

THE MESSENGER

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FROM THE EDITOR

I'm an inveterate follower of political affairs who is also committed to thoughtful church leadership. As a result, I find myself grappling every now and then with the question of appropriate church involvement in political questions. During the sixties and early seventies, the role of the church in political affairs was hotly contested. Since then, most mainline churches have accepted activist fringes as part of their identity, though most churchgoers are the right of these groups. Recently, the conservative churches in America have become exceedingly politicized. Without the "liability" of much dissension in the ranks, the conservative agenda is being pushed with somewhat greater intensity than the mainline churches were ever able to generate for their more liberal causes.

The depth of feeling among overtly religious people on both sides of the political spectrum has, in recent times, spurred me to rethink my mind on this matter. I used to believe that it was the church's highest duty to intervene in social questions. This was where the action was, after all. Did the church have the mettle to take the "right" stands or didn't it?

Now I have decidedly strong reactions against the church taking official stands on political questions. I am bothered by the certainty with which many people interpret biblical language to buttress their political agenda. In fact, there seems to be a perfect stand-off between fundamentalist and liberal theologians as to who believes most fervently that the Bible categorically supports their politics. I find myself wondering what Jesus would have counseled in such matters. Though a great many of our Lord's utterings have political implications, it does seem rather certain that Jesus, who came from a slave population, avoided politicization of his message.

Political application of spiritual and theological viewpoints is an essential challenge, especially in a democracy. But note the word "challenge." It is not a simplistic task that is reducible to mere proof-texting from the Bible. The variables are numerous and their implications often subtle. Budget issues for social programs, for instance, frequently have good arguments going both ways for them, and I cannot find in myself a rising fire for either side.

Fifteen years ago I felt the church has a moral duty to stand forth on social questions. Today I believe that it is more appropriate to reflect more clearly the ambiguities in political questions. Rather than the church issuing a resolution, which seems to declare where religious people come down on a given question, I propose that either such resolutions somehow reflect the dissension within that church on the question, such as putting the actual vote tally in the final wording, or that resolutions be banned. When interested people feel like taking a collective stand, they are free to write out their position and publish it with signatures and other indications of its support. This approach would then serve to allow any part of the church to be vocal on any issue for which it has the energy and savvy to be eloquent. At the same time, no person need feel that they are being "officially" represented on a matter which they feel is personal and interpretive.

People often seek a church which lays out all the answers and decrees the final word on tough matters. This is patronizing and belittling of the human spirit. Guidance leading toward a mature development of a person's spiritual potential has a great deal more respect for freedom than that. □

Jim Lawrence

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Two Encounters With Death

Bill James Cook

The night I died . . . I was only five years old. I had been ill with lung trouble since birth. For three days before my death I had suffered from croup. I slept in a little crib in the corner of my parents' bedroom because I was very sickly and small for my age. Here they could watch over me. My brothers and sisters would often tease me about this, as they all had rooms of their own.

The night I died I had been given medicine and put to bed early. I dropped off to sleep almost immediately. The next thing I remembered was that all the lights were on in the bedroom. My father, in his pajamas, held my little body in his arms while I floated above him looking down on the scene.

"My God! Irene, he's dead," my father cried. "He isn't breathing. I wish Dr. James would get here. He said that he would come right away."

"What can we do?" cried my mother. She was hysterical by now and sobbing. My father gently laid my body on the bed and turned to comfort my mother.

Now I was no longer in the bedroom or anywhere I had been before. I was floating down a long black hallway or tunnel. The tunnel was nothing connected with the house or reality, yet I could still hear my parents crying and talking as clearly as if they were just behind me. I floated on in a circular or spinning motion, faster and faster.

"Don't cry, Irene," sobbed my father. "It's better this way. Little Billy was cripple and at birth had only one lung and was a blue baby. Except for the doctors, he would have died at birth. I guess that's the way it should have been. He was always sickly. This way the poor little tyke won't suffer any more. It's really all for the best."

Now it was my father who broke down, and Mother who tried to comfort him. I could hear what was being said as I was swirling through the dark tunnel toward a light at the far end.

Then everything stopped. I heard nothing. I saw nothing. I sensed nothing.

My body was lying on my parents' bed. Dr. James examined me and confirmed that I was indeed dead. He dropped my body at an

odd angle over the pillow, and in his concern for the living tried to comfort my sobbing parents. It was then that all three of them heard a strange gurgling sound coming from my throat. Dr. James rushed over and held my body by the feet and pushed on my back, trying to force the mucus from my lungs.

Then air rushed into my lungs, restoring life to my body. I found myself being held upside down by the doctor, and I began to cry. Dr. James turned me right side up and hugged me in his arms. I was alive.

The Day I Died:

I was in the physical therapy department of a large hospital. Now a man of forty-six, I had been hospitalized for many months. A long series of operations had been completed on my deformed body. As an aftereffect of being flat on my back for such a long time, I lost my ability to walk or adjust to a vertical position. I could not sit, walk, or stand. My body was covered by a large plaster body cast.

Now I was fighting, trying desperately to walk again. I found myself in physical therapy once again. Tom, my therapist, jacked the tilt table up to a seventy-five degree angle. Each day Tom raised the tilt table a few more degrees. Tom left me with these words, "If you start to feel dizzy, call to one of the therapists." Then he added, "I'll be back in fifteen minutes."

I enjoyed watching the therapists, Nancy and Linda. They were playing with some little children, giving them physical therapy. They were so kind and gentle with the little ones. As I watched, the minutes passed—ten of them—and then I felt dizzy. The clock became blurred. I called out to Nancy and Linda for help. . .

I was picking flowers. I could see and hear, but I felt no pain. I was in a state of complete contentment. I walked about picking blue, white, and pink cornflowers in a field that was bright and beautiful. The flowers were perfect, not a single blossom or leaf showed any signs of attack from insects or disease. They were far more beautiful than any found on earth, and their beauty made me feel joyous.

I could hear what was being said as I was swirling through the dark tunnel toward a light at the far end.

As I walked through the field, I made my way toward a bright light on the horizon. The light was bright like the sun, but it was not hot, nor did the light hurt my eyes as I stared at it. I kept picking flowers and walking toward the light.

Two voices could be heard coming from within the bright light. I could hear my mother calling, "Come to me, Billy. Come to me. Come to me, Billy."

I was conscious that Mother's voice was that of a young and beautiful woman. It was the voice of the mother I knew when I was a baby, not the voice of the elderly woman who had died ten years before. But there was no doubt that this was my mother's voice. In a young and musical voice she kept calling, "Come to me, Billy. Come to me."

Oh, how I longed to go to my mother and be with her! I wanted to go to her so much!

As I walked through the field, I made my way toward a bright light on the horizon. The light was bright like the sun, but it was not hot, nor did the light hurt my eyes as I stared at it.

The other voice I heard was a man's voice. No one I knew. The man's voice kept saying, "Pick your mother some flowers. Remember that she likes the pink and the blue. Pick her some flowers."

Although a grown man, I was now like a child of long ago. I was picking the beautiful flowers for Mother as I made my way toward the light and the voices. I kept saying over and over to myself what the man kept saying, "Mother likes the pink and the blue, the pink and the blue."

