

The Messenger

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH
NOVEMBER 1982

*The year that is drawing toward its close
has been filled with the blessing of fruit-
ful fields and healthful skies . . . they are
the gracious gifts of the Most High God!*

Abraham Lincoln

*He who thanks but with the lips
Thanks but in part;
The full, the true Thanksgiving
Comes from the heart.*

J. A. Shedd

*Amidst the storm they sang,
And the stars heard and the sea,
And the sounding aisles of the dim
woods rang
With the anthem of the free.*

Felicia Dorothea Hemans
"Landing of the Pilgrims"



*These are the amber days of autumn loveli-
ness, like people who have mellowed with
the years, and whose days hold the garnered
richness of wisdom and remembering.*

Esther Baldwin York

*Let us give thanks to God upon Thanks-
giving Day. Nature is beautiful and
fellowmen are dear, and duty is close
beside us, and God is over us and in us.*

Phillips Brooks

*Sometimes our light goes out but is blown
again into flame by an encounter with
another human being. Each of us owes the
deepest thanks to those who have rekindled
this inner light.*

Albert Schweitzer



THE GRACE OF GRATITUDE

"My people have forgotten me, days without number." Jeremiah 2: 32

In strange and wonderful ways we find that the passage of time tends to blot out many of the sad, painful events in our past life. And so it is that we look back and talk about the "good old days" which, by and large, had their share of both trials and joys. But we tend to forget the trials and we magnify the joys, which is a very good thing. It would be impossible to live effectively in the present if all our past mistakes and troubles were constantly in our thoughts. There is much in the past that is better buried.

But there is one sin of omission that is mentioned frequently in the Bible. Jeremiah put his finger on it with these forceful words: "My people have forgotten me, days without number." God had led the people of Israel from bondage in Egypt to the promised land; he had fed them; provided them leadership; led them to a land of milk and honey—and then he was casually dismissed, as a servant who had finished his work.

So it is, even today. Ingratitude is the basis of a great deal of the current strife and misunderstanding in the world. When people forget God, then the door is opened to a host of other evils, and they come pouring into the individual and collective worlds of the Soul. In one of his plays Shakespeare calls ingratitude a "marble-hearted fiend"—a vivid picture of what happens when we forget God and the heart grows cold, like stone.

There is a great wonderment here. God wants us to feel independent and responsible—that is the way he has made us. And the wonderment enters at precisely this point. Having made us free moral agents, he is fully aware of the risks and dangers involved, but still he insists that we perceive our life as strictly our own—at the same time we need to recognize that in reality all of life comes to us moment upon moment from the generous hand of God. When we recognize this seeming paradox, then thanksgiving becomes a natural, spontaneous part of our total life, and every day becomes Thanksgiving Day.

This is the kind of thanksgiving Henry Van Dyke had in mind when he wrote:

Do I give thanks for this? or that? No, God be thanked I am not grateful

In that cold, calculating way, with blessings ranked

As one, two, three and four—that would be hateful.

I only know that every day brings good above
My poor deserving;
I only feel that in the road of life true Love
Is leading me along and never swerving.

MESSANGER EDITOR RESIGNS

At our recent Department of Publications meeting in Philadelphia I announced my resignation as editor of the *Messenger*, effective in September, 1983.

There are several reasons for this decision. I have the feeling that it is about time for an infusion of new ideas, fresh spirit and a more innovative leadership for the *Messenger*. I've been at the helm for eight years and it's time for a change. Also I would like to return full time to parish work, which is my first love.

By and large it has been a very rewarding and challenging experience. And most enjoyable, too. So much of a minister's work is intangible; we seldom see concrete results growing out of our endeavors. But here, every month 2000 *Messengers* roll off the press and are delivered to 2000 New Church families and homes around the world, and this makes for a very satisfying, enjoyable feeling.

This position is open to all qualified people, men and women, clergy and lay persons. If you are interested please see page 215 for further information.

P. Z.

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The 'Inner' Ecology

John Pontin
Manchester, England

Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth".
(Isaiah 5:8)

There are two main-streams of environmentalism, one which is attempting to control some of the worst effects of man's inefficient land use practices and pollution, and the other which is reformist, seeking a new metaphysics, cosmology and environmental ethic of God/planet/person. One main-stream is treating the symptoms of the environmental crisis and challenging some of the social assumptions that are now dominant in society. The other is growth of the economy with limited control, and planned obsolescence, in which the main goal is to measure the possession of commodities as an end in itself. Nature, a great storehouse of resources, should be 'developed' to satisfy man's ever increasing demands and at the end of the day whatever the problem, technology will solve all of our problems.

The 17th century philosophers—e.g. Bacon, Descartes and Leibnitz, laid the foundations for the present technocratic-industrial pattern, and the principle that man MUST dominate and control the earth. God is denied any active involvement in nature. While the school of Cartesian philosophy liberated the mind from the fetters imposed by the theologians of that period and the minds of men became more ready to receive new ideas, this philosophy led to an unbridgeable gulf between mind and matter, between Spirit and Nature.

Emanuel Swedenborg, who was well acquainted with Cartesian cosmological physics, as well as being familiar with the views of the Greek philosophers, was little if at all influenced by narrow dogmatic thinking. He was a speculative thinker, with an active scientific imagination. He had one great essential attribute, the faculty of genius for anticipating cosmological ultimates. The universe was sacred and it had a spiritual discipline. Nature was ever unfolding and indwelling, was God.

One of the most interesting chapters in Swedenborg's 'Principia' (Vol. 2) is "The Diversity of Worlds", in which he reveals his thoughts about the immensity and the mystery of creation, the many heavens and planetary systems. He contemplates the succession of changes through which the earth had passed, and in which continuity and order existed, not

only in this life but also into the spiritual world. Later in the 'Arcana Coelestia', Swedenborg stated, "The Deity is in each single thing, and this even to such an extent that there is in it a representation of the Eternal and Infinite". Because Swedenborg's language comes from a different age to which we are accustomed, we must not underrate his contribution to what we would now call a biospheric concept. Here we can see the 'inner'—ecology—a reverential attitude to all creation, and opposition to the 'technological fixers' of his day—the cosmologies of Bacon, Descartes and others.

'Inner' ecology begins with Unity rather than dualism, it extends to what would be called an ecological consciousness. Man's blindness and insensitivity is not the will of God, but the distortion of the will in man. The belief in the Unity of God requires the rejection of subject/object, man/nature dualisms, and in its place an adjustment from an ego-oriented society to a new ideal of spiritual development—the grace of perception that will give the harmony and wholeness we require, to live in peace in God's Kingdom. Man has lived with the illusion that he is central to creation—as a conqueror or manager. Man is dependent on God and His order, whose mind should flow outwardly with the creative forces of spiritual truth, rather than attempting to play 'God'. If man stands outside the unity of creation, so his sorrows are multiplied by imbalance. All things are of the Lord and from the Lord, and a conscious awareness of this reality brings man back to the essential understanding of his responsibility and the nature of his existence on earth.

The whole universe is the expression of the Lord's Kingdom, and everything that exists had its own proper relationship with its Creator.

The 'inner' ecological cosmic view stresses the identity, 'I/THOU' and not 'I/IT'. Man is the steward, and if he opens his heart, he can receive the light of truth and the heat of love, from which the growing rhythm of his will and understanding will reflect his concern for all creation. Education should encourage spiritual and personhood development in young people, and not just in training them for jobs, appropriate for oligarchic bureaucracies or for consumerism. Life and death on this planet is in man's hands. The forces for renewal must come from spiritual gentleness so that man may learn to walk again and shape his life in harmony with the earth. Regeneration, renewal, is the

dynamic force which leads man forward so that he can walk in the footprints of the Lord. Man's crisis is internal and if he is to move away from darkness, destruction, waste and sorrow, economics must become subordinate to an ecological-ethical criteria. "The whole land is made desolate because no man layeth it to heart", cried Jeremiah.

