

AUGUST 1965

CONVENTION ISSUE

# NEW-CHURCH MESSENGER



# NEW-CHURCH MESSENGER

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The opinions of contributors do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors or represent the position of the church.

AUGUST, 1965

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## ESSENTIAL FAITH OF THE NEW CHURCH

There is one God, and He is the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Saving faith is to believe in Him and keep the Commandments of His Word.

The Word is Divine and contains a spiritual or inner meaning which reveals the way of regeneration.

Evil should be shunned as sin against God.

Human life is unbroken and continuous, and the world of the spirit is real and near.

## Keeping the Divine among men

The 1965 Convention, held in the Brockton, Massachusetts, area, was notable in several respects. It opened on June 24 with a challenging address by Convention's president, the Rev. Richard H. Tafel, in the Bridgewater Church; and it closed on June 27 with a moving sermon by the Rev. Brian Kingslake. This sermon was broadcast over Radio Station WBET. Both of those discourses appear in the present issue.

Of importance was the report of the meeting of officials of Convention and officials of the General Church of the New Jerusalem, with the aim of establishing more cooperative relations between the two sister churches. The results of this meeting appear to be gratifying. The MESSENGER will later carry more details.

Personally, your editor was the most impressed—indeed, thrilled—by the reports of the three earnest and sincere ministers of the experimental project at Bellevue, Washington, known as Project Link. This is no reflection upon other splendid reports and addresses. Although space in the MESSENGER is at a premium, we decided to print the reports of Project Link in full. For some time we have been in a state of “suspended judgment” regarding Project Link. But no more. We are now convinced that this is one of the finest undertakings made by our church. What stands out in my mind in particular is that Project Link is a demonstration that the primary concern of our church is people, with all their problems, their frustrations, their guilts, their sorrows. What finer thing could be said of our church than that it is a church that cares—cares for the individual human being with all his frailties, his failures, his faults, yes, even his misdeeds; that its primary aim is ever to lift the individual to a higher spiritual plane; and that it measures its creativeness not by the magnificence of buildings of brick and stone, which it erects, nor by the size of its budget and its endowment fund, nor even by the number on its membership roles; but by its success in helping people to attain peace of mind and growth in love to God and their fellowmen.

In this connection we quote the words of Jerome A. Poole, a young theological student, who along with his classmate, Randall E. Laakko, spent a part of the year working with Project Link:

“It (Project Link) is God and man centered rather than centered on the institution, and it reaches out to individuals for the sake of each of these individuals, not for the sake of the preservation of the church.”

To this may we add: What better way can the church find to keep the Divine among men than by a concern for human beings? What more glorious image of our church could we wish for than the image of a church which cares for people? After all, did not God enter the World in the person of a humble servant to save man? Must not this saving of man always be the first object of the church?

Sometimes even good and kind church people become cynical and say, with special reference to one whom they have pronounced worthless: “You can’t make a silk purse from a sow’s ear.” Well, we make nylon from coal, and wonder drugs from what appears to be filth. Paul once wrote that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, “of whom I am chief” (I Tim. 1:15). The Lord has been transforming human character since the beginning of the race of man. True, a man cannot change himself, but he can put himself in the way of the Power that can change him. It is the task of the church to guide him and to aid him to find this way so that he can live a fuller life. If the church fails in this, it has failed to keep the Divine among men. There is no worthless human being, because there is none who cannot be transformed. Even the thief on the cross was promised by the Lord a place in Paradise.

## *A Call To Service*

by Richard H. Tafel, Sr.

As we convene for this our One Hundred and Forty-Second Session of the General Convention of the New Jerusalem, to take thought for our Church which we would make increasingly the Lord's Church, may we be mindful that, "Unless the Lord build the house, They labor in vain that build it; Unless the Lord keep the city, The watchman waketh but in vain."

We have assembled to the challenging call of our Convention Theme, "Here am I: send me!" May this be our inspiration during these days before us, that we may truly be sent forth of the Lord in the same spirit and with the same message as were those whose going forth into all parts of the Spiritual World we have been celebrating this month.

The earnest words of the Prophet Isaiah, "Here am I; send me!" cannot but also call up to our minds the consecration and the heroic efforts of those who have labored before us; and especially that humble "Servant of the Lord" whose spiritual mantle has fallen upon us as a church. Here, then, is at once the content of our call, as well as its inspiration. First let me speak of the "call" itself: that upon which we are being sent by the Lord.

I am struck more and more forcibly by the astounding similarity between the world of Swedenborg and our world of today. It also was a world that was delighting itself in gadgets, different from our present gadgets though those might be. It was a world mighty like ours in interests and attitudes.

Like ours, it was an age that was putting its trust in "scientism"—faith in science—though it did not call it by that name.

Men were placing their highest reliance on human ingenuity and the newly discovered power of science. Literally nothing was impossible! (does that not have a modern ring?) And along with that growing confidence in man's ability to build his future with his own hands alone, religion and the Church became more and more irrelevant. Nature and the laboratory were held to be the proper sources of truth, rather than the Bible — which could be called the "Holy Word of God" only by way of ancient superstition, now happily dispersed by the new learning. The heavens, rather than "declaring the glory of God," merely demonstrated the new physics, its majesty and grandeur compressed into laws, principles, and theories. And God, once worshiped as Creator of the world and as the Heavenly Father of His children of earth, was pushed further and further out of His Creation, reduced at best to a First Cause, to nothing more than the initial "push" needed to start the universe spinning on its automatic way.

Again, one cannot help seeing the amazing parallels between those times and our own! We can hear the scornful laughter of the 18th century, at the thought of taking seriously such things as angels, reflected in the returning Russian astronauts' remark, "We saw no angels nor any heaven!" If all this is true, does it mean

that the wheel of progress has come around to a full stop? That the very concept of progress is itself a delusion? What does this do to our conviction that Swedenborg stood on the threshold of a New Dawn and heralded the Second Coming of the Lord?

But suppose we and Swedenborg are standing in the same age, he at the beginning and we perhaps well into it?—Call it the "Post-Christian Era," if you will, which now seems to be the fashion. Then the shaking, the breaking up, the tearing down, and the uprooting of old ideas, outworn concepts, and spiritual principles and insights which can no longer serve man's needs is a continuing process — just as the Second Coming itself is continuing, progressive, ongoing. What we are witnessing in our times, then, is not the repetition of a similar cycle of events observable in Swedenborg's day, but the further working out of the very trends which he saw beginning in his time!

This would also account very nicely for the amazing relevance of not only what he was inspired to formulate as the principles of a New Faith, but accounts also for his method and approach to the modern mind. He began his spiritual journey, you remember, by attempting to make the fact of "Spirit" stand up against the physical and the material. He ended by experiencing the reality of "Spirit," thereby adding a new dimension to our existence. by demonstrating the two-fold nature of our universe, spiritual and material, he showed how there was ample room

for God, both within and beyond the observable universe, and a place for heaven and angels as well. By perceiving the true nature of the Bible as God's handiwork as well as man's, he restored it to its position of authority as the Crown of Revelation, the one unfailing source of doctrine and life. Then having found a place for God in our two-world universe, Swedenborg proceeded to make Him relevant to us in His Divine Humanity.