"Come to me, Billy. Come to me."

Then the man's voice asked, "Don't you want to go to your mother?"

"Yes, I want to go to Mother," I answered. "But they will not let me go. They just will not let me go! Please let me go to my mother!" I pleaded.

Quick as a light snapping on or off, I found myself lying on the floor. I was extremely angry. Yes, mad and angry because they would not let me go to Mother. I tried

pulling my hand from the nurse who was holding it, checking for my pulse. Oh, how I hated these people!

Then I took in the situation. A doctor gasped, "Thank God! he's not dead. He's alive!"

The nurse, checked my pulse, spoke to two men who had oxygen tanks, "He has just come around."

By now the hot anger that I felt on awakening had quickly disappeared, as I realized where I was. I was lying on the floor surrounded by the doctors and nurses of the "All-Call" team or the lifesaving squad of the hospital. The entire physical therapy crew stood back looking on with fright. I had been unstrapped from the tilt table and moved to a position on the floor. From the time I called out for help I could not feel anything being done to my body. My hands and feet were cold. I shivered.

Now Tom and the therapy crew were all talking at once, their voices excited and relieved.

One of the doctors, who seemed to be in charge of the situation, called out to the switchboard operator, "Cancel the All-Call. We've pulled him out of it."

Some of the men helped Tom move that big hunk of plaster called me, back onto the cart. The therapy crew kept asking all at the same time, "How do you feel? Are you all right?"

Tom said, "You really had us scared. You were out, and we couldn't bring you back. Your blood pressure dropped down way below the danger mark. We thought for sure we had lost you. Please don't ever do that again or I'll die of fright."

Indeed, I'm not afraid to die. These two encounters with death have taught me that life continues after physical "death." The inner self—the human soul—is released to experience another realm, another plane of Being. □



A free lance writer in retirement, Bill James Cook is a longtime member of the General Convention. He resides in Glendale, Ohio.

How Do We Get There From Here?

Steve Koke

It seems, from the symposium on our role in the New Age (March), that we are moving in a very creative direction. Holistic growth programs, full participation in society's problems and projects, Paul Grumman's arresting observation that the New Age is about *relationships*, all suggest that we are now willing to enter the world and try to work with it as it is.

But there is a rough spot on this road.

A number of years ago, Hillside Church in El Cerrito (Swedenborgian) put together a program of seminars and therapy groups in order to do just what the symposium writers urge. I participated in it and helped a lot of other people put it together and keep it going. Quite a few people from surrounding communities were attracted to the program. We had some very challenging and illuminating experiences, suffered with those who had come in with severe problems in

cy of people in crisis to see only adverse people, circumstances, or personal weaknesses as the cause of emotional problems. A person who enters a therapy group usually wants a solution to one or more of those three things.

But the problem is also due to a tendency in our theological teachings to remain high overhead and not deal with the tensions and crises of life in a practical way. Swedenborg tells us that we must love and do good, but he stops just short of providing the practical wisdom that is needed by therapists, counsellors, group leaders, and ordinary people in helping themselves and others carry out that advice. Instead, he concentrates on first principles and causal forces. Evil is described at length, but only in its naked form. The many practical disguises that evil will take down here are not unmasked. Only in *Conjugal Love* does he pro-

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managing their lives, and often found out that we weren't doing so well either. It was an experience of growth that creates both joy and some disturbing discoveries.

But it became apparent that our theology was remaining aloof. The problems that people brought into our groups were so deeply personal that they evaded theological commentary. The only healing wisdom that we could apply was the wisdom contained in the therapy systems around which the groups were organized. Transactional Analysis, for example, has a particular way of looking at the psyche in order to deal with common problems. Jungian psychology also has a practical vocabulary dealing with archetypes and their immediate effects on the personality: one needs to go only a little way into the unconscious to see how the archetypes operate. We were dealing with problems creatively, but it was very difficult to deal with them *religiously*.

The problem is due partly to the tenden-

vide an ethical system and the practical psychology to support it.

Swedenborg is an exponent of the top-down, inside-to-outside approach. In this approach, one sees spiritual truths first and then looks at material or natural things from them. Thus, one must assume a somewhat elevated and internally secure position to start with. As a result, Swedenborg approaches spiritual and emotional problems from a direction that is opposite to the only one that is readily available to a person who has these problems. To reach this person (or even the troubled areas in ourselves), we have to be able to get down with him and try to work with his point of view, pushing out the walls and opening it up step by step to higher and more internal discoveries. That requires an exceptionally earthy spiritual consciousness, just to get things going. Anything else may seem to be too intellectual or abstract.

The sheer elevation of Swedenborg's

work has had, I think, some effect on our history. We have felt separate from the world because of the tendency of Swedenborg's teachings to lift us out of it. Among Christian denominations, we have been unusually metaphysical. It really does seem that we look down on ordinary life as if from a high mountain, and the prospect of going down has not been attractive.

The task of building a bridge between Swedenborg's high philosophy and the lower wisdom needed to live day by day is now crucial, for we can too easily concentrate on one and leave the other behind.

But our visions are changing, and we now feel more related to the world and more willing to be a part of it. The question now arises, Can we carry our theological teachings into our new interests? At El Cerrito, we could not because the two were too widely separated. The task of building a bridge between Swedenborg's high philosophy and the lower wisdom needed to live day by day is now crucial, for we can too easily concentrate on either one and leave the other behind.

The ideal bridge would be a therapeutic philosophy and technique derived from Swedenborg's teachings, perhaps by some exotic use of logical procedures. Now, we tend to import therapies from other sources. They work, but without building the unique spiritual consciousness Swedenborg tried to build. The peculiar quality of Swedenborg's

vision is still unparalleled. It is true that it now has reflections in other philosophies, but the point can still be made that only in Swedenborg's writings is so much brought together in one beautifully integrated system that illuminates our highest and best values. It remains our most comprehensive view of the New Age spirit.

But can we build *that* bridge? I'm not sure. Here we could get into some technical details about logic and whether one can really *derive* practical ideas from principles. In the sciences at least, the answer is no. One has to have intermediate ideas which link the principles to specific conditions and define how they are going to be applied. Those intermediate ideas typically require additional research. The formation of a complete system of understanding is actually the formation of a hierarchy of different kinds of ideas from different sources.

What is needed in our case is not specific answers to strictly personal questions, for each person would need a different answer. Instead, we need an increased awareness of how the Lord can be seen in adverse circumstances and *through* material conditions. That in turn seems to require special research into a set of intermediate ideas and practices which can bring our theology closer to where we live and help it illuminate any creative process. They are a kind of intermediate counsel which can be approached either from below or from above. Without this kind of help we remain very informative theologically, but not very helpful therapeutically; or we install therapies and creative programs; but have difficulties making them theologically significant. □

Steve Koke is a free-lance writer living in Grass Valley, Calif.

