

The Messenger

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH
JANUARY 1983

“The Diversity of . . . Worship”

diversity . . .

does not do . . .

damage,

but rather works to advantage,

since it is a source

of heaven's perfection.

We can see from all beauty, charm, and delight

that move the senses and the passions

that this is the source

of all perfection.

These . . .

come into being . . .

and flow . . .

from the harmony of many . . .

either manifesting themselves

at one time . . . in arrangement,

or, . . .

following each other . . .

in . . .

sequence.

So it is said that variety is pleasing . . .

Heaven and Hell 56

LOOK AT BOTH SIDES NOW

Recently we received a letter from Anna Raile of Arizona which reads in part: "I begin to think I'm a rather wishy-washy person. When I read an article on getting rid of the nuclear bomb I'm all convinced, and then I read one like the book section in the October '82 *Reader's Digest* and I've swung around to the other side again. I really think there should be an answer to that in the *Messenger*! . . . I read your sermon in the *Daily Bread* and liked your idea of a 9 p.m. prayer around the world. The idea is good; now let's put it into action. How can I help?"

Your dilemma is one that many of us share, Anna. Almost every issue in life has at least two sides to it, and people on both sides can present plausible, convincing arguments in their favor, and so we are pulled back and forth. But finally we have to make a choice; we cannot vacillate indefinitely. In any given situation we need to look at all the facts as carefully and objectively and honestly as we possibly can, in the framework and in the spirit of our New Church teachings, and then we consciously decide where our loyalties will lie. This is always our individual choice to make, and we are making these choices all the way through life. In this process of making hard decisions our belief and value system, and ultimately our character, is gradually being formed.

In this matter of nuclear arms the following thoughts might be helpful. The *Reader's Digest* contains many very interesting and worthwhile features; at the same time it is recognized as a rather conservative, nationalistic publication. There is nothing wrong with holding a conservative, nationalistic position, except when it is carried to extremes, even as espousing an overly liberal position can be dangerous. Historically the *Digest* has blamed communism and the Soviet Union for most of the troubles of the world, and I find it difficult to accept that basic assumption. The root causes of the world's ills go much deeper than that. From a spiritual perspective, all nations and all peoples in varying degrees are involved in creating the world's plight.

The *Digest* favors the building of the MX missile system, the B1 bomber, and more Trident submarines, saying that this additional military hardware will give us more security; that it will help to preserve an uneasy peace. I believe this position is terribly wrong, for the following reasons.

According to the U.S. Department of National Defense Annual Report FY 1982,

United States and Russia are presently roughly equal in strategic nuclear power. America is ahead in the total number of warheads, in reliability of missiles, and in invulnerable submarines. The Soviets are ahead in total megatonnage, in tanks, and in SS-20 type deliverable warheads. The fact is, and this is based on a U.S. Defense Department document, at the present time there is approximate parity between East and West military systems. Currently both nations can completely destroy one another many times over; indeed the United States has a considerable pragmatic edge because, as NATO commander General Bernard Rogers has said, "Two of our invulnerable subs could destroy 200 major Soviet cities."

So what is to be gained by spending \$30 billion dollars on the MX system? The Russians will simply match this escalation with equally sophisticated military hardware—and will we feel any safer! I doubt it. This same \$30 billion dollars, if spent on modernizing factories and upgrading transportation systems and building new homes would put 500,000 people back to work. And it would help to defuse a very tense and dangerous situation. As a Christian nation we should seriously consider this more constructive course of action.

P.Z.

Our thanks to Ken Turley for the paraphrase of H.H. 56 on the front cover.

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GATEWAYS TO THE NEW AGE

*Rev. Ernest O. Martin
Palos Verdes, California*

*Address at the fall 1982 session
of the Pacific Coast Association*

When I graduated from seminary, my diploma contained these words of Jesus: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

This command or injunction is known as the Great Commission, the basis for the Christian missionary movement and evangelistic efforts. The assumption has been that if anyone is not a Christian, he or she cannot be saved, or enter the kingdom of God. The Roman Catholics taught that there is no salvation outside the Catholic Church. Protestants declared that there is no salvation outside of Christianity.

At a luncheon that I attended some years ago of ministers and rabbis, a rabbi asked whether ministers were not obligated to try to convert all Jews to Christianity. A minister answered, "Yes, we probably are, but we're so busy trying to make Christians out of our own people that we don't have time to convert Jews." There was uneasy laughter, because this didn't really answer the question. Most Christians believe there is no place in the kingdom of God for Jews, Moslems, Buddhists, and Hindus, to say nothing of the heathen.

I was brought up in the Swedenborgian Church to believe that there is salvation in all religions, and that God asks only that we try to live up to the best that we know. Swedenborg wrote: "The church of the Lord is spread over all the globe, thus is universal, and all those are in it who have lived in the good of charity according to their religion." The last chapters of the book of Revelation give us a vision of the 12 gates leading into the holy city New Jerusalem, signifying that there are many ways into the kingdom of God, and that we don't all have to enter by the same gate.

When Christianity became the only recognized religion of the Roman Empire, pagan temples were closed and pagan worship suppressed. The government ordered the removal from the senate house at Rome, of the statue and altar of Victory which had been placed there by Julius Caesar. The spokesman of the Senate, Quintus Aurelius Symmachus, argued with Saint Ambrose, but to no avail.

Temples were closed and statues removed. In one of his last pleas, Symmachus declared: "It is impossible that so great a mystery should be approached by one road only."

Part of the genius of America is that we have welcomed people of all nations, races, and creeds, and that the tremendous variety in our society has given us a richness that no other nation has achieved. Our nation's forebears provided in the constitution that there should be no state church; the nation would not favor any one religion or church over another. This tolerance for and respect for differing religions is known as pluralism.

Many zealous Christians, including the so-called "moral majority", cannot accept this pluralism. In their fanatical adherence to their particular creed, they insist that all who differ from them are not only mistaken but damned. The president of the Southern Baptist Convention declared, for example, that God does not listen to the prayers of Jews.

How different in spirit was the statement of Bishop Spong of the Episcopal Church: "Christianity itself does not and cannot embrace the whole truth of God. So I can make no claims for God that are ultimate, and if I do, I am dishonest. I cannot limit God to my understanding of God. I cannot limit salvation to those who share my vision, no matter how broadly I draw that vision. I cannot act as though God works only in those ways which I understand or with which I am familiar."

In a series of lectures on "Christianity among the religions of the world," Arnold Toynbee pleaded for a purge of exclusivism and intolerance among Christians. He said: "One can be convinced of the essential truth and rightness and value of what one believes to be the fundamental points in one's own religion—and at the same time not believe that I, my church, my people, have the sole and unique revelation . . . If God loves mankind, He would have made a revelation to us among other people. But, on the same ground and in virtue of the same vision of what God's nature is, it would also seem unlikely that He would not have made other revelations to other people as well." He continued, "I think that it is possible for us, while holding that our own convictions are true and right, to recognize that, in some

measure, all the higher religions are also revelations of what is true and right. They also come from God and each presents some facet of God's truth."

This picture of tolerance and mutual respect reminds me of Swedenborg's statement that "churches which are in different goods and truths, provided their goods have reference to love to the Lord, and their truths to faith in Him, are like so many jewels in the King's crown."