Take these inspired teachings of this Servant of the Lord point by point; hold them up against the needs of our times, and see how beautifully they match! Note their utter relevance! Here, then, is both our call, and the message we are to proclaim! Speak to our times, to present world needs, the still-new truths of this new age of our Lord's Second Coming!

Now let me say a word about the "inspiration" of this call to serve our Lord. I am going back to the very beginning of the 6th chapter of Isaiah, the Call to Service. It begins, "In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne . . ." In other words, there must be that death of an earthly king, before there can come the vision of the Lord "high and lifted up, his train filling the temple." There had to be a "dying" within the person of the young Isaiah, before he could become a prophet and speak for, and in behalf of, his Lord. His self-

ish ambitions, his desires, his pride, all thoughts of self must be let go of and die, before he could see his Lord who was calling him to serve. There must come that abject confession of unworthiness, coupled with an intense zeal to do God's will on earth as it is in heaven, before there can come that answering commitment, "Here am I; send me!"

We do not know what it cost Isaiah to answer this call to serve. In the comparable case of Emanuel Swedenborg, we know something of the price. He tells us of his terrific struggles to put down his pride in his own accomplishments, to turn his back on fame, and to put himself unreservedly in the hands of his Lord to do His will.

He had to "die" to the things of the world, outward fame and reputation, that he might give his life to the Lord in a further and nobler service.

My friends, is it not time that the "King Uzziah" within us also die, that we may see the Lord "high and lifted up?" Is it not high time that the love of self — the sense of our own importance; our selfish interests and petty concerns; our foolish striving to have our own way; our little conceits that this church should run, must run, my way or I "won't play" — is it not high time, I say, that all this "King Uzziah" die so that we may hear the Lord calling to our beloved church, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" Then, only — and let us be in deadly earnest about this — then, only, can our response be true and deep and sincere: "Here am I; send me!"

Will you join me in praying, in utter commitment to our Lord, so that as members of a church dedicated to His service we may dare to make that response? Will you join me in praying that the "King Uzziah" within me and within you "die"? Everything inside us which

stands in the way of our fulfilling as a Church the challenging mission to which we are being called by your Lord? Will you pray with me for a deeper sense of devotion, for a greater measure of self-sacrifice, for rekindled zeal, and for that spirit of re-dedication to our Lord, whereby we "lose" our life only to "find" it in his service?

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### Prayer of Dedication and Commitment

Dear Lord: we have sought to save our life by withholding complete and total commitment to thee. We have sought to serve thee, while yet seeking to serve our own purposes, our own interests, our own desires.

We have dared to build this Church, and to call it "New Jerusalem." We boast of our proud heritage, the treasures of heavenly truths entrusted to us. We pride ourselves upon the glorious mission to which thou hast called us: to herald thy Second Coming as thou dost move to "make all things new." And, withal, we have not died as to ourselves, that we might find our life in thee!

Dear Lord: accept our confession of sin and wrong-doing as a church. Blot out our unfaithfulness to thee, and our unlovingness to one another. Wash us, and re-baptize us in water and fire, in total and unswerving allegiance to thee and to thy New Evangel.

Hear this our prayer, and hear thou it is our chastened but wholehearted response to thy Call to Service, "Here am I; send me!"

Amen.

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### Cover Picture

The picture on our cover page we owe to Miss Doris Bowers of Washington, D.C. It is taken in front of the beautiful Brockton church edifice. The men shown are, from left to right: Rev. Richard H. Tafel, Sr., President of Convention; Stewart E. Poole, Vice President of Convention; and Rev. Theodore T. Foster, minister of the host church, the Brockton Society.

The following five reports on Project Link summarize the very significant experiment that is being carried out by our church in Bellevue, Washington. We urge all MESSENGER readers to carefully peruse it.

## PROJECT LINK

### Searching, Testing, Learning, Growing

by David P. Johnson

Project Link was many years in evolving. In fact it goes as far back as our Judio-Christian background. More specifically and more generally it goes back to all man's search to understand himself, his fellowman and his God. Time after time man has grasped new insights into the meaning of his existence, and then has hastened to dogmatize and institutionalize his discoveries; that is to perpetuate, in some formalized way, what he has learned.

In ancient times this was meaningful, for comparatively little was known and discoveries were made slowly. Swedenborg, many years in advance of his times, added greatly to the known knowledge of his day through his scientific research and theological experiences. What he discovered was possible because of his amazingly open mind and spirit. Today the rapidity of discovery and consequent change in the understanding of our world tend to outrun the keenest minds. In religion as well as in science the inquiring mind must be encouraged, if we are to make the use of our theology relevant to today's needs.

So much of what gave life stability through tradition and custom and in long established friendships lived out in the same surroundings, simply is no longer a reality. The basic truths of religion remain the same. The basic need to understand ourselves, our fellowman and God remain the same. But the way we function with them in rapidly changing social, economic and living situations demands our most earnest and prayerful search and exploration.

It is in this broad framework that Project Link came into being. The need to explore and search and experiment with new forms of human intercourse in the light of our Swedenborgian-Christian faith became a commanding force for those who proposed it. In what greater tradition than that of the scientist-theologian, Emanuel Swedenborg, could this be done?

Project Link is an experimental program. Basically it seeks to find the means of making religion and the church more significant in our current world. The project began with no panaceas to offer, no earth-shaking programs, no blueprints for "the" way in which to move. But it did begin with a conviction that with patience, seeking minds and hearts, a determination to try, an abiding faith that God would give his blessing to any sincere effort to find increasingly effective ways to serve Him, something would emerge.

Are there new and significant ways to express our worship of God? Can we discover more creative ways to communicate Biblical and theological knowledge? Can a group of ministers, a team, searching and sharing together, bring a richness to the ministry that in the one man situation is sometimes missing and make for a loneliness, a limited scope and a onesided spiritual outlook? Is it possible to provide a means by which, through small groups in and out of the church, some of the centrifugal nature of life today can be overcome and man may find a deeper inner security once again?

Parallel with the development of these concepts, the faculty of our theological school was searching for more effective ways to train our ministers. This same inquiry engaged the thinking of most theological schools throughout our country. Out of the explorations of the faculty, the concept of the Laboratory Parish was born. In it the student could experience and test some of what he had learned. It was seen as an opportunity to further study in the field with two faculty members as a part of the team. Whether Project Link was born or not, efforts would have been made to establish the Laboratory Parish. Today one student has completed his work in the "Parish" and two are currently deeply involved.