The Johnny Appleseed of Early Guiana

P.P. Dial

Many Guianese do not realise that the Swedenborgian community is one of the oldest established religious groups in the country. Swedenborg's teachings were known and practised more than a century and a half ago in the Colony of Demerara and there is record of at least one flourishing community which existed in Demerara during the first half of the 19th

century. This community, known as the New Jerusalem Church, was founded by James Glenn, the intelligent Scottish planter who renounced the world of wealth and position to win his Soul. Though he had an acquaintance with Swedenborg's teachings while in Europe, it was in Guiana that the thunderclap of the words of the Great Teacher struck Genn's Being and revolu-

tionized his life, and from a fickle seeker after the goods of this World, Glenn was metamorphosed into a man of strength, compassion and saintliness. Most colonists at the time were completely blind to the true import of Glenn's conversion and to them he appeared no more than a madman or eccentric.

When Dr. George Pinckard saw him on the Edmonstone

Estate up the Demerara River in 1796-7, Glenn was probably between 70 and 80 years old. Dr. Pinckard described him as "an antiquated and eccentric being who passes his declining days in the dull and harmless reading of an old Hebrew Bible and two or three worm-eaten volumes of Greek and Latin." Lt. Staunton St. Claire, who visited Glenn 9 or 10 years, was more sympathetic and probably even felt some admiration for the old man. This difference in attitude may have been accounted for by the fact that St. Claire knew Glenn's life story, while Dr. Pinckard didn't.

Glenn came out to Guiana from Scotland as mate on a merchant ship. He so liked the country that he decided to stay. He was a young man of perspicacity and soon learnt about the running of plantations. At this time, Guiana was still Dutch, and Glenn applied to the Dutch authorities and was granted a good tract of land. This he developed into a flourishing plantation and, in a few years' time, had become a man of wealth. His conduct and tastes were much the same as any of the normal well-to-do planters; it seemed that Glenn would have ended his days in ease and luxury.

But the sad downfall of Glenn's material prosperity was soon to come: Glenn visited a Dutch ship, which was lying in the river, and in the Captain's cabin he found a work written by the famous Swedish theologian and religious visionary, Swedenborg. Glenn pressed the captain to give him this work for he had become very interested in it. He now began to study the doctrines of Swedenborg. He became so engrossed in the three thick

volumes that he neglected his estate, which fast went to ruin. The land became overgrown with weeds, the workers deserted him and all profit disappeared.

In the meantime, Glenn had ordered a ship load of Swedenborg's books with the intention of spreading the light of his doctrines over the face of Guiana. When the cargo arrived, it was found that Glenn was unable to pay for the books. The captain of the vessel was forced to go to the Courts, which ordered Glenn to be declared a bankrupt and his estate sold.

This poor man was reduced to the most abject misery. He made his way to the town of Stabroek, where in spite of his hunger, he held public meetings among the poorer Whites and Africans, preaching to them the beauties of Swedenborg's doctrines and enjoining them to adopt the tenets. The words of his friends were of no avail in shifting him from the path he had chosen. Eventually he was reduced to stark beggary.

From Stabroek Glenn made his way to Berbice, where, to prevent death from starvation, he offered himself to the Dutch commandant to serve as a private in the army. He was so employed and spent all his spare time preaching the word of Swedenborg to the Dutch garrison. For a few years all went well until there was fear of mutiny in Berbice and the troops had to be on the alert and pay closer attention to duty. One night, the officer in charge, on going the rounds, challenged a sentry-post where Glenn had been detailed. To his surprise he found Glenn fast asleep in his sentry-box. The delinquent was immediately arrested, tried by the court-martial and sentenced to run the gauntlet, the usual military punishment at this time.

The soldiers at the garrison fell into two ranks facing each other. The prisoner, with his back bare, was to be obliged to follow a sergeant who would lead him slowly along while each soldier must strike a blow with a stick as he passed. When the punishment was about to commence, the Commanding



Officer, in consideration of Glenn's age and the situation of life he had once enjoyed, said that he would not put the severe punishment into operation, but instead would dismiss Glenn from the service. To this benign offer the old man replied: "Sir, I am ashamed of myself for what I have done and I entreat you to let me receive the punishment due to such a crime, as an example to my comrades."

All that the Commandment would do would not alter Glenn's determination to face punishment. He promptly bared his back and slowly walked down between the rows of soldiers. On two or three occasions he even stopped and chided some of his companions for striking him too lightly.

On leaving the army, Glenn again returned to Demerara where an old friend Mr. Edmonstone, who owned a plantation up the Demerara River, met him and offered him a refuge on his property. Glenn accepted it, built a small hut in the forest for himself and, with a hardwood plank for his bed and an Old Bible for his pillow, led a life of prayer and healing.

He would offer his devotions to God each sunrise and sunset and would untiringly heal his Amerindian patients from far and near with the various medicinal herbs and plants of the forest. His knowledge of these forest remedies was very great, and his reputation had spread into the furthest parts of the jungle. Yet, in spite of all his services, Old Glenn would accept no reward or payment. His humanity and consideration for others even expressed itself in his attitude to animals, for not even the snakes and vampire bats which came into his hut would he destroy.

This withered old man, with sunken grey eyes and legs wasted to sticks, who wore a shirt as his only garment and whose favourite verse in the Bible was: "There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing. There is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches," was often mocked and derided. Yet in spite of all his material sufferings, Glenn had realised his God and his soul was cleansed; he ended his days a much happier man than most of the wealthy and powerful plantation owners of the country. □

The above article is based on a broadcast script prepared for the Government Information Services by Mr. P.P. Dial, B.A. (Lond); M.A. (Cantab); Dip. Ed. the Government Archivist.

Conference on Women Ministers Held

Clergywomen and laywomen professionals from 10 denominations in the United States and Canada took stock of the status of women ministers in the church at a meeting April 9-11 sponsored by the National Council of Churches' Commission on Women in Ministry.

The look back was 15 years—about the time women began entering seminaries in significant numbers—and forward 15 years to the end of the century.

The Rev. Ann DuBois, an executive with the Presbyterian Church's Vocation Agency who serves on the coordinating committee of COWIM, described the meeting as an "opportunity to look back and create a collective future." The 42 participants included women executives from mainline Protestant denominations and three women's ecumenical groups who are responsible for programs related to women ministers. Also in attendance were representative clergywomen serving parishes and various specialized ministries.

Using a case study approach, the participants' experiences became the basis for special attention to five areas: racial ethnic women in ministry, spiritual survival for women in ministry, feminist model for clergy leadership, sexuality in ministry, and denominational strategies for acceptance of women ministers. The result will be used for future COWIM programming as well as the individual denominations!

Ms. Marilyn Breitling, a United Church of Christ executive with responsibility for clergywomen and laywomen in the denomination, said she has become aware more than ever of how issues for women "cut across lay and clergy." Commitment to unite ordained and lay women in a common agenda in the church and culture was a recurring theme throughout the meeting.

Women in the ministry within the General Convention of Swedenborgian Churches has grown dramatically since 1975, when women were first affirmed for ordained ministry. Today fully one seventh of the active Swedenborgian clergy in the United States and Canada are women, and 40 percent of the students of the Swedenborg School of Religion are women. □

New President for Swedenborg School of Religion

Skuli Thorhallsson

Not only is it the first time in its history that the Swedenborg School of Religion has a full-time president, but it is also the first lay president and the first woman president.