Man has made some effort to change radically his social behaviour as he has bulldozed trees by the thousands, scraped bare the fields and built predestined slums. A new generation cried, Stop! Shortsighted self-interested man must no longer be allowed to violate forests, countryside, wilderness areas, marsh-lands and pour poisons into rivers. The great bubble of expansion was bursting and some said it is time to take stock. The pragmatic school looked at the mathematics of survival, while others looked for deeper, inner reasons to bring a spiritual change. For the time being in a few places on earth, the frightful speed towards a gutted planet has slowed down, as a more articulated eco-political-economic programme is now being considered.

Of all resources the most critical is man's spirit. To dishonour the earth is to dishonour the spirit within and the purpose of creation. If you love, you love that which sustains you. Man needs a wiser concept of 'who is my neighbour?' In more ancient times, (the Most Ancient Church) the people saw in each and all things—mountains, forests, rivers, valleys, in animals and plants of every kind—something representative and significative of the Lord's Kingdom. Swedenborg tells us that the affection for serving and to whom charity should be exercised—" . . . namely, all in the universe, but yet to each with discrimination", had been lost (A.C. 3419). Man was once gifted with an interior perception, a kind of extension of the senses, which he must regain. A reverential attitude to all creation is not a nostalgia trip, or an 'arcadian' stance towards nature, but through the power of reason and understanding, to look again at man's dominion over nature.

The deepening ecological consciousness is a continuing process, we can go back to the eighteenth century—Gilbert White—the parson naturalist; Carl Linnaeus the pious businessman with an intense passion for plants; John Ray's 'The Wisdom of God Manifested in the Work of Creation'; and the Lutheran divine, John Bruckner, who published a philosophical survey of the animal kingdom. All made a major contribution towards the spiritual reaction against the Hobbesian view of

man being nasty, brutish and lacking virtue or morality. A great leap forward has to be made to the time of transition (utilitarian period to the birth of an ecological approach) when the dominant economic attitude was challenged towards land-use and wildlife management. In 1933 the now famous essay, 'The Land Ethic' was published by an American, Aldo Leopold. His appeal was for a more holistic approach to wildlife conservation and land management. In our own time, the '40's and to the present day, has seen the publication of many outstanding books, one of which was Rachel Carson's 'Silent Spring'. It made clear that the atomic bomb was not the only threat to the sanctity of life.

The injunction, 'walk humbly with God', raises the important question of 'our neighbour'. If we love the Lord and seek the truth through the Word, then 'our neighbour' extends beyond homo sapiens. If this suggested interpretation of 'our neighbour' is legitimate and we can consider the whole of God's creation, then the organic and mystical delights of the holistic concept, or oneness with God, can be found in this definition. Support for this view of a God/Nature/Man relationship will be found in Capra's 'Tao of Physics', and other writings, as indeed, we can find the 'alternative approach' from the teachings of Swedenborg. If the ultimate reality is a quality that it is real and its value is not an illusion, man's concern for nature and all sentient things should express the will-to-good, the love of God's creation. There is wisdom to be found in the stability of natural processes unchanged by human intervention. Man is an animal with the seed of the Divine implanted in his soul. He is more than just intelligence, more than a planner for material benefits. He can respond to spiritual impressions, and renounce self-will. He is capable of love, compassion, building relationships, and has a developing sense of unity and universality.

Swedenborg has warned against ". . . those who have deliberately avoided thinking of the Divine when observing the marvels in nature . . ." (DLW 352). He further makes clear that all things which have use flow by influx, the spiritual into the natural, confirming the Divine's creative love (DLW 355), all things operating by discrete degree, and by what he termed "imperfection" and "perfection" for describing different members of the animal or vegetable kingdoms (DLW 346).

Returning to Isaiah 5:8, Swedenborg tells us, that the internal sense represents the external man building up knowledge to increase his

external wealth and out of bad reasoning come falsities and therefore derivative evils (AC 1488). The house denotes the human mind, and the field represents the things that belong to the field in which things grow and live (AC 7502). All things which are created by the Lord are uses according to degree. To man uses are referable, on a small or large scale, that sustain his body and his spirit. The essence of spiritual love lies in doing good from truth. Without charity, faith has no meaning. Good towards man, his habitation, its protection and conservation, is an acknowledgement that all

things are from the Lord. Man is the Lord's appointed steward over the things provided by the Lord. (DLW 333/ff) Man is conjoined by discrete degrees within the unity of creation.

All sentient things belong to the Lord, and any form of exploitation is against his creative purpose.

John Pontin

"The 'Inner' Ecology" by John Pontin is re-printed with kind acknowledgement to "Lifeline", a British Conference publication. John Pontin, is business manager of the New Church Theological School in England.

THOUGHTS ON NEW AGE RELIGION

*Taro B. Starbuck
Olympia, Washington*

The line it is drawn
The curse it is cast
The slow one now will later be fast
As the present now will later be past
The order is rapidly fadin'
And the first one now
Will later be last
For the times they are a-changin'

Bob Dylan

In many respects my article "Swedenborgians Living the Life", which ironically appeared in the same *Messenger* issue as "The New-Age Religion", serves as a partial response to the latter article. However, I would like to comment further as, while I concur with the author on some points, I do, however, see things from a more hopeful perspective.

I, too, have been on a 20 year Faith Journey, and during that time I have gone from Christian fundamentalism to the occult, from Eastern thought and meditation to conscious expanding drugs, from Evangelical Catholicism to a Trappist Monastery, from working with Marxists to serving with the Society of Friends. Ultimately, like the author of "A Scandinavian Seeker," I also found in Emanuel Swedenborg's teachings the fertile theological soil for which I searched to plant my spiritual roots. In all my spiritual and religious experiences I did not find it necessary to officially join any particular group. Avoiding labels and not being a joiner, I actively sought, instead, the Divine Essence or generic spirit, which connects all sectarian groups.

While having been a student of E. Swedenborg since 1967 and fatefully married to a Swedenborgian since 1975, it is only as recent as

the 1982 General Convention that I came in contact with the official New Church Body. We, like many other families are isolated Swedenborgians, not having a New Church in our community. Perhaps my limited formal exposure to the New Church does not qualify me as expert enough to comment on its nature, but my intuitive spirit must speak from what means it has.

Being an impartial observer at Convention at Irvine gave me a unique vantage point from which to view the New Church in action. Some of what I saw confirms what the author in question has already stated. There seemed to be in attendance as many, if not more, older people than young and some of the formal worship services I attended were, in my opinion, a plagerization of the "old forms". Not all those worship services were, however, necessarily conducted by the aging patriarchs of the Old Order. Women, as well as men, young, as well as old, have difficulty breaking from the "old forms."

I did witness and sense, also at Convention, an attitude towards change. This was made manifest in the planning of the Peace Convention for 1983, the passing of the Nuclear Freeze Resolution, the rejuvenation of New Church Camps and family ministry. There has been imaginative work done by the Board of Education with the "Infant" and Sunday School Programs, a re-evaluation of curriculum at S.S.R., the equalitarian acceptance of women into the clergy and the vision of ministering to isolated Swedenborgians, all are encouraging signs of

(cont'd on page 214)

The Tafel Network

DR. JOHANN FRIEDERICK LEONHARD TAFEL

*Richard H. Tafel
Philadelphia, PA.*

Although our ancestral roots go back far into the past, as you know, and we are so fortunate in having our geneology so fully documented, I would like to pick up the story of the family in the second decade of the 1800's, when the Four Tafel Brothers (from whom most of us are descended) were students at Tubingen University.

Those were fateful years in the history of the German people. Napoleon had just been defeated, bringing to an end his despotic rule and the war which had for so long brought bloodshed and misery to Europe. The German princes and kings had promised their people free and constitutional government, but they had no intention of keeping their word; and now with Napoleon gone they themselves became as despotic and oppressive as he had ever been. The German people seethed with discontent; the universities were hotbeds of political unrest, and the Tafel Brothers were right there in the midst of things!