The struggle to form and integrate a team is happily beginning to bear fruit. Bringing together three ministers and their wives, all of varying back-grounds and temperaments, demands a great deal of patience, insight, hours of "getting acquainted" and discovering the most effective functions that the individuals can perform. All the dynamics of groups are present plus the demands of the special task at hand. It takes courage and faith that are born of a willingness to keep the image of the goal uppermost. The blending of the talents and interests of three ministers, their wives, and currently two students, is a growing reality.

Experiments were made in our Religious Education program. We are greatly dissatisfied with the traditional format of Sunday School. Tests have repeatedly revealed that it is not very effective. The greatest influence, other tests demonstrate, is that of the parents. We have therefore concentrated through the Yokefellow program in helping parents to discover a deeper significance in their religious life. Our church school program is very simple, using

sound-film strips to present the message. Time then is spent with the children in small groups. We are by no means satisfied and are currently investigating "programmed learning" or the "teaching machine" as a tool to effectively communicate Biblical and theological knowledge. Much work lies before us in this field.

The search for the way to effectively work with groups was one of the most difficult of our early struggles. Some past knowledge of the Yokefellow program of prayer-therapy and later an opportunity — of one of the team to lead a group, became a pattern by which we discovered we could take our first big step. From one group in October 1963—all non-church members but one—it grew to five by the addition of four church groups in February 1964 and another non-church group in May.

Today there are ten groups in all, only three of which are composed of church members exclusively. They come to us from West Seattle, Northeast Seattle, the University district, Kirkland, Ballard and, of course, Bellevue. Another new group is in the process of forming and with it there will be some 70 persons with whom we are in contact who have never heard of our church before. These groups will undoubtedly change. Some members will disperse with whatever growth they have made. Some will come to our church. Many will return to churches from which they have come. And some will affiliate with a church for the first time in many years. But we will have the inner satisfaction that whatever way they go, they will have found a more meaningful way of life.

Though other youth groups are involved in the total Yokefellow program, our church youth group of 13 is unique. Dr. William Parker is preparing a special program for them involving completely fresh material. Arrangements were

made and leadership is given by our two students in the Laboratory Parish.

Except for the original group, non-church members have been asked to make a financial commitment to the church when they are formed. Later the original group was asked, too. The response varied widely and was not very inspiring. In December and January the first "paying" groups were established. Individuals pay \$15.00 per month. The fees are divided between the church, a scholarship fund, and the three ministers.

Encouraged to move into the fee basis by Dr. Cecil Osborne, West Coast Director of Yokefellow, Inc. and Dr. William Parker, author of our basic text "Prayer Can Change Your Life," we are told to anticipate more groups than we can handle. This, too, was confirmed by a local psychiatrist when a group of ministers considered establishing a "Pastoral Counseling Service" in Bellevue. The need for therapeutic groups is tremendous. So there is some prospect that an increasing proportion of the project can become self-supporting.

The Yokefellow program is one of about seven years standing in its current form and grew out of the blending of the disciplines of religion and psychology. Because of the breadth of its approach and the freedom of each leader to work in the framework of his own religious background, we are free to express our beliefs as we understand them. Not only this, but our own theology is such that we find greater use of the program than some we know in other churches. We are convinced that the wise use of psychology and religion is a fulfillment of the heritage left to us by Swedenborg whose interests covered these as well as many other fields. Yokefellow is a fine, ready-made tool to express our faith in the group experience.

All groups currently have the

leadership of two persons: 2 ministers, a minister and his wife, or a minister and student. If current growth continues we may reluctantly have to go to one-man leadership. Two persons help to check one another, pick up things the other misses and give a broader perspective of understanding and experience. Students wives are involved as participants in a group.

As people participate in the groups their self-discovery and emotional and spiritual growth are often startling. Many times it is slow and less dramatic. But the experience is one of seeing "regeneration" in vivid action. Love and understanding of one another within the group grows week by week as each one tries to help the other. Deep compassion on the one hand and exuberant joy on the other are often expressed. From time to time those who have literally feared God, have found him as a loving God. Others who have discarded Him, have found Him again.

As we are able to serve the searchings and longings of those within and without our church family, Swedenborg's statement "Religion is life and the life of religion is to do good" ceases to be words and becomes the reality of experience. Few religious bodies have laid greater claim to being practical and down to earth than ours has. And in Project Link we are reaching out in a new missionary spirit with new methods. Time and our faith and God's help will tell us just how effective we have been.

We are constantly faced with the limitation of time. Resolutely, though sometimes we feel hesitant, we concluded we must at present concentrate on our group program. It is now central in our church. Each person attends his group meeting regularly each week and each day commits himself to at least a half-hour "Quiet time" for prayer, meditation and reading.

This program provides a creative means for spiritual growth and we feel it is of greater usefulness than a program of many other activities. The only other group in the church is a women's guild which from its inception some six years ago, has served the church and others but has never had a money-raising project.

As we try to find our way we need your recognition of the sincere effort, the devotion and the hard work that is being given. We need your patient understanding that something new takes time to develop and we are happy to be able to present what progress we have made so far. We are anxious

to serve our fellow human beings with all the light our faith presents through the institution that has been established to that end, our church. But we are not interested in simply serving the institution. All in all we need it to be understood that we need time to try, to give all we've got, without being badgered to "produce."

We are on the track of something and the signs are very hopeful. It is not our desire to make hasty predictions about the future. Much is to be tested and much more to be learned, but we do hope we can increasingly share what we learn with the rest of the church.

## MANY THANKS

The MESSENGER feels sure it is speaking for all who attended the Convention in the Brockton area in extending its warmest thanks to the people and their ministers of Brockton, Bridgewater and Elmwood for their splendid hospitality, and for their efficient handling of the numerous details attendant on holding a convention. There were so many who helped in this matter, that we are hesitant about mentioning names, yet feel compelled to mention Mrs. Martin, Mrs. Alan W. Farnham, H. Page Conant, Harvey M. Johnson and Rev. Theodore Foster.

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## PRAYER THERAPY: A CHRISTIAN MINISTRY OF HEALING

by Calvin E. Turley

According to Dr. Ely of the University of Washington Graduate School of Medicine, 47% of all those who seek help for emotional distress go first to a clergyman. In matters of mental health, Dr. Ely sees the minister as "the first line of defense". And we in the parish ministry know that we are increasingly called upon for the ministry of healing. Increasingly, the Church is again hearing the commission of its Lord to "heal the sick" and "say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'" (Lk. 10:9). In our searching and seeking in Project Link, we have found a tool in a program of Prayer-Therapy which is proving to be of lasting significance in our effort to respond to "the cry for help" in our day.

Prayer-Therapy is an outgrowth of the Yokefellow program begun by Dr. Elton Trueblood in 1949. Today, the work is a blending of the insights and discipline of religion and psychology making use

of the small group as a "healing community of love." Briefly, the program has three interdependent aspects: psychological testing, group therapy and the discipline of individual quiet time.