As a former student of hers at Urbana University, and as a current student here at SSR, it gives me great pleasure to introduce to the Swedenborgian community the next president of the Swedenborg School of Religion, Dr. Mary Kay Klein. Dr. Klein's deep personal commitment to a philosophy of education which acknowledges the Lord's presence and the spiritual nature of persons, was influential in the development of a number of past and present students at the Swedenborg School of Religion who came here via Urbana University.

Dr. Klein, 40, was born in Binghamton, New York and grew up in Albany, N.Y. She received her BA in mathematics at the College of New Rochelle, New Rochelle, New York and MA and PhD in Philosophy at Boston University. She is Married to Rev. Dr. J. Theodore Klein (Convention Minister and Professor of Philosophy at Urbana). They have three children, Karen, John, and Kevin.

Dr. Mary Kay Klein has taught Philosophy, Inter-disciplinary Studies, and Women's Studies at Urbana University for fourteen years. As well as having been chairperson of the Humanities Division, she has been involved in other administrative work. Currently she is Project Director of a Federal Title IV grant for special services for disadvantaged students, involving tutoring, career counseling, academic advising, diagnostic testing, and cultural enrichment at Urbana and at off-campus centers at Marysville, Ohio Women's Prison, and at London, Ohio Men's Prison. The purpose of the program is to help those persons maintain their involvement in school and to nurture their positive educational development. Dr. Klein was also a visiting professor at SSR in the Fall of 1982, teaching Bio-Ethics.

Basic assumptions of Dr. Klein's philosophy about people is that they are free, rational, and caring, and that every individual is unique and expresses Divine Love and Wisdom in their own way. She feels that a theological school should help each in-

dividual develop their potential by combining theory and practice (love, wisdom and use); and specifically and most important is its training of professional ministers and lay ministers. Her plans for SSR include pursuing the possibility of getting degree-granting authority from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Board of Regents, and accreditation from the American Association of Theological Schools. Other goals include fundraising, recruiting, long-range planning, policy planning, and the development of SSR as a center for religious education and spiritual development for persons not necessarily going for ordination, and the development of computer networking for enhanced communication. She feels that the school has a good staff and is excited about her new challenge as President.

The Rev. Dr. Robert H. Kirven, the current President of SSR, joyfully looks forward to reassuming the full-time teaching responsibilities which he had prior to becoming President. He will be Professor of Theology and Church History at SSR. We the students look forward to seeing more of him in the classroom. And we all look forward to this new stage of development of the Swedenborg School of Religion as a continuing viable place for theological learning and spiritual growth. □



Creation

Ednah E. Richard

*In the beginning God created
The heavens and the earth:
My heavens and my earth.
My earth was formless and empty.
Darkness was heavy and deep,
And God was moving on the depths.
And God said, "Let there be light,"
And there was light.
The Light He called Day,
And the darkness Night.
I did not know from whence it came,
But God said it was good.
Evening and morning, the first day.
And God divided the waters,
And I looked—the heavens were above
And the earth below.
And God said that it was good.
Evening and morning, the second day.
Earth and waters in their place*

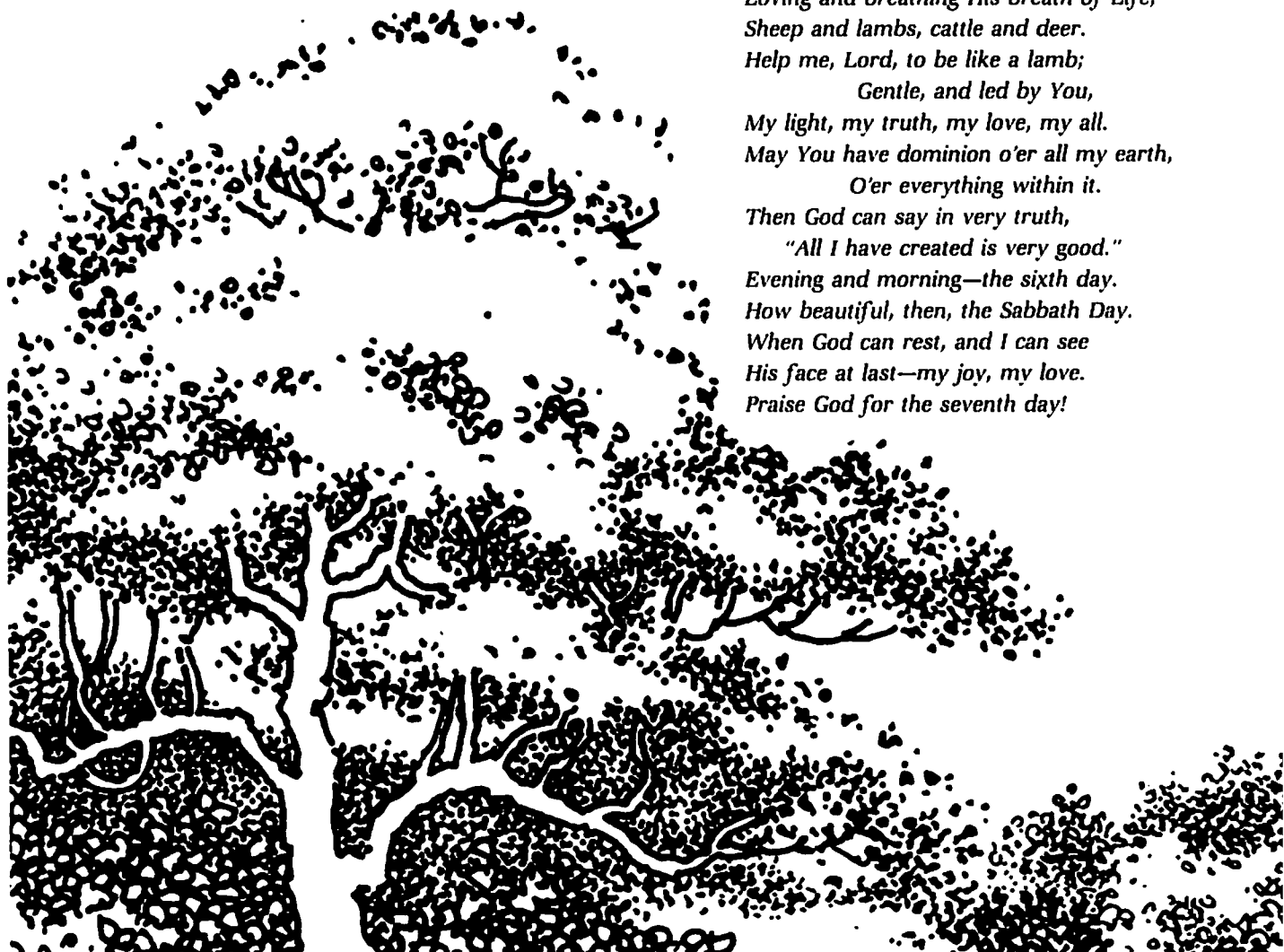
*To water my land and make it grow
Grass and trees, flowers, then fruit;
Flowers for purpose, becoming fruition.
And God said that it was good.
Evening and morning, the third day.
And God created the sun to rule the day;
The moon to rule the night;
And the night was full of stars.
And then I understood—*

*"God is my Sun—my Light.
In darkness He shines as a moon,
And stars reflect His Truths.
And God said it was good.
Evening and morning, the fourth day.
And God created all living creatures,
Fish in the sea, and birds in the air.
A love of learning—so much to learn.
Like birds, my thoughts fly high.*

*"Be fruitful and multiply," God said.
Evening and morning, the fifth day.
And God created the animals,
Warm, living creatures of every kind,
Loving and breathing His breath of Life,
Sheep and lambs, cattle and deer.
Help me, Lord, to be like a lamb;*

*Gentle, and led by You,
My light, my truth, my love, my all.
May You have dominion o'er all my earth,
O'er everything within it.*

*Then God can say in very truth,
"All I have created is very good."
Evening and morning—the sixth day.
How beautiful, then, the Sabbath Day.
When God can rest, and I can see
His face at last—my joy, my love.
Praise God for the seventh day!*



Meditation on the Lord's Prayer

This prayer is a prayer of right relationship, of God, us, our neighbor and the world. Only in right relationship does true freedom reside. I invite you to pray with me and meditate with me on the Lord's Prayer.