But those opening years of the 1800's were exciting times in areas other than the political. It was as if a window had been thrown open in a too long stagnant room, and new ideas and aspirations came sweeping through. Immanuel—the oldest of the brothers, nicknamed “The Wise One”—reacted to this new surge of life on its philosophical and religious level. He wholeheartedly embraced the new presentation of Christianity as set forth in the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, with its emphasis on freedom and its appeal to reason and Scripture. He devoted his life to furthering the Swedenborgian movement in Germany, bringing out a scholarly edition of Swedenborg's works in Latin, and later translating them into German. He championed the new movement with his pen, and was in contact with the leading spirits of Germany: the poets, writers and philosophers. For instance, he encouraged Froebel in his kindergarten movement, the inspiration for which he had found in Swedenborg. Immanuel well merited the title, “The father of the Swedenborgian Church in Germany.”

But my assignment tonight is to tell about the life and work of the third oldest brother, Dr.

Johann Friederick Leonhard, my grandfather, nicknamed “Der Fromme”—“The devout one.” All of the Tafel Brothers were outstanding individuals: intellectual giants, of tremendous energy and enterprise; possessing a broad liberalism; driven by a passion for a united and free Germany, and motivated by the high ideals of service to the common good.

Dr. Leonhard shared his brother's Swedenborgian faith, so much so that he felt forced to change his course at the university from theology to philology and ancient languages, which field was really closest to his heart. He worked under the university professor Lucas Tafel (I presume his uncle) and prepared to enter the teaching profession. He was master of twenty-four languages, ancient and modern. At his table they spoke a different language every day of the week. My father mentioned how relieved he was when the day came around when they could speak German!

But before he could carry out this plan for his life work, he was arrested, along with his younger brother Gottlob, for his political activity, and was confined in the fortress of Hohenasperg for eighteen months, from 1824 - 1826. Dr. Leonhard himself tells us about this:

“The cause of arrest was my participation in a students' club whose object was to bring about the unity of Germany and freer institutions, which the German princes had promised the people but which they had not kept. With a band of thirty young members of the Turnverein (athletic club) I made a foot tour to Odenwald, going through Heidelberg, where I heard at a meeting of the leaguers that the students were planning to take up arms, and that they were already drilling in Prussia. I explained to them the stupidity of such a course of action, and demanded that they dissolve their club because they were endangering the cause of the Fatherland. I told them that we would work openly for the unity of the country.”

As a result of this, the student's club was dissolved, but a year later the story came out, and at the request of the king of Prussia arrests were made all over Germany.

In those days life in prison for political activity was not too burdensome—provided you could afford to have your meals sent in, and be supplied with books, and pen and ink and paper. Dr. Leonhard occupied his time translating the current literature of the times into German, translating James Fennimore Cooper's "Leather Stocking Tales," Sir Walter Scott's "Ivanhoe," etc. In this way he helped introduce the Romantic Movement in Literature to Germany.

But it was in his chosen field of philology and languages that my grandfather was to lay claim to fame. He had discovered a new method of teaching languages, which he called "The Analytical Method" but which we today know as "The Direct Method." In those days students were introduced to languages through the doorway of dry and boring grammar. His method took one directly to reading stories, learning the words, and then seeing how the various parts were put together, i.e., grammar. I vividly remember being taught this method as a boy of six, learning little stories by heart, and then making my way into the meaning of the words. I still remember:

"Cancrum retrogradum monet mater
prossum ut eat. Filius respondet, faciam
si te idem, facendum prossum ut eat."

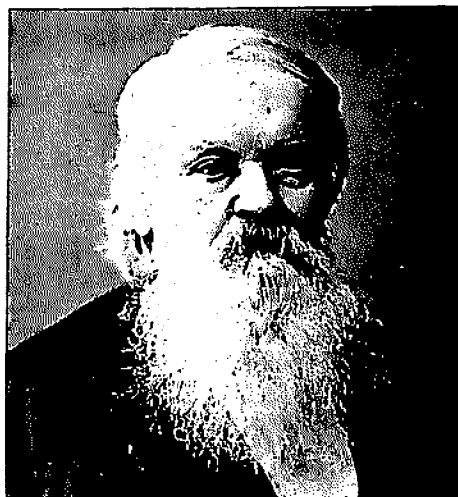
Which means:

"A crab, going backwards, was admonished by his mother that he should go forward. The son replied, 'I will do it, if I first see you do so.'"

I trace my love for languages to that method, and am grateful to him who discovered it.

But Dr. Leonhard could not sell his method to the state board of education, which was well content to go along in the old, fixed ways. Being a personna non gratis didn't help either. So in 1853 he decided to come to the United States, where the air was freer and new ideas invited. In doing so he but added to the "brain drain" which saw the finest fruit of intellect and skill fleeing Germany because of despotism, repression and conservatism, coming here to make us a still greater nation. It has been said, and I believe with justification, that Hitler's Germany would not have been possible were it not for just such a brain drain. The German immigrants, who came in great waves from 1848 on, proved to be among our very best and most useful citizens.

My grandfather said to his family as they reached the new world, "andere Lander andere Sitten"—"other countries other customs"—showing the pliable attitude of these Germans who came to our shores. By the way, did you



Johann F. L. Tafel

know that German came within a whisker of being voted our national language? It did! In Congress, the vote was a tie, being broken by . . . a German!

The waves of German immigrants arrived, too, in time to insure the northern victory in our Civil War. Those immigrants, who had largely fled Germany to avoid conscription, loyally threw themselves into that struggle. Three of Dr. Leonhard's sons answered the call to the colors; another, my father, was the rebel, fighting for the South and for what he believed right, from 1861 - 1865.

Dr. Leonhard succeeded in introducing his new method of teaching language to the new world, setting up schools in Philadelphia and St. Louis, teaching at our Church college in Urbana, Ohio, and in the Church's theological school here in Philadelphia.

Dr. Leonhard's third claim to fame was his translation of the Bible into German. It was a monumental, lifetime work, but was just one of the many projects to which he turned his linguistic skills.

The picture of Dr. Leonhard, exhibited here on our display table, notes that he was "The head of the Swedenborgian Church in America." This is not factually true, unless you take this to mean that he—and his sons and grandsons—supplied the main scholarship and intellectual expertise for the Swedenborgian Church here in America. In that sense he can rightfully be called "The Head," for that Church would be infinitely poorer if it were not for the devoted work of this Tafel family.

As a matter of fact, Dr. Leonhard remained a layman for most of his life, although always being a ready and able lecturer and writer for

his beloved church. He was ordained and became a minister at the age of seventy-two. And this is the way that came about.

There was a small German-speaking congregation in New York, too poor to pay a minister, who begged him to come and serve them. It was a call to duty which the old man could not but answer, so at the ripe old age of seventy-two he became their minister and served them faithfully for the eight remaining years of his life. He was living at the time with his son, Adolph, on Staten Island. To get to the Church by 9:30 a.m. to conduct the Sunday School, meant taking a ferry at 6:30, then riding on two horse cars. This he did, week after week, despite the weather.

In addition to this, he continued to teach languages, rising early on Monday mornings to conduct a class in New York, and then immediately taking a train to Philadelphia for his classes there, teaching all week until returning to New York again on Fridays—and somehow finding time to prepare his sermon and worship service. (I know of ministers today who refuse to teach a Sunday School class the day they are to preach, saying, "I don't want to overextend myself." Over-extend themselves! This old-young man could

tell them something about that!).

He remained active up to the end. The day before he died he taught a class in Sanskrit, and then complained about pains in the chest. He took to bed, but rallied the next afternoon, and felt sure that he would be able to teach his class the next day. Dying in my father's arms, he asked for his Aramaic grammar, as there were some unusual verb forms of which he was becoming unsure.

Dr. Leonhard was the father of fourteen children, the grandfather of seventy, with great grand children and great great grand children to numerous now to count. He has contributed thirteen ministers to the Swedenborg Church, two Presidents to our national organization, and another President to our sister Church in England—a long line which continues his fine tradition of scholarship, his devotion to great causes, and his commitment to his beloved Church.