It would be easy, and natural, for Swedenborgians to assume an air of superiority as we proclaim our ecumenical vision. And yet, as we do this, we fall into the same trap that zealots of other churches do. At the close of the 19th century, Swedenborgian minister B.F. Barrett took fellow churchmen to task for assuming that all but Swedenborgians were outside the gates. In repeating Swedenborg's statements about the death of the Old Church, some of our compatriots would have us believe that the General Convention is synonymous with the Lord's New Church, and that we are IT.

The alternative to a haughty exclusivism, that we alone possess the truth—which turns off any people with whom we might want to share our faith—is to look within our faith for those elements which mean most to us, and share them.

Swedenborg wrote that the kingdom of heaven is enriched by the addition of each new angel. No angel is perfect, but each contributes to the welfare of the whole. By sharing our unique insights, skills, talents, and energies, we all benefit and society is enriched. This is true in a marriage, a family, a community, a church, nation, planet, and universe. If we expect others to listen to us, we must be willing to listen to them. Deepening relationships can be formed only through mutual respect.

My thesis is that we don't have all the answers, but we have a contribution to make among the religions of the world. What that contribution is, is not clear. One hundred years ago, when our denomination was at its peak in terms of membership, churches, and ministers, the mission seemed obvious:

- to disseminate the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg

- to build imposing church buildings where people can worship each Sunday morning and hear learned sermons on the central doctrines of the church

- to teach the spiritual or correspondential meaning of obscure Bible passages

These goals may have been legitimate 50, 75, and 100 years ago, and our forebears did a good job in implementing them. They built large and beautiful churches, worshipped, lectured and taught. They wrote, printed, and distributed masses of materials about the unique message of Emanuel Swedenborg.

We pointed to Swedenborg as the herald of a new age. We called ourselves the Church of the New Jerusalem. Yet we accepted uncritically most of the forms of the so-called "old church". Our church buildings were pretty much the same, with altar, pulpit, and pews. Our worship services were very much like the Episcopal and Methodist liturgies. We established Sunday Schools, women's groups, men's clubs, etc.

I am not presuming to say what our forefathers in the church should have done differently 100 years ago. I am saying that if we are to continue as a church, we must create new wineskins for the wine of the new age. We must develop new forms of ministry, including worship, teaching, and healing—as we seek to nurture the whole person in his/her growth and development.

We must redefine our mission as a national church denomination, as regional associations, as local churches, and as individual Swedenborgians.

In October I attended a meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on Goals and Priorities in the 80's. Building on the responses of church members who had sent in their ideas, we listed the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for the church, as well as a number of fantasies of what we might be and do as a church. At our meeting in November we will define our purpose, as a church and then list specific goals, objectives, and programs.

We have a right to expect leadership and guidance from Convention. We must also be ready to do our own dreaming and planning as we decide how we can best minister in our particular setting.

Perry and I have shared, through *The Messenger*, our dream of a Swedenborgian Growth Center. The Middle Atlantic Association has appointed a committee to explore the establishment of a retreat center. Washington, Wilmington, St. Paul, Kemper Road, and El Cerrito are developing wedding ministries. Sue Turley-Moore and Paul Martin Grumman are working in new areas under the Board of Missions. Several of our ministers and laymen are involved in counseling ministries.

We are all challenged to be creative in seeking new ways to serve the Lord through the church. One approach can be to reflect on how our particular doctrines can help us to love more wisely and deeply?

How can we use or apply our faith in life beyond death in relating to those facing death, or those who are bereaved?

How can our knowledge of the correspondent relationship between the world of the spirit and the world of nature make us more sensitive to and appreciative of our physical world environment? and more in tune to the potential growth of the spirit?

How can our philosophy of love and wisdom help us to develop a richer marriage relationship, and counsel others in deepening their human relationships?

How can our doctrine of the conjunction between God and human beings enable us to

experience the presence of God?

How can our understanding of the wholeness of life—life in all its facets and dimensions—help us to achieve wholeness of spirit, mind, and body?

The essence of our Judaic-Christian-Swedenborgian heritage is contained in these words of Moses:

“The Lord our God is one Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shall talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down and when thou risest up.”

May we prove faithful to our heritage as we seek new ways to express our love to the Lord and the neighbor, both now and forever more.

Convention President Visits the West

Your President has been on the roam again; this time on a twelve day junket with stops in St. Paul, Minn.; Winnipeg, Manitoba; Rosthern and Prince Albert, Saskatchewan; Edmonton, Alberta; Kelowna and Vancouver, British Columbia; and winding up in Los Angeles for the fall meeting of Board of Managers of the Wayfarers Chapel. As you can see, this trip required taking along clothing ranging from insulated long johns to bathing suits.

This was a stimulating and encouraging trip of pastoral visits. At some stops church members made their way to the airports and met with me during lay-overs between planes. At others, the schedule made possible day long consultations with our professional ministers plus informative dialogue with our committed laity. It is, of course, not possible to convey the spiritual essence of these visits. However I can report some significant and stimulating observations.

The Western Canada Conference covers a tremendous area of diverse and wonderful landscapes extending from the Mississippi River across the Canadian Rockies to the Pacific Ocean, from 54°40' to as far north as you might care to go. This is a vast territory with, one might guess, one Swedenborgian for every 10,000 square miles! Whatever that might be, our fellow church members aren't quite that evenly scattered. Rather, they are gathered in such romantically named places as Roblin, Meadow Lake, Sunnyslope and Edmonton,

ranging from metropolitan centers to villages amid unbelievable expanses of prairie.

How to provide the ministry of pastoral care and caring to a flock so widely scattered? A ministry is being provided by three lay ministers in this vast territory: the Revs. David Sonmor in Prince Albert, Henry Korston and John Bennett in Edmonton plus the Rev. Gertrude Tremblay working out of St. Paul, Alberta, and the Rev. Erwin Reddekopp lending a hand “out of retirement” from Kelowna, B.C. Still, the need for the pastoral ministry of care and visitation was verbalized over and over again during these visits.

Beginning with the “Airport Visit” in Winnipeg, a slightly new model for ministry began to emerge. Rather than the pattern of “the visiting minister” making a fast visit to preach and conduct a worship service, the people identified a need for home visitations, for time for pastoral caring on a one-to-one or on a family basis. This need could better be met, they thought, if the minister came to their location and stayed four or five days in the area, providing the ministry of pastoral care and perhaps culminating in a service of joy and celebration before leaving. Such extended visits, perhaps four times a year, seemed a viable and effective new model. As this idea was shared with others visited in the Western Canada Conference, response was positive and enthusiasm for the new model grew. The idea

(Cont'd on page 16)

“THE NEW CHURCH IN THE YEAR 2000”

Steve Pulis

The two aspects of the New Church at the turn of the century which need consideration are its organizational abilities (size, financial condition, talents available) and its form in meeting the needs of society in the year 2000.

Organizational ability

Although our Convention membership in North America is approximately 2,500 and a very minute part of the continent's population, I see this only as a relative concern in the overall picture. I may be wrong, but I suspect as our society's awareness grows, it will beat a path to the very ideas Emanuel Swedenborg talked about over two centuries ago. Being ready for that day is of prime importance. And being available through visibility is also crucial. As inquiries into his ideas increase, every effort should be made to meet that demand. And I believe it WILL increase when the time is appropriate. For those inquiring minds to be exposed to Swedenborg's thoughts, visibility through publicity, publishing, parish ministries, public performances and individual lifestyles must be an ever-present priority as well. We must let our light shine!