The psychological testing is under the guidance of Dr. William Parker of the University of Redlands. Unlike most psychological testing, the results of tests taken are made known to the individuals concerned. With the conviction that spiritual growth is enhanced by an awareness of the specific and personal blocks which each of us must overcome, Dr. Parker and Cecil Osborne (West Coast Director of Yokefellows, Inc.) have developed the use of "Spiritual Growth Slips" for each group member in Prayer-Therapy. Each slip deals with one specific area of feeling; i.e. depression, guilt, fear, hostility, inferiority. The slip indicates the intensity of the individual's feeling revealed on his test and suggests some causes

which might lie behind the feeling. Included are reading assignments for help in pin-pointing the feeling, accepting it, and dealing with it. The emphasis is always on feeling, conscious or unconscious, and never on actions as such.

The group sessions (two hours each week) are essentially therapy—a time for seeking awareness and understanding. Here, in the security of the group, individuals are helped to explore and express their feelings, be they constructive or destructive. These are not problem solving groups; rather, they are opportunities for searching, for sharing, for analysis. Ground rules for participation in groups include: "Be personal, not abstract"; "Confess no one's sins but your own." The process of growth is sometimes painful, sometimes threatening, sometimes emotionally exhausting, but the spirit of love and acceptance, which develops among the members of a group over the months, is a thrilling thing to behold and be part of. One senses that here, indeed, is the "healing community of love", here, indeed, is the church in a fundamental expression of her healing power. (Ultimates?)

The discipline of quiet time is

a freely accepted—or rejected—discipline encouraging each group member to take one-half hour daily alone; a time for reading, meditation and prayer. We think of the quiet time as a time for synthesis; a time for growth and building; a time for forgiveness—given and received; a time for abandoning the feelings of fear, hate, inferiority and guilt in the presence of a God of love. For most people, this is not an easy discipline to accept or find meaningful at first, but for many, it becomes a precious time to be cherished.

The results of participation in the Prayer-Therapy program in terms of individual development—in terms of Christian healing and growth toward wholeness—are nothing less than outstanding. For those in the helping profession of the ministry, this is, indeed, a most rewarding experience. For me, after twelve years in the mission field, it is by far the most personally rewarding experience of my ministry.

In commending Prayer-Therapy to the serious consideration of fellow churchmen, I would share these comments concerning three areas of personal conflict through which I have had to work. To become an effective leader in Prayer-Therapy, I have had to:

1. Learn to be honest. Now this may sound like a simple, if not normal, expectation of a minister, but when we bring in the emphasis of “being honest about our feelings,” I have found a good many feelings which I would have preferred to ignore or deny. In seeking to be honest, I have had to . . .
2. Be willing to look within and to deal with the feelings I found. Among other things, for a minister to be effective as a leader in Prayer-Therapy, he must be truly willing to grow and truly willing to surrender many of his previous images of his role as a minister; i.e., the authority figure, the father figure, the saviour complex and the martyr complex.

3. An equally difficult conflict was that between concern for people vs. concern for the church and its institutional needs. I am absolutely convinced that effective leadership in Prayer-Therapy can only be arrived at when one's love for people takes precedence over his love for the Swedenborgian Church, or any other church. This I found a most difficult conflict, for my feelings of appreciation and indebtedness toward our Church ran deeper than I thought. There is forever the temptation to become “teacher” to a group; to straighten out their faulty thinking with tid-bits of Swedenborgianese; to minister to the needs of the institution rather than the needs of the people. The minister must be willing to accept and be comforted with each individual's response to God as he understands Him. Indeed, the need often arises to “stand by” while another rejects God altogether. For many, it is only after being free to reject that they are then free to grow. The process can be painful to the minister who has “found all the answers.” On the other hand, I am deeply grateful for the beauty of correlation between the teachings of the Swedenborgian Church and the basis of Prayer-Therapy.

Prayer-Therapy has proved an effective tool for us in the Christian ministry of healing. It has proved an expression of the church which has the capacity to make a difference—lives are changed. It has proved an avenue of entry into the life of faith. Prayer-Therapy is one way in which we have been able to respond creatively to “the cry for help.”

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## ELECTIONS

The following were elected by the recent Convention to fill its offices and boards:

Vice President, Stewart E. Poole; Recording Secretary, Horace B. Blackmer; Treasurer, Chester T. Cook; Editor of the MESSENGER, Bjorn Johansson; General Council, Roger Paulson, Albert Rado, George Dole; Board of Managers of the Theological School, William Woofenden, Robert Young, Dorothea Harvey, Peter Greeley; Board of Home and Foreign Missions, Othmar Tobisch, George Dole, Margaret Sampson, Adrienne Frank; Augmentation Fund Comm., Stewart E. Poole; Trustees of Pension Fund, Ernest Frederick, Wilfred Locke, Faith Greeley; Board of Education, Carolyn Blackmer; Board of Department of Publication, Jan Seibert; Nominating Committee, Robert W. Tafel.

## KIRVEN AWARDED DOCTOR'S DEGREE

Robert Kirven, who along with his duties as a teacher in the New Church Theological School has been studying towards a doctorate at the Brandeis University, was awarded the much coveted degree of Doctor of Philosophy on June 13. He completed his work in three years, a rather unusual accomplishment in this School, and furthermore was honored by being appointed Marshal of the Graduate Students at this commencement.

Dr. Kirven wrote his thesis on the subject, “Emmanuel Swedenborg and the Revolt against Deism.”, to which a more extended notice will be given later.

## RESULTS AND OBSERVATIONS FROM PROJECT LINK

by Owen Turley

As we approach the mid-point of our second year in Project Link, we on the team of ministers have some results and observations to share with the General Council and Churches of Convention. Certain questions have also arisen to which we have only partial, tentative or no answers—questions which will require the combined efforts of all in the Convention to even approach answers.

Project Link, a research program of the General Convention, has as its basic goal to search for, identify, and develop means, through the church, of meeting the needs of modern man in the world and culture in which he finds himself inevitably involved.

We have made a basic assumption, drawing upon the experiences of many, that the most effective means of communicating the deepest needs of men is in the small group. Several different approaches to the small group experience, have been used in the Project. Some of these have been effective to some degree and some have not. They have all led up to the present basic program—the Prayer-Therapy group. Through these groups the tools of psychology and religion have merged. The people in the groups have found increasing understanding and acceptance of themselves and others. Growth of the individuals involved is obvious and creative.

The Prayer-Therapy program has been the most effective means that we have discovered for reaching out to people outside the church in a meaningful way and reaching out to needs that are at once current and critical. We are

at the present time ministering to 10 groups in which there are about 70 people involved who are new to our church. There is a steadily increasing number of inquiries about our work and an additional group is now in the stage of formation. Most new recruits come to us by means of word of mouth publicity. Individuals who have found help and inspiration in a group tell their friends about it. Advertising and newspaper publicity have brought few results.