We are grateful for this rich heritage bequeathed to us, and out of our gratitude we repeat the words of the great Goethe at this time of our Family Reunion:

"Happy are they who are glad because of those they have sprung from."

TAFEL REUNION

Over one hundred Tafels and Tafel descendants held a reunion at the Centre Hotel in Philadelphia, hosted by the Philadelphia area Tafels, on the weekend of August 20 - 22. Tafels gathered from different parts of the United States, Canada, England, Germany, Italy and Mexico.

Dr. Maurice Raraty spoke on "Tafel Beginnings" on the Friday night, after which a color sound film of Rosenfeldt, the ancestral Tafel home, was shown. After this followed a film made by the Smithsonian Institute on the Boericke & Tafel Homeopathic Pharmacy in Philadelphia. This film has been shown several times on television.

On Saturday night the Rev. Richard H. Tafel gave an address on the life and work of the Rev. Dr. Johann Friederick Leonhard Tafel, which is printed above. This was followed by fellowship and dancing.

On Sunday a beautiful memorial communion service "for all Tafels gone before" was held in the Philadelphia Church. The Revs. Harvey and F. Robert Tafel conducted the service, and the Rev. Richard H. Tafel, Jr. delivered the sermon. Nina Tafel was at the organ, and the ushers were the four sons of the late Rev. Dr. Leonard I. Tafel.

The Tafel Family Reunions have become a tradition, and the next gathering of the family will be in two or three years in Nuremberg, Germany.

THE NEW BOOK OF WORSHIP

The General Council has directed us to send one copy of the new book to each society and group in Convention to insure that everyone has the opportunity to see it.

It has set the price at \$15, with an introductory offer of \$12 if ordered before November 30, 1982, plus mailing charges.

Also, through the courtesy of our General Council, payment of bulk orders of twenty-five (25) books or more at the \$12 rate, placed before November 30, 1982, may be spread over three years without interest. The same spreading of payments also applies to bulk orders of twenty-five or more books placed after November 30 at the \$15 rate.

The new Book of Worship may be ordered from:

The Central Office
48 Sargent St.
Newton, Mass. 02158

Richard H. Tafel,
Chairman of the Committee on Worship

FEMININE CONNECTIONS

Perry S. Martin, Editor

Sponsored by the Alliance of New Church Women

The feminine connection is at work, we have only to make ourselves open and available. As if by chance this month Carole Rienstra reminds us to take time to look, to feel, to be aware, and Barbara Mackey writes of the power of listening. When we empty our minds of our habitual inner clatter we open ourselves to all possibilities. We see and hear things as they are, not as we think of them, and we realize the original nature of everything. To be there only, to do what seems like nothing, is of profound use. Wilson Van Dusen points out that "use is a way of looking at creation that gathers all the tiny details together and enables one to see through time to the way the whole operates." Coming to our senses is, as James Baldwin said, "to respect and rejoice in the force of life itself, and to be present in all that one does, from the effort of loving to the breaking of bread."

P. S. M.

THE TURNING OF TIME

"For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven . . . He hath made everything beautiful in its time; also He hath set eternity in their heart yet so that man cannot find out the work that God hath done from the beginning even to the end."

Ecclesiastes 3: 1, 11

Summer has slipped away. How very quickly the months have gone to take their place among our memories. Now we stand in the midst of autumn—of bright warm days and cool brisk nights—of hills ablaze in uncomparable tapestried colors. Yet over all of this beauty rests the quiet sadness of autumn. Within this all encompassing loveliness we stand alone and wonder, "Where did the time go?"

Once again we are aware of the CALENDAR, of school schedules, meetings, bus routes, milk money, coffee hour schedules, Sunday School, music lessons, programs, etc. So many activities all scribbled into those neat, precise rows and squares of red and black numbers of passing time.

Only memory recalls the summer and an awareness of how good and important it was to live beyond those neat precise rows and

squares. How good it was to really look at the twinkling stars, the dawn and the dusk, to feel the earth with our fingers, the mountains under foot, to lie in the sand and swim in the sea. How sad to see the soft summer days go. How sad the turning of time into reality.

We know we must live and work in a world of hours and minutes but our spirits need to rise above. We can take with us all the goodness of summer and let it encircle us, that this goodness may live on in our hearts and become a part of our hectic lives, a cushion as we bounce along day to day.

And so it is with this autumn. Before it turns to winter let us gather in all the goodness of this season. Capture and hold fast the memory of the leaves shouting with color before they tumble down, the smell of burning leaves and the spicy aroma of pickles, jams and jells. Study the intricate design of the spider's web, absorb the haunting fragrance of drying herbs and berries. Enjoy the rustle of leaves underfoot, the bustling and chattering of squirrels as they store their bounty for winter, the brilliant blue of the sky against the crimson of the trees, the air alive with friendship and football and school, the overwhelming wonder of it all. A Divine Allegory of nature and God, of seedtime and harvest, of work and play, of study and insight, of sunlight and shadows, of summer and winter, of Love and Wisdom . . . Life.

*Carole Rienstra,
Fryeburg, Maine
Alliance Religious Chairman*

LISTEN . . .

*Barbara R. Mackey, Ed.M.
Urbana, Ohio*

It is not unusual for a musician to write about hearing and listening. Much of my life has been directed toward being "in tune." Recently, the brief phrase has taken on new meaning. A meaning which puts me more in tune with myself and all of life.

Generally, seeing and hearing are considered to be the most precious of the five human senses. Swedenborg says that through uses all

the delights of heaven are brought together in the five senses of humans. He goes on to say that each sense has a distinctive delight in accord with its use. In hearing we get delights from harmonious sounds, while the uses hearing performs relate both to the understanding and to the intention through attentiveness and awareness.¹

Don Juan, the Mexican sorcerer, instructed his apprentice, "use your ears to take some of the burden from your eyes." Carlos Castaneda continued his training to become a man of knowledge by trying to *hear* his environment rather than consistently monitoring his own running inner narrative of his perceptions of life. Castaneda described his two-month exercise period as "listening to the sounds of the world." He said it was "excruciating at first to listen and not look, but even more excruciating was not to talk with myself. By the end of two months I was capable of shutting off my internal dialogue for short periods of time and I was also capable of paying attention to sounds."²

Listening and really hearing can be a very exhilarating part of human experience. As I think about listening and hearing four experiences come to mind. I want to share them with you.

Listen to the sounds of nature. Imagine that you are walking through the fall woods full of brightly colored leaves with a crunchiness under foot. Imagine a cool breeze periodically moving across your face. Imagine the sounds of water running over the rocks in a stream, wind moving through the trees and the sounds of your breathing and heart beat as you trudge along.

For almost four years now, I have found a shelter from the chaos of the world in listening to the sounds of nature. A favorite source of inspiration for composers and poets, the sounds of nature are an important part of each human being's experience. The birds were the original flutes. The wind and rain, the first percussion instruments. Spontaneous, random and harmonious, the sounds of nature are always present if we take time to listen.

Listen to your body. What is my body saying when my shoulders are sore? When my lower back is tight? What is my body saying when I feel as if I am coming down with a cold or when I crave vitamin C? What is my body saying when I feel the need to be close to someone?

By turning down the constant chatter of my inner tape recorder, I am learning to listen to my body. By listening I am able to recognize the difference between fear, frustration and pain.

By acknowledging their role in my life, I have begun to move into ways of identifying those things in my life which lead to joy and delight, rather than pain and despair.

Listen to the feeling in your daily life. As I move through the hours of each day, I try to tune in periodically to my feelings about the particular situation I am in. Recently, I read the book *The Cinderella Complex* by Colette Dowling.³ I was struck by the changes in my feelings about the author's premise that women are not socialized to be responsible and independent. At first, my reaction was that this was just another one of those heavy-handed women's lib books. Later, I experienced anger at what she was saying and tried to deny that it had any relevance to me. Still later, I began to accept that I, too, was a woman and affected by my own genes, heritage, and situation. Finally, I felt comfort in not being alone, in living an uncertain life in 1982, as all people do including men.