Preservation of an organization through careful use of its resources and their replenishment must also be part of awareness. We are God's instruments. Everything is in His hands. The Bible shows us the step-by-step growth of man's soul. God is not only leading us one by one to His love and awareness, but mankind as a whole. It is without doubt in my mind that no other value than wanting to know our Creator is worth considering. It may not be the year 2000, but I do feel it part of our "raison d'être" to keep the enlightenment of His being and His love alive for all the searching minds in our world to find Him.

New Church form

Eighteen years can change a lot. Who could have predicted in the 50's what the 1960's turned out being for all of us? I can't venture even a close guess. But I will do everything in my power 18 years from now to make sure I keep with Jesus's example to bring the Word to the people. It may mean using electronic media in different ways (hopefully much differently than the Rex Humbard's and Oral Roberts' seen today). Perhaps it will be simply providing

thought provoking, stimulating ideas to the public with Swedenborg directed credits for the curious to pursue at their local libraries or colleges.

I don't think we'll ever lose the need for personal ministries. We will always need to love people, touch people, share with people.

We must develop programs that meet the lifestyles of people in 2000. Maybe worship services in more homes, more evenings. Maybe more discussion groups. Maybe using our buildings for all kinds of community projects so we're always in touch.

The New Church forms exist for the purpose of reaching and helping people. That means many evaluations of those forms before 2000 comes around.

(Steve Pulis, a first year theological student at the Swedenborg School of Religion from Seattle, Washington, submitted the above reflections when asked what he thought the organized New Church might be like by the year 2000.)

THE REALM OF THE MIND

There's a subtle frustration in this country these days, frustration caused by a lack of new frontiers, no more uncharted territory. The survivors of the human race "evolved" to be those who braved the wilds of unknown lands. Mankind, trained through such genetic selection, has not yet learned how to redirect its energies in ways that do not involve physical frontiers.

With the world's increasing population and decreasing per capita space, it seems that the obvious new direction for our endeavors is toward our fellow man.

I have been fortunate enough to discover how this can be accomplished. If you are lucky, you can find a person whose mind meshes with yours. This meshing has endless possibilities of discovery and sweetness and excitement. The paths of the mind are of no fixed distance or proportion. And this space is immediately available to all, not something for just a very few chosen and carefully trained individuals.

The problem, though, with this frontier of the mind is that you can never grasp it fully. The more you try to possess it, the more it eludes you. Although that very elusiveness is what makes it an eternal frontier, the challenge is always there.

All you can do is accept and take advantage of the paths that are opened for you to explore

from time to time, and allow the explorations and subtle pokings of the other mind. At times it seems as though this other mind has entered your body reaching around and entwining the soft formless shapes inside, so tentative and sweet.

Yet there will also be days when walls are erected. Perhaps too much constant closeness between human beings is not healthy. Perhaps at times we need to draw back within ourselves to retain our individual identity. That certainly enhances the mystery and excitement involved with discovering another person. Or perhaps it is just that we are all so afraid to share ourselves. Regardless of the reason, this frontier is not an easy one to attain and conquer. There are many barriers and hidden pitfalls. But if it were easy, it would not for long be the eternal frontier that we so desperately need.

There are joys to be had that compare with none others on earth. These joys are intangible and transient. Yet their existence is not to be doubted, and their memory is somehow more concrete than the memory of many physical experiences.

These words have been written based on an experience with one special person. But wouldn't it be fine to aim for this kind of rapport with many people. If we could share our thoughts and dreams, maybe a lot of pain and suffering could be alleviated. King Solomon, when given the opportunity to ask for riches and power, asked instead for an understanding heart. In a way, that is what this entire piece has been about. What an impossible goal! . . . and therefore how eternally present.

Nancy Kraus
Houston, Texas

WORTH WATCHING

A number of outstanding religious television programs are scheduled for the coming months. ABC "Directions", normally seen at 12:30 p.m., and CBS "For Our Times", with a feedtime of 10:30 a.m. ET (Sundays) will be worth watching. On January 16 CBS features "Apartheid as Heresy and Idolatry", followed by a three part series on "Religion in Cities" on January 30, February 6 and 13. The subject on February 20 is "Brotherhood—a Look Forward and Backward." Check your local TV schedule for time and station.

A special one-hour program on the Russian Orthodox Church, filmed this summer, will be shown on the NBC network on Sunday, April 24th.

MADONNA CREDIT

Our apologies for not crediting Mary Michel of Ventura, California for the lovely drawing of the Madonna and Child on the December *Messenger* cover. Mary is a professional artist in Ventura and serves on the faculty of Ventura College. She is a member of the Church of the Foothills which last year published an Advent book from which this drawing was taken. Our sincere appreciation to the artist and the Church of the Foothills for this fine art work.

LIFELINE SUBSCRIPTIONS

It has come to our attention that some Convention members might be interested in subscribing to the *Lifeline* magazine, the official organ of the British New Church Conference in the United Kingdom. This publication contains a wide range of interesting Church-related features every month, and is available by contacting Mr. D. K. McCallum, 65 Heaton Road, Heaton Norris, Stockport, England SK4 4JJ. Overseas subscriptions cost £6.45, about \$10.00 U.S.

SUGGESTIONS RE: NOMINEES

Over the next few months our Convention Nominating Committee will draft a slate of nominees for election at Convention '83 in Wilmington, Ohio. Nominations are required for all Convention officers and vacancies on General Council, Bd. of Education, Bd. of Publication, Bd. of Missions, Nominating Committee, Augmentation Fund, Committee on Admission into the Ministry and the Swedenborg School of Religion Bd. of Managers.

If you would like to recommend the names of qualified, interested Convention members (including yourself) to any of these positions, write, giving full information to:

Miss Cecile Werben
75 Henry St., Apt. 22D
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201

IN THE FEBRUARY MESSENGER

"Abraham Lincoln and Early Swedenborgians in Illinois" by Dorothea Abbot

"A Swedenborgian's View of History" by Patrick L. Johnson

"Swedenborg's Influence on Coleridge" by Jim Lawrence

Part III of "Swedenborg's Psychology" by Eugene Taylor

. . . and more

THE PEACE PAGE THINKING THE UNTHINKABLE

by Michael Miller

Most people abhor the prospect of nuclear war. Many are surprised that there are people "thinking the unthinkable" and planning for the use of nuclear weapons in combat.

For those of us born after World War Two, nuclear weapons have been a fact of life. Many of us know that their use is much more than unthinkable. Their use may very well be our means of destruction.

As children growing up in the 1950's and 1960's, we saw the fear on our parents' faces when they considered the best location for a bomb shelter. Maybe we were too young to realize the significance of the act, yet we felt the tension and anxiety of the time.

We also felt the fears of the Cuban missile crisis. During that time, I first thought about the possibility that our lives could be destroyed in any hour by nuclear weapons.

As children, we also learned about the fears of our imagination through books like *1984*, *Alas Babylon*, and *On the Beach*. We learned to wonder if surviving was worth the loss.

Now, as adults, we are used to the ever-increasing toll of nuclear weapons. Between us, the U.S. and U.S.S.R. have more than 15,000 strategic nuclear weapons. Many of us are aware that the U.S. produces at least 3 new nuclear weapons every day. In the next decade, the United States is planning to produce 20,000 additional nuclear warheads.

