

# The Messenger

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH  
DECEMBER 1982



*May the spirit of Christmas be with you*

## CHRISTMAS: WHERE TWO LINES INTERSECT

There are essentially two dimensions to life. There is the physical, natural level where we live out our daily affairs, which is a flat, horizontal plane of existence. And there is the up-and-down vertical thrust of spiritual life which comes down and cuts through our mundane life like a sharp razor. Thus we have the picture of a cross, and Christmas is at the very heart of it.

Christmas, the way in which God came to us, tells us so beautifully that the full Christian life must include both dimensions. One without the other is incomplete. The way in which God came to us was vertical—from on high—totally unexpected. He was born of a virgin; his coming was heralded by a star not of this world; his birth was announced by angels. God from on high, stepping into our shoes. There is mystery here, we can't explain or understand all of this. We simply have to accept it as being true. This is the vertical dimension.

At the same time the Lord's birth was immersed in the workaday affairs of our material world. He was born in a stable. Mary and Joseph were there for the census. Roman soldiers were walking around. In that same village other babies were being born and people were dying. Luke tells us about the tax-collector and the angels in the very same breath—both are part of life. The cross looms large, even in Bethlehem.

We tend to transpose this whole story into a kind of Christmas fantasy-land where nothing is quite real, neither the angel nor the tax-collector, and so we miss the incredible connection between the statement that "all went to be taxed" and "the angel came upon them." They are both true statements and we need to incorporate both into our Christian life and faith. Certainly Jesus did not live in a fantasy world. He and his followers lived in a world where men fought and struggled; where people loved and hated; where rival interests clashed. His kingdom was not of this world but very much in it. He cared very deeply about the welfare of every man, woman and child, how they were housed and fed and clothed; and he cared even more about their souls because the soul goes on forever. The story of the Lord's birth brings all of this home so dramatically—there must be both the horizontal and the vertical dimensions in our life. Our God is found wherever there is injustice and war and

heartache. He is also in worship and meditation and beauty. Do you see the cross?

In today's practical world of science and technology there isn't much room left for angels and we are the poorer for it. We like to sing about the angels but we believe in the tax-collector.

The Christmas story reminds us that **before** there can be "peace and good will to men" there must be "glory to God in the highest." Praising, loving, following God comes first, then we have peace and good will in the world. God became one of us that we might walk with him, both here and hereafter. That is the wonder and the glory of Christmas.

Let us, this Christmas and always, honor Him with tender care for one another.

P. Z.

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Paul B. Zacharias, Editor

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EDITORIAL, BUSINESS & SUBSCRIPTION ADDRESS:

THE MESSENGER

Box 2642, Stn. B

Kitchener, Ontario N2H 6N2

Telephone—Office 519-743-3845

Home 519-744-6785

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Swedenborg's Psychology:

# DREAM INTERPRETATION

(Part II)

Eugene Taylor  
Cambridge, Mass.

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## DREAM INTERPRETATION

For the first portion of Swedenborg's active life we have said that he devoted himself to the study of scientific and philosophic subjects. Seemingly able to grasp all available knowledge, and probably helped by his use of breath control to achieve intensive states of concentration, he published on a wide range of subjects. These included: inclinations of the mind, societies and scientists, soils and mud, fossils, echoes, the causes of things, salt boileries, tin work, stoppage of the earth, instituting an observatory, commerce and manufacture, fire and colors, warfare, the essence of nature, the earth's revolutions, the height of water, blast furnaces, weights and measures, discovering mines, docks, sluices, and salt works, iron and fire, principles of natural things; new attempts to explain chemistry and physics by geometry, concerning heat, working copper, magnetism, hydrostatics sulfur and pyrites, various physiological and anatomical subjects, empirical psychology, the nature of the infinite, the mechanism of the soul in the body, infinity and the finite, how we have knowledge of the soul, and so on.

We witness by this list a steady progression in his interests from mechanical and physical subjects to more psychological and philosophical concerns—literally a progression from the outer to the inner. The reality of it was, however, that in the 1730s he literally mixed metaphors. His work included such topics as the economy of the soul's kingdom, the skin and the tongue, the muscles, the calibration of printing, corpuscular philosophy (his theory of the atom), red blood, the senses, rational psychology, and then in 1744 he took up the study of dreams.

For the first fifty-six years of his life he searched for the soul in the material world and when he did not find it there he began to use the same rigorous techniques of scientific investigation to look within. He has left us a very interesting account of the transition in his life that took place between 1733 and 1734 in his

posthumously published *Journal of Dreams*. I bring it up because it introduces the second technique I want to share with you regarding Swedenborg's practice of spiritual discipline. The *Dream Journal* is a prime example of a successful self-analysis of one's own dreams. In my opinion, Swedenborg developed this technique on his own and brought it to a high level of sophistication. He discovered, as many had before him and many after, that dreams can be used to answer questions. I do not necessarily mean questions like "where is my next check coming from?" or "who is going to win the next election?" Although such questions have often been asked, few have been answered. Rather, I am speaking of those questions that we ask of our inner life concerning who we are, what our true nature is all about, what is our destiny, and what are we to be doing. These are the really important questions.

Here Swedenborg was asking these questions of himself, and he was using the analysis of his own dreams as a vehicle to arrive at some workable answers. It is interesting to note that normally when one takes up dream psychology it is quite easy to go off on a tangent and get caught in a blind alley somewhere. But Swedenborg had the proper psychological attitude for using his dreams as tools for inner exploration and self knowledge. This attitude is quite distinct from the cold, dry intellectual approach he used in the first 56 years of his life. But in 1744 we see a crack in the egg. We see him struggling with his guilt over what he felt as religious transgressions that hindered his progress in inner growth; we see him struggling particularly with his sexuality. He was always open and frank with himself in his journals and diaries. Yet the first translators of these works were themselves so embarrassed at his frankness that they left the explicit passages in Latin, untranslated. The effect, of course, was just the opposite from what they intended, for the Latin passages only stood out all the more to any learned man or woman. The thing we wish to hide the most is always most obvious to others.