Day-to-day living is our most immediate laboratory for personal growth. Inner growth comes from hearing and understanding the essence of the moment. Spiritual growth comes from an inner awareness and acceptance of the variety of feelings we experience every day of our life.

Listen to what the angels and the LORD have to say to you. Have you ever been given an amazing gift by an inner voice? In a dream? In a prayer or meditation or while reading? That inner voice, sometimes in the form of a warning, I believe is the presence of angels and the LORD with you.

In my dreams I have received verbatim directions such as "live life fully in the present, letting the past and the future take care of themselves", and "listen to the birds and the fear will go away." My experience shows that these messages have specific and immediate usefulness in my life. While reading I often get insights into interrelationships of concepts which come from an inner voice. From an angel? From the LORD? My dream journal and I Ching journal, now both over a year old, provide a way to record my sequence of daily concerns, insights into the way of life and other messages from a more heavenly perspective.

Hearing and listening are integral parts of our daily experience. Although all hearing is good, there may be some types of listening that contribute more to our personal well-being and growth. Tuning in to what our body and environment are saying is a useful tool. Tuning out the endless chatter of the natural person and tuning in to the universal ways of life

through a connection with the angels and the Lord are ways to experience heaven on earth. This is becoming my new way of being "in tune" with my existence. What about you?

LISTEN . . .

1. *Heaven and Hell* 402 Emanuel Swedenborg

2. *A Separate Reality—Further Conversations with Don Juan* by Carlos Castaneda, 1971
3. *The Cinderella Complex* by Colette Dowling, 1981. Reviewed in "Feminine Connections" in September 1982 issue of *The Messenger*.

The Peace Page

Why I Feel Development Of Neutron Bomb Is Immoral

by J. Garrott Allen

To minimize the horrendous devastation of nuclear warfare, exemplified by the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Reagan administration in the United States has decided to produce the neutron warhead, which is designed to release enormous amounts of radiation while inflicting minimal damage to buildings and property in the targeted area.

The principal advantage, we are told, is that the radiation would penetrate enemy tanks and rapidly kill military personnel, as well as anyone else within a radius of about 500 yards.

There seems to be little awareness that many other people will receive lethal doses of radiation but will not die for weeks, months or even years. This poses medical problems of a magnitude never before considered.

Most physicians have not encountered patients heavily exposed to a sudden burst of ionizing radiation in which blast and heat are not components. I am one of the few who have.

During the Second World War, I was a physician on the Manhattan Project to build the first atomic bomb, and I witnessed the death of a 32-year-old physicist, Dr. Louis Slotin, who had been exposed to radiation during an accident at Los Alamos Scientific Laboratories in May, 1946. He was the leader of a group of eight men trying to join two pieces of nuclear material in order to create a critical mass.

Slippage occurred that allowed a super-critical mass to develop momentarily, setting off an uncontrolled chain reaction and creating a sudden burst of ionizing radiation.

Slotin had the presence of mind to immediately command the other seven persons in the room to remain stationary until he could

draw circles around their shoes. He did this in order to identify their location so that later on their clinical courses could be correlated with the dosage of rems (roentgen equivalent, man—a unit of radiation) that each received.

In less than an hour, all were admitted to the local hospital; in that brief time, Slotin had turned a tragic accident into the nearest thing that we have to a controlled human experiment on acute total body exposure to ionizing radiation.

Slotin had already made a rough estimate of his own probable exposure dose as being more than 1,500 rems, and on that basis concluded that there was no hope for his survival. From numerous previous experiments on dogs exposed to ionizing radiation, there was no doubt that, if his calculations were correct, so was his prognosis.

His clinical course resembled that of some of the radiation victims in the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings 10 months earlier, who had been in locations where heat and blast did not reach them.

Much of this radiation was secondary, not direct, and resembled x-rays. Therefore, the exposure doses could not be nearly so well estimated. In the case of most of the fatalities, death was instantaneous from the heat and the blast, which extended beyond the bomb's radius of radiation.

The clinical results in Slotin's case duplicated what would happen to a person exposed to a nuclear tactical weapon, uncomplicated by the effects of blast and heat.

During the first 12 hours, Slotin vomited several times and had diarrhea and a diminished output of urine. His hands, which

had been the most heavily exposed to radiation, became swollen.

Edema (swelling) and cyanosis (bluish discoloration) of the fingernail beds were noticed within three hours of the accident. Also, patches of erythema (redness) appeared on his hands and forearms.

In 24 hours, erythema was also noted on the chest and abdomen. By the following morning, massive blisters had formed on his hands and forearms.

After the first day, Slotin developed adynamic ileus (paralysis of intestinal activity), which could be relieved only by the use of a continuous suction tube through the nose.

This tube soon became painfully irritating because of ulcerations that developed on his tongue and in the back of his mouth and nose. His hands and arms became increasingly swollen and painful. He required morphine for relief.

By the fifth day, diarrhea was frequent and uncontrollable. His hands had become gangrenous, because the swelling had shut off the blood supply. The erythema and edema increased daily over his entire body.

Frequent doses of morphine were the only treatment that was symptomatically effective. Nothing could be done to stop the steady progress of total disintegration of body functions.

On the ninth day, Louis Slotin died.

The autopsy findings were the same as those we had seen many times in experimental

animals—hemorrhage throughout the body, the absence of platelets and blood that would not clot.

The total body irradiation that this victim had received was later estimated at 1,930 rems. The other seven scientists in the room experienced much lower doses.

The man standing immediately behind Slotin at the time of the accident, Dr. Alvin Graves, 34, received the second heaviest exposure, 390 rems. He eventually returned to work, directing many of the studies at the Nevada test site for several years before developing cataracts, becoming blind and dying at age 54 of other complications attributed by medical authorities in part to his radiation exposure in 1946.

Two other members of Slotin's team subsequently died of acute leukemia.

There will be many survivors, both military and civilian, if and when nuclear tactical weapons are used. They will have received enough radiation to kill them, but for many death may be slow in coming.

There is no effective medical treatment for serious radiation injury and these deaths will be almost as agonizing to those looking on as to the victims themselves. The production of neutron weapons is probably as immoral a concept as human minds have yet devised.

Allen is a professor emeritus of surgery at Stanford University Medical School. He is a founding member of the U.S. Radiation Research Society and the author of numerous articles on the effects of radiation injury.

Los Angeles Times

INCREASE IN VIOLENT TOYS

Sales of traditional toys are down, and those in the high violence categories are markedly increased, according to a report from Dr. Thomas Radecki, M.D., psychiatrist with the Southern Illinois University School of Medicine, and chairman of the National Coalition on Television Violence.

According to Dr. Radecki, sales of traditional games such as *doll houses* are down 22%, board games for children are down by 17%, and *toy trains* are down by 9% over the past year (data from *Toys, Hobbies, & Crafts*, Aug. '82, and calculated in constant dollars). Meanwhile, violent *videogames* dominate a new, multi-billion dollar market; violent "*adventure*" and *military board games* are reported to be selling very quickly, and *toy gun* sales are up 200% in the last four years.

Radecki attributes this trend to the increasingly heavy emphasis on violence in television and movies seen by children.

NCTV reports finding a steady increase in the percentage of violent electronic games in amusement game centers over the past two years. The traditional, mostly non-violent pinball machines have been replaced by electronic games. The percentage of non-violent electronic sports games has also decreased over the past year, being replaced almost entirely by electronic games having a *violent theme*. NCTV monitoring reports finding that 89% of the current amusement games are based on a violent theme, where the player practices a violent skill (i.e., shooting a gun, rocket, laser, etc.).

Home videogames are by far the fastest growing area of the toy and hobby industry. Sales in the last quarter of 1981 totaled \$1 billion. Radecki reports that 65% of current videogames are in the "violent" category. Additionally, he states that the large majority of new videogames entering the market also place in the "high-violence" category.