Yet, as our strategic weapons grow, the world continues to develop weapons to be used in small military battles. **An 8-inch nuclear artillery shell now has the same destructive capability as the nuclear bomb dropped on Hiroshima.**

The Army operations manual even discusses the theory of nuclear weapon use in battle. In part, it says, "While not a substitute for strong conventional forces, nuclear weapons provide the commander the capability to generate instantaneous combat power of enormous magnitude that can negate the enemy's offensive advantage and deny him his objective."

And the roll of countries having nuclear weapons capability is growing. Libya, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, are only some of the countries that may have these weapons in the coming decade.

For many of us, "thinking the unthinkable" is no longer wondering if nuclear weapons will

be used. **The unthinkable is wondering if we can defuse the growing piles of weapons before they are used.**

Each of us needs to face our need for security. Are these weapons really being used to contend fearlessly against evil, or do we merely use them to hide behind because we are unsure of our ability to deal with others?

Economically, we must ask if each working American can afford to spend more than \$1000 per year on weapon systems. For most of us this is a substantial percentage of our income. For most of us, this is certainly more than we individually give to our churches or other charitable groups.

In our homes, in our schools, in our churches, do we even talk about our fears or our weapons? Few of us seem secure enough to open discussions with those who do not hold the same views as we do.

Do we take the time to share our views with our elected officials? Postcards, letters, or even calls to local offices allow our representatives to be aware of our feelings. Even though they may disagree with us, the issues raised may stay with them.

Each of us can try to open lines of communication with people of other lands. Some may have the opportunity to talk and share with others, but we all can try to understand a little about their lifestyle and history.

Ultimately we each have to find the limit of our conscience. We have to determine what is enough and begin to convey that to others.

Historically, many of our founding ancestors came to this country to escape forced military service and military taxes in other lands. Through the years many people have been afraid of the threat the military poses to our basic principles of freedom. Someday, we may have to decide what we will sacrifice for the thing we call security.

It has been estimated that the current stock of nuclear weapons is equivalent to 6000 pounds of TNT for every man, woman, and child on the planet. Will doubling the stockpile of weapons be enough? Will tripling the stockpile be enough? Will there ever be enough?

As people, we each have to deal with these questions and come to terms with our weapons. If we ignore them, history tells us that the weapons generated in an arms race will ultimately be used.

I think the unthinkable is possible. With work, with sincerity, with love, and with dialogue we can rid ourselves of the means of our own destruction.

—Quaker Life

Report of the Board of Education Meeting, October 29 - 31, 1982

Our new Hand Activity Book to accompany the Dole *Bible Study Notes* is selling well. Forty-nine of the first fifty copies have been sold—going to Great Britain and Australia as well as sales in the United States. (See *Messenger*, July/82, p. 151.)

The Swedenborg School of Religion has thirteen students on campus and one off. Three or four students plan to make music a major part of their ministry. Steve Pults presented a synopsis of a musical drama he has composed, which contains much beautiful correspondential symbolism. Several local Swedenborgian musicians have read the score and are interested in producing it.

Ken Turley reported on a very successful Music Workshop (featured in the December *Messenger*) held in Newton in August, 1982. Now plans are being made to hold a pre-Convention Music Workshop at the Convention site in June, 1983.

Report of the Rev. Ronald Brugler, Religious Education Resource Person—

Ron discussed how the Convention Children's Program is growing. He is anticipating 30 to 40 children in the 1983 Program. He was very happy with the professional staff working with him at Convention 1982. They included: Marjie Shelley, Betty Jean Neuenfeldt, Cindy & Taro Starbuck, Carl Yenetchi, Gladys Wheaton, Loring Young, Susan & Cliff Moore, and Valerie Brugler. Next Convention Ron hopes to take the children on a day trip to Beside-the-Point for swimming, boating, etc.

Ron told of new things at Almont, such as the teen group, "Survivors", and new lake front improvements. He has visited Chicago, LaPorte and Portland, Me., and he will be visiting Washington, D.C. and Urbana. He played a charming tape of music to "Sir Oliver's Song" a children's musical about the Decalogue and told how Fryeburg Camp used it. He has sold four copies of the CONVENTION CONNECTIONS Board Game. Only fifty copies were made. He mentions that he has a request to have a display of class and craft ideas at the 1983 Camp Leaders' Workshop.

The Board received a letter from the Board of Missions asking us to take over the Cassette Tape Program of the Isolated developed by

Margaret Sampson. "Sammy" has retired from this post. This is a lending library of tapes which are essentially devotional in nature. Ron reported that he and Valerie would be willing to take over and run this lending library.

Included with Ron's report was a report from Valerie on the course in commercial art training that she is taking at the Art Institute of Pittsburgh. With this training she will be able to help people produce professional-looking ads for their events, such as Conferences, Church Fairs, etc. If you want her help she must have the material or information she is to include ninety days before the ad is to be distributed. If you are having a conference on May 20 and you want to mail flyers on April 20, and you want Val to design the flyer, she has to have the information by January 20.

Perry Martin reported on the **Camp Counselors' Workshop** at Almont in May 1982. There were representatives from Almont, Blairhaven, Beside-the-Point, Fryeburg and SNAP (Swedenborgian New Age Pioneers) and some SSR students. The representatives were interviewed about their camp settings, populations, strong points and problem areas. Common problems appeared to be in areas of handling teen-agers, discipline, finances and obtaining adequate staff. The conference produced a breakthrough in camp co-operation and development of a common sense of purpose and strengthened belief in the values of our church sponsored camps. This new spirit became evident in the all-camp brochure placed in our Convention packets. An invitation to a second conference was issued by the Kemper Road representatives for Spring 1983 at Beside-the-Point. (Also see report in Sept. 1982 *Messenger*, p. 176)

Swedenborgian New Age Pioneers—SNAP East held at Fryeburg New Church Assembly, Aug. 24 - 29, 1982 (see reports in Nov. 1982 *Messenger*, pp. 214, 216). Ruth M. Crowell discussed differences in the 1982 program and previous years. She would like to see new leaders, and new program ideas along the line of holistic health and spiritual growth. Ruth feels she needs to be a participant, rather than a leader, for a change. Discussion followed on training new leaders, in which nuances of leadership were related to the statement "There is a difference between Zen Frizbee and Ego Frizbee." Also there was discussion of SNAP

as a concept, and should SNAP Society members be served as "Isolated" members?

SNAP West held at the Santa Cruz property July 10 to 18, 1982. Written reports by the Rev. Paul M. Grumman says that eighteen people and four month old Bow Grumman attended. There were four participants of whom three had not been active in the Church. This year some participants were only part-time, which detracted from group cohesiveness but made other valuable contributions. Many of these participants have attended SNAP for five years and they are ready for new programs and leaders to lead them into more depths and details. They are ready for quality trained leaders who have done advance preparation.

New Church Youth League (see reports July-August 1982 *Messenger* pp. 151 - 2)

The League Chaplain, Rev. William R. Woofenden reported on much of the same things as the earlier *Messenger* reports: it was a landmark year. *Clear Blue Sky* circulation is increasing. The League has a new name, a new handbook and a new President, Lee Woofenden (he was President in 1978). The planned League Retreat at the Santa Cruz property did not happen because there were not enough Leaguers able to go. There was discussion whether or not the League should try to hold a Retreat after Convention 1983. No decision was made.