Prayer-Therapy groups are not new nor are they the exclusive invention of Project Link. The program and tools were developed and promoted through the West Coast office of Yokefellow Incorporated. Prayer-Therapy groups are in operation in many churches of several denominations. Yet, in a little less than a year, the program has grown to a point where others who have worked with the program for years are noticing our work. One minister who has been involved in the program in his own church for several years has commented to us to the effect that as he sees it we are doing more in ministering to the needs of people who have been outside the life of the church, than all the other churches in Bellevue combined. We feel he is being generous, yet, that we are doing significant work, is quite evident.

What then is the explanation of the success of Prayer-Therapy as it is practiced in Project Link? This is a difficult question to answer conclusively but we have at least some partial answers. There is the fact that Project Link is a research program and therefore is dedicated

to exploration. This in itself creates an atmosphere in which new approaches have a good chance for survival. The fact that we have a team of men and women working together in the ministry of the Project is also a contributing factor. We have had training and are increasingly seeking opportunities to improve our skills for doing this kind of work. As we work together we are a group ourselves and can thereby learn from first-hand personal experience—we can share in the growth and discovery that others are experiencing.

But even more basic to all the above, Project Link can find success in working with Prayer-Therapy because of the heritage that is ours through the Swedenborgian perspective on life. The observation has been made that we are able to work in a much freer atmosphere than can many other ministers from other church backgrounds. This puzzled us at first until we began to observe some of the struggles which others were having in attempting to correlate the feelings and understandings that come through Prayer-Therapy with their theological or philosophical backgrounds. Swedenborg's dedication to the concepts of growth—of regeneration, his own experience of self-discovery prior to his development of theological concepts—in short the total view of reality, creates an atmosphere in which the disciplines of psychology and religion come together and augment one another. Each releases and strengthens the effectiveness of the other as they operate in a Prayer-Therapy group. The freedom of the individual to discover, develop and relate his own unique God-given being to his fellowman and to God is noticeably enhanced in the theological atmosphere of Swedenborg.

One other result we can with gratitude report is a discovery. The church can be creative—can

reach out to people and their needs—regardless of the size or popular acceptance of that church. Indeed, just to the degree that we shift our concern from the maintenance and propagandizing of the institution to a concern for people and their growth to that degree does the church become creative and alive. As a point of fact our membership has not grown appreciably at this point in our work. Attendance at worship services has not greatly increased although, one can feel a distinct difference in the feelings of people who do attend and more participants in our Prayer-Therapy groups are beginning to find the worship service a meaningful part of their lives. Yet, there remains the fact that we are serving in a dynamic way more people who are not members of the church than we are serving members and this number is increasing. It is a good feeling to realize that we can be effective after years of frustration in trying almost desperately to find a way for our church to become a more useful tool in the Lord's hands.

Some questions remain to which we must address ourselves. What about this theological atmosphere of Swedenborg's which we have found so healthy as a part of the background and heritage of those of us working in the project? As another point of fact we do little teaching of Swedenborg's theology as such but, rather put our emphasis upon using what we understand of it in our work. So how do we provide for others to carry on this heritage? We have partial answers to this and a strong confidence that as time goes by the answers will become increasingly clear. Partially the answer lies in the fact that we make it clear that we are ministers of the Swedenborgian Church, that the teachings of the church have played a part

in our own development. It is our hope that others, as they grow in their own awareness of their needs and potentials will want to explore the heritage of the church that has provided opportunity for their growth in awareness. We have observed this happening in many small ways. To the degree that we are alert to opportunity to share our heritage and to the degree that we can conscientiously leave each individual in freedom to respond to that heritage as best fills his needs, we believe that the heritage will live to become increasingly effective in the years to come. God help us to be alert and increasingly help us to understand and eliminate our need to *control* the growth and regeneration of our neighbor!

Other questions before us are:

1. To what degree and in what ways can our churches with more firmly established traditions, put those traditions up against the close scrutiny of an exploratory atmosphere so necessary to the spirit of freedom needed to minister to people in new ways? The team is searching for ways in which we can be helpful in sharing our experience and talents with other churches. We will help where and when we can but we are limited by time and a need to explore much further than we have in our own work in Bellevue. Project Link is not limited to what we can discover and share. The whole church can put its heart in searching for answers to this question.

2. To what extent can team ministers be applied effectively elsewhere in the church? This is almost a "wait and see" question. It depends upon whether men now in the ministry and in the future find this a meaningful way in which to carry out their ministry. This is something which must come from the men themselves and can not be forced from the outside.

We have our experience to share with any who are interested in exploring the possibility. The two students from the Theological school, who are now doing their laboratory parish work with us, are now exploring the team concept as a way for them to minister.

3. How can a church become financially sound with the type of approach and program developing in Project Link? This is a question that has many facets. In Bellevue we are trying to confront an indebtedness of \$124,000 on new buildings as well as striving to meet the higher costs of personnel. We are experimenting with a possible solution to the higher costs of personnel by operating on a fee basis for non-church members in our Prayer-Therapy groups. This is in its infancy but holds some promise of being a useful direction in which to move.

Congregations which already own their buildings would not be faced with an indebtedness such as that faced in Bellevue. These churches could thus proceed without this financial problem. If their buildings do not provide the facilities needed, they could, in most cases, be sold and the proceeds would more than adequately provide for other buildings. A decision of this kind, however, would, in our opinion, be more intelligently made some time after the program is well under way. In other words, let building needs grow out of the experience.

We strongly believe that more thought and experience needs to be given to the possibility of working without heavy expenditures in new buildings. We are thoroughly convinced, at this point, that much more is to be gained in the capability of the church to reach out to serve people by expending more resources in personnel rather than in buildings.

## DISCOVERING A MEANINGFUL MINISTRY

by Randall E. Laakko

At mid-year of my experience at Project Link I find that my response to the project is one of overall excitement. From my point of view, that of a student, I find my total education and experience greatly benefitted by my involvement here in Bellevue. Through my participation in the team ministry and the Yokefellow Program I am finding myself feeling more assured that effective, meaningful ministering can be accomplished. I am seeing and I am involved with people on the level where unacknowledged or unknown feelings come into the light of awareness with the result that our lives are changed.

The effective ministry that is made possible through the team ministry far surpasses that which the individual man can accomplish. Within the team atmosphere it is possible to explore ideas and then try these ideas. The team ministry provides more resources from which to draw.

Functioning in the dual role of student and team member has been a valuable experience. There is freedom to explore the area of personal interests and freedom to function more fully as myself. The student does not serve as the fall-guy for the senior team members. He is instead given the challenge to function as an individual and to develop into a more creative, effective person.

The team ministry and the Yokefellow program has made it possible for the church in Bellevue to reach out beyond the limitations of contact with only church members. It is this contact beyond the church membership that makes the church in Bellevue truly an expression of God's dwelling with men. It is this outreach that I feel is so important if the church is to become alive.

## AN ANSWER TO THE PROBLEM

by Jerome A. Pogle

Is Project Link worth all the money, time and effort that is being put into it, and is it effective in its outreach as an arm of the church? My answer is definitely yes. As an intern, one who has only been around a short while, I cannot gather a large number of reasons to support this answer, but one thing I can do is share with those interested that which I see as the basic reason for calling Project Link a progressing success.