Our Father

Lord Jesus truly you are our father. Through you we are born again, not of blood, nor of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God—born into the reality of your Spirit and the spiritual world.

Who Art in Heaven

Lord Jesus you dwell within us directing and guiding our lives—our hearts, our minds and our lives.

Hallowed be Thy Name

You direct and guide our lives making everything whole, complete, by putting together for us the good things and true things which we have gathered by shunning evils as sins against you.

Thy Kingdom Come

Lord we ask your wholeness, your order to be present in every part of our lives—the order, the harmony that we see in nature, the regularity of planetary cycles, the flow of changing seasons.

Your Kingdom, your order come.

Thy Will Be Done

Let our ego-selves, our self-conscious selves be still and submit to you, you who are the Divine Self—the Divine desirer of the world—for your desire, Lord Jesus, includes our own needs and our neighbor's needs.

Let our little wills submit to your complete and holy will and let your intentions be carried out, Your will be done.

On Earth as it is in Heaven

Lord we ask that your dwelling, your completeness, your order and your intentions be expressed in our bodies and our external surroundings as they are expressed within us and in our spiritual world surroundings.

Give Us This Day our Daily Bread

Lord our daily bread is to perform those tasks which you daily put before us. Let us rejoice and not grumble when you do not give us our favorite things to do. Let us trust that this work, however small, however large, however easy, however hard—this work will feed our spirit as well as our bodies and help fit us for eternity. This work is your presence with us. You are our daily bread.

And Forgive us our Debts as we Forgive our Debtors

Forgive us, Lord, when we shun the work and so injure our neighbor.

Forgive us, Lord, when we avoid the work and so injure ourselves.

Forgive us, Lord, when we don't want to work at all and so shut you out of our lives.

Forgive us, Lord, and let us feel that forgiveness so deeply that we will never deny forgiveness to another.

And Lead us not into Temptation, but Deliver us from Evil

Lord, your leading never tempts. It is our own evils which tempt us.

Your leading lets us see our evils, lets us hate our evils and lets us desist from evil.

Your leading delivers us from evil.

For Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the glory. Amen.

You Lord Jesus are the Lord, all power has been given you in heaven and earth.

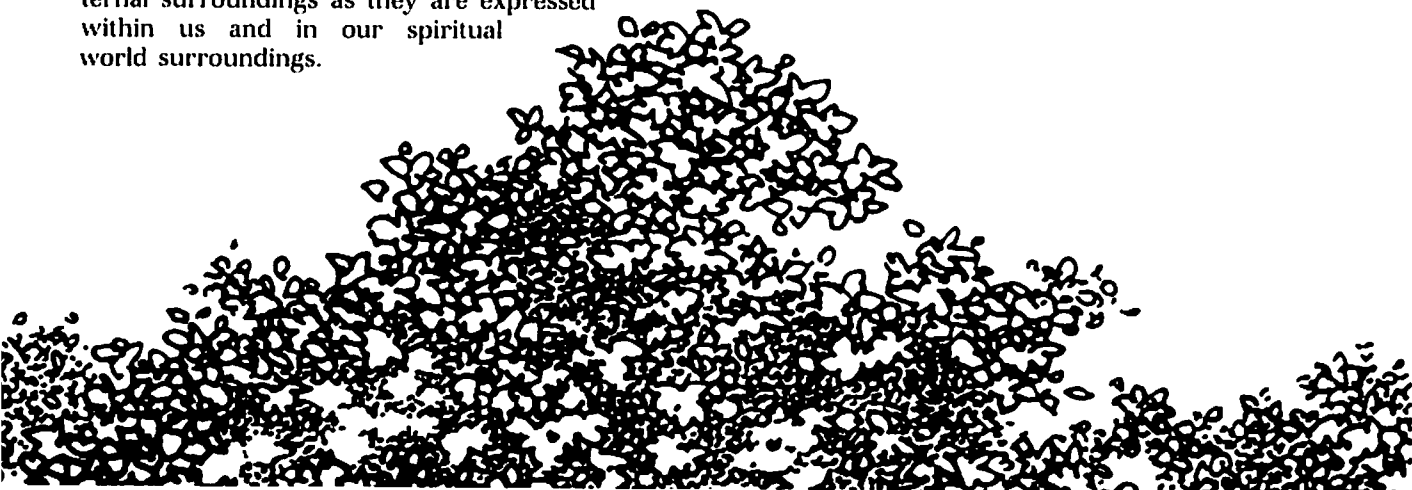
You are Love and you are Wisdom, you are the Holy Spirit, the proceeding Divine.

You open yourself to us. You open your Word to us and show us your glory—the resurrected Divine Human Being—present within the world, within the Word, within the Church, within each one of us.

Praise you and thank you Lord Jesus that it is so.

Amen, Amen.

Rev. Gladys A. Wheaton



WOMEN COMMUNICATING

ANNELLA SMITH, EDITOR

BERTHA BERRAN, CO-EDITOR



The New Jerusalem is a new and glorious religious condition of earth. Its transcendent light is in the spiritual illumination which floods our minds, through the revelation of the spiritual sense of the Word. It is not here nor there; it is in the heart. It is not in this sect or that; it is wherever the mountain tops of sublime thought are tinged with the new born light. Its descent is not specially in the announcement of the inner life of the Lord's Holy Word through books or preachings, it is in the spiritual discernment of its truths by the soul, the spirit and earnestness of the heart in living them, the unselfish and useful labors of the hands in ameliorating all life under their influence. It comes also but not exclusively in the organized union of those who would work together for its success. But you and I will be partakers of it only as we and each of us receive the light, the spirit, the love, and reflect them all around in a lovelier and more heavenly life.

From the Editors

With your help, for the second year in a row, we have been able to have "Women Communicating" pages in each issue of *The Messenger*. We want to thank each and every one of you who contributed to make this possible.

From Sylvia Rankin, Hollywood, California

Every Wednesday evening an Arcana Study Group meets at my home. We first read the literal Bible story. Then from Volume I of the Arcana, we find Swedenborg's explanation of how to apply this to our own personal daily lives. In about two months' time we have studied the Creation and the Ark.