Swedenborg did not originally intend for his dream journal to be published, however. It was primarily for his own learning—a mirror into his own soul. It was a record of what he saw, his struggle to understand it, and it served as something of a guidepost in his inner journey. In many ways his technique of dream interpretation was in advance of similar techniques practiced today.

I will give you a simple example from his dream journal, dated April 2 - 3, 1744:

There came two persons. They came into a house which was not yet ready, but the building was finished. They went round about it, and did not appear at all pleased with it. We saw that our force was not with us, and feared them. One came to me, and said that they had a punishment for me on the next Maundy Thursday, if I did not leave. I did not know how to get out. He said he would show me the way. Wakened. Means that I, in an unprepared and unswept cabin, had intended a visit from the Highest; and that he found it unswept; ought to be punished; but most graciously the way was shown me to escape their wrath. *Journal of Dreams* — pg. 10

Several interesting points should be noted. First that he tried to report the dream imagery as it happened and with minimal distortion. Second, upon awakening, he attempted to analyze the dream content. Many interpretations are possible, of course. But significantly, the meanings he chose were fit for his own progress at the time. Carl Jung said as much when he remarked that there is no interpretation of the dream image apart from the dreamer. Only the dreamer has the key to the meaning of his own dream. One simply has to ask with sincerity and an open mind. When the answer comes, its presence is then obvious.

But there is a truth test here. How do I know when I am interpreting my dream whether or not I am fooling myself. Am I going to allow the truth of the dream to come through? How will I know? One measure is the richness of associations that flood in while contemplating the dream image and the felt depth of meaning that accompanies this internal movement. Here is another example. Swedenborg reports:

How a woman laid down by my side just when I was waking. I wished to know who it was. She spoke slowly; said she was pure and that I smelled ill. It was my guardian angel, I believe, for then began the temptation. *Journal of Dreams*, p. 5

Now images are what control us. This is the principal of those talking machines that overweight people put in their refrigerator that say in a very human voice; "No more bologna, Fatsol!" The function of the insult is to counter the image you have in your mind of that piece of pie that drew you to the refrigerator in the first place. When you get there, there is this other competing voice that meets you and counteracts the one inside you that comes from your desire. Actually we are pretty unsophisticated about our knowledge of inner experience and the true power of the will, as this example of the talking box suggests.

Yet what we see with Swedenborg is that he is meeting the submerged feminine side of his personality. You remember that we said he was not a feeling oriented person, but rather, a highly trained intellect. The temptation was not just his temptation for the physical love of a woman, but it was a higher temptation. It was a temptation of the lower aspect of his personality that prevented him from seeing into the higher, and everytime he obeyed the lower, he missed the vision of the higher. So when he says, "the temptation begins," we are reminded of the temptation of Christ, when Satan took Jesus into the wilderness and said, 'you can have it all, if you would but become my servant.'

Swedenborg's interpretation of his own dreams precipitated an intensive period of wrestling with inner questions. What he witnessed was a power equal to or surpassing that kind of thing that happens to a psychotherapeutic evaluation. The difference is that in psychotherapy someone else tries to help you, whereas with Swedenborg, he was trying to help himself. His reasons for going within were for purposes of spiritual growth. He was not a pathological personality just trying to become adjusted to Swedish society in his own time. He was relatively healthy; an assessor of mines; a nobleman who sat with the governing body that made decisions on the fate of the country. He traveled in the name of Sweden to visit the mines and smelting works of foreign countries. In this the dream journal is interesting because you see this tremendous turmoil going on in his inner life, while at the same time he pursued his outward affairs as if nothing was happening. Storms below, yet things in waking reality appear calm.

This happens to us quite frequently but we only experience it as an *angst*, a vague feeling of non-specific anxiety. We are not sure what the forces are, but he had a way to confront them

with these tools we are describing. The process might be called 'non-traumatic exploration' of the unconscious.' Swedenborg was doing this, and it must have taken quite a bit of courage. Inner exploration, after all, is not for the faint hearted. Often we stop at the first fatigue barrier, instead of pushing on through the obstacles to achieve a new sense of energy and power and fulfillment. Swedenborg was opening up these inner doors, and we could say that he was exploring the same states as a psychotic might. The difference is that Swedenborg knew what he was doing, and whatever state he got himself into, he had faith that he knew how to get back. He had enough trust to know that he could find his way; that he had tools; and that he could learn what he needed to know. He knew that he had good religious reasons for his actions. On the other hand, when a person becomes psychotic, we give him drugs and shock therapy and try to get him back out into society as fast as possible, even if we have to put him on welfare and foodstamps. By then he has lost the connection with the very things he needed to know to regain his sanity. The thread has been cut. This is why one of the great modern psychological interpreters of Swedenborg, Wilson Van Dusen, has written that in his own psychotherapeutic practice it is sometimes helpful to conceive of psychosis as a half-born satori; in other words, an aborted religious transformation, where the person is trapped in a middle ground, at a stage on the way, so to speak, which in any event is never a pleasant place to be for prolonged periods.