There is a certain phrase or statement that seems to be heard over and over again from many people belonging to the Swedenborgian denomination. This repeated phrase really puzzled me during my growing-up years and brought out many questions and a great deal of irritation when I heard it during my stay at the New Church Theological School. The statement is the never lost "... "The New Church is an intellectual church." I wish to stand over and against this and ask whether or not this is the case and thus true, and if it is true are we then not only half a church. It has always seemed to me that an intellectual church that has the answers, or a system in which answers can be found, ought to at least be able to communicate beyond itself and be of help to the world about it, the world in which it exists. I have seen the church doing very little of either successfully. Oh yes, there have been many reasons for this absence of success, reasons usually put forth in our tried and true phrases of rationalization—our New Church Doctrines call upon the intellect, any understanding man can see we have the truth. Is this the case though, are there only several thousand who are capable of understanding? I think not. My feeling and belief is that nearly everyone has the potential to comprehend and understand.

As a church then where are we? In a pretty tough spot, as I see it, but not yet one that we cannot get out of. Where do we move next? It seems that Project Link has an answer here. We move into a whole new realm, down a different avenue of approach, take a new look at our aims and goals to discover what we are after and why we exist, and become actively concerned with doing something about moving forward, about growing creatively. This is what we are trying to do, and are doing in part, at the Church of the Good Shepherd in Bellevue.

The Bellevue church is more than an intellectual center, it is a feeling church, one that seeks out human beings as emotional and feeling creatures as well as intellectual beings. Project Link exists to assist total growth to help the whole man grow, not simply a part of him. It is God and man centered rather than centered on the institution, and it reaches out to individuals for the sake of each of these individuals, not for the sake of the preservation of the church.

Why do I feel Project Link is a growing success? When I see so many people responding to the program being offered, and when I become aware of myself growing and developing more mature and meaningful relationships to others and the Lord, I feel proof of its success and a real reason for its support in Bellevue as well as programs like it in other areas. Before coming to Bellevue I had a good idea as to what success was and is in my life and the world about me, but never had I truly felt it like here at the Church of the Good Shepherd. Have you ever felt success? Do you feel it is still yet possible for our church to become effective as an arm of the Lord? I do, and pray that we all do.

## A LIVE COAL ON THE LIPS

by Brian Kingslake

Once when I was a little boy I saw a distorted image of myself in a shiny copper tea kettle. I found that as I drew closer to it with my face, the image became more distinct. But when my lips touched it I squealed with pain, for the kettle was full of boiling water. My lips swelled up, so that I could not speak for the rest of the day. Consequently, when I first heard of Isaiah's experience in the temple in Jerusalem, and how one of the six-winged seraphim took a live coal with tongs from the altar and laid it upon his mouth, saying, "Lo, this hath touched thy lips; thine iniquity is taken away and thy sin purged," my tender imagination was appalled, and I marvelled that Isaiah was able, after that ordeal, to speak at all, let alone say, "Here am I, send me."

But I have since come to realize that pain arising from preoccupation with one's **self** — one's own image — is often a necessary preliminary to commitment to the Lord's work. The pain is valuable, because it teaches us that self-love only gets us into hot water. We must turn away from our preoccupation with our image of ourselves, and look upwards to the Lord, and outwards to other people.

Isaiah needed that burning piece of charcoal to check his former course and redirect his activity into new and more fruitful channels. Hitherto his life had been like yours and mine, full of yieldings to the lower selfhood. His lips had spoken lies and his tongue had muttered perverseness. "Woe is me!" he cried, "for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips."

The lips, the mouth! What a wonderful organ is the mouth! By way of it we take in nourishment. By it we communicate; we give out words of sympathy, love and encouragement. With our lips we kiss. Yet what a cause of stumbling they are! the alcoholic, the toper, takes in strong drink by the mouth. The same lips which can sing, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts," can also tell the smutty joke, and foul up the whole environment — so that we "dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." To cleanse the lips, the mouth, is to go a long way towards purifying the whole person. As Jesus said to the pharisees, "A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things, and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things. For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

Purging the lips, therefore, goes much deeper than (say) washing the hands. Our hands represent our actions merely, but our mouth is the opening of a passage leading into the innermost parts. And it is the inner, secret areas of desire and motive which must be purified if we are to become messengers of God — apostles who are "sent" on His affairs.

Purification involves the breaking up and removal of the self-centered ego. When Isaiah said, "Woe is me, I am undone," he meant it literally. The "I" in him was *undone*. Only when our inherited selfhood has been undone and reduced to rubble under the battering ram of temptation can we be rebuilt as a temple in which the Lord can dwell.

Purification involves simplification, a stripping away of every-

thing which is of inferior quality and which causes a lowering of the value of the whole personality. He who wants the best, should not fritter away his time, talents and energy on the second or third best, or fourth best. Ambition to excel in certain directions, to achieve certain ends, to make a name and reputation, to amass property and possessions — these need not be evil in themselves, but they will have to be relinquished if they draw our attention away from that which is of absolute value. Pleasures and amusements, and petty social vices in which we indulge so as to be like men of the world, may be innocent enough, but we shall find ourselves giving them up as we advance in the spiritual life — not from any motive of asceticism, but because they devalue our personality. You cannot serve God and mammon.

It is the same in our church life. This also must be purified, if we are to hear the Lord's call, and answer, "Here am I, send me." By purification here I mean concentration on essentials, and the minimizing, if not the entire removal, of inessentials. The essentials of religion were defined by the Master Himself when someone came up to him and asked, "What exactly is this new teaching you are putting over?" He answered, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with heart, mind and strength; and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." *Love to the Lord, and love of people* — these are the two essentials of our Church life. How readily some of us plunge into inessentials, in order to escape the responsibility of these essentials!

It is so much easier and less demanding to serve on some commit-

tee, to be involved in some great project, some public relations effort that will bring the name of the Church prominently before the public, some drive for funds! Such work is gratifying to us, perhaps, because it makes us feel busy and important in the Lord's service. I am thinking of the priest and levite in the parable of the Good Samaritan, who were so busy with important affairs of the temple that they had no time to attend to the man who had fallen among thieves. That is a familiar symptom of a dying church—the placing of emphasis on externals rather than internals. The real work of the Church is with the Lord and with people, and this means that ministers and laymen alike should strive after an ever closer contact with the Lord and with people. This is sometimes troublesome, because it requires an expenditure of one's self. And so we try to avoid such contacts, by feverish activity on the level of the second-best.

Understand me, these church projects and organizational meetings are good in their proper place. But if made a substitute for the true work of the Church, which is to bring holiness and wholeness into people's lives—to bring the Divine among the people; then they become stumbling-blocks. Churches are not killed by obvious out-and-out corruptions. When these come they can be easily recognized, and generally produce a reaction before they have gone too far. Churches are much more likely to be destroyed by second-rate good things: good projects, good preoccupations, which are accepted as a substitute for the real work of God. God is not mocked! We may deceive ourselves, and a minister may deceive his parishioners, but we cannot deceive God. Nor are our parishioners deceived in the long run. They soon discover the difference between the genuine and the sham.