A short summary of our study would be:

1) From the study of "Creation" we began to find how God was going to create, in us or of us, an image of Himself so that His love could be returned to Him, enabling Him to use us as angels in His work entirely for His children.

2) The first Ancient Church, we found was the embodiment of this effort, shown by the Garden of Eden with its persons, animals, plants, etc., all spiritual entities of looking entirely to the Lord.

3) Without a struggle to keep life pure and godly, it is shown pulling away from Heavenly qualities and the sad results that came about in the account of the Flood and the Ark.



Swedenborgian Wellness

Dorothy Travers-Dávies

Let's talk about the most important organ in the body. It weighs, normally, only three pounds and is the chemical-processing plant and distribution center for almost everything that enters the body through the walls of the alimentary canal. Before I received my holistic training, I thought that Lydia Pinkham's Pink Pills and Caroid and Bile Salts were the only preparations available to help this organ. And I understood little about it because the commonly published articles completely neglected it. By now you have guessed that I am talking about the liver, the most important biotransformer in the body. This process in the liver defends the body against the toxic effects of a wide variety of environmental chemicals such as insecticides, herbicides, dyes, food preservatives and a full spectrum of carcinogens.

Several enzymes systems in the liver accomplish this biotransformation of drugs and foreign compounds which enter the body through ingestion, the lungs and the skin. So consider: if you both drink and smoke and take in toxic substances through the lungs as well as ingestion, you are challenging the system that is the back-up system for the cardio-vascular system. We hear a great deal these days about heart problems, but few are addressing themselves to the organ that purifies the blood and cleans toxins out of the bloodstream. One-half ounce of pure alcohol, the amount in a standard drink, starts a decrease of the function of the liver.

If the drinker is also a smoker, poisons from the tobacco smoke, during an evening of drinking, can stay in the body for hours or days, depending on how much alcohol the liver must dispose of and how efficient the liver is performing. The synergistic action of alcohol and smoking has been recently published by the International Agency for Research on Cancer in Lyons, France. It was found that the risk of esophageal cancer was 18 times higher for someone who smoked moderately and drank heavily (a liter a day). A person who both smoked and drank heavily increased the risk 44 times.

When the liver is preoccupied with substances like alcohol and the 4,000 dif-

ferent chemicals inhaled from cigarettes (almost all of which are known carcinogens), it puts aside other important functions, such as clearing fat from the bloodstream. The lipids and fat byproducts begin to clog the blood at the same time that the chemicals from the smoke increase the coagulating tendencies of the blood. This thickening starts clogging the capillaries which are the cells that carry food and oxygen to the body cells.

In all the holistic literature there is one important liver restorative treatment. The research goes back more than 50 years to Germany where it was discovered that the liver could be stimulated to a higher level of function by caffeine taken as an implant in the colon. This procedure is used in the clinics that are run by American medical doctors on the off-shore islands, in Canada and in Mexico. They have been forced to flee American soil due to the monopolistic and autocratic American Medical Association.

I personally interviewed an M.D. who had cured himself of a pancreatic cancer using nutrition, meditation and coffee implants for a number of years. He is the director of a cancer clinic in California. These techniques are used in cancer clinics in Scandinavia, Germany and Switzerland. But the coffee implants is for higher health level, not just for a disease syndrome. It is considered a live restorative technique. And it is very simple. Use one cup of caffeinated coffee to two cups of water, keeping the mixture at body temperature. Implant in the colon and retain for at least 12 minutes. (It is best to clear the bowel first or use this procedure after the lower intestine has been evacuated.)

The peristalsis of the lower bowel will not be affected, but within 4 seconds, the liver will react. When fasting or detoxifying, when coming off alcohol, nicotine or drugs, this technique will alleviate many symptoms. In some clinics it is advised many times during the day depending on the discomfort and condition of the individual. For more than 8 years, I have found it the most important health maintaining technique. ☐

People and Places

Urbana Names New President

Dr. Paul G. Bunnell has been named President of **Urbad** his new responsibilities as of May 20, 1985. Dr. Bunnell was serving as Vice President for Administration and as Assistant to the President of The Defiance College, a position he had held since 1981.

He received his A.B. degree in Health and Physical Education from Ohio Wesleyan University; his M.Ed. degree in Physical Education, Health, and Recreation from the University of Toledo; his Deacon's Orders from the United Methodist **Chruch** (he attended the United Theological Seminary in Dayton); and his Ph.D. in Administration of Higher Education from the University of Toledo. He has served in numerous administrative and teaching capacities at several colleges, and he has served his church as part time Supply Pastor in the Ohio West Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Among the special awards he has received are the Service Award presented by the Student Senate on behalf of the student body of The Defiance College and a Special Support Award presented by the football coaches and players of Defiance.

A native of Bradford, Ohio, Dr. Bunnell, 44, is married to Ruth Ann (Nicodemus) Bunnell. They have two children, David, 21; and Paula, 16.

Cambridge Church Offerings Expand

The Church of the New Jerusalem, Cambridge, Mass., has been steadily increasing its reputation in the Harvard area of Boston as a site for special events. The historic Chapel has become especially popular for concerts, usually of small ensembles. Recently, Swedenborg School of Religion student Ken Turley and his wife Laurie Turley, who

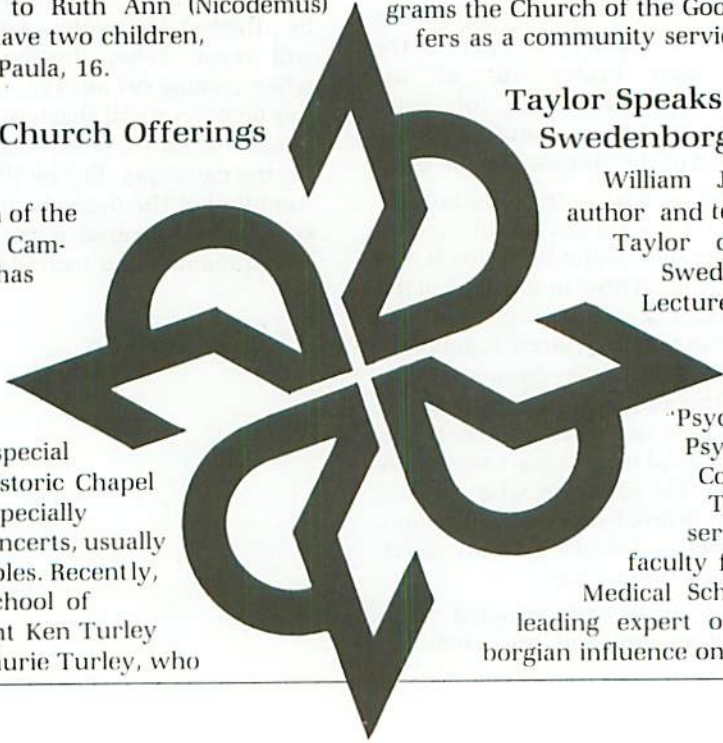
is trained in dance and movement, helped present "The Call To Courage," an inter-faith service of original music and dance. The contemporary service celebrated the many faces of the One Creator through readings, prayer, movement and song. All donations went to support the Harvard Square Meal Program and the World Hunger Relief Fund. The Cambridge Chapel is looking for the somewhat unusual donations of a baby grand piano to enhance their capacity to stage high quality concerts. If interested, you may respond to the Rev. F. Robert Tafel, Church of the New Jerusalem, 50 Quincy St., Cambridge, Mass., 02138. Tel: (617) 864-4552.