So the key to Swedenborg's dream psychology is this; that he remembered his dreams; he wrote them down when he awakened; and by so doing he built a bridge between the inner world of dream imagery and the outer world of writing it down and analyzing it. He allowed himself to free associate on the dream contents; he was honest with himself about its meaning; while at the same time in this free association he allowed the natural intuition of ideas to perform its unique kind of alchemy. This means uncluttering the mind with preconceived ideas in order for those associations to come in. When they then inundate the field of awareness, we have to bear witness to them, to see them as they really are, and to experience them in their full force. So that we can say that these experiences that Swedenborg went through wrought a tremendous transformation in his attitudes toward life. This is particularly evident in his change from the kind of intellectual arrogance so characteristic of 'the scientist,' to a mood of

humble religious piety in the face of what he witnessed from within. Thus we have in his technique of dream interpretation an import of what was to come.

[to be continued]

*Eugene Taylor of Cambridge, Massachusetts, studied at Southern Methodist University and at Harvard University. His scholarly interest in William James led him to Swedenborg's writings, and in recent years he has lectured extensively on both James and Swedenborg in the Boston area. This year he has been named associate in psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, consultant in the History of Medical Psychology at the Massachusetts General Hospital, and the 1983 William James lecturer at Harvard Divinity School.*



Eugene Taylor

Photograph Courtesy of Robert Arruda

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## MUSIC WORKSHOP AT SSR

*A summation of a wondrous weekend, by Muff Worden*

A music workshop, aimed at current composers of religious music, was held at the Swedenborg School of Religion, Newton, MA the weekend of August 20 - 22. Developed, planned and led by SSR student Ken Turley, an accomplished composer and guitarist, the workshop's aim was to bring together Swedenborgians who are involved in the composition of music, and who are interested in writing new music (in many forms) for church use.

A questionnaire, circulated last spring, indicated a wide interest in the subject from New Church musicians all over the country. As the date drew closer, however, many who had planned on taking part found that other priorities prevented their attendance. The small group who did participate found communication easy, the performance and practice of their pieces fairly thorough, and all were able to get right into the thick of the discussions.

Central to the workshop was the presence of composer Richard Yardumian, a Swedenborgian and member of the Lord's New Church in Bryn Athyn. This "third branch" of the New Church is also known as Nova Hierosolyma, or familiarly as Hemmelsche Leer. Richard came to that church about 30 years ago as it was forming, and found a group whose members wanted their own forms of music and worship. In the time since, as he himself has grown in developing his own forms and styles of writing, he has provided worship music—psalms, responses, and all of the hymn arrangements currently in use in that church. He has also derived his main compositional theory from Swedenborg, from *True Christian Religion* 625, in which the mention of the singing of the angels from the different quarters of heaven led to Richard's specific use of a polyphonic (many voiced) style.

Richard is well-known, internationally, as a composer of symphonic and choral works, and his music is performed often in this country and abroad. Among his compositions which we heard in the workshop were the Armenian Suite, written when he was 20 (his earliest-published piece); the Second (Psalm) Symphony for orchestra and mezzo-soprano;

and his large oratorio, Abraham, for soloists, chorus, orchestra and moving images hand-painted on 70mm film by the late French artist, Andre Girard. We listened to parts of these, as part of a discussion on his styles and methods, and also sang several of his chorales—arrangements of chant, hymn or folk tunes with words derived from the Psalms.

Richard, his wife Ruth, Mary Loisele—whose doctoral dissertation at Eastman Conservatory is based on Richard's music and theory—joined an enthusiastic group of Convention musicians: Ken Turley, Bob McCluskey, Julie Egger and Muff Worden from the Boston area, Trevor Woofenden from Western Massachusetts and Chris Laitner from Midland, Michigan. Mary Graziano, who had lent her soprano voice in aid of the SSR Chorus in the spring, graciously stepped into a last-minute gap and served "deliciously" as cook.

Steve Ledingham and Barbara Mackey of Urbana were not able to attend, but sent tapes of their works for the assemblage to hear and discuss.

During the two days many compositions were heard, some for the first time, as the group read through them, improvised on them, made suggestions that were tried here and there, and then rehearsed them for more solid performance later in the weekend.

In the choral medium, Chris Laitner presented a four-part setting of the Adoramus from the *Book of Worship*, which she wrote for her women's group, the Last Chants, and which she rearranged for four-part choir. Muff Worden, not usually a composer, wrote a short, four-part hymn, and Trevor Woofenden presented pieces for piano, meditative in style, which would translate easily and well for organ. Ken Turley brought a jazz sonata for flute and guitar and two sonatas in baroque style, but much work was done on his brand new liturgy with its three major songs (for congregation or choir) and a meditation, since this would be the order of worship at our Sunday morning service.

Between sessions, meals and discussions, members of the group gathered to "jam" in the



L - R: Mary Loiselle, Ken Turley, Ruth Yardumian, Trevor Woofenden, Chris Laitner, Richard Yardumian, Muff Worden, Bob McCluskey, on SSR patio during first Music Workshop. (Aug. 20 - 23, 1982)

music room—to play through the music and to improvise within and around it. Bob McCluskey and Ken Turley on electric or acoustic guitar, Trevor Woof on bass, Julie Egger with violin and Muff on piano managed some fairly intricate variations of melodies, chord progressions, Richard's quadradic basic chords, or on set pieces, in which improvisations are incorporated into the body of the piece.

The Sunday morning worship service, led by Ken, included music by Trevor, Chris and Muff, added to Ken's liturgy.

An evaluation session, held during and after dinner on Sunday night, covered most aspects of the workshop and found it very beneficial, particularly as a starting point. Outcomes include developing a network of practicing musicians and composers to work toward the Convention '83 program and to keep each other's enthusiasm for producing new music "up, up, up!;" to increase the amount of music that is written for Convention's churches and to locate new composers whose works need polishing, performance and publication; and to generally build a strong body of new music, as well as to keep track of a core of musicians who can rehearse and perform the new music, or who will be available to lead other workshops, training sessions, or teaching sessions for music both new and old.