How are we to achieve this purity of aim and purpose—this simplicity of life, so necessary for the would-be servant and messenger of the Lord? In Isaiah's vision, the purification was affected by fire. Fire is the best consumer of garbage; it is also the best anti-septic, if we can take it. and fire, in a good sense, is the glorious, glowing, all-consuming, and all-renovating love of God. The Lord is the Sun of the spiritual heavens, shining in its strength. He is love itself; and to come near to this flaming source of all love is to be purged of every element of dross. To live in close daily contact with the Lord is the only really effective antidote to the corrupting influences of the Second Best. For when the Lord is felt to be near, we cannot, out of very shame, escape the challenge of the Best. You cannot wriggle out of your responsibility for the things that really matter when you are conscious that the Lord Jesus Christ is standing over you and reading your thoughts, penetrating right through to your hidden motives. That fire cuts inwards like a sharp sword.

At the Minister's open-air Communion Service held last week at

### KEEPING UP WITH THE KINGSLAKES

Immediately following the Convention, Rev. and Mrs. Brian Kingslake flew to England on vacation, where their address will be c/o Mrs. Newall, 2 Kingston Ave., Leatherhead, Surrey. They are returning to New York in the "United States," between August 6 and 11. From August 25 to Sept. 1 they will be at the Wayfarer's Chapel, Palos Verdes, California. During September: first week, San Diego; second week, Los Angeles; third week, San Francisco; fourth week, Bellevue, Wash., and Portland, Ore. From October 1st, c/o The Swedenborg Chapel, 4815 Broadview Road, Cleveland 9, Ohio, 44109.

Waltham, we were each given a slip of paper, and invited to write on it any problem that we might want to bring before the Lord, any resentment we wished to get rid of, anything from which we wanted release and purification. We then walked one by one to the fire and threw the slip onto the glowing coals, and watched it go up in smoke. I personally was deeply helped by this simple act of symbolism.

Purification by fire is a kind of washing, and the word used for it in the Greek of the New Testament is **baptism**, which, of course, is employed also for cleansing with water. So John baptized with Jordan water, whereas Jesus, who came after him and was mightier than he, baptized with the Holy Spirit and with fire. Water-washing is surface cleansing; fire penetrates deeper.

Isaiah, in the framework of Judaism, had to go into the temple to enjoy the shekinah experience, to see the Lord sitting upon the throne, and to have the seraph touch his lips with the live coal for his purging. But today you do not need to be a priest or enter any particular building, for the Lord God Jesus Christ is here with us, in His divine humanity, and he can, and will, baptize us wherever we happen to be. But as Isaiah did, so must we have a personal encounter with the Lord. He is the baptizer, and we must approach Him for our inner cleansing. We must not shrink nor hold back. We are as qualified for the experience of baptism by fire as were the apostles on that memorable day of Pentecost described in the Book of Acts, and he is available to us today as He was to them. We have but to know a minimum of truth concerning the Lord's nature and His holy Word, and He will fill that truth with the wind of His Spirit and the fire of His love, till they overflow and fill the whole place where we are.

That fresh breeze could blow through this Church of ours, if we wanted it to, sweeping away the paralyzing and suffocating smoke of past mistakes. And the tongues of fire could flicker over this congregation, as they did over those pioneer Christians in Jerusalem, inspiring us to new expressions of joy and praise (in languages known and unknown) and enduing us with power from on high.

There is quite a lot in this Church of ours, as in all church organizations, which needs to be burnt up. Let us draw close to the Lord in our private lives, and in our public lives, and His love will do the purifying for us. Malachi saw God as a refiner of silver, seated at his crucible, purging the sons of Levi. And, as I began this sermon with a little boy looking at his distorted image in a shiny copper kettle and trying to get it into focus, so I will end with our beloved Lord and Savior Jesus Christ gazing into our molten souls. Whenever we shun evils as sins against him, they float to the surface as scum, and he scoops them off. He continues doing this, until we have perfectly received Him, until He sees his divine image clearly reflected without distortion in the smooth liquid surface of our whole personality and life. Let our Church reflect Him, in purity and simplicity. Let us be men of God. And the joy and peace of heaven will descend upon earth, and the New Age will have dawned.

Amen.

## The Swedenborg Student

CONDUCTED BY THE REV. LOUIS A. DOLE  
FOR THE SWEDENBORG FOUNDATION

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Those today who have no knowledge of the internal sense of the Word are in obscurity as to its nature and meaning. We often hear it said that the Bible is the product of the church, that the Old Testament is the product of the religious insights of the Jews, and that the New Testament was the product of men of the early Christian Church. The reading for this month should make it clear that this is not the case. The church is the product of the Word, according to its ability to understand it, and this understanding makes the difference between the Jewish and the First Christian Church and between that and the New Christian Church.

That the Gospels are not the product of the First Christian Church should be self-evident. The Gospels were first spoken by the Lord, and were lived before they were written in books. It should be equally clear that the Old Testament was not the product of the men of that age: it was a revelation from God to them. Not only could the human penmen not have written the Word; they could not even understand it when it was given to them. It contains hidden depths beyond the comprehension of men and of angels as well.

Our reading for this month begins with the entreaty of Moses for the Israelitish nation, that they might be preeminent over all the people of the earth. In the letter this is not a legitimate request, but the internal sense, as quite

frequently happens, is the opposite of the appearance in the letter. Spiritually interpreted the desire of the Israelitish nation expresses the fact that those who learn and keep the precepts of the Word are enlightened to see the way of life.

The words of Moses, "I beseech thee, shew me thy glory," expresses the desire to see the inner truths of the Word. The glory of any church or of any individual mind is the truth that it possesses. To see the truth within the Word one must be in enlightenment, and no one can be in enlightenment unless he is in love to the Lord and to the neighbor and seeks truth for the sake of applying it to life. We read, "In heaven there is not any truth which is not conjoined to good, nor is good anything without truth."

External worship such as is described in our reading is sometimes found today. It is such worship as is practiced "by all those who are in external things without internal, for if they reverence and adore God, and as it were love Him, it is not for His own sake, but for the sake of themselves." It is love of self which excites their reverence. It is the character of this worship that is described in Jacob's words at Bethel: "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God." Some are ready to acknowledge God when all goes well with them, but blame Him and depart from Him when adversities come or when they do not get what they want. We get an echo of this when we hear it promised that religion will enable

us to get what we want—health, friends, success in business.