Parker Brothers and *Kenner* (both *General Mills* companies) are launching a \$20 million campaign of a *Star Wars* videogame and *Star Wars* "action" figures. *Atari* has a \$125 million campaign selling its games; new releases include *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *SwordQuest*, and *Berzerk*. Of *Berzerk*, Radecki says, "In this game you're a stick figure with a handgun; the object is to kill as many other stick figures as possible, before they kill you. This type of role-playing practice is certain to have long-term harmful effects on the player; it teaches violent reactions. These games are training the next generation of Americans to be even more violent than our current adult generation, already the most violent in American history."

Radecki notes the large numbers of inter-connections between violent toys, movies, TV programs, comicbooks, and even advertisers of violence. NCTV reports that *General Mills* is the number one sponsor of Saturday morning violent programming, while *Atari* is the fourth leading advertiser of prime-time and eighth leading advertiser of Saturday morning program violence.

NCTV reports that *Hasbro Toys* will spend \$4 million on TV advertising for its *G.I. Joe* military toys. These ads are aimed at the 5 to 8-year old male viewer, and will reach an estimated 95% of this age group an average of 50 times this year.

Radecki said, "high violence toys are clearly teaching a culture of violence and aggression. These toys are marketed worldwide, closely timed with the release of the movies. Although research funds to examine violent toys and videogames have been drastically cut, it is clear what the findings will show. These toys have the same type of impact on the viewer as violent TV and movies. The images and cues are those of violence. The aggression arousal and justification for the use of violence have been found to be quite effective methods for teaching violent habits. All other researchers with whom I have spoken agree: *These toys are teaching children violent habits.*"

Radecki noted that Sweden has banned war toys, and Germany has asked for voluntary toy company restrictions. Radecki said, "I have written the Federal Trade Commission (FTC),

asking that the advertising of violent children's toys be *banned as unsafe and deceptive advertising*. Children have no way of knowing that these toys increase violent behavior, since this information is never included as a warning, either in the advertising or on the package. I believe counteradvertising is urgently needed to inform the public of the harmful effects of these videogames and toys. I have also urged the FTC to require NCTV and other public interest groups be given one ad to warn of the dangers of violent toys, for every two ads that promote these toys. I suggest this counteradvertising begin at once, and continue for two years after the violent toy ads are prohibited. I am confident that if Americans have access to a fair balance of information, the large majority of children and parents will choose wisely. I am certain that the democratic system can successfully end this growing American culture of violence. Americans have a right to fair and honest information; the FTC and Congress should begin assuring that the people get this information."

OUR MITE BOX GIFT

This year our Mite Box Gift goes to the Swedenborgian Church in Guyana—to Rev. L. Frasier and all his parishoners and especially to:

The lovely ladies of Yarrowcaba
Sponsors of ideals
Indomitable of spirit
Talented in handcrafts
Loving guardians of children whose mothers work
Showerers of tender loving care
Leaders in church services
Singing, praising, supporting
Providers of fillers for inner needs
Charm, courtesy, kindness
Sisters in Guyana's ecumenical movement
Treasures of generosity and love
and
Now our sister Alliance members
God Bless.

Our president, Mareta Saul, suggests that each member make her own box and bring it to Convention in Ohio next year. We will use them as favors on our breakfast table.

Keep loving and keep the peace
Marge Ball,
Mite Box Chairman

East Coast S.N.A.P. 1982

Hello! I am writing to tell you about our East Coast S.N.A.P. I was one of the East Coast S.N.A.P. staff members. Our theme this year was "Belief into Action". We had one confirmation: Karen Duffey, from E. Stoneham, Maine. We have one new "regular member", one new "associate member", and four new "friends of S.N.A.P."

The retreat took place in Fryeburg, Maine, from August 24 - 29, at the New Church Assembly. Fifteen people attended, including four children. We also had five weekend visitors. Each day was structured by a morning worship, led by one of the four staff members. This was followed by lunch, prepared by staff and retreat participants. After lunch everyone had a "Magic Spots" quiet time. Each person chose a "spot" where they could be alone, quiet, reflective, asleep, etc. Next followed our small "inter-personal" groups. These were structured to provide an opportunity for more personal and in-depth sharing than the

morning large group often permitted. A free time followed these groups—people enjoyed the river, played tennis, went for walks, etc. Another meal prepared by members of the group followed, and then a community gathering. This was a time when the adults and children gathered to sing, tell stories, and listen to the day's events. During the morning and afternoon the children had their own program. The children went to bed—and adults gathered for more informal sharing. During one evening the film "Images of Knowing", written by the Rev. Dr. George Dole, was shown. Several local Swedenborgians attended.

Our morning workshops had the following themes: "Belief into Action", "Giving and Receiving", "Female Images of God", "Integrating One's Daily Life With One's Spirituality".

It was a very successful retreat! Everyone seemed to leave feeling rested, rejuvenated and well nourished—in many ways!

Laura Lawson,
South Newfane, Vermont

Thoughts of New Age Religion (from p. 205)

movement towards "new forms". These and other innovations did not occur without risk or commitment by those involved. I personally know of those in the New Church who are advocates for change and they have not been without their critics nor resistance. Much work has yet to be done.

It has not gone unnoticed that parishes go without ministers, that retiring clergy are not replaced fast enough. There are congregations generations old with dwindling finances and memberships. This has given impetus for making more relevant the role of the New Church in the New Age.

The final question asked by the author of "The New Age Religion" cuts to the core of the matter and should be addressed by each New Church member. It should be a point of continuous discussion and a searching for solutions. I would challenge the author, as well as New Church People, to get involved in discovering and implementing imaginative forms of worship. Help to raise people's awareness through Love in Action.

The difficulty lies in how to tread the sensitive area of each person's spiritual expectations of worship. What may seem a radical divergence in forms of worship to one person may seem less so to someone else. Forms of worship successful in one New Church may not be in another. Also much of the dynamic

ministry which takes place in the New Church occurs outside the formal worship service; areas such as family camps, counselling, education, and involvement in social action in the community. For some ministers the formal parish ministry can be a grim experience. With low attendance and lacking new blood the New Church hasn't the Life to interest the involvement of the spiritually disenfranchised it is commissioned to serve.

As spoken by our Lord, "the healthy do not need a physician, but those that are sick."

I am certain as the ministry of the New Church becomes less exclusive and more inclusive, less self-serving and more serving of those who "have grown up in the wild wilderness of esoteric theologies", it will find relevancy in the New Age. My spiritual brothers and sisters and myself, who are of the "wilderness" have made a commitment to the change to "new forms" by entering the ministry. We don't expect a revolution, but rather to be part of the exciting evolutionary metamorphosis of the New Church. The solutions will be difficult to achieve, but if the New Church is to survive the New Age and become a vital part of the "Aquarian Conspiracy", then we have no choice but to find those solutions and implement them.

We welcome these thoughtful observations by Taro Starbuck, a spiritual seeker of many years, and son-in-law of the Rev. and Mrs. Calvin Turley.

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.

DOLE NOTES WIDELY USED

GOOD NEWS! SSA treasurer Tom Zehner reports that the sale of *Dole Bible Study Notes* continues at about 400 volumes a year. This has made it possible to pay substantial amounts on the loan from Convention. The original loan of April 30, 1979 for the completion of the last three volumes was \$16,049.02. To date it has been reduced to \$6,783.62. Volumes are now being purchased in both Australia and England.

Tom should receive a twenty-one gun salute for his tireless work on behalf of the Dole Notes. Without his determination to get them into print and his continued labors on their behalf, they would never have achieved the hard-cover state.

Another enthusiastic fan is Mr. Leslie Sheppard of Brisbane, Australia. He got his set of the Dole Notes from the Rev. Ian Arnold of the Sydney Society. Les waxed eloquent on their behalf and soon sales were booming in the land down under. Last September Les went to Manchester, England to take a course at the New Church College, and then . . .