Sunday School Association (see report in July-August 1982 *Messenger* p. 151)

The Rev. F. Gardiner Perry III reported on the enthusiastic response to the Infant Program and he passed out copies of an introductory letter and the first five Units of an Infant Program written by the Rev. Gertrude Tremblay. This is a program of the church reaching out to maintain regular contact with expectant parents from the first trimester of pregnancy until the child is old enough to attend Sunday School. Gertrude's material was distributed for comments and suggestions. It is not yet available for use.

Pre-Convention Conference (see report in July-August 1982 *Messenger* p. 143)

Lorraine Sando reported on the PCC and made the written evaluations available to the Board. The importance of this kind of Conference is not questioned. The issue discussed was whether it should be a Pre or Post Convention Conference. The decision made at this meeting is that we will have a Pre-Convention Conference next summer, 1983, probably on the Convention site. Then we will have a Post-Convention Conference in 1984, hopefully, at Fryeburg New Church Assembly

after Convention. So, save your dollars and your time to join us for a grand spiritual bash, after the mundane problems of the Church have been taken care of in 1984. We will make it a Brave New World—Swedenborgian style. A Brave New World—Swedenborgian Style would not be a world of cloned workers, but a world of diversified workers. It would be a world where no two workers are alike, but they are all individually working to develop their own talents to the greatest possible degree of perfection, in order to express love to the Lord by means of love to the neighbor.

Middle Atlantic Association Report

The Middle Atlantic Association met in Washington, D.C. on Friday evening, October 15 and Saturday, October 16, 1982. Those from Philadelphia and Wilmington were housed by members of the Church of the Holy City.

An informal gathering was held on Friday evening in the home of Mary and Gus Ebel. After dessert our hostess asked us to consider what we would like to see done on the local, Association and Convention levels—to "blue sky." Everyone present participated. The bottom line seemed to be a desire to strengthen ties on the Association and Convention levels.

Great enthusiasm greeted the idea of chartering a bus to take members to Convention in June 1983. The advantages of traveling together are numerous: financial, convenience, but most of all the comradery engendered and the opportunity for some to attend who might not otherwise be able to do so. The dream is to have the bus start in Philadelphia, stop in Wilmington, then in Washington. The idea was formally endorsed at our business meeting and we are now getting information from bus lines.

Saturday began with a worship service, centered on peace, which was conducted by the Rev. Richard H. Tafel.

At our annual business meeting the following officers were elected: President, Jeffrey Watt; Vice President, Nancy Piorkowski; Treasurer, August Ebel; Secretary, Doris Tafel. The Rev. Richard H. Tafel was heartily reaffirmed our General Pastor.

A revised constitution, incorporating the policies contained in the Council of Ministers' Statement of June 1980, was unanimously adopted.

After Philadelphia reported its participation in the CROP Walk for Hunger and Wilmington its participation in the Heifer Project (both

programs of Church World Service of the National Council of Churches), the desire to visit the New Windsor (MD) Service Center, headquarters for Church World Service in this area, was expressed. At this Center clothing donated in the eastern half of the United States is sorted, baled and shipped to meet relief needs of six continents. We are contacting the Service Center with the idea of a two day stay—one to volunteer our services and the other to hold a meeting and a worship service.

In the afternoon the two character, one act play, "Last Rites," was presented. This sometime comic, but always deadly serious and sobering, play generated thoughtful discussion. Corinne Tafel who never before revealed her talents as an actress was superb.

Later the Swedenborg Foundation's award winning film, "Images of Knowing," was shown. Everyone should see this beautiful film more than once!

Our hosts and hostesses provided sandwiches and coffee at the close of the program.

Those who were able stayed over for the Sunday Worship Service conducted by the Rev. Richard H. Tafel.

CHURCH WOMEN UNITED

Since its beginning in December 1941, Church Women United USA has dealt with issues of justice and peace. On Pearl Harbor Day and the days immediately following, women from three interdenominational groups came together to form the United Council of Church Women. The name was later changed to Church Women United, but now as then the focus continues on peace and justice.

A People's Platform for a Global Society was designed and built upon the response of women across the country whose priority concerns were unemployment, health care, housing, peace and military spending, family stability, human rights, education, environment and justice. The message was taken, by several women, directly to the White House telling President Carter what Christian women in America thought was important in the years ahead.

A staff member of CWU serves at the Church Center for the United Nations. Through this program global issues are interpreted and citizen action is encouraged by the national unit.

As it has done several times in recent years, once again the Executive Council of CWU has stated that it:

REAFFIRMS its commitment to peace and to a reduction in the U.S. military budget.

SUPPORTS a comprehensive economic conversion program for the U.S. from military spending to human services.

OPPOSES the MX Missile, the B1 Bomber, the Trident Submarine, Nuclear War-heads.

RECOMMENDS the establishment of a U.S. Academy of Peace and Conflict Resolution to provide educational training and research in peacemaking and conflict resolution.

CALLS for a moratorium on manufacture and importation of hand guns.

In nearly 2000 communities, women of Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox and other Christian traditions gather to worship, pray, study and act on these concerns.

The following are the resultant actions: letters to those who determine policy, participation in prayer vigils, as well as marches for peace and justice, and programs to educate and encourage others to join the response to these issues and causes.

In Pennsylvania the following Peace Statement was made:

The Governing Board of **CHURCH WOMEN UNITED** in PENNSYLVANIA, meeting at Lycoming College, May 21 - 22, 1982, representing 17 denominations and 118 local units of CWU, takes this means to remind you—the leaders of our State and Nation—of your responsibility under God to advocate and support legislation designed to save and develop humankind.

Therefore, as women of faith, we firmly denounce the build-up of Nuclear Weapons and advocate the restoration of human service programs.

We reaffirm our National **CHURCH WOMEN UNITED** commitment to **PEACE** with **JUSTICE** and to a reduction in U.S. Military spending.

We recommend a U.S. Academy of **PEACE** to provide educational training and research in **PEACE-making** and **Conflict-resolution**.

Our State Unit encourages us to, "Make peace your personal priority. Wear the purple ribbon which symbolizes a commitment to the nuclear freeze. Develop a consciousness about the language of conflict which is a part of our vocabularies: "I could have killed . . ."; "he belted him a good one . . ."; "explode with anger . . ."; "let's not blow up the meeting . . .".

We who claim the name "Christian and/or Swedenborgian" have a job to do. Let's get on with it so that all of God's children can say they, too, are "Living the Life."

Doris Tafel

World Day of Prayer March 4, 1983

On Friday, March 4, 1983, bells the world over will ring out to announce the observance of WORLD DAY OF PRAYER. Sponsored in the United States by Church Women United, this annual international observance unites women of faith in 170 countries on six continents around the globe. 1983 marks the 95th consecutive year in which untold thousands of women will gather to be part of this worldwide prayer witness. Translated each year into hundreds of languages, the World Day of Prayer service is thought to be the most widely used piece of Christian literature in the world today apart from the Scriptures.

This year's service was written by Christian women from the island countries of the Caribbean on the theme, "New Persons in Christ." Representing a rich mixture of races and cultures, these women are seeking a new Caribbean identity. The service reflects their joy in the new found independence of their nations and the new opportunities opening up to women socially, politically and within their own churches. They have also prepared a special Children's Service designed to build bridges of understanding and teach young people 'round the world a new awareness of the culture of the Caribbean.