The giving of the second tables of stone hewn from the foot of the Mount tells how revelation followed men down to reach them in their lowest states, so that there may be conjunction with the Lord; for He is the Source of life, and without this conjunction men would perish. So there has always been a revelation adapted to the capacities of men to receive it, for the Divine love and wisdom cannot be immediately received. The opening chapters of our Bible are, as we know, taken from an ancient Word. But the Jews needed a Word adapted to the states of the natural man, written in a language that they could in some measure understand. So it was commanded, "Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables." Though the external form of the Word would be different, its internal meaning would remain the same. In one sense the Word that we have is more marvelous than previous revelations, for it can meet the needs of all men, not only the wise and good, but even the wicked.

#### Notes

10559<sup>3</sup>. Why the Word had to be written in the land of Canaan.

10563. On the personal character of Moses.

10568. The light that enables our minds to see is a real light from the other world.

10578<sup>3</sup>. "To live according to the Lord's commandments is to love Him."

10582<sup>3</sup>. "They who read the Word without doctrine are like those who walk in darkness without a lamp."

<sup>3</sup>. "Altars, burnt-offerings, sacrifices, meat-offerings, and drink offerings . . . were first instituted by Eber, and had been quite unknown in the ancient representative church."

10603<sup>4</sup>. This tells us the reason why worship was to be in Jerusalem alone.

10603<sup>5</sup>. Here we have the reason why the Israelites were permitted to have a plurality of wives—it was, as the Lord Himself later said, because of the hardness of their hearts.

10607. Moses, distinguished from the Israelites in general, is "the external of the Word, of the

church, and of worship which received Divine truth, thus through which internal Divine truth shines."

10612. By "Jehovah commanded," when said of the Israelitish nation, "is not signified what is well-pleasing, but permission that it should be so done because they insisted."

10624. On religious errors. Note particularly the last sentence.

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### DR. GEZORK ADDRESSES CONVENTION

Speaking on the theme "Here am I, send me", Dr. Herbert Gezork, retiring president of the Andover Newton Theological school, addressed a Friday afternoon session of Convention at the church in Brockton, Mass.

His topic was also the theme of the convention and Dr. Gezork said that Christians must have no longings for 'the good old days' which were always good only for some people but bad for many others. He said that the church must become involved with the world, especially where there is discord. He said there is no room for escapism and that the church must help where there is racial unrest, housing problems and other ills to be remedied.

Calling the period from 1850 to 1940 "nearly a century of stability" he said the world had now come into "a revolution of rising expectations" and where the rich were still becoming richer and the poor poorer, revolutions were violent and likely to be followed by a turn to communism.

He predicted that by the end of this century the United States would have a 25-hour work week with retirement at fifty years of age or even less. Whether this would be a blessing or a terrible bane remained to be seen.

He compared the church to an army which must always be adjusting and re-adjusting to a mobile situation and that today the church was in need of attracting industrial workers, artists and intellectuals.

Dr. Gezork was among the ministers of many faiths who demonstrated in Selma, Alabama, and he commented that the ecumenicity of the deed was more important than many ecumenical talks.

Dr. Gezork also said that he did not believe as some people do that the church congregation is outdated and will die. He believes that it can be a vital source of support and inspiration and that he had found it so in many periods of his life. He also said that if he had his life to live over again he would devote more attention to people and less to organizations.



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## Report Of The National Alliance Of New Church Women

The National Alliance of New Church Women met for its fifty-eighth Annual Meeting in the Brockton Church on Thursday, June 24, 1965. Our Alliance Chaplain, Mrs. Alice Van Boven, opened our meeting with a beautiful and inspirational worship service. Sixty-one women signed the roll; 49 voting members and 12 visitors.

The following women were elected to serve the coming year:

President .... Mrs. Harold Beran, Wayfarers' Chapel, California

1st Vice President .... Mrs. Wilfred Rice, Elmwood, Massachusetts

2nd Vice President .... Mrs. Robert Tafel, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Treasurer .... Miss Frances Spamer, Baltimore, Maryland

Recording Secretary .... Mrs. Immanuel Tafel, Chicago, Illinois

Corresponding Secretary ..... Mrs. K. J. Casper, Cleveland, Ohio  
Religious Chairman .... Mrs. Alice Van Boven, Riverside, California

Mite Box Chairman .... Miss Mildred Billings, Chicago, Illinois

Round Robin Chairman .... Mrs. Foster Woods, Bethlehem, Connecticut

Publication Chairman .... Mrs. Richard Tafel, Jr., Cincinnati, Ohio

Nominating Committee .. Mrs. Peter Greeley, Wilmington, Delaware.

As in the past, the report of the Mite Box Committee was of paramount interest. The collection this year was directed to the education of Johannes and Dorothea Reissner, son and daughter of the

late Rev. Erich Reissner of Berlin, Germany. At the time of the Alliance meeting, \$1,585.46 had been collected, and the fund is still growing! The League, under the guidance of Miss "Muff" Worden, scheduled a Hootenany for the benefit of these two young people. Further contributions will be received throughout the meetings of Convention.

The 1970 New Church World Assembly again was brought to the attention of our membership through the enthusiastic report of Miss Margaret Sampson. We are told of the availability of savings globes, and the proposed meetings were outlined briefly. Miss Sampson suggested also that women who hope to attend this conference could enrich their experience greatly if they joined actively in the National Alliance "Hands Across the Sea" letter-writing project.

Participation of local Alliance groups in the development of the Library-Museum at the Wayfarers' Chapel in Portuguese Bend, California was suggested. Activity in this missionary outlet of our church could include research and development of proposed exhibits which at present lack development only because of the limit in time and talent available.

Recommendations from the Executive Board passed favorably by the members present and voting included:

1. A change in the method of communication via the publications committee, moving from Grand Alliance pages within the MESSENGER into separate and

inclusive bulletins;

2. A sum of \$100 to be given to the 1970 World Conference Committee for the furtherance of its promotional work;

3. A sum of \$100 to be added to the fund established last year to help provide travel expenses for young people attending the 1970 World Assembly in London, England;

4. And a sum of \$75 to be taken from the Alliance Fund for New Church Education, to be sent to the Leadership Education Institute to be used toward the support of some young person in attendance this year.

Mrs. Richard H. Tafel, Sr. shared with us the highlights of her trip to western Canada last summer. A similar missionary trip is planned this fall when Mrs. Tafel with her husband travels to Europe. The Alliance Board will contribute \$500 from the Revolving Fund to help underwrite her expenses.

Mrs. Louis A. Dole of Bath, Maine, was given special recognition for her long years of faithful and inspirational service as chairman of the Round Robin Committee. Mrs. Foster Woods made the presentation of gifts and flowers on behalf of the Round Robins.

Miss Dora Pfister of Cleveland, Ohio, thoughtfully arranged for greetings to be sent to those not able to be with us this year.

At the request of our president, Mrs. Franklin Blackmer gave a brief talk on the challenge presented to us as church women through the expanding development of Urbana College.

The women then moved to the vestry of the Brockton Church where they enjoyed a delicious luncheon. Our guest speaker, Miss Gertrude Dole of Bath, Maine, concluded our meeting with her development of the theme "Joy in the Lord" as it is given to us in the Ten Commandments.

Bertha F. Berran, President,