GOOD REVIEWS! Here are excerpts from a report of the New Church Sunday School Union in England:

" . . . At the last Council meeting the 'Bible Study Notes' prepared by Anita Sturges Dole, perhaps more familiarly known as the 'Dole Notes' were reviewed and it was de-

cided that these notes met our needs most adequately . . . The Council were very impressed by the depth of the notes and yet by the directness and simplicity of their presentation. Indeed so impressed that it has been decided that we will help schools to buy sets of these books . . . So convinced are the Union of their value that schools purchasing a set need pay only half of the total cost, the other half will be met by the Council. So all Sunday School teachers, hurry now, this fantastic bargain offer is far too good to miss. It is your golden opportunity to purchase the Church's equivalent of the Encyclopaedia Britannica . . ."

WANTED

Convention Minister to fill vacant pulpit at Washington, D.C. National Swedenborgian Church. On October 1, 1982 Rev. F. Robert Tafel moves to his new ministry in the Cambridge Church, Cambridge, Mass.

For information, please contact William Etue, Chairman, Pulpit Search Committee, 1611 - 16th St. N.W., Washington, D.C.
Home phone — (703) 620-2103.

WE GET LETTERS

A CLARIFICATION

Dear Paul:

I can understand the confusion . . . but I am not retired. I'm still pastor and pastoral counselor to the Seattle Church of the Good Shepherd. I still carry on my counseling work. As a church we meet once a month in people's homes on Saturday afternoon, have a service and then a pot luck supper and fellowship. On alternate Tuesdays the Swedenborg forum meets in my office and I am its "leader". I also perform the usual rites and sacraments.

I do say I am partially or semi-retired because I have reduced my load and work to half-time. However I am not retired.

David P. Johnson
Seattle, Washington

(This corrects a misunderstanding which appeared in the July-August *Messenger*, and we apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused.)

WELCOME, KAREN DUFFEY

Dear Mr. Zacharias:

Following are some impressions of the East Coast S.N.A.P. held at Fryeburg, Maine on August 24th to 29th.

Tuesday started out with a wonderful vegetarian lunch lovingly prepared in the camp kitchen. People started arriving soon after I arrived at about 11:30 a.m.

The theme for our program was "belief into action" which dealt mainly with our inner lives and relationships. We had some wonderful religious meditations led by Laura Lawson and the Rev. Susan Turley-Moore. We explored the female/male aspects of God through deep meditations and prayer.

Mornings began with a session usually led by the Rev. Gardiner Perry—stretching and breathing exercises followed by a group meditation. The rest of the day was taken up with meditations, prayers, and our interpersonal relationship groups.

I was confirmed into the Swedenborgian faith on August 29th by the Rev. Gardiner Perry. It was one of the most beautiful, meaningful and moving experiences of my life. My decision to join the church is based on acknowledgement and acceptance of the doctrines as far as I know them now. My journey of spiritual growth is just beginning.

Karen Duffey
Secretary of East Coast SNAP
E. Stoneham, Maine

CAN YOU HELP?

Dear Editor:

I wonder if any reader can identify a William G. Coward of Bridgewater, Conn. He autographed a New Church book "Index to Arcana" with his name in 1849. I would like to contact relatives since this is my mother's family name—COWARD.

Ruth Ebberts,
Rt. 2, Box 204,
Eureka, Kansas 67045

THE NEW CHURCH AND GROWTH

Dear Editor:

You invite comments on the article in the September *Messenger*, which came from the British Conference *New Church Magazine*. We can be thankful for the conviction of the author that in the writings of Swedenborg one can find a base for a universal religion. However, he does not apply some statements in the writings to our church worship. We use the literal sense of the Bible because it is the containant for the internal senses. An example is that we open our worship with the verse, "The Lord is in His holy Temple". We know this means the temple of His glorified body, and means, "We worship the Lord in His Divine Humanity". The Bible selections in our Book of Worship are well chosen to lead us to the Lord.

The quotation, "Behold I make all things new", should not be taken to mean that He makes all new things. The worship of the early Christians was, as to content, an adaptation of Jewish worship as to externals, but with a newness in its internals. So, the worship of the New Church is an adaptation of that of the older Christian church, but with a newness of approach. We should see this as we repeat the Adoramus, for example.

The New Church is growing in the world in proportion to the influx from the World of Spirits. As the influx grows stronger, there is more growth. Now, there are two ways for growth, somewhat similar to the two ways one can step up an electric current; one can increase the voltage, or decrease the resistance; either one of these increases the current. The New Church (except in places like South Africa) is not growing by increasing our spiritual voltage, but the resistance from the world is fast disappearing. We see it in a few of the ecumenical movements, which are not denominational, where people are truly seeking the Lord and His love. We do have to be skeptical about some of the cults of today, which seem to serve self

rather than the Lord.

The New Church has used many methods to try to produce growth, without success. This may be because we somehow fail the Lord, but it may be that it is not His present purpose that we become a large organization. What then, is our role in today's world? For ourselves, it must be to come nearer to the Lord in charity as to life and in love to the Lord, through our lives and church. As to society, our role may be to preserve and promulgate the writings until such time that they can be better received, by more of the Lord's people.

It is unfortunate that the smallness of our numbers often induces our young people to go to other churches where there are large groups of people; youth seems to need that stimulus. We should study the emotional needs of youth and devise ways to provide it. Our camping programs help some here.

It is indeed unfortunate that the different branches of the Swedenborgian church do not cooperate better. We should seek to love all of them, realizing that it is faith that separates, but love unites.

Alice Van Boven
Redlands, California

THE WORD IS CENTRAL

Dear Editor:

First let me congratulate the Scandinavian Seeker in his discovery of Swedenborg. I welcome the editor's invitation to comment on his article. He has indeed had a broader experience with various non-Christian religions, but as an isolated Swedenborgian of 82 years, I have had a fairly broad experience with Christian denominations and my first instinct is to be thankful for the changes we have not made.

First, I am thankful that the Lord's Word is still paramount in our church and the ritual of opening it in its holy setting thrills me to my very core. I am also glad that there is a lot of reading of the Word in the opening service. One's mind may wander and we may find it boring, but all things worthwhile take a certain amount of forced attention and once in a while, when the selection is familiar, we experience a certain thrill that that part of the Bible is now ours. This Scripture reading has dwindled markedly in many of the churches and sometimes one hears only a couple of verses from the minister as he opens his sermon. He rarely bases his sermon on an incidence in the Bible but I have heard sermons entitled "The Gospel According to Peanuts", "Citizen Kane" and "The Clockwork Orange", while the congre-

gation sits thirsting for truth expounded from the Bible—something that lifts the heart and sends one home with new resolutions.

Also, I am glad that we still take the Lord at His word, when He said, "Thus pray ye" and repeat the Lord's Prayer in our services. Some sects have come to feel that it is much more important to be able to compose your own prayer and you are graded in your Christianity on your ability to do so.

If the liturgy fulfills its purpose it has brought an aura of worship over the congregation. (Swedenborg received his spiritual connections while reading the Word.) "The Lord is in His holy temple. Let all the earth keep silence before Him." We now have a situation that all of us are bound to try to preserve. So what does the minister do? He asks us to shake hands with the person behind us, who is busy trying to shake hands with the person behind him. Bang goes the aura! And I shake hands because I'm ordered to, not because a sudden love for my neighbour impels me to.

Another writer in the last edition of the *Messenger* mentioned the Adoramus as a part that might be left out of the service. In my mind I compare it to the writers of the Constitution, who, over 200 years ago, wrote for the ages, one as well as another. The writers of the Adoramus neither seemed to leave out a necessary word nor add one.

After 82 years, I have found a change I want to make in my religious habits. That is to try to find more similarities with the New Church and the first Christian Church than differences. And when my Mormon daughter-in-law said something like "Why does so-and-so think he wants to go to heaven when he seems to enjoy the evil life more?" And I thought "Right on, Sister."

