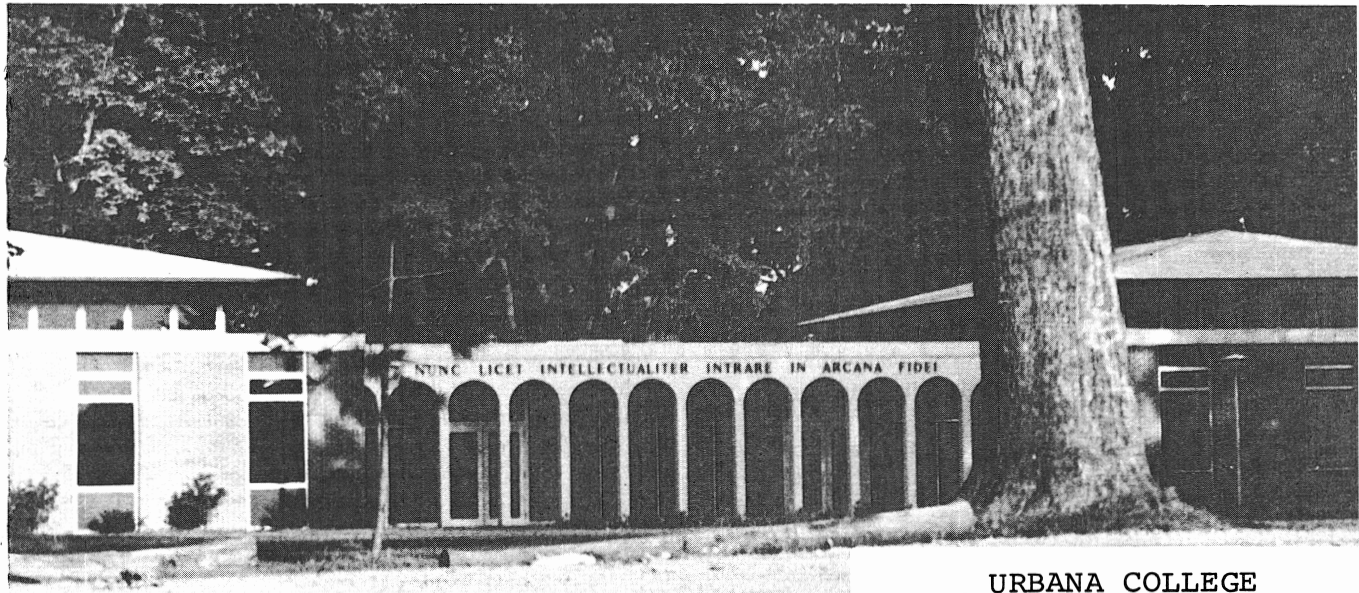


THE MESSENGER

Official Organ of the Swedenborgian Church



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MEMORIAL LIBRARY

SCENE OF IMPORTANT
CONVENTION MEETING P 132



SEPTEMBER 1968

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

The Messenger this month is devoted to our church--as it is, and as it is becoming. The challenge of youth, to "Tell it like it is," has seldom been so dramatically met as by the discussion groups in the Convention Theme program, "The Layman Looks at His Church" (July-August Messenger p. 114). The exciting, in-person report which the group leaders gave to the Convention was tape-recorded, and I had planned to print a transcript of it this month. However, the written reports by the same leaders seem better in print than the transcribed adlibs. Although these reports already have been distributed to a few dozen church leaders, they are eminently worth reprinting in full--especially in conjunction with the report on the Urbana Consultation on Research and Development, also in this issue.

The Consultation covered some of the same ground as the Convention discussion groups, but with a different perspective and purpose. It is particularly interesting to me, to note the harmony between the "Purpose of the Church" statements coming out of the Consultation, and the purposes implied by the ideas from the discussion groups. I have no illusions that my editor's blue pencil is any magic wand that can make one statement out of the five which were formulated in Urbana, but it appears to me that all of them share at least this much: *we are together as a church to use our Swedenborgian heritage to help people as our expression of love to the Lord.*

This includes much that is familiar: study of Swedenborg and the collateral literature of interpretation and application, and discussions among ourselves to share the human impact of this theology and tradition, since we must sharpen, and get a firm grip on, our Swedenborgian heritage if we are to use it; also, worship, fellowship, and work together to strengthen our community with each other and with the Lord (our unity as a church), and to help, support, and love one another; but also--turning now from studying "Charity" and "Use" as doctrines, to developing them as practices--a more active and concrete program than we have ever known, to use our Swedenborgian theological heritage and our unity as a church to help people as our expression of love to the Lord.

We have no commandments greater than these. Despite all we've done for so long, including the Urbana Consultation, we're only just beginning to conceive how to put them into practice. But while we are just beginning, time is running out. Every participant in the Consultation recognized, in one way or another, an urgency and a need for some kind of change. Swedenborgians have long said, and firmly believed, that the world needs what we have to give.

Today, with the world in turmoil that ominously approaches nihilism in thought, revolution and anarchy in society, the figurative death of God in theology and the physical death of mankind in war... doctrines must now be transfigured into action, while we still have the material and the spiritual resources to do it.

Robert H. Kirven

Vol. 188 No. 9

September 1968

Whole No. 4913

Published monthly, except for the one double issue in July-August, at the office of the Editor, c/o Swedenborg School of Religion, 48 Sargent St., (P.O. Box E) Newton, Mass. 02158.

Second class postage paid at Boston, Mass.

The Messenger is the official organ of the Swedenborgian Church, founded 1817, incorporated as the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America.

Printed at Thomas Todd Company, 14 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. 02108. Incorporated publisher: the Swedenborg Press, Box 143, Madison Square Station, New York, N. Y. 10010.

Subscription free to members of the Swedenborgian Church; non-members, \$3.00 a year; foreign postage, 25 cents extra. Gift subscriptions, if from a member, \$1.50. Single copies, 25 cents. Address subscriptions, checks, changes of address to the Publisher, Box 143, Madison Square Station, New York, N. Y. 10010.

Contributions toward the cost of publishing should be sent to:

The Treasurer, Swedenborgian Church

Chester T. Cook, Box 215, Deer Isle, Maine 04627

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Address all editorial correspondence and manuscripts to the Editor, *The Messenger*, P. O. Box E, Newton, Mass. 02158. The opinions of contributors do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or the Department of Publication, or represent the position of the church.

NEW RECOGNITION FOR URBANA COLLEGE

Recognition of developments in the curriculum and over-all program of Urbana College have recently come from two important sources. Last June, President Ronald D. Jones was notified that the Ohio State Board of Education had approved Urbana College's teacher training program as qualification for a state teaching certificate. Also, the new annual handbook of the American Association of College Registrars gives Urbana an "A" rating; which means that in schools which use the handbook ratings, students graduating or transferring from Urbana will have their transcripts accepted at full value without any special qualifying examinations.

URBANA COLLEGE MEMORIAL LIBRARY DEDICATION

There is a great need today in the United States for small colleges such as Urbana College to serve in ways that the huge universities cannot serve, in the opinion of James Q. du Pont who delivered the main dedicatory address for the Memorial Library on the Urbana College Campus, July 1 (See July-August Messenger).

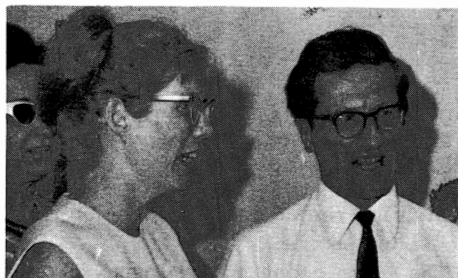
His address was the climax of an afternoon of activity in connection with the dedication of the \$400,000 library which was made possible by the contributions of the General Convention of the Swedenborgian Churches and many individual members of the church.

The Rev. Richard H. Tafel, Sr., immediate past president of the General Convention, expressed the feeling of the church and its members as he said:

"It is fitting that the interest and support of the Church which founded and now sponsors Urbana College should take the form of this Memorial Library. It symbolizes at once the spirit of our Church and the reason why we wish to work more closely with this college.

"By our gift of this Memorial Library and all that it symbolizes, and by our pledge of denominational support, we affirm our **allegiance**" to the "spirit of freedom and ecumenicity" which has always been the spirit of Urbana (College)."

DR. GUTFELDT TO URBANA FACULTY



The Rev. Horand Gutfelt, recently pastor of the Swedenborgian Church in Vienna, Austria, has received his Doctor of Philosophy degree from the University of Vienna. He is seen here with his wife, the former Cynthia Bateman of California, when they attended Convention in Urbana in 1966. He expects to return to the Urbana College campus to join the faculty this fall, as Asst. Prof. of Psychology and Sociology.



Mr. James Q. du Pont, Dedication Speaker, leads the procession to the Dedication of the new Urbana College Library, July 1. Following (r.-l.), are Convention President Ernest O. Martin, immediate past-president, the Rev. Richard H. Tafel, and Mr. Philip M. Alden, Chairman of the Urbana College Board of Trustees. The new library appears on the cover of this issue.

LAYMEN LOOK AT THEIR CHURCH

Convention Theme Discussion Group Reports

GROUP I: EDUCATION

Leader: Michael Stanley

Recorder: Mary Poole

1. High interest and pertinent contributions from young people.
2. The young people showed respect for their church and concern for what it should be doing.
3. Issues in everyday living and doctrine must be presented and discussed together.
4. The doctrines must be presented as living truths, which stimulate concern for immediate problems, facing the individual and the world.

GROUP II: EDUCATION

Leaders: August Ebel, Dorothy

Burdett, Mary Cochran

1. General. a. The subject of the discussion evolved quickly from "A Layman Looks at the Church" to "Adult Looks at Youth and Youth Looks at Adult". b. The major complaint of youth is, "You ask us to participate and then you ignore what we say." c. Our young people felt more discussions like this would be good.

2. Conclusions: a. Most important: This is a different generation. Youth believes what they can see and experience; they retain what they can apply. b. Other important: Most Lectures or discussions on religion with teenagers go right over their heads because they are phrased in complicated theology; the youth do not have readable material to prepare for discussions; they are not interested anyway because they do not see the application. c. Equally important: This also applies to adults except for a small number of "expert" Swedenborgians. d. We don't communicate.

3. Answer/Discussion of the Questions: a. What do I need to learn, etc. 1. How to use my religion to determine what is right? (e.g. "Don't see how story of Noah helps to decide what is right in Viet Nam or Racial Issues). 2. What does our church believe stated in language I can understand and tell others outside so they can understand it? (e.g. "A simple statement on the Trinity). 3. What did Swedenborg learn about God through visions? 4. What is life after death about? b. In what ways can I best do this? 1. Have books written which

are understandable to the average person - perhaps similar to the College Outline Series. 2. Discussions following reading matter. Talk with instead of lecture at. 3. Teenage problem and adult problem is the same; the teenagers admit it, the adults do not. 4. Need to instill (but not brainwash) in youngsters a desire to continue learning all their life. 5. This is a new generation; their values are different from their parents. 6. The very young are "gullible" and will accept teaching pounded in; teenagers will not. c. Learning related to regeneration was not explored deeply.

4. The Sunday School Problem: a. Children drop out of S. S. at about 15. b. Possible causes. 1. Youth feels they know it all (pretty much discarded). 2. They are supersaturated with teaching. 3. They need a change of pace from the Sunday after Sunday routine. Church camps give this. 4. The once a week program is too diffuse. Witness effectiveness of church camps. 5. Need to simplify the message; update it. 6. Their faith is not applied in their learning process as it is in church camps. c. A camp does a much better job than Sunday School.

5. Recommendations: a. Change the methodology of Sunday School from drill to discussion at about 14 years old. b. Really include youth in the planning of Sunday School programs and conventions. c. Avoid repetition in Sunday School (Don't go over the first half of the Bible each year) d. Include a study of comparative religion and fellowship with other churches and religions. e. Make the teaching applied. f. Prepare clearer reading material. g. Annual Convention should have more of meaning for young people. This discussion was an example but be sure youth knows about it.

GROUP III: THE CHURCH

Leaders: Pearl McCallum

Helen Keith

1. What is "the Church"? "The Church" is many things - a building, a set of doctrines and beliefs, a group of individuals growing together for religious development, a society working for the betterment of mankind.

The church we belong to offers its members and friends freedom from fear, especially freedom from the fear of death. It provides a unique set of teachings which interpret the Bible in a meaningful way.

Needs: Our ministers need to provide help in the practical application of our teachings in our daily lives, so that adults and youth both can better meet the everyday problems of life with an understanding of how our teachings can help us live regenerately.

Swedenborg's teachings need to be put into everyday language so these teachings can help us to meet our problems right here and right now.

Ministers need to understand better and interpret better the changes of our times, and relate their efforts to these changes.

Questions: Do we put too much emphasis upon Swedenborg as a being "just under God," failing to acknowledge his writings as guides for understanding the Word?

2. What is the Church for? Why do we attend and how do we benefit from our attendance? We go to Church to learn of the Lord, and to interpret his Word. We attend sometimes through habit, sometimes due to responsibilities in the Church, sometimes through marriage, sometimes through coercion (young people), and for various other reasons, not always religiously oriented. We attend for social reasons, for communion with others, for spiritual uplifting. We attend in an effort to become better people, better equipped to help others. Idealistically, the church exists for the help it provides to people, both individuals and communities. The church has an obligation to help people now, not just in the future (life after death). Thus, idealistically, there would need to be only one church, which would have the truth of God for all people.

Needs: We need to do more to help others; in helping others we help ourselves. If we want to be helpful, we will be able to find a way. We need to become involved in current happenings in our world and in our communities. We need to teach our doctrines more effectively; we need to use our buildings more effectively.

3. In what direction should the Church move? What should we do?

First, the Church must learn to relate itself better with our times and to our needs, both personally and in our communities. Adults and youth both indicate a need to learn how to live a religion.

As a Church organization: We should participate in current happenings - YMCA, Freedom Groups, Urbana, Black Power Movements, etc. The Church should help us to understand current happenings in light of our teachings and doctrines. We should understand war in terms of our teachings so we may more intelligently form our opinions. We should encourage youth participation. We could have young people on our Church Boards and let them vote at age 16. We should let young people become involved in Church happenings. We should get out into our neighborhoods and communities and talk to people - get them interested in us and let them know about our teachings. We should make our buildings available for use by various groups, Scouts, YMCA groups, etc. Buildings should not sit empty six days weekly.

Church services: Why does the service have to be so serious? Make it happy! Have music which appeals more to young people. Streamline the service, eliminating the ritual. Have "talk-back" services, with a panel or the congregation participating. Ministers should be more "human" during the services. Have separate services for youth, or plan services attractive to youth. Separate sermon topics could be planned, with a lay person or a guest speaker addressing the youth. (Adults would be welcome as long as they did not overwhelm the young people.) Topics such as the Hippie movement, racism, war, community needs for help, etc. were suggested for youth. Also, Conforming vs. non-conforming, Drugs, alcoholism, smoking, etc. Have sermons that teach you something or tell you something. Have an appealing beginning so people don't "tune-out" right at the start. "Where is the Church going? Nowhere. If it were going somewhere, we would all be too busy going there to sit around and talk about it."

SUGGESTIONS MADE BY OUR YOUNG PEOPLE AS WAYS THE CHURCH MIGHT BE MORE HELPFUL TO THEM:

1. Relate to their interests - current happenings. Have a hippie, a young man returned from Viet Nam, a representative of a Freedom Group, the Black Power movement, etc. come and talk to them. Discussions could follow which tie in our religion's point of view on these happenings.
2. Let them become involved in the Church happenings. Have them on the Board, and let them participate in services.

3. Listen to them!

4. Provide workshops at Convention which would give them opportunities to learn things they could take back to their Leagues. i. e. Drama workshops - act out parables in "every day language". Workshops where young people could rewrite the teachings in language they can understand, to give to others in their Leagues. Workshops where young people learn about other religions, and compare them with their own. Workshops which teach of our Church as an organization - which describe what the Board does, how decisions are made, how plans for spiritual growth are formed, etc. Workshops which provide review and re-education on our doctrines - which explain what we believe and how we interpret the Bible. Workshops which would give them ideas on how they might make money for their League groups. Service workshops which would show them how they might do something in their communities to help others, i.e. tutoring, entertaining, teaching, etc. Workshops which would help show them how they are supposed to put what the Church teaches into their everyday lives. 5. Teach ministers to better relate to the needs of young people. If this does not seem to be possible, then have lay people who can relate to young people work with them instead of the minister.

COMMENTS OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN

GENERAL: "Sunday School is all right - you learn something. In Church you are bored usually, so adults should not make kids stay for Church." "Adults don't like to see kids enjoying the service." "The Church doesn't seem to do anything - it's just a place you go on Sundays." "At least a hippie thinks - many people don't."

GROUP IV: THE CHURCH

I. What is this Church to which I belong? A. Church is threefold: Physical, Mental, Spiritual. B. Church is the individual. C. Community of people who use common means to reach a goal. When this breaks down, people drift away. D. Organization to hold people together who come to worship and gain inner strength. E. Place of social activity as well as learning. F. Teachings and doctrines of organized church, philosophy of daily living. G. Attitudes of ministers represent the "church" to individual.

II. What is it for? A. Learning. 1. Source of education of man to relate to community of man. 2. Learn about God and His plan for us. 3. Individual must seek these truths, church can only present them. (Man enlightened by the Lord, not by Bible, etc.) 4. Development of man spiritually. 5. Man born in darkness must be instructed. B. Social Action: 1. Instrument to break religious and racial barriers that separate man. 2. Powerful organization to move in areas of social action. 3. Media for bringing understanding to where there is dissension. C. Social Gatherings for all ages. 1. Youth feels alienated.

III. Differentiation. A. Individual can be a church unto himself, but the group provides an outlet for the Lord's influx of love.

IV. What experiences mean "church" to me.

A. Feeling of happiness and joy. B. Giving back to the Lord something of myself by using a God-given talent in creative action. C. Dissemination of religious knowledge through publications (writing and distributing). D. Witnessing to the Lord, relating of religious experience. 1. How Lord has influenced one's life. E. Singing (modern mode as opposed to traditional hymns). 1. Folk masses. F. Breaking through your own shallow view of another to see him more nearly as an individual. V. How can such experiences be deepened? A. Revert to old Christianity of community help to another. B. Commies and hippies. C. Get active in the world today. D. Learn and increase our love to our fellow man. Hold fast to our faith. E. Return to willingness to share and make people feel wanted. F. Church should be community center and be of community service.

GROUP V: WORSHIP

1. What worship experiences mean the most to me? Sharing of beliefs, Exaltation, Prayer (private and public - prayer circles). Worship as expressed in the small joys of daily life, Exchange of thoughts - feelings with friends, Small things in nature, Chanting. 2. How do they affect the way I live? Help from daily prayer. 3. What often blocks my worship experiences? (Attitudes, settings, form, music, sermons, etc.) Attitudes of discouragement and depression, Physical states, Tempo of service - too

rushed, People talking before or during the service, Sermon with little or no Bible background.

4. How can we allow for individual differences? By changes in liturgy, by being willing to try something different.

5. What would deepen and enrich our worship experiences within the Church? Some changes in liturgy, changes in the type of services such as the two early morning services we've had here. More knowledge of the meaning of the service and why it is set up as it is. Prayer fellowship or prayer circle. Having times when the young people take charge. Appreciation of what we have.

6. What are you expecting to take away from a worship service? Spiritual food - feeling of tranquility, of filling a need of intake and output - sustenance flowing through and passed along. Inspiration. A knowledge of the spiritual sense that can be applied to life.

7. What need do we see to develop new forms of worship? Train young people when they are children to appreciate our service. Interchange between old and young using young material also. Explain teachings more clearly to young children and young people. Groups composed of both teenagers and adults discussing teachings. Need of communications between young and old. Adults need enthusiasm and excitement and need to communicate it to the young person. Need to encourage young people to conduct services of their own. Give them a free hand. Oftener than once a year. Parents must lay the groundwork. We can't live without the church. Young people need to take their own initiative. Find out what local group wants or if they are willing to try something new.

GROUP VI: THE MINISTRY

Leaders: Seward Bowers,
Betty Munger

1. Need for bridging the gap between lay members and minister - especially apparent on the part of the young people in the discussion group - but approach this not by the layman telling the minister what to do - rather, by getting to know him, possibly by letting him know what they liked and didn't like in a sermon - certainly by a better "person-to-person" relationship - and by participating with him in church work (even such as on pastoral calls). 2. Young people want to know why they should go to our church - rather than some other - at an early

age - in such a way that they can tell their friends and contemporary acquaintances. 3. Laymen want to make their own ultimate moral judgments.

Are there writings simple enough to be easily - or fairly capable of understanding by persons not deeply instructed in the church? Need of i.e. felt by the young for early exposure to the teachings and the "what" and "why" of the Swedenborgian Church.

GROUP VII: THE MINISTRY

What have we to offer our ministers?

Participation in minister's program: Prayer fellowship, Active church worship. Young people (and adults) need relate feeling of cooperation with him: Responsible to attend service - help self as help minister. Definite program to insure lay participation in Associations and Convention: Make Convention attendance possible to more and different individuals. Responsible for making people feel welcome: coffee hour - circulate - not over zealous greeters each Sunday - names for minister to follow up. Lay person communicate needs to minister: tell minister want to discuss something, inform minister of someone sick, etc. Treat minister as a man: invite to home socially time to get views other than spiritual side; minister may have problems - congregation should rally; leader should be supported. Trustees should consult with minister as to ground rules: hymns and sermon responsibility of minister - negotiate and service on other points. Every member campaign. Weekly newsletter. Monthly bulletin.

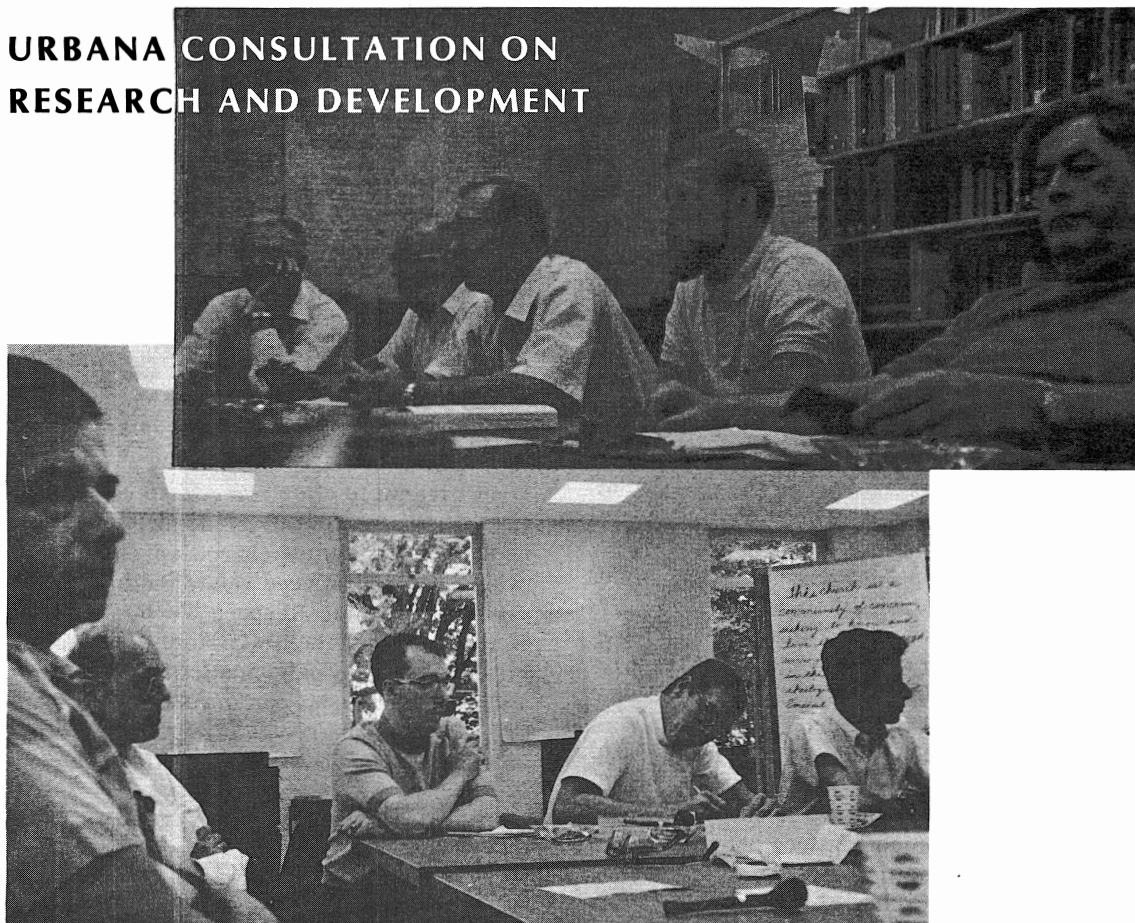
What needs do I have to be ministered to? In what ways can my church minister to these needs?

Why was the church formed? Religious community basic function.

What is the role of the church and the minister? Minister guide in worship and fellowship: sharing same beliefs, comfort, communication due to age differential difficult; lay person may be in position to minister; need to discuss social problems. People expect too much of minister: minister's wife role important.

Need for earlier instruction in the writings: make known to young people early who Swedenborg was. Young people want to be able to

URBANA CONSULTATION ON RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT



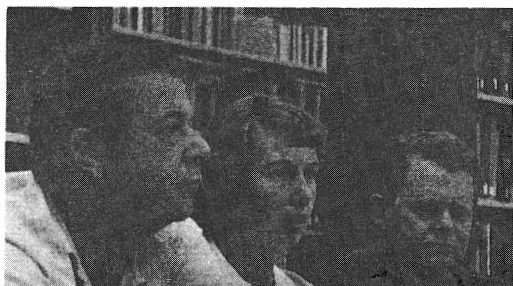
The Urbana Consultation on Research and Development was held at Urbana College, August 1st through 4th. Scheduled last January by General Council, and the Board of Managers of the Swedenborg School of Religion, as the first step in an intensive program of exploration and experimentation in new ways of church life and programming, the Consultation was arranged by Convention President Ernest Martin, and SSR President Edwin Capon. 24 laymen and 23 ministers were invited to participate; 6 laymen and 19 ministers attended.

Participants reported on the circumstances in their own churches, and on the hopes, dreams, and experimental programs planned or undertaken. Greater emphasis developed on the hopes and dreams for the future of the church held by the participants themselves, and on the surprising differences that appeared between the hopes that participants had, and the hopes which others thought they had. Understandings of the similarities and identities in purpose among members of the Consultation, and a more accurate perception of the differences which do exist, had at least two concrete re-

sults. One was a feeling expressed by practically every participant, to the effect that "this was valuable and good". Another was the beginning of serious attempts to broaden this kind of understanding, so that the visions and the proposals of members of the Consultation, leaders of Convention, the SSR faculty and others working on research and development, may be enriched by and coordinated with the hopes and dreams of the broader church membership.

Beyond this brief and over-simplified summary, there are two kinds of specific content reports which came out of the Consultation. One is the list of five statements drawn up by small groups within the Consultation, each attempting to define our purpose and reason for existence as a church. There was not time to forge one statement out of the five; there was no real desire to, either, because the obvious common purpose behind the similarity of wordings suggested strongly that getting on with the work was more important than further decisions and definition.

AT THE URBANA CONSULTATION: (LEFT, ABOVE) Irwin Reddekopp, Robert Young Galen Unruh, Randall Laakko, David Johnson; (LEFT, BELOW) Owen Turley Richard Tafel, Sr., Malcolm Peck (Boston), Richard Tafel, Jr., Paul Azadian (San Francisco); (BELOW, LEFT) Owen Turley, Pearl McCallum (Los Angeles), Roger Paulson (Urbana); (BELOW, RIGHT) F. Robert Tafel, Malcolm Peck, Randall Laakko. ALSO PARTICIPATING: Edwin Capon, Calvin Turley Paul Zacharias, George McCurdy, Richard Coulter, David Graham, Ernest Fredericks, Ernest Martin, William Woofenden, Robert Kirven, Adolf Liebert (Philadelphia), Owen King (Bellevue). THE PLANNING GROUP CONSISTED OF Messrs. Martin, Capon (co-chairmen), Johnson, Kirven, Turley, Turley (SSR Faculty), Zacharias (Ch., Council of Ministers), and Laakko (Ch. Adult Leadership Education Committee).



1.
Our fellowship exists to seek to know and love the Lord through service to people. This love and knowledge grow from a response to the living Christ. And in this search we believe that the theological heritage of Emmanuel Swedenborg holds a central place.

2.
We sense our "Reason for Being" to be found in a fellowship of mutual love and respect through which we join in a search for meaning, seek to embody an environment for growth and realize a community of service to the needs of man. These objectives we seek to realize in response to God as each may understand him to be.

The foundation out of which this statement grows is Swedenborg's declaration that: H. H. #328 "The Church of the Lord is universal. It includes all who have lived in the good of charity according to their religious belief."

As tools of implementation we would freely use the resources of all disciplines of knowledge with a particular emphasis on the Swedenborgian perspective.

3.
This church is a community of concern, seeking to know and love the Lord through serving human needs in the light of the theological heritage of Emmanuel Swedenborg.

4.
This Church is a fellowship of people dedicated to serving human needs out of love to God and in response to the eternal truths of His holy word as presented in the writing of Emmanuel Swedenborg.

Our Church is a fellowship dedicated to serving human needs out of love to God and in response to his Holy Word.

As we seek to do this, we draw particularly upon our Swedenborgian heritage.

5.
From many and varied personal experiences, we come together as a church to search, to grow as persons into the fullness for which we were created, to find ways to serve human needs with passion and concern through the Swedenborgian heritage. Thus we commit ourselves to loving the Lord by helping people.

answer what church believes. Writings available for study in everyday language (Sower Notes example). Feeling that New Church so engrossed in its intellectual background that purpose lost. "Not New Church so out" even though may be Christian. Want to know why go to a certain church. Just because parents and friends go?

What needs? Social as well as spiritual - counteract bad movies, etc. - dances, social activities, young couples club. Church "missing the boat" in helping young person relate to the church.

Writings become clearer when need arises.

What do we see as the promising forms of ministry to be developed?

Service on Sunday only will not cause church to grow. Church as place for discussion and ideas to grow; involvement means church attendance. Ministry is the teachings: individual make own choice - minister should help individual, not take stand for entire church. Help fellow man as individual. Exchange of ideas among ministers of different faiths. Be practicing Christian every day. Psychological approach - only with background which thoroughly prepares one to undertake meeting problems. More harm than good from amateur psychologist.

GROUP VIII: SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Leaders: Doris Bowers and
Roger Paulson

Our group, with ages ranging from 12 to 60, found ready agreement on answers to the first question: What is my responsibility to the society in which I live? These are the items on which we agree. 1. Love, respect, friendliness to the neighbor. 2. Give of yourself. 3. Understanding and acceptance. 4. Let our church teachings show in our lives. 5. Teach our beliefs. 6. Obey the community's laws. 7. Reach out to help others. 8. Give of our money.

On the second question: In what respect do I see this as carrying out my church's teaching about the larger neighbor?, we felt that if we adhered to the eight principles given in answer to the first question, we would be carrying out church teachings and would be living a Christian life. We also agreed that anyone living in accordance with these principles, would be living a Christian life whether or not he called himself a Christian.

In answer to the third question: In what respect do we as a church body have corporate responsibilities to society?, we found the young people in the group disagreeing with their elders on the question as to whether the church should take a stand on controversial questions of the day. The young people did not want the church to take a position. They wanted the church to teach sound moral precepts, lay down guidelines for action after which individuals should make their own decisions and act upon them as they saw fit. There was some debate as to whether "controversial questions of the day" could, or should, be divided into "moral" and "political" questions, and whether the church should take a position on moral questions (i.e. the race issue) but not on political issues (i.e. Vietnam) on the reasoning that the church should know moral issues but might not be in possession of sufficient knowledge to decide on political matters. Also, important in this discussion was Swedenborg's assertion "the wars were permissible". There did seem to be agreement by all that the church should not be a sanctuary for violators of the law and that anyone who disobeyed the law, even considering it to be an unjust law, should be willing to take the consequences.

GROUP IX: SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Leaders: Muff Worden and
Mabel Larsen

9 societies, represented by 15 people of varying ages - 5 teenagers, 1 mid-twenty, 9 over-35's - introduced themselves to the group and began to discuss our responsibilities. While discussion wandered freely from local problems to theological definitions to expressions of need, at the end of the afternoon the consensus was as follows.

1. Responsibility lies first with the individual.
2. The individual should develop his own responsibilities with regard to his group or community.
3. The individual should relate first to his immediate group before moving outward.
4. Our job is: to get people, to get beyond the status quo, to respond to whatever is found in a situation, duty to the people and God to live up to our religion and to help other people understand it, to show concern in others' lives and religion(s), to respond to appeals (for help in various areas), to live up to the doctrine of uses.

CONSULTATION - Cont'd. from p. 133

The work to be gotten on with, in carrying out this common (if variously stated) purpose, was developed in the Consultation on a wide and diverse scale. A kind of description of this work appears sketched in hazy and hasty form in a list of "Concerns and Insights", drawn up at the end of the Consultation.

CONCERNS AND INSIGHTS

Concern for the future vitality of the General Convention.

We feel that there is a need for a change and new directions in the Church.

We are willing to see the needs of a person in a particular area and to support them.

The need for teaching to face reality.

In any new direction, approach the layman so that it is not too traumatic. (Easy Transition)

Need for learning to face reality.

The ministry of Convention should not be mainly directed toward buildings, gaining people and teaching doctrines; but to more concern with people.

Laymen are more responsive to new ideas than may be assumed.

Old labels don't fit.

"Ministers are human too".

Employ present opportunities for taking this kind of meeting to the local areas.

Ministers sharing their confusion with the laymen helps them to understand -- as opposed to presentation of "pat ideas."

Realization "we are not alone" helps.

Enthusiasm for regional retreat-conference centers (An example of the fruitful application of the idea of "focused ministries").

Examination of possibility of pooling and focusing total resources.

There could be legitimate ministries that cannot become self-funding.

Examination of closer ties with General Church.

Research into apartment ministry.

Another example of specialized ministry is to declining churches.

Present trauma may be due to our identifying too closely and emotionally, the state of our Church and Lord's Second Coming.

Fear that failure of a church questions the validity of the second coming.

Our affirmation of the Conventional parish church as a focalized ministry.

Need for in-depth study of the national structure in keeping with "the new look".

Need for providing staff for exploration of change, etc. on local or regional level.

Need for more "interpretive" ministry: books, teaching materials, scholarship.

Need for more conferences like this involving other people. (e.g., All lay conference.)

Need for more efficient use of available talents, lay and ministerial. More mobile basis.

Need for better communication between various bodies and peoples within Convention.

These are results of the common feelings and sharing of this group, working closely over the conference time:

A process of growth and development; central effectiveness of this conference was to get our hang-ups as persons; we operate as people not as "labels"; the importance of increased trust among us.

LAYMEN - Cont'd from p. 134

Our discussion involved two problems which seemed to be universal: planning a program to help a church grow in which all or most of the members were older people; and reaching to, and holding the interest of, the people between the ages of 20 and 40, whose absence is felt keenly in many churches. We returned to the element of excitement many times, and it was stressed that excitement is catching, that continual renewal (of people and program) generates excitement, and that sharing (of many things) leads to continual renewal.

Several questions remained as we closed: Does it matter how many people are in a church for it to be successful? Does it matter to keep the church active? Does it matter that much theoretical interest generates little energetic action? How far should you go in lending your church to the community? We agree we're interested in growth - but where do we go from here?

A general conclusion might be this: our action-word is "share"; the responsibility is first with the individual, so it is the individual who must demonstrate his interest through initiative.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

It seems to me very important that we look at the question of transcendent experience in some detail for in it we are faced with the central problem of man: how can he relate creatively to a source of meaning and value which can transform his life, placing him in the stream of evolutionary purpose? In traditional terms, how can he find God?

The religious journey has indeed been taken by Easterners as well as Westerners but it is rather misleading to assume that because in both Oriental and Western mysticism there is a seeking for the transcendent "Other" that the experience of the seeker is in all aspects basically identical, or that the goal sought or achieved is basically identical. The differences are crucial and point us to the differences between drug and non-drug religious consciousness.

In general the Eastern religious mystic aims at unity with, or absorption into the transcendent cosmic God. The final state is an annihilation of the personal self or ego as the seeker's being merges with the infinite One. In contrast the Judeo-Christian tradition has produced a mysticism in which personal identity is retained in a relationship to God. The Christian mystic (e.g. Jacob Boehme, E. Swedenborg) does not seek to return to oneness, to lose individuality in a merging with Godhead, but seeks to relate to God, as Buber's I-Thou. Related to this is an evolutionary concept of history (e.g. Swedenborg's states of the Church Most Ancient, Ancient, etc.) in which the individual takes a responsible role in manifesting God's purposes. This is the tradition which has formed the Western spirit and we can do real psychic self-harm in trying to break with it.

The critical problem in religious experience is the function of the ego, of personal identity. The ego, or "I" is the center of consciousness, it relates what is me, my attitudes and reactions, it is the center of response to what is not me. In certain religious paths the aim is to be rid of this. The drug LSD and other psychedelic drugs place one in an ego-less state of consciousness similar to the goal of Eastern mysticism. This is not the case in Christianity or in the depth psychology of C. G.

Jung. Here the aim is to retain and use the ego creatively in choiceful acts. In Christian mysticism the ego is not sacrificed, rather the ego's claim on life is sacrificed, and this is an act of ego. Swedenborg's discussion of the unregenerate versus regenerate "proprium" (selfness, ego-claim) is central to this problem.

Drugs can indeed produce "religious experience" as can many other techniques. But how do I integrate this experience into my conscious life? The ego, as the center of consciousness, stands between the "inner world" of religious experience and the outer world of lived action. The presence of the ego in religious experience makes all the difference in whether or not the experience is integrated into life. This is, as Dr. Elizabeth B. Howes says in Intersection, Seven Talks on Depth Psychology and Religion (Guild for Psychological Studies Publication, S. F.), the "religious function of the ego". It is the deepest bringing together of the inner and outer worlds, the journey of "wholeness". As Dr. Howes puts it, "When the 'I' is fully dedicated and sensitive to... the 'Holy Thing', and to the possible birth of the Holy Thing, inwardly and outwardly, it is functioning religiously. And when the 'I' is aware that this birth is both the object of its own work and the result of 'grace' from the other side, even more is it functioning religiously. It is then creatively submissive to the Mystery, and the Mystery, by becoming manifest in the Individual, thus is potentially manifest in the outer world and its history." (pg 19). Without the presence of the ego in religious experience, as in the use of drugs, the great danger lies both in the experience remaining unintegrated into the conscious life and in the consciousness becoming dominated by the elements of the inner world that is experienced.

To choose to not use the drugs to make contact with the inner world does not relegate one to having to "travel vicariously". Indeed, as any traveler can testify, until you have been there yourself you really have not been there. There is no vicarious religious experience. Many techniques are available to the religiously committed person for taking the journey inward, for discovering the transcendent. Meditation and prayer are the forms developed by the religious mystics. Today, analytical psychology (the depth psychology of C. G. Jung) has given us added techniques of introversion

such as dialogue and active imagination, as well as dream analysis. These are not tools to be played with just as drugs are not. They should only be used in the most serious religious work of analysis.

We can use the works of mystics such as Swedenborg as tremendously helpful guides on our own journeys into the inner world. Most importantly we have the life of Jesus as the great example of what it is for a person to lead a committed life in relationship to God. If we choose the religiously committed life and the work of wholeness necessary to it ("be ye perfect (all-inclusive) even as your father in heaven is perfect (all-inclusive)") then we must understand the distinctions I have been making in Eastern, Western, and drug mysticism, and especially this problem of the function of the ego in the process of regeneration.

Helen Saul Williams

Dear Editor:

I am writing in reply to an article in the June issue by Leslie H. Johnson entitled "Parapsychology or Paradoxology". I feel this article deserves some comment.

A domesticated animal can love its master, but he can never understand his behavior because he does not have the necessary faculties. A man can love God without understanding Him. However, he can reach a degree of understanding if he so desires. Man was made in the image of God, and therefore has the attributes of God. Man can transcend time (precognition) and space (clairvoyance). These feats are accomplished through his psychic faculties. Men of God have used their psychic faculties from the beginning of time to reach a better understanding of God, and to learn how God operates. We need not be as a domesticated animal with no understanding of his master. We can be like men and develop our God-given talents which link us with our Creator.

Mr. Johnson suggests that parapsychology may well be the only acceptable way for "doubting Thomases" in their search for "Spiritual Truth". Jesus accepted the fact that Thomas did doubt and was willing to give proof of his resurrection. The world is filled with "doubting Thomases", and as Jesus didn't mind his

disciples requiring proof, then why should we? Proof would definitely lead the way to happier, more productive lives for literally hundreds of millions of souls, excluding Mr. Johnson. I'm all for proof rather than blind faith (and hoping we were right in what we put our faith in), especially since God in His wisdom has given us the means of finding proof if we honestly search for it.

Wilbur J. Shannon

Dear Editor:

I read with deep interest and concern in the July-August Messenger the description of Dr. Clyde Reid's "New Man".

We also in California have seen a "New Man" emerging in our midst and are wondering how to communicate with him. Whether he is the same as Dr. Reid's "New Man" I do not know.

The California "New Man" is very evident at Berkeley, and is numerous in my community, Mill Valley.

He too considers himself free from rigid moralism, and from others' values. He fornicates and defecates in our city parks, swims nude in our reservoirs, smokes marijuana in public places, and drops trash to blow around the city streets. He has been responsible for the enormous increase in drug use among our youth. Last week in our downtown square my 14-year old daughter was offered hashish, LSD, and opium by three different "free men".

He too is rebellious toward ready-made ideas or structures, and is working actively toward change. He has registered in large numbers in California's Peace and Freedom Party, which among other things seeks to abolish all laws governing drug use, sexual behavior, and abortion. He is seeking to disarm the police and the military.

He is unquestionably frank in his speech, ecumenical in his acceptance of Buddhism, theosophy, and American Indian peyote worship, and international in his outlook.

Is he spiritual? He appears to reject bourgeoisie materialism, but instead depends on chemically-induced visions -- surely a form of sensual materialism. His interest in beads, gods'-eyes, incense and other quasi-religious

STATISTICS

BAPTISMS

Marline Corrine, infant daughter of Mas and Eleanor Thimer of Edmonton, Alberta, was baptized in the Church of the Holy City on Saturday, March 16, 1968. Rev. Harvey A. Tafel officiated.

Steven Joseph, infant son of Joe and Edna Charzewski of Winnipeg, Manitoba, was baptized during a worship service at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Schellenberg of Transcona, Manitoba, on Sunday, March 24, 1968. Rev. Henry Reddekopp officiated.

On April 7 John Andrew Knox and Daniel Gordon Knox were baptized in the Church of the Holy City in Edmonton, Alberta.

On Sunday, April 28 Terry Edward Sawchuk, infant son of Ed and Carol Sawchuk was baptized in the Edmonton, Alberta Church.

On Sunday, June 9, the following children of Chester and Barbara Skinner of the Riverside New Church Society were baptized by the Rev. John W. Spiers: Edward Alvin, Joel Matthew, Julia Marie, Mark Andrew, Melissa Ann .

On the same day Tina Roxanne and Tandee Frann, children of Benjamin and Frances Skinner were baptized in the Riverside Church of the New Jerusalem, by the Rev. John W. Spiers.

Also baptized on June 9 in the Riverside Church by the Rev. Spiers were James Nathan and Kimberley Ann, children of Peter and Patricia Barrett; and Tammy Lynn and Amy Louise, children of Allen and Sherrill Hassard.

In the Boston Church of the New Jerusalem, David Wells Allen, son of Mr. and Mrs. William D. Allen, was baptized by the Rev. George D. McCurdy on June 9.

On July 27 Jill Sara Telesnicki, daughter of Walter and Gloria (Zacharias) Telesnicki, was baptized at Tonawanda, N. Y. by the Rev. Paul B. Zacharias.

BIRTHS

A son, Robert Brian, was born to Mr. & Mrs. Robert Love of Portage La Prairie, Manitoba on March 22, 1968.

A son, Douglas Matthew, was born to Delmer and Irene Funk of Thompson, Manitoba, on April 5th.

On May 7th Lisa Mae was born to James and Patty Farrington. The Farringtons are from Fryeburg, Maine.

CONFIRMATIONS

The following were confirmed into the Church of the Holy City in Edmonton, Alberta on April 7: John and Ann Sawchuk, Al and Lynn Beach, Diana Bradley, Diane Demskie, David Almond, Barbara Bradley, Terri Doull, Ken Gilchrist, Danny Knox, John Knox, Horst Krajewski, Dennