna, on Sunday, September 9, 1979. Here we met Mrs. Florence Sampson and Arlyn, former members of my congregation in Alberta more than twenty five years ago (as were Harry and Della), also met Harold and Thelma Wiens and their son, Peter, originally from Manitoba, and Clifford and Linda Smith, members of the General Church. Clifford is a school principal at Armstrong. Lois Smith came with us that day, but Wilson was unable to attend. From that time we have tried to meet monthly at various members' homes, alternating on the basis of distances. You might say that our parish is about 90 miles long. Since that time we have added to our group with the retirement of Sam and Vera Milligan from Edmonton, Alberta, Richard and Vera Marks from Saskatoon and also Mrs. Annie Braun from Saskatoon. We have another newcomer in Mrs. Elsie Wiens from The Pas, Manitoba, living at Armstrong. We anticipate and welcome the addition of more people. Our average attendance is about 19.

This is our Okanagan Valley group. We are now associated, formally, with the British Columbia New Church Society. With the enthusiastic and capable help of these folks we are planning to host the 1981 meeting of the Western Canada Conference in Kelowna, meeting for two days, with Executive Committee meetings before and after. Meetings will be held primarily in the CAPRI Hotel.

Something about our forms of worship and general organization. For the services we use our Convention Book of Worship. If there is an organ or piano in the home, Lisa will play.

Otherwise we sing a cappella. I try to lead, trusting I'll start on a suitable pitch. We usually sing about three hymns, go through most of the order of service and have the traditional sermon. (Not too long.) An offering is taken after the service. We always have a lunch following and a period of fellowship, often ending up with serious discussion. We all enjoy this freedom and informal structure. For my part there are no board meetings to attend, no administrative concerns and no building to maintain. It really seems these folks look forward to attending the services, even with the great travel time involved. (No one needs to make an excuse for *not* coming to church.) This is the New Church in the Okanagan.

In addition to these services in the Okanagan I travel to Creston, B.C., about 300 miles south east of here, for special occasions. Where and when needed, if possible, I call on isolated people and patients in hospitals, as a part of ministry. Every two months I travel to Calgary, either by car or plane, a distance of 400 miles, to help with the Society there. They meet twice a month in a small library room of a Vocational School. Services, except when I am there, are conducted by lay members, or by one of the lay ministers from Edmonton and on occasion by Gertrude Tremblay. Calgary is a city of about half a million population.

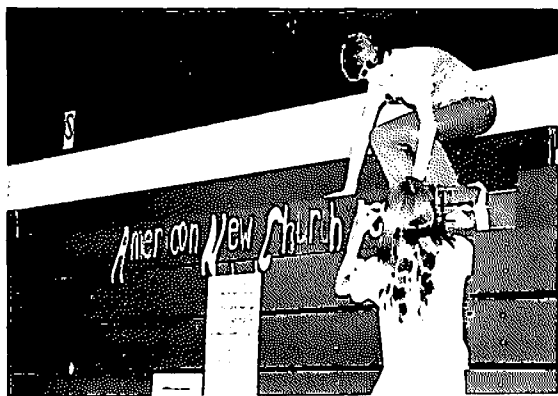
People may ask, "Why do you travel 80 miles or more on a Sunday (one way) to attend a church service; isn't there one nearer than that?" That is what is unique and special about people who have become involved in and influenced by the teachings of the Lord's New Church. They will "walk more than a mile" for a service.



On Knox Mountain above Kelowna.

A.N.C.L. Annual Report (cont'd from pg. 189)

church that keeps them coming back. The League is not only holding onto its membership, but it is growing and feeding the mother church. So why is there such widespread apathy towards the League? The A.N.C.L. is one of the B.O.E.'s more successful programs, so why do so precious few adults support it? I just can't understand this. For instance, each year we send out a letter to all our ministers and churches requesting an up-to-date mailing list of all Leaguers in the area. Our response rate is usually around twenty percent! Last year we sent out *eighty* letters and got back *eighteen!!!* That's the sort of thing that can really get discouraging.



Two Leaguers preparing the League display.

So, I'm asking for the support, the *active* support, of the adults of Convention. Many people want to help out, but just don't know what to do, so here are a few suggestions:

1. Send us addresses of Leaguers who may not be getting our magazine, **CLEAR BLUE SKY**.
2. In September, when we send out our annual mailing list request (it will also be printed in **THE MESSENGER**), be sure your minister or church responds, even if the response is that there are no Leaguers there.
3. If there are three, four, or more Leaguers in your area, start a local League. We just started a local League in Urbana before Convention: they'd been thinking about it for a long time, but nobody would take the bull by the horns and do it! If you need help with this, let me or your A.N.C.L. Regional Officer know and we'll be sure you get all the help you need.

4. See if there is sufficient interest in your Association to have a League retreat. Once again, this is something we'll be glad to help with.
5. Help with any other youth programs, such as S.N.A.P., B.O.E. — sponsored A.N.C.L. Association representatives at Convention, Sunday School, Church camps, and so on.

In closing, I want to once again thank the people who have helped us during the past year, and encourage the rest of you to pitch in and help. I believe in positive thinking, so the picture I'll leave you with is one of an active League that has the full support of the rest of Convention.

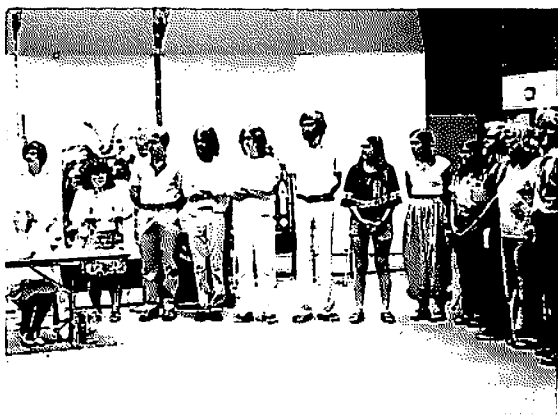
Thank you.

Trevor George Woolfenden,
A.N.C.L. President.

AND FINALLY . . .



Ron Brugler and friends did a great job with the children.



These people (except Ethel Rice) are SNAP graduates.

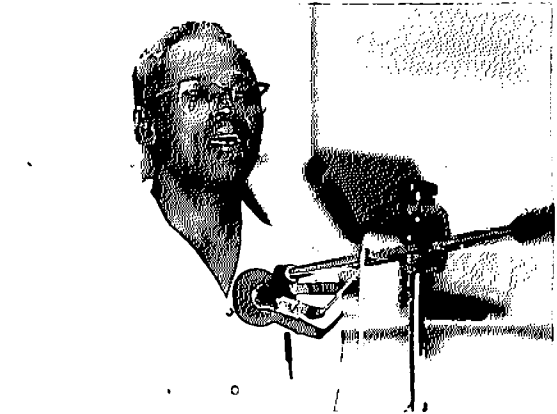
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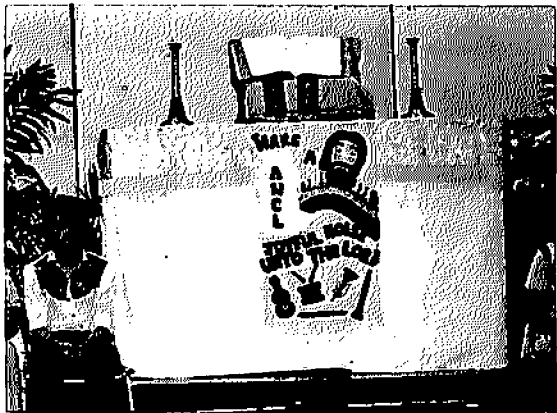
This is the Pacific Coast NETWORK.



Llewellyn Fraser reports on the New Church in Georgetown, Guyana.



Grace Sudden, Kitchener, Mary Crenshaw, Detroit, and Mary Ebel, Washington.



The ANCL banner graced the altar area.