Those of us who were here saw great usefulness in the workshop, and hope that other musicians and composers in Convention will be eager to join us for the next one, or will be in touch with us about taking part in the musical portions of Convention '83 in the Cincinnati area.

A happy note (pardon the pun) to end on is this—it seems the Swedenborg School has become a veritable music centre! Ken Turley, Dave Fekete and new student Steve Pults (from Seattle) both write and perform music, while Bob McCluskey makes an electric guitar sing just beautifully. Kim Pults, Steve's wife, is a professional sound engineer for a recording studio. Other students, and faculty members George Dole and Bill Woofenden, take part in music through class or hobby, and as of the end of September the School has an official music practice room in the basement. We are happy to see music become an important part of our preparation for church work, since it is an art common and enjoyable to most people.

For musicians and composers who are interested in keeping in touch with our new "network," please feel free to write to Ken Turley at Swedenborg School of Religion, 48 Sargent St., Newton, MA 02158. Ken will serve as coordinator as we get started.

# ***The Sounds of Christmas***

## **A Dream**

I still have a dream today  
 that one day every valley shall be exalted  
 and every mountain and hill will be made low,  
 and rough places will be made smooth,  
 and the crooked places straight,  
 and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,  
 and all flesh shall see it together.  
 I still have a dream with this faith  
 we will be able to adjourn the councils of  
 despair  
 and bring new light into the dark chambers of  
 pessimism  
 With this faith we will be able to speed up the  
 day  
 when there will be peace on earth and goodwill  
 towards men.  
 It will be a glorious day,  
 the morning stars will sing together  
 and the sons of God will shout for joy.

—Martin Luther King

## ***Proclaiming Christmas (The Message of a Tree)***

They say that I am no Christian,  
 But a pagan, signifying naught.  
 They say that the Christmas Tree  
 Is a foreign intrusion into our festivities:  
 That to make it the center of everything  
 Is to displace our Christ God.  
 Deep down you may feel this,  
 Even while you rejoice in my presence.  
 But wait, let me tell you my story.  
 I am not a wonder tree  
 Glowing red and yellow as winter comes,  
 And proclaiming anew that God is here.  
 He himself came not in kingly purple,  
 But as the smallest and weakest of things,  
 A babe lying little in a manger.  
 Why envy more wonderful trees  
 Or wish for more renown?  
 To know that God has chosen me  
 To tell his story  
 Is fame enough for me.  
 I am a tree knowing suffering and pain,  
 Even as my Lord himself.  
 To die for him in my glory,  
 And to witness to resurrection.  
 Though they bind my arms and tie my hands,  
 Though they chop off my feet, I die not—  
 Nor will I ever die—because I am the symbol  
 of Life Eternal.

My leaves never wither;  
 Summer and winter I fade not,  
 That God may say anew:  
 "I am Resurrection and I am Life;  
 Because I live, you shall also live."  
 So when you enthrone me in your home  
 You worship not me, but Him who made me.  
 Glory not in the beauty of my branches  
 But in the Good Tidings they proclaim.  
 When you adorn me with lights,  
 You beam abroad my message:  
 "Life, and life more abundant;  
 Life that shall have no ending."  
 When you put gay balls on my living boughs,  
 Shining tinsel and an angel or two,  
 You repeat the grand story of resurrection  
 Which God came to tell us again.  
 As with me, so with you:  
 They may bind your arms and tie your hands;  
 They may chop off your feet, but you shall  
 never die.  
 Because you shout out with me:  
 "Life is eternal and ever green."

Richard H. Tafel  
 Philadelphia, PA.

## ***Led By A Great Light***

In *True Christian Religion* #123, we read,  
 "He who knows what hell is, and to what  
 height it had risen and how it had overflowed  
 the whole world of spirits at the time of the  
 Lord's coming, and with what might the Lord  
 cast it down and scattered it, and afterwards  
 brought order into both hell and heaven,  
 cannot but wonder and declare that all this  
 must have been a purely Divine work."

This says it all. The Lord came into the world  
 to bring sanity where there was insanity—to  
 restore reason—to bring light to dark places—to  
 challenge the hells. The nature of the hells is  
 described. "It consists of myriads of myriads,  
 since it consists of all those who from the  
 creation of the world have alienated themselves  
 from God by evils of life and falsities of  
 belief."

The Incarnation, then, is an event of  
 profound impact upon the life of every person.  
 The wonder of it all calls us to our regener-  
 ation—to a striving for order within ourselves.  
 The Covenant between God and man has been  
 re-affirmed.



The hells, we are told, were scattered. Brought into order. Have they gotten the message? Could it be that the power of the hells was so great that many more generations will be born before this power finally gives in?

The nations of the world are arming for war. Weapons of terrible destruction are continuing to be developed and made ready. There can be no doubt that if this trend continues, the drain on both human and natural resources will be disastrous. The course to which we appear to be committed is insane. The hells still are inflicting their mischief upon our planet. We allow them this opportunity.

What would happen if we would say to the world—"We the United States from this time forward will wage only peace. We will gradually disarm ourselves. We will turn our swords into plowshares."

It has been said that God loves the common people because he made so many of them. My feeling is that if we would truly dedicate ourselves to Peace—the common people the world over would join hands with us in this effort—and the meaning of Christmas would come into its finest hour.