If your community does not have a World Day of Prayer service, Church Women United encourages you to take the initiative. Bring together women from the various churches and plan with them for the sharing of this important worldwide celebration. Consider reaching out beyond the churches and bring World Day of Prayer to an office group, a Girl Scout troop, Christian students on a university college campus, a retirement or nursing home, hospital chapel, local prison or halfway house.

A variety of World Day of Prayer materials are available and can be ordered from the Church Women United Distribution Center, P.O. Box 346, Kutztown, PA 19530. Worship Services as well as the Leader's Guide and the Children's Service may be obtained in English and Spanish. For those with special sight needs, WDP materials may be ordered free of charge in braille and/or in large print from the John Milton Society for the Blind, Room 832, 475 Riverside Drive, NY, NY 10115.

Posters, Radio and TV spot announcements and a sample Press Release are also available to facilitate promotion of your event. For further information, write Church Women United, 475 Riverside Drive, Room 812, New York, NY 10115. Plan and order as early as possible.

Women's League Looks After Aged

The New Church Women's League of Southern Africa recently held its annual convention in Kgotsong, Bothaville, in the Orange Free State.

The office bearers (who were all returned to office) are: president-general Mrs. Eulalia E. Mooki (Orlando), vice-president Mrs. Julia Mokhosi (Bloemfontein), secretary-general Mrs. Gladys Masilo (Brakpan), assistant general-secretary Mrs. Irene Mokhosi (Petrusburg) and the treasurers from all headquarters.

More than 300 delegates from the Republic of South Africa and neighbouring national states attended the six-day conference.

In her presidential address, Mrs. Mooki challenged the delegates to organize committees within their branches to focus on the needs of the aged during this, the Year of the Aged.

This was subsequently given priority among resolutions adopted. Should there already be established organization to care for the aged, the members were asked to join hands to help make them as successful as possible.

Mrs. Mooki also called on the women to take part in the development of the black nation.

"We must not merely be on-lookers, leaving our men-folk to do all the work. Just as we contribute so much in the church, we must also play our part in the educational and social life of our people," she said.

In its fund-raising report it was stated that the league collected R19 250.70, with the following branches taking the lead: Orlando, Rietfontein/Dobsonville, Krugersdorp and Bloemfontein respectively. Orlando collected well over R2 000.

Among its major achievements, the league helped with the building of a church in Leeudoringstad early this year. Three delegates were also sent to an international convention in Melbourne, Australia last year. In previous years, the league sent delegates to the United Kingdom and the USA.

The New-Church Women's League was established in 1910, and was affiliated to the London-based group in the same year. It is also a member of the International New-Church Women's League, to which it reports annually.

The above article was published in the Sowetan, a daily newspaper printed in Johannesburg with a circulation of 100,000. The story covered is the Annual Convention of the Women's League held at Bothaville from Sept. 28th to October 3rd, 1982.

WE GET LETTERS

THE NEW AGE IS NOT SO NEW

To the Editor of the Messenger:

Dear Paul:

I want to admit, publicly, that since I have been in a kind of semi-retirement I have been getting not only tardy, but a bit lazy when it comes to putting my thoughts and feelings on paper. Recent articles in the *Messenger*, and letters too, have prompted me to some action. I sometimes wonder how I used to write one sermon a week, besides looking after weddings and other parish duties during our last nine years in San Francisco.

In this letter I want to generalize a bit without going into details about comments made by writers, most recently in the *Messenger*. I want to refer to the many references to the New Age as though this is something that we "old timers" have not been aware of. In a mild way I take umbrage with those who think of my colleagues in the New Church ministry as being "exclusive" and "self-serving" as expressed by Taro Starbuck in his recent article. Unfortunately that is how we must appear to him. The Scandinavian Seeker has also some critical comments about Swedenborgian Churches and "priests donning black coats and starched collars, standing at the altar separated from the people": and that "They are simply copying the obsolete, meaningless rituals of the old churches." After all he has to say, and at one time I would have applauded him, he offers nothing that is tangibly constructive or inspiring. Then along comes the "Truth Seeker" in the November *Messenger*, who makes a sweeping indictment on our ministers of the New Church with the words: "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." I do hope that this "truth seeker" will try to learn a bit more about the Swedenborgian ministry and that all of us, in our own way, have been trying to make changes in our worship and in our lives that are consistent with the principles of the New Age.

And speaking of this present emphasis on the New Age I want to go back in our church history to acquaint a younger generation with the fact that there have been earlier "Pioneers of the New Age." Some of these Pioneers, as I know in western Canada, risked a lot for the sake of the "New Teachings" which they had found. That is, they found themselves in danger

of being socially ostracized from the community by neighbors, friends, and even relatives. It took some moral courage to be an avowed Swedenborgian those days. In some ways, Paul, your grand-parents and mine were numbered among these New Age Pioneers. They, along with other hardy souls who left the Mennonite Church (meaning no disrespect to this group) were the pioneers of the New Age in western Canada. It seems "by chance" that I have before me a copy of the 1919 Convention *Journal*. A few items I wish to quote that I am sure will be of interest to you and to other readers of the *Messenger*. With respect to western Canada I quote as follows: "This is our first annual report since the Conference as a body was formally united with the Convention; and we extend our brotherly greetings to the church as a whole." (Conference was first organized in 1907.) After reporting on the various activities the report closes with this paragraph: "In Manitoba Mr. Enns is steadfastly upholding the banner of truth for the New Age; and his loving sincerity is an inspiration for us all." It was then noted that the next Conference meeting would be held in July in Herbert, Saskatchewan. The report was submitted by John E. Zacharias, President.

In the same Convention *Journal* I gleaned this other bit of information relating to the New Age. Just after the first World War a report was given by Walter B. Murray about Convention's Lecture and Publicity Bureau. Lectures had been given in major cities of the USA, most prominently in the Boston area and also in the Cleveland area. Good speakers of the Swedenborgian Church were enlisted. I quote as follows: "We obtained a galaxy of talent that has never been surpassed in our history. They were all men capable of presenting the message of the New Age in a representative fashion to the people of our time. . . . The name and object of the national New-Church Bureau are becoming known wherever the lectures are being given." You may be interested in some of the speakers and their topics: Edwin Markham on "The New Brotherhood," Rev. Frank A. Gustafson, "The New Spirituality," Rev. Julian K. Smyth, "The New Christianity," and the Rev. Charles W. Harvey, "The New Immortality." There were several others. The largest audience, as I can determine, was at Cleveland, Western Reserve University, with an attendance of 1000. Edwin Markham was the speaker. Costs were shared by the local societies and by the Lecture Bureau. I wonder, could we try something like this again in Convention?

Why do I see this as so special, Paul? Because I want to emphasize that "the New Age" has always been part of the concerns, aims and goals of the Swedenborgian (New Church), and that each era or generation within the organized church has had its own special ideas and "systems" through which the New Age should be ushered in. I suppose I ought not to say "generations" because the groups change more often than that. I have often wondered what Jesus would tell us to do, if we could listen to Him, to respond more effectively to His Second Coming?

Paul, to close: I see that you plan to retire as Editor of the *Messenger* next September. You have done a good job! Quoting your figure of 2000 Messengers coming off the press each month, you may be interested in one last quote from the Editor of the *Messenger* in 1919: "The number of *Messengers* sent out to individual subscribers at a recent mailing was 2,017." Rather close to the present isn't it?

Best wishes!

Erwin D. Reddekopp,
Kelowna, B.C.

STRENGTH IN DIVERSITY

To the Editor:

In response to the Scandinavian seeker and *Messenger* letters commenting on Swedenborgian church growth.

Signs of growth are inspirational to spurts of new endeavor. But, do signs of growth mean only numbers of members? Is it our attitude we should be examining? Do we seek a religious affiliation only because it is widely accepted? Do we commit ourselves to causes because of the honor they shed on us by belonging? Man can have as much pride in the small but true. This is a good inner pride stemming from a belief we are pursuing a right path and that the cause is worth fighting for.

The state of youth is a time to experiment. Each youth is stirred to taste as widely as possible the variety of life. Idealism springs naturally and forcefully from his being. Dreams and visions abound. Youth experiences a compelling need for change, the need prods new stirrings. Without these dreams we would have little progress.

An awareness exists in each of the church branches of the value in experimenting with new forms in ritual and organizational resources. The Scandinavian seeker, perhaps, has not attended some of the Swedenborgian worship services held in the woods, in fields, including many forms of music, dance, and

drama. Or attended some of our camps and small group sessions which promote interaction in circular groups and with experimental role playing. Or examined the efforts of young architect's to apply our science of correspondences to new forms in church buildings.

These experiments spring from our youth's desires, are being carried out with pastoral cooperation. Begun as an appeal to youth (some go back twenty and thirty years, and earlier) the experiments have found appeal and support, also, among adults. Because there is appeal to some, does not mean the need for uniform acceptance. There is room for a variety of ritual forms to evoke "spheres" of worship. We cannot expect to alter our religious forms faster than changes take place in our civilization despite the fact that we have "new" truths to make the spirit within the form.

The Scandinavian seeker bemoans the fact that the little Swedenborgian church cannot get its act together. Instead, is split into three or four hardly communicating branches. A *Messenger* letter writer sees further fragmentation ahead, due to "New Age" application.

Seeker, take another look at the situation!

There are strengths in diversity. The separate church branches recognize their common purpose—to keep the truth of the writings alive, and to apply them in today's living. Each, however, sees a different role in doing this. Each must work out its own course. Each has its contribution to make to the Lord's work. More friendly cooperation would help. Real cooperation, however, is possible only at a level of uses where we see eye to eye. The work of the Swedenborg Foundation is one good example.

It is well to know our differences. It is more important to see the "Good" in each other's endeavors. There is strength in separate roles. Don't despair at our small numbers. If the spirit is within, our organizations are still alive. Only the Lord knows how many persons have entered the other world deeply affected by the truths our small organization have nurtured over the past almost two hundred years. He works with us in unseen ways.

N. Williams,
Massachusetts

REAL GROWTH IS INTERNAL

Dear Editor:

I was very pleased to see readers responding to the article 'Scandinavian Seeker'.

On the point made by Alice Van Boven, re New Church growth being in proportion to the

influx from the World of Spirits. Why is the influx weaker within the established church and growing in the ecumenical movements and New Age organizations? I agree with her that we have to be skeptical about some of the cults of to-day, but we also need to keep an eye on some of the older cults too!

Why do people have to think only in terms of organization when they talk about growth? Youth seek the stimuli of love and truth and if they cannot find it within the traditions of the old religion, they will look elsewhere. Youth is not only a matter of age it is also a state of mind. Regenerative work is all about change—individual and collective. This is seen in cooperation, working together and allowing the healing power of the Holy Spirit to bring us to a higher state of being. When the SELF is subject to the Lord, we grow inwardly and this is reflected by our external actions. It is very sad indeed, more so in view of the New Church doctrines, that the different branches of the Swedenborgian church do not pull together.

The thoughtful observations of Taro Starbuck show a sensitive understanding of the problems and the needs not only of the New Church but the contribution it should make in the greater world. I would like to see his letter published in the U.K. New Church 'Lifeline'.

Your 'Messenger' is an excellent journal, open to discussion and in contact with the world outside of the Church. It is alive! It is full of love—re-read "Feminine Connections" and what of the meaningful letter from Karen Duffey?

John F. Pontin,
Manchester, England

(Mr. Pontin, until recently employed at the New Church College in England, retains his deep interest in New Church affairs.)

VISUALIZE PEACE IN THE WORLD

Dear Paul:

Do we believe in the power of prayer? Are thoughts really things? If we in the Swedenborgian Church do believe, then we can make some positive contributions to maintaining and escalating peace around the world.

Suppose a certain date and specific time were set for all societies and all isolated Swedenborgians to pray—Pray Peace—what would happen? All of these thoughts would be sent out at the same time in a concentrated force. We should picture a flow of Love and Peace encircling our earth. Our prayers and thoughts should not be centered on any specific solutions, but we should picture ALL peoples

living together in love and cooperation.

We can all do something else, too. No matter our age, location or health, we can be alert to conflicts (personal or national) or to negotiations and mentally encircle the participants with Love.

We must—Think Positive—Think Peace.

Carole Roberts
Roanoke, Virginia

Thank you, Carole, for this splendid suggestion. This is something that every one of us can do—we can help to build a peaceful world with peace-filled people by investing sixty seconds of our time each day. At 9 o'clock every evening, let's set aside one minute and pray for peace in the world, sending out beams of spiritual energy that encircle the globe, focusing especially on Moscow and Washington but including leaders of all nations. Bathing the entire world with Divine Light for one minute at the same time every day will mobilize forces for peace in a positive way. There are Swedenborgians living in most of our planet's time zones—in Europe, Africa, Asia and Australia—which makes possible a continual barrage for peace around the clock. Let's start tonight. P. Z.

FROM CHURCH RECORDS

BAPTISMS

BERNIER—Carrie Rebecca, daughter of Steven and Rebecca Bernier, was baptized in the New Jerusalem Church in Bath, Maine, on October 24, 1982, the Rev. A. L. Nicholson officiating.

THOMAS—Ayrn Junnae, adopted daughter of Tom and Judy Thomas, was baptized October 31, 1982, at Montezuma, Kansas, the Rev. Eric Zacharias officiating. Ayrn is the granddaughter of Doris Friesen.

ARNDT—Tracey Lynn, daughter of Larry and Nancy Arndt was baptized into the Christian faith in the Church of the Good Shepherd, Kitchener, on Nov. 28, the Rev. Paul Zacharias officiating.

CONFIRMATIONS

GUY—Ruth and Marilyn Guy were received into membership of the New Church, on October 17, 1982, at the Brockton, Mass. chapel, Rev. Dr. George F. Dole, officiating.

ENGAGEMENTS

SMITH—KEARNS—Eldon and Annella Smith of North Shore, California, members of

the San Diego Society, proudly announce the engagement of their daughter, Carol, to Ralph Kearns, the son of Mrs. Florence Kearns, of San Jose, California, members of the San Francisco Society. The young people are planning to be married next June at the Wayfarers' Chapel, in Rancho Palos Verdes.

MARRIAGES

DuSABLON—EPP—Louis Joseph DuSablón and Dawna Elaine Epp were united in marriage on August 28, 1982, in the Trinity United Church, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, the Rev. David L. Sonmor officiating.

PERRY—EATON—Steven C. Perry and Shirlee Eaton, both of Jackson, New Hampshire, were married at the home of Mr. & Mrs. Frederick G. Perry, in Jackson, on October 28, 1982, Rev. F. Gardiner Perry officiating.