Let us be slow to make useless changes, but welcome any changes that further the spread of the New Jerusalem.

Anna Raile,
Scottsdale, Arizona

FOLLOW THE INNER LIGHT

To the Editor:

In response to your invitation to comment on the timely article by the Scandinavian Seeker, entitled "The New Age Religion", I say that you were very wise, discreet and kind not to divulge the writer's name, otherwise the dear fellow might have been frozen stiff by the "COLD SHOULDERING" of his Swedenborgian friends and acquaintances. And I hope you will please grant me the same privilege of

just signing me as a "Truth Seeker."

I heartily agree with everything written in this article by the Scandinavian writer, so there is not much that I can add, but I have noticed that most members of the so-called "New Church" groups seem to be completely unaware of the fact that the REAL New Age groups already have the same knowledge and truths (and even more) than was given in the Swedenborg writings. The Swedenborgians seem to think the rest of the world will have to come to them to receive the New Age Teachings, even though they are not well enough taught in their own Churches, nor publicized enough to lure in any new members.

Some of the "New Church" members claim to be guardians and protectors of the Swedenborg writings, but these writings have been so well guarded and hidden from the world, that they have become passe, in most respects, or by-passed. Only a very few have become ENLIGHTENED and discovered the REAL GURU within their own Souls.

It is quite obvious that the ministers of the Swedenborgian Churches have no intention of making any of the necessary changes that would qualify their groups to be a part of the real NEW AGE CHRISTIANITY, and the members cannot change by groups, but only as INDIVIDUALS who are receiving more LIGHT. Consequently, those individuals are responding to the call of our God to "Come out of the Babylon or religious confusion," (Rev. 18: 3 & 4) and they are accepting the New Age Teachings from many or several other sources. But, instead of forming or joining any new ORGANIZATIONS, these New Age People are LIVING and LOVING according to God's laws, and they are FREELY giving this new knowledge to many other designated New Age Groups, and other INDIVIDUALS, and the New Age Literature is published and FREELY passed on to those who are ready to receive it.

The MASTER TEACHER always appears to those who are prepared to receive these Truths which really makes us a FREE people. This Master Teacher is WITHIN each and everyone of us, and when we are really acquainted with the Christ WITHIN, then we need no man or woman to teach us. Read II John 2: 27. This frees us completely from all religious leaders (and many false teachings) and eliminates the necessity of recitations of dogmas, creeds and doctrines, MAN MADE.

God's Laws are immutable and irrevocable, and nothing more is needed to bring about JUSTICE and a happy life, here and now, and here-after. Micah 6: 8.

Sincerely,
A Truth Seeker.

FROM CHURCH RECORDS

BAPTISMS

EASTMAN—Stacy Lynn, daughter of Donald and Dorothy Eastman was baptized into the faith of the New Church in the Fryeburg, Maine New Church on September 12, 1982, the Rev. David Rienstra officiating.

HATCH—Michele Lynn, daughter of Steven and Kathleen Hatch was baptized into the faith of the New Church in the Fryeburg, Maine New Church on September 18, 1982, the Rev. David Rienstra officiating.

CONFIRMATIONS

DUFFEY—Karen Duffey of East Stoneham, Maine was confirmed into the faith of the New Church at the East Coast SNAP session at Fryeburg, Maine on August 29th, 1982, the Rev. Gardiner Perry officiating.

KLINE—Mrs. Katherine Louise Adair Kline was confirmed into the faith of the New Church in the Church of the New Jerusalem, Cleveland, Ohio on June 18th, 1982, the Rev. Gladys Wheaton officiating.

MARRIAGE

PEFFER—ANDERSON—Timothy Peffer and Valerie Anderson were united in marriage in the Cleveland, Ohio New Church on July 17th, 1982, the Rev. Gladys Wheaton officiating.

DEATH

BAKER—Mrs. Rose M. Baker (nee Speck) of Fairview Park, Ohio, a member of the Cleveland, Ohio New Church Society, died while visiting her daughter, Mrs. William Conklin in Bay Springs, Missouri. The resurrection service was held in Lakewood, Ohio on August 27, 1982.

NEW ADDRESSES

Rev. and Mrs. Andre Diaconoff
12942 Third St.
Yucaipa, California 92399

Rev. and Mrs. Patrick Duvivier
c/o Mme. La Fleur
65 Avenue Fourcault de Pevant
78000 Versailles,
France

Rev. and Mrs. Paul Martin Grumman
3626 N.E. 45th St.
Seattle, Washington 98105

THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON

(Part 2)

by Leon C. Le Van

When the biblical hero Gideon was ready to lead the attack near Mt. Gilead against the invaders in the Midianite War, he disbursed to each of his faithful 300 followers a trumpet, a pitcher, and a fire or torch in each pitcher. Then he told them: "Look at me and do as I do. When I blow the trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of the (Midianite) camp and shout, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!"

"So Gideon and the hundred men that were with him came unto the edge of the camp in the middle (night) watch; and they blew the trumpets, and broke the pitchers that were in their hands. And the three companies blew the trumpets, and broke the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal, and they cried—

"THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON!"

The startled Midianites awakening from sleep and supposing they were being attacked by three surrounding armies fled down the valley towards the Jordan River in wild confusion. Thinking everyone an enemy they slaughtered each other in the darkness. Unknown to Gideon, the invaders had seemingly lived in terror of a sudden attack from the hills. They had probably heard of Gideon's former army of 32,000. They must have feared that a sudden onslaught could tumble out of the high ground above and crush their army as the "barley cake" flattened the tent in a soldier's dream.

God fights for people in the right. Wrong-doers are always in a position of weakness. The appearance may be contrary; but inwardly the strength of wrong-doers is like the false strength of the Midianites, while the apparent weakness of the righteous contains within it the strength of the Lord.

The trumpet blasts pierced through the darkness. The torches seemed to be leading thousands to the attack. Their battle cry proclaimed vengeance for what the Midianites had done in pillaging the Land of Canaan for seven long years. As the disorganized host fled down the valley towards the Jordan, other Israelite tribesmen joined in the pursuit. The escape route was partly cut off at the fords of the Jordan. Those Midianites who managed to get across the river continued their flight down

the "escape corridor" beyond the Dead Sea for a hundred miles. Thus the Lord saved Israel by the hand of Gideon and the Midianites returned no more.

As we look for spiritual meanings in these events, we find that Gideon represents the Lord in His Divine Human. The "sword of the Lord and of Gideon" is the divine truth in inmosts and outmosts. When Jesus fought against the hells during His "temptation combats," He employed the "sword of the Lord and of Gideon." That sword is a "sword of the spirit." It is that "sword" of the spirit (the Divine Truth) that the Lord employs in fighting for the salvation of our souls, even though we also must fight again our evils "as of ourselves." When we fight external wars against aggression and tyranny we should not forget that the greatest battles are against our own evils and sins within.

Gideon gave to each of his 300 men a trumpet, a pitcher, and a light. By the objects in their hands, and the words in their mouths, the Lord shows how we must fight the powers of spiritual darkness. The pitchers represent the letter of the Word,—its parables, histories, Prophets, Psalms, Gospels, and Book of Revelation. The lights or torches within the pitchers reflect the light of Divine truth within the letter. The piercing sounds of the trumpets tell us that the truths of the letter and spirit must be employed with power.

Every person is, so to speak, a "Land of Canaan" or "Promised Land." That "land" is possessed either by the Lord or by the "armies of the aliens."

In a personal sense "Israel" is your spirit. "Israel" is your inner "kingdom of God."

At the beginning of these events, Gideon hid in the winepress from the Midianites. He believed himself the least of his Tribe and the least of his family. But the Angel told him: "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor . . . Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel."

Trust the Lord's promises. Smite the altar of Baal. Hew down its grove. Throw off bondage to false beliefs. "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." The inner and outer truths of the Word. These are the means for our spiritual victories. These are the "weapons" to win our spiritual wars.

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