"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." Isaiah 9: 2

Eric Zacharias  
Pretty Prairie, Kansas

## A Thought And A Prayer

*It was a long, dark night,  
the longest of the Ages,  
when beamed a long-awaited Love-Light  
that few men saw,  
and yet this Light of Love  
has shown on history's pages,  
and is revealing,  
line by line, a living Law.  
Although the blind still lead the blind,  
and 'tis the blindest  
who sit today in places of the highest power;  
although the hard, cold hearts and minds  
of the world's unkindest  
disclose no signs that Love will bring  
its destined Hour;  
although the black of the dark night  
and long, still lingers,  
beclouding you and me, and the thoughts  
of all men here;  
yet, little by little,  
will the Light's determined fingers  
unloose the bands, and free Him  
from His swaddling-gear.  
In us, in our own hearts,*

*are "Jew," and "Greek," and "Roman,"  
the "Samaritan," the merchant,"  
and the "Pharisee;"  
also the "Publican," and "Magdalen," the  
woman—  
all these resort, and find retreat  
in you, in me!  
O Light of Mankind's Love, come forth!  
forth from the "Manger!"  
forth from the dark, dank stable of our  
ignorance,  
free!  
Come to the "Inn" of our famished hearts,  
no more a stranger!  
Be welcome here, and light our purblind souls  
with Thee.  
Enlighten—and unite!—the Jew, the Greek,  
the Roman  
and all our hearts' contending "legions,"  
making war!  
Thou Lamb of God, and Lion of Judah,  
Divine and Human,  
turn all these "guests" to "Wise Men,"  
following the star!*

Alice Spiers Sechrist

## Let Us Remember

*And when we give each other Christmas gifts  
in His name, let us remember that He has given  
us the sun and the moon and the stars, and the  
earth with its forests and mountains and  
oceans—and all that lives and moves upon  
them. He has given us all green things and  
everything that blossoms and bears fruit—and  
all that we quarrel about and all that we have  
misused—and to save us from our own  
foolishness, from all our sins, he came down to  
earth and gave us himself.*

Sigrid Undset  
—from the DeLand, Florida  
New Church bulletin.

## Friendships

*Friendships are the true gift of  
CHRISTMAS*

*Over time and distance,  
Through love and change,  
Our friends bring us fullness of joy  
In this and all seasons.*

*All experiences invite God's Love  
All times are His seasons.  
May Christmas be His invitation of Love  
May your response be for all seasons.  
I wish for you gifts of priceless value.  
May you discover the Joy in giving  
the Love in sharing  
and the Peace in living  
Each day with Hope.*

## The Peace Page

# MAKING A DIFFERENCE

One of the best *introductory* books on the subject of nuclear war, written from a Christian perspective, is *FACING NUCLEAR WARS* by Don Kraybill (Herald Press, 1982, \$8.95). Like other books of this genre, Kraybill's book contains the usual dose of horrifying statistics and urgent cries for action. Part of the special appeal of his book is its simple, folksy style of writing that makes it an excellent introduction for readers who may be unfamiliar with nuclear jargon or who may have been too intimidated by the shrillness of other nuclear books. This is a book that can both prod those already familiar with the issue, and also challenge those who are "unconverted" on the issue. Kraybill says he deliberately aimed the book at "those who haven't thought much about how their Christian faith related to the chief moral issue of our time . . . I've attempted to cut through the foggy technical jargon and say things in a down-to-earth manner."

Another strength of the book is its element of hope. Though Kraybill does not minimize the imminence of possible nuclear holocaust, he also plays up the possibility of Christians actually doing something to avert catastrophe. "The New Testament theme of hope threads its way through many of the somber lines of this book," the author says. "Although we rest in the confidence that God will ultimately triumph over the evil powers that hold sway in a nuclear age, this does not free us as Christians from facing up to our responsibility."

Nor does it free Kraybill from the responsibility of giving specific guidelines for "what can we do." He does not leave the reader hanging in despair. Although many of his suggestions are plain common sense, they are nonetheless worth reviewing. Taken seriously by God's people, they could be the start of meaningful action. "The timid bits of witness we contribute may direct others to God's peace-making activity and become public markers of his peaceable kingdom today," says Kraybill. Among his suggestions:

—**GET THE FACTS.** Gather information—books, brochures, publications from national peace organizations—to be as informed as possible about this critical issue.

—**FIND A FRIEND.** Don't work alone; find another person with similar feelings to lean on. Brainstorm and pray together about how you can be peacemakers in your community.

—**SPEND MONEY.** A lot of peace activities don't cost a cent, but be prepared to make a financial investment if you want to pay for books, subscriptions, postcards, guest speakers and films. "Consider your total personal budget," says Kraybill, "Is it really asking too much to devote a small portion of it toward peace?"

—**CONTACT LEGISLATORS.** Investigate the various political initiatives to slow down the arms race and support one that moves in the direction of eliminating nuclear weapons. For example, there are nuclear FREEZE movements as well as START (Strategic Arms Reduction Talks). Let your government representatives know how you feel about nuclear arms. "Send them postcards or letters on a *regular* basis," advises Kraybill. "One letter is not enough! Is it asking too much to spend a dollar a month on postcards? The message doesn't need to be fancy or long . . . Better yet, go to their offices and speak to them personally. Invite them to come and speak to your church or club."

—**GROUP STUDY.** Work through existing channels in your church to arrange for group study of the Christian response to the nuclear threat. Perhaps a Sunday School class could spend some time studying the issue.

—**FILMS.** Many excellent films dramatically portray the implications of the nuclear threat. You may want to get a few friends together to sponsor such a film in your church or community.

—**MASS MEDIA.** Let your local press know how you feel about the nuclear issue. Write letters to editors; call in to radio talk shows and express your views. Urge your local TV stations to show films on the topic. Sponsor peace ads in the newspaper.

—**POLITICAL ACTION.** You can offer to work in the campaigns of political candidates who support nuclear arms reductions. "Such traditional political activity will, or course, never usher in the kingdom of God," says Kraybill. "Nevertheless, we should vigorously do everything in our means through political avenues to express our opinions."

—**CORPORATE PUBLIC WITNESS.** Peace vigils and processions can sometimes be effective forms of public witness if done in an orderly and respectful fashion. "A candle-

light walk or vigil incorporating many of the churches of a community can be an important symbol of the unity of Christ's body as well as a call to peace," Kraybill says.

—RETAIN CHRISTIAN INTEGRITY. Remember that all forms of Christian peace witness are to be done in the name of Christ. The form of witness itself must be peaceful, says Kraybill. "Our best tool for disarming opponents is the gentle touch, soft word, and honest tactic." Moreover, he says, the discipline of prayer is vital. "Prayer that purifies and refurbishes our spirits lies at the heart of our peace witness."

—Sources and Resources  
El Cajon, Calif.

## AD HOC COMMITTEE MEETING

The Ad Hoc Committee on Goals and Priorities for the 80's held a strenuous and successful meeting at SSR on Friday and Saturday, October sixteenth and seventeenth. Chairman Fred Perry turned the meeting over to Peter Collins and Paul Maring of the St. Louis Society, who started us on a process of strategic planning which they have used successfully in a number of other settings.

Basically, this phase of the process centered in survey of Convention's internal strengths and weaknesses, external threats and opportunities, and our fantasies or dreams for the future. On each topic, we first tried to list as many specific items as we could, then grouped them into appropriate categories, and finally ranked them in order of importance.

Of particular value to the process were the responses to the questionnaire that had been sent to all the individuals on the *Journal* mailing list. The percentage of response was excellent (astonishing in view of the fact that it resulted from our violating the inviolable tabu against summer mailings: the survey was mailed in July!). The thoroughness and thoughtfulness of the responses was impressive, and provided information of fundamental importance for the committee's work.

At this point in our explorations, there is a growing consensus that we are coming to an overarching perspective on the present nature of Convention, a view that is coherent without taking refuge in oversimplification. We see an underlying vitality that is founded not on resolute optimism nor on the denial of resolute pessimism, but on a good hard look at "the best and the worst."

We will be meeting again in November to formulate a detailed statement of organizational purpose that responds to our nature and our situation, and by next Convention should be able to present specific objectives and proposed means for achieving them. We are putting in our bid for ample time at Convention '83, since the response of the membership to these proposals will be critical to their viability; and we are quite prepared to go back to the drawing board if it will help.

The members of the committee are the following:

Eric Allison, 2 - 171 King St. S., Waterloo, Ont. N2J 1P7 (519) 578-2433  
Peter Collins, 39 County Lane Ct., St. Charles, MO 63301 (314) 441-2822  
Mary Crenshaw, 18242 Birwood St., Detroit, Mich. 48221 (314) 863-5569  
George Dole, 284 N. Main St., Sharon, MA. 02067 (617) 784-8306  
Ad Liebert, Lawrence Hill Apt., Apt. C-32, West Chester Pike and Lawrence Rd., Havertown, PA 19083 (215) 449-7888  
Charles McCormack, 3141 Chestnut St., Riverside, CA 92501 (714) 686-9038  
Barbara Mackey, 727 S. High St., Urbana, Ohio 43078 (513) 653-5972  
Paul Maring, 350 Sidney Place, St. Louis, MO 63119 (314) 962-1290  
Erni Martin, 5755 Palos Verdes Dr., S. Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90274 (213) 541-2291  
Fred Perry, Box 50, Jackson, N.H. 03846 (603) 383-4286  
F. Robert Tafel, 48 Sargent St., Newton, Mass. 02158 (617) 244-0504  
Cal Turley, 48 Sargent St., Newton, MA. 02158 (617) 968-4240

A slide-cassette presentation of the committee's purpose is available from the Central Office, and societies and associations are urged to use it, discuss the issues it raises, and send their thoughts to the committee in care of the Central Office. Members of the committee stand ready to attend such meetings as resource persons, as their schedules permit, and may be contacted directly.

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### NEW ADDRESS

Rev. and Mrs. Paul Martin Grumman  
17614 182 N.E. Street  
Woodinville, Washington 98072

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# WE GET LETTERS

## The New Church in South Africa

My Dear Friends:

In December 1981, I informed you that the long awaited Government Permission to build had, at long last, been obtained, and that in a matter of weeks we would be starting with building operations. We did not know, at the time, that the piece of land in front of us had just been allocated to another church body, although we too had applied for it.

This threw us into disarray and complicated things very much indeed. It meant that now we have been pushed right out of the main street, a street that was named after us many years ago! the MOOKI STREET. It also meant that once our prospective neighbours take occupation of this site, the main entrance to our Church, our own gate, and a double gate used for special occasions like marriage and funerals, would all three have to be closed up, as they would then lead into a site that does not belong to us.

We remembered that 25 years ago we had a similar experience. The Rev. Brian Kingslake was then General Superintendent. The Church of the Nazarene was allocated a site next to this one. But, before Mr. Kingslake knew what was happening, they had already dug foundations and their fence was well up, and the walls were about three feet high! Mr. Kingslake's objections were noted but nothing could be done, since these people had already gone very far! But an assurance was given us that a thing like this would never happen again. But it has happened! Only this time we discovered early what was happening and protested. It is these protestations by us that kept the fence away, although on Wednesday of this week the fencing contractors, after digging at several places, had to give up in despair because they could not find a peg which should have been at one of our corner poles!

Our objections and protestations have been vehement. We have interviewed several officials. We even called on the Rev. Kingslake to write to the Soweto authorities. Several deputations from local members and from some of our ministers called on the legal experts. We do not know what the outcome will be. The great trouble is, that our brethern of the 'other' Church, to whom the site was allocated only a matter of days prior to our obtaining Government permission to build, are refusing to give up what was given to them. But

we had pinned all our hopes on that site. Where do we go now?

PLEASE PRAY FOR US.

Rev. Obed Mooki,  
Orlando, South Africa

## Building The New Age

Dear Paul:

May I respond to the letter from Ella Baker. I, too, have read the article by a Scandinavian Seeker and find myself in sympathy with much of what he has written. Is the New Church looking into the future? Does the New Church wish to see a growth in membership? I speak, of course, from my own experience, but the problem is not only to be found in the United States. Can the New Church take its place in the contemporary world of modern psychology, or New Age teaching? I came into the body of the New Church (Swedenborgian) of my own free will, I was not born into it, or made to grow up in it, so I am free to seek the truth without remaining in the eighteenth century.

I spend some of my time 'bridge-building' within the local ecumenical group, through interfaith activities, and find no real problem in introducing the subject of Swedenborg or his writings. The New Church establishment is another matter. The New Age Religion IS being built by teams of people, group action and real community living. The New Church has a place in this new age, if only it were willing to step outside of the cage it has built for itself. Frankly, I find some New Church members, of long standing, who appear not to welcome or want new members. If the church is a closed order, then let it say so.

Ella Baker need have no fear. If more people outside the Church had knowledge of your journal (U.S.A. & U.K.), it would soon build up its readership. It is an excellent publication, full of good-news and information to make you think! The dichotomy is within ourselves, not in what we read, or in the Editor! There is no need to part from those who differ, or have separation in mind—organization is to serve and is not an end in itself.

The more stimulating the publication, the more mind-expanding, the better it is for the organization it represents. Change is inevitable if you are to stay alive.

I have recommended the *Messenger* to a number of organizations in the U.K., and your Editor has agreed to forward copies, others will follow—that is how we build.

John F. Pontin,  
Manchester, England

## Comments on the "New-Age Religion"

Dear Editor:

Scandinavian Seeker's article seems to me a mixture of both confused ideas and very valid problems confronting our organizations today. The suggestions I offer below may be helpful.

Seeker can take comfort from the fact that there are thousands of searchers like himself everywhere. But the process of becoming New-Age people cannot be hurried. An old man told me about sixty years ago that you won't understand Swedenborg until you grow old. How right I now know he was! The writer won't be so scornful of elderly pensioners when he is one himself. He will know in that day why they attend our churches—it was because they *really want to*. Adult self-converts, as most of us are, do not need to apologize because we seem dull and dowdy to others. But Seeker reveals himself as already beginning to feel one of us! After saying he does not feel able to join with us, he later makes a reference to "our" ministers. Or was this a slip for "your"?

Here follow some tips for this writer. Don't give up reading the writings. The more you read, the more you'll find in them, even possibly understanding and appreciation of Swedenborg's many repetitions. Continue to attend other churches if they bring pleasure and inspiration. But don't forget all new things must inevitably lose their newness. Help along the New-Age yourself by giving the non-Swedenborgian clergyman some of our pamphlets. If you choose the time carefully, you may find a very grateful and ready "receiver".

And now, gentle Seeker, please don't give up on us. Who knows? You might even find a friend among us!

The following suggestions may not save the day for our churches, but they are offered here as an alternative to giving up too soon. Fewer and more meaningful services may be what all the churches will be holding in the near future. Special occasions such as Christmas, other holidays, conventions, reunions, etc., still draw much larger numbers than the routine Sunday morning services. Adult study groups will fill another need. People have always had churches; they will demand religion. We've an obligation to help supply it. Let's re-name ourselves (unofficially, of course) "New-Age Faith". A new name might give us a new image—nobody will scornfully demand, "How do you spell it?" as sometimes happens when one announces he is a Swedenborgian. This designation can apply to all the signed up

members, the partially converted, and our "sister" denominations. Are we really so small in number after all?

Seeker doesn't think new translations are needed; but modern spoken languages are changing rapidly as is everything else about us, thus making translations out of style. However, published translations require many long scholarly hours to prepare. Perhaps an up-to-date translator could read selected passages from the original Latin works directly onto tapes in his native modern colloquial tongue. Even if some slips and "fluffs" had to be corrected, this would save a lot of time. The tapes could be sold at cost making them available to many more and especially the very busy people who might otherwise miss out altogether. An example of a need for a new rendition: Nova Ecclesia—New Church. It really means: "New people forgoing new relationship with God."

A. H. Dillaway  
Waltham, Massachusetts

## Another Buscaglia Buff

To the Editor:

Thank you for your message "Buscaglia on Love". It was my pleasure to attend "An Evening with Leo Buscaglia", his only Southern California appearance in 1982 on September 9th at the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove. He is indeed one of the most inspirational speakers ever—a man for all seasons—and I am so thankful that he is out there sharing his special meaning of life with others. As a professor of Education at the University of Southern California it is also gratifying to know he is speaking to the young men and women on living, loving and learning in person daily. For those in this area his September 9th lecture can be heard on public T.V.—Channel 50 KOCE—Orange County, on December 8th.

Mareta Saul  
Newport Beach, Calif.

## A Thanksgiving Basket

New Church Messenger:

How do you thank 42 people who at the last Convention signed a card sent to us "A Basketful of Special Thoughts"? Well, this is it. Thank You, one and all. We went to Germany and had a delightful time. We will hopefully be at the next Convention.

Eugenia and Gib Heddaeus  
Pittsburgh, PA

## BOSTON INSTALLS NEW PASTOR

The first very special occasion in this church year for the Boston Society was the Convention Installation Service and reception for our new pastor, the Reverend G. Steven Ellis. President of Convention, the Reverend Dr. Calvin E. Turley and the General Pastor of the Massachusetts Association, the Reverend Wilfred G. Rice coordinated the solemn and impressive ceremony. President of the Society Lawrence C. Young, Sr. introduced the participants. His wife, Dorothy, presented the request to Convention for the Rite of Installation. Music was provided by the Boston Church organist James H. R. Currier.

Friends from SSR and all the local Societies joined with us for the ceremony and reception following. Mrs. Ruth Markquick provided the tempting and "scrumptious" refreshments aided by Mrs. Jean Chapin and Roger Young. We were delighted to welcome our pastor's relatives, many from a distant area. Present were Mrs. Steven (Brenda) Ellis, her parents Mr. and Mrs. Bobby Buchanan and family; Brenda's grandparents Mr. and Mrs. Medford Huntley of Cape Cod. Steve's mother Mrs. L. E. Ellis had come for an extended visit from Drakesboro, Kentucky. Another guest from afar was a beloved member Mrs. Antony Regamey.

The Society is looking forward to a good future under the spiritual guidance of the Reverend Mr. Ellis and the friendship of his lovely wife Brenda.

Dorothy deB. Young  
Secretary of BSNJ



*Rev. Steve Ellis, with his mother, following his installation service.*

## FROM CHURCH RECORDS

### BAPTISM

**WIENS**—Robyn Elizabeth, born July 5, 1982, daughter of Robert and Laurel Wiens, was baptized into the Christian faith and life in Summerland, B.C., on Oct. 3, the Rev. Erwin Reddekopp officiating.

### MARRIAGES

**WIENS—STRINGER**—David G. Wiens and Colleen Stringer were united in marriage at the Anglican Church in Summerland, B.C. on September 18, 1982, the Rev. Erwin Reddekopp officiating.

**DUSABLON—EPP**—Louis DuSablon and Dawna Epp were united in marriage on August 28th, 1982 in the Trinity United Church, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, the Rev. David Sonmor officiating.

### DEATHS

**GALE**—Melvin Gale, an associate member of the Boston New Church Society, died on October 15, 1982. Survived by Malcolm D. Gale and Marion R. Gale of Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts. The resurrection service was held on October 19 in Brookline, Mass.

**LAU**—Myron Lau, 77, a long time active member of the Detroit New Church Society, died on October 19, 1982. A memorial service was held on Sunday, October 24th, the Rev. F. Gardiner Perry officiating.

**SWANTON**—Mary Alice Swanton, a long time member of the Newtonville, Mass., Society died on October 12, 1982. She is survived by John R. Swanton of Newton and Henry A. Swanton of San Diego, Calif. The resurrection service was conducted by the Rev. F. Robert Tafel.

### ALMONT TEEN RETREAT

Monday, Dec. 27 — Thursday, Dec. 30

Cost per person: \$15.00

Staff: Gard Perry, Bill Woofenden,  
Eric Allison

Theme: "The Future"

Note: Almont Spring Retreat

May 20 - 22, 1983

"Peacemaking"

## INTERESTING AND CHALLENGING PART-TIME POSITION TO BEGIN FALL OF 1983.

# Editor for the Messenger

### Requirements:

New Church Affiliation  
Writing and Editing Ability  
Ability to carry out Production  
Salary Negotiable

Send Resumes  
and Applications to:  
Dept. of Publication  
48 Sargent St.  
Newton, Mass. 02158

This position open to all qualified clergy and laity.

## *DESIDERATA II*

IN WHATEVER RELIGION YOU HAVE BEEN TAUGHT, HOWEVER YOU HAVE BEEN BROUGHT UP, AND HOWEVER YOU HAVE UNDERSTOOD YOUR TEACHERS . . . on these levels you will understand and grasp this message. It is not enough that this message be believed. It is a message to be lived. The essence of Universal Religion is Peace and Truth, with Love for and Kindness to all the creatures of the earth. Now is the time to express this essence in your own life. A beginning must be made, and the place to begin is with and in yourself. You would reform the world? Begin with yourself, brother! The message of the unreformed reformer seldom inspires reformation. The heart of all Religion is love. And righteousness, which is love in action, is the fulfillment of Religion. Love not only family and friends!—for love limited is love denied. Seek peace within yourself and seek, too, within yourself the Divine Breath of Life. Persist in these things! Do not let up for a single moment! Through your faith and through your deeds you shape your life and

help shape the lives of others, as well. What a responsibility! The Spirit finds in you its agent and also its partner, and to the degree that you are aware of this and act on it, your life is enriched. A revelation will occur to you . . . a revelation higher than your most exalted dreams. The New Age is coming, and in it there will be a realization of the Oneness of all. Differences between the various Religions will disappear. The good, which is in each of them, will be fused and will become the common goal of all mankind. Know that you have the power to choose! Choose love, not hate; choose gentleness, not violence; choose holiness, not evil! Dare to believe that the Reign of Love and Peace is coming soon! Ready yourself for it! Ready yourself for it with deeds of righteousness! Righteousness is the door-opener, and beyond the door is love. May power divine enter every aspect of your life endowing it with the rewards of material accomplishments, the treasures of purposeful existence, and the eternal light of spiritual achievement.

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

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