SCHAFER—ANDERSON—John Kevin Schaffer and Donna Lee Anderson were united in marriage in the Philadelphia New Church on November 20, 1982, the Rev. Jaikoo Lee officiating.

DEATHS

AHRENS—Florence L. (Floss), passed into the spiritual world on Nov. 7, 1982. Floss was a life-time member of the Church of the Good Shepherd, Kitchener, Ontario, and sang in the church choir for over sixty years. A memorial service was held on Nov. 10, 1982, the Rev. Eric Allison officiating.

LIBBY—Bruce C., passed into the spiritual world on Nov. 15, 1982. The resurrection service was held on Nov. 18, 1982, the Rev. David L. Rienstra, officiating.

SHOEMAKER—Miss Alice (age 86) passed into the spiritual life on Nov. 6, 1982. The resurrection service was held in the Philadelphia Church, on Nov. 9, 1982, the Rev. Richard H. Tafel officiating. Miss Shoemaker was a life long member of the Philadelphia Church.

FLOOD—Mrs. Dorothea B., of the Bridgewater Society of the New Jerusalem Church, passed into the spiritual world on Tuesday, October 12, 1982. A memorial service was held on Saturday, October 16, in Bridgewater, the Rev. William Woofenden officiating.

CALDWELL—Joseph B., passed into the spiritual world on September 2, 1982. A memorial service was held on September 4, Rev. Gudmund Boelsen officiating. Mr. Caldwell (65) had studied for Convention's ministry in the mid-50's.

BLEVINS—Glenn, an active, long-time member of the New Church in Portland, Oregon, passed into the spiritual life on April 17, 1982, after a lengthy illness.

GODDARD—Mrs. Warren (Helen) Goddard, wife of the late Rev. Warren Goddard, died in Brockton, Massachusetts on October 29, 1982. We hope to have more details later.

Convention President Visits

The West (cont'd from page 5)

will be explored further with probable implementation.

Another need for pastoral services was identified as "training for parents who will of necessity provide religious education in the home." With families so widely scattered, it is obsolete to think of Sunday Schools. It is **not** obsolete to provide training and materials for "home-grown" religious education. This need was identified with the group in Winnipeg and will be followed up by the Rev. Ron Brugler.

Many opportunities and needs exist and the spirit among our people is positive. Commitment, dedication and good will help us find a way. The New Age is among us.

Calvin Turley
Newton, Mass.

HIGHEST I.Q.

On the Terman index for Intelligence Quotients, 150 represents genius level. The indices are sometimes held to be immeasurable about a level of 200, but a figure of 210 has been attributed to Kim Ung-Yong of Seoul, South Korea (born March 7, 1963). He composed poetry and spoke four languages (Korean, English, German, and Japanese), and performed integral calculus at the age of 4 years 8 months on television in Tokyo on "The World Surprise Show" on November 2, 1967. Both his parents are university professors and were both born at 11 a.m. on May 23, 1934. Research into past geniuses at Stanford University, California, has produced a figure of "over 200" for John Stuart Mill (1806 - 73), who began to learn ancient Greek at the age of three. A similar rating has also been attributed to *Emanuel Swedenborg* (1688 - 1772) and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749 - 1832).

Guinness Book of Records, 1976

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from "THE ROCK"

Where is the Life we have lost in living?

Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?

Where is the knowledge we have lost in
information? . . .

We build in vain unless the Lord builds with us

Can you keep the city that the Lord keeps with you?

A thousand policemen directing the traffic

Cannot tell you why you come or where you go.

. . . a horde of active marmots

Build better than they that build without the Lord . . .

When the Stranger says: "What is the meaning
of this city? . . .

What will you answer? We all dwell together

To make money from each other? . . .

O my soul, be prepared for the coming of the
Stranger,

Be prepared for him who knows how to ask
questions . . .

Though you forget the way to the Temple,

There is one who remembers the way to your door.

Life you may evade, but Death you shall not.

You shall not deny the Stranger.

T. S. Eliot

THE UPPER ROOM

A NEW SPIRITUAL YEAR

*Leon LeVan
St. Petersburg, Florida*

Since another New Year has come, let us think on the meaning of a "new year" spiritually. A "year" in the spiritual sense does not mean 365 days. It may signify a period of a few hours or days, or a year, or a hundred years, or thousands of years. "Years" spiritually mean states of a person's life or states of the life of the church. Time and space are real things to our natural mind. We in the natural world cannot easily think apart from years of time and distance in space. But in the Heavens the past and future are present as one living experience; and things far and distant are as near as our thoughts.

Let us explore this subject of a "year" a little more deeply. A "spiritual year", as said, signifies a state of life. Thus, a "new year" spiritually would signify a new state of life. In that sense we can truly wish one another a "happy new year." But whereas we can do nothing to change our calendar year, the Lord does permit (and indeed desires) us to do something about our "spiritual year."

Spiritually speaking, for example, there should be "new year resolutions." We can resolve that our states of spiritual life will be better than during the calendar year just ended. In that spiritual manner of speaking, you could say something like the following:

"I am resolved that I shall study the Lord's Word and Doctrines more diligently; think more truly; write and speak more helpfully. I am resolved better to observe the laws of health for spiritual ends—to avoid careless exposure to wind and weather—to obtain needed rest and exercise; balanced food; sufficient sleep. I am resolved to avoid waste of time and effort, and to shun inefficient ways of doing things."

In this way the negative influences of the calendar year just ended may not only be restrained but there will be actual gains in love, in wisdom, in health, and in your general and particular uses in the church.

New year resolutions may be undertaken in wisdom or in folly. If the latter be the case, they prove worse than useless, and would best not be undertaken at all. But if we seek to do the Lord's will, and to follow in His ways, we can begin every new year in wisdom.

Are there conditions in your life which you

know should be changed? Are you in bondage to bad habits, false ways of thinking, self-excusings, harmful or evil affections, harsh judgments, hardness of heart and self-will?

In your office, in your home, in your employment, in your church, in your club or neighborhood or fraternal association, are there ways of thinking, speaking, and doing that you know should be changed? This then could be the beginning of a new spiritual "year" for you. Ask the Lord's help to change your old "year"—your wrong spiritual states—and begin a new year of new and true spiritual life before God and men. You do not need to proclaim such a spiritual resolve to others; but, if necessary, undertake it and accomplish it.

Let me now offer one specific resolve for a new spiritual year which all of us may well make. That resolve is this: once a day open your Bible to the Book of Psalms (or elsewhere in the written Word) and read a phrase, a sentence, a verse, story, or chapter until you see some light of truth in it. Suppose, for example, you open to the words: "There was a certain man who made a marriage." If you see that a "marriage" means Heaven—that Heaven for you consists of employing good and truth in your life—that the "certain man" that makes Heaven possible for you is the Lord—if you see so much, you could then close the Book for that day; for some light of the Word has illuminated your life.

These things are said to illustrate how the Word can shine into your life this coming year of 1983 if you will make it a "new year" indeed—the beginning of a new spiritual state or states. Open the Word once a day. Read some word or sentence or verse or passage until your mind opens to receive a spiritual idea from it. Continue reading until you do find such a spiritual truth. Do this every day. Let it be a sacred obligation to you.

If you do so, this faithful opening of the written Word will become your daily food and drink from the Lord—and you may well find, when the twelve months are ended, that this has been the most enlightening spiritual year of your life. May God bless you and give you a New Spiritual Year.

THE MESSENGER

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GUARANTEED



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