Presentation on Medicinal Herbs and Disease

Richard DeSylvia, practicing herbalist, wildcrafter, herb farmer, lecturer, past editor of the *Ontario Herbalist Association Newsletter*, owner of a herb milling business and college teacher of herbal therapeutics presented an evening talk on "Herbal Medicine and the Nature of Disease" at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Kitchener, Ontario, on May 9. The program was one of many occasional public lectures and programs the Church of the Good Shepherd offers as a community service.

Taylor Speaks at Swedenborg Library

William James scholar, author and teacher Eugene Taylor concluded the Swedenborg Library Lecture Series for the academic year 1984-85 with a talk entitled "Psychiatry and the Psychotherapeutic Counter-Culture." Taylor has been serving as adjunct faculty for the Harvard Medical School. He is the leading expert on the Swedenborgian influence on William James,



and thus on the beginnings of the psychiatric movement in this country.

Tafel at Urbana

The Rev. Richard Tafel, Jr. gave a guest presentation at Urbana University in May on "The Swedenborgian Connection," in which he discussed the affiliation between the General Convention of Swedenborgian Churches and Urbana University. The Rev. Tafel is minister of the Kemper Road Center for Religious Development in Cincinnati. He was recently named Chair of the Council of Ministers for the Swedenborgian Church and was also recently appointed to the Urbana University Board of Trustees. A past Master of the Mariemont Masonic Lodge and currently captain in the Montgomery Community Fire Company, the Rev. Tafel holds degrees from Dickinson College and

Andover-Newton Theological School, and is a graduate of the Swedenborg School of Religion.

Van Boven Receives Honors

Octogenarian and longtime member of the Swedenborgian Church, Alice Van Boven was recently featured in a full-length story in the University of Redlands alumni magazine by noted authoress and writing professor Roberta Smoodin. For her consistent service to the Redlands community in Southern California, where she has lived for the past 77 years, Alice Winslow Perry Van Boven has received an Alumni Citation and the Knights of the Round Table Grail. She is active in the Riverside, California Swedenborgian Society.

Annual Meeting N.C.T.S. Corporation

The Annual Meeting of the Corporation of the New Church Theological School will be held at the New Church Assembly grounds, Almont, Michigan at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 29, 1985, to elect officers and transact such other business as may properly come before it. One such item of business is a recommendation of the Board of Directors to amend Article VI, Section 1 of the By-Laws.

The Board of Directors at its meeting on March 31, 1985 voted unanimously to recommend the following amendments to Article VI, Section 1: Change the last sentence by deleting the existing sentence: "This article shall be amended only by a unanimous vote at an annual meeting of the Corporation, the notice for which shall contain the specific amendment proposed" to "This article may be amended by an affirmative vote of at least three quarters of the members present and voting at an Annual Meeting, the notice for which shall contain the specific amendment proposed."

At their meetings March 6-11, 1985, the Board of Managers of the Swedenborg School of Religion adopted the following resolution:

The Merger Committee anticipating that we will be able to develop a strategy for

merging the Board of Managers and the Board of Directors by as early as the 1986 Convention, it was moved, seconded and voted affirmatively that Article VI, Section 1 of the By-Laws of the Corporation of the New Church Theological School be amended so that the last sentence specify "three-quarters" vote instead of "unanimous."

This vote was taken in connection with current efforts of both Managers and Directors to find a way to merge the two separate boards into a single board. In addition, in reviewing the requirements to be authorized to grant degrees by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts it appears that Article VI, Section 1 is too restrictive, and a slight easing of the Article to permit change when mandated by an overwhelming majority (3/4 voting in the affirmative) is desirable. □

Convention Notes, 85'

Last-minute details, which we hope will reach you before you depart on your way to either Almont or Windsor, are these:

Phone Numbers:

Almont New Church Assembly -

(313) 798-8487 or (313) 798-3575.

University of Windsor (519) 253-4232,
extension 3274

(this extension is at our convention desk)

Convention Central Office (Newton, MA)
(617) 969-4240

(this office will be open all summer, and
during convention sessions.)

Travel Information:

Driving directions will have been included in letters of acknowledgement of your registration. If you have further questions, please phone the Central Office (above).

Airplane travelers - when you arrive at Detroit Metro Airport, pick up your bags at baggage claim and proceed to the Shortway Limousine Desk in the same area. The people there will have information on how you'll get to Almont or Windsor, if you forget.

TO ALMONT: On Saturday, June 22, Shortway Limo will take groups of people from the airport directly to Almont to the camp. On other days, you will be met by the Convention van at the same place, Shortway Limo desk. There will be a small charge for this transport, which will be added to your Almont bill, or billed to you there.

TO WINDSOR: Beginning Tuesday afternoon, June 25 (only for those who HAVE to be in Windsor early Wednesday morning), and throughout the Convention, pick up your bags at baggage claim and proceed to the Shortway Limousine Desk in the same area. There you will be met by an About Town Taxi driver who will take you directly to the registration area at Vanier (VAN-yay) Hall at the University of Windsor. This trip will cost in the neighborhood of \$8-10.00, U.S., and you should pay the driver directly.

Convention Staff:

The Convention Desk Staff this year will include veterans Lee Richardson of Fryeburg, ME and Boston; Dan Dyer of New

York City, and Sarah Dole of Boston and Sharon, MA. Lee has just graduated from Newbury College in Boston; Dan is a student at Baruch College, NYC (across the street from the Swedenborg Foundation!), and Sarah has completed her second year as a voice major at Boston Conservatory. Newcomers to the desk are Gail Perry, a hotel management major at Johnson & Wales College in Rhode Island and daughter of our Assistant to the Treasurer John and Anne Perry of Sherborn, MA; and Paul Coats of St. Louis, a member of the Garden Chapel, musician and composer, and a new student at Swedenborg School of Religion in the Fall. They will be ably assisted by local desk committee members Joyce and John Fekete of Livonia, MI and Joy Fekete Fleming of Windsor, and by Marjorie Mott-Hogg of Royal Oak, MI. Central Office director Muff Worden will be there too. That should be enough people to handle ANYthing!!

Rates:

Rates for Convention were published in the March *Messenger*, but are listed here again for your convenience:

ALMONT:

Adult in room: \$27. U.S. per day;

Adult/s and teens in dorm:

\$20.00 U.S. per day;

Children 6-12, \$12. per day;

Small children in parents' room (3-6 yrs) \$4. per day.

WINDSOR: BASED ON WEDNESDAY DINNER THROUGH SUNDAY LUNCH:

Adults in single room: \$106.86 U.S.,
\$138.92 Can.

Adults in double room: \$97.65 U.S.,
\$126.95 Can.

Youth (10-18), double: \$87.15 U.S.,
\$133.30 Can.

Children (3-9) in bed in parents' room: \$62.96 U.S., \$81.85 Can.

Children (3-9) in sleeping bag in parents' room: \$24.19 U.S.,
\$31.45 Can.

Please note these prices *include* Wed. through Sun., and are NOT a per-day charge!

LAST-MINUTE REGISTRATIONS:

If you should decide at the last minute to come to Convention, you will be welcome. You will be even more welcome if you take a couple of minutes to phone us before you leave home so that we may expect you. Phone numbers are above. THANKS!
(Pre-Convention week at Almont will be too full, we think, to allow any last-minutes, so be SURE to phone ahead!)

CONVENTION 1986 WILL BE IN BOONE, NORTH CAROLINA. More later. ☐

ADVANCE CONVENTION REGISTRATION

(We hope you'll join us in a wonderful week. The theme is Communication!)

General Convention, 1985, Almont and Windsor

June 26-30, 1985

NAME _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE/PROV _____ ZIP _____

ACCOMPANIED BY: _____

CHILDREN: NAME AND AGE:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

NCYL MEMBERS BETWEEN AGES 13 AND 18 PLEASE FILL THIS IN:

_____ My parent/s will be at Convention. They are _____

_____ My guardian at Convention (if no parents present) is _____

REGISTRATION FEE

_____ I have enclosed a check for \$25.00 (\$15.00 if BEFORE May 15, 1985) made out to GENERAL CONVENTION '85, to cover registration. Everyone 12 years of age and over must pay this fee. Registration is PER PERSON and covers some Convention costs and special events. Mail this form and your fee to Central Office, 48 Sargent St., Newton, MA 02158.

TRANSPORT

_____ I will arrive at Detroit Metro Airport on: Date & time _____
Airline & Flight _____

_____ I am driving to Convention on: Date _____
My first meal will be _____ breakfast _____ lunch _____ dinner on: _____

_____ I am a passenger in the car of: _____
Arriving at Convention on: date _____ time: _____

_____ I need directions to ALMONT from: _____

_____ I need directions to WINDSOR from: _____

_____ I will arrive at Windsor Airport on: Date & time _____
Airline & flight # _____

(NOTE: PICKUPS HERE ARE SCHEDULED ONLY JUNE 26 THROUGH 30)

_____ OTHER MODE OF TRANSPORT _____

Arrival date & time _____

HOUSING

_____ I would like a single room.

_____ I would like a double room, sharing with _____

(If you don't have a roommate yet, be sure to answer the following)

_____ I would like to have a roommate assigned to share my room.

_____ I/We would like (if possible) to have a room near _____

_____ (For Almont) I would like dormitory accommodations @\$20. per day, adult.

Please also complete the reverse side!

SPECIAL NEEDS

- ☐ I am a vegetarian, with no other restrictions.
- ☐ I have these dietary restrictions: _____
- ☐ I am not able to climb stairs or hills
- ☐ I am not able to walk very far without discomfort
- ☐ I have these medical requirements: _____
- ☐ I am _____ diabetic; _____ a heart patient; _____ other: _____
- ☐ Other physical/special/dietary needs: _____

(If you don't let us know, we may not be aware of your needs!)

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR CHILDREN

(Children's programs will run during Pre-Convention days beginning Saturday and continuing through the week until after worship on June 30)

- ☐ My child/children will be participating in the Children's Program for ages 4 to 12 beginning on: date _____
- ☐ My child/children will need the Child Care program for age 3 and under beginning on: date _____
- ☐ My child's/children's special needs are: _____
- ☐ My child has _____ has not _____ attended a pre-school program

OTHER PROGRAMS

I wish to co-register for the following programs:

- ☐ Ministers' Study Committee (Almont, June 20-22; limited to Comm. Members.)
- ☐ *Pre-Convention Conference (Almont, June 22-26; open to all)
- ☐ *Music and Movement Workshop (Almont, June 23-26; open to all)
- ☐ New Church Youth League Officers (Almont, June 23-26; officers only)
- ☐ Council of Ministers (Almont, June 22-26; ministers & SSR students)
- ☐ Ministers' Spouses (Almont, June 22-26; ministers' spouses only)
- ☐ Women's Alliance Luncheon on Friday, June 28.
- ☐ *Proprioceptive Writing Workshop (Almont, June 30-July 3; open to all)
- ☐ *LEI (Leadership Education Institute) (Almont, June 30-July 7; open to all college-aged people)
- ☐ *R & R (Rest and Recreation) (Almont, June 30-July 3-ish; open to all, as space permits.)

(NOTE: ASTERISK (*) DENOTES ADDITIONAL FEE REQUIRED.

We will be in touch with you to give you more information on your choice.)

LETTERS

Growth Centers

Dear Editor

The report on developments at Almont, in the April **Messenger**, was exciting and informative. The progress being made in setting up new centers in various parts of Convention is very encouraging as we work toward a revitalized church.

I want to clear up a misunderstanding in the April article by Ron Brugler. Ron wrote: "I sense that Almont's vision has much in common with those who are working on the idea of establishing such a center in the Middle Atlantic area, but from what I have read of their work thus far, I must question the feasibility of a year-round center that intends to rely almost entirely upon Swedenborgian leadership, participation and funding."

In **The Messenger** article on **Swedenborgian Growth Centers** in January, I wrote: "The success of the Center (proposed for the Middle Atlantic area) will depend on involving non-Swedenborgians in leadership roles and as participants. To make the Center self-supporting, the facilities must be used a good part of the time."

One of the main reasons for establishing a Growth Center is to reach out to and serve people beyond our own limited membership. We have spoken of a Conference Center for "meetings, conferences, seminars, workshops, lectures, films and discussions for up to 100 people, with overnight accommodations for 30 people." Facilities would be made available for outside groups on a rental basis. We envision a Swedenborgian library, research and study center that would be available to church members and *other interested persons*, including scholars in residence and writers, and courses offered in Swedenborgian studies. The hospice and day care center that we have described would be primarily for people outside the church.

Our concern to be of great use, and our need to become self-supporting, require that we reach out beyond ourselves, to offer our facilities and our programs and leadership to the world around us.

Ernest O. Martin
Wilmington, Delaware

Reservations

Dear Editor,

I recently received a copy of the new Constitution and Bylaws for the General Convention of Swedenborgian Churches prepared by General Council. I have two concerns. The first regards the term "New Age," which I feel is inadvisable because it is used by every generation to refer to their own programs. Another item I question is the proposed abolition of delegates. While it is good to let all have a voice in decisions, the policy of letting everyone present vote favors the churches near to the convention meeting. Churches far away, who can send only a few of their members to convention, are at a distinct disadvantage when important matters are being decided. Furthermore, if there are no delegates, how can those who attend claim tax exemption for expenses incurred in getting to the meetings?

Alice Van Boven
Redlands, Calif.

My Church

"My church is the home of my soul, the altar of my devotion, the hearth of my faith, the center of my affection and the foretaste of Heaven. It claims first place in my heart, the highest place in my activities, and its unity, peace and progress concern my life in this world and that which is to come. I owe it my zeal, my benevolence, and my prayers. When I neglect its services, I injure its good name, I lessen its power, I discourage its members, and I chill my own soul.

(From a Boston Society member to the Rev. Henry Clinton Hay, 1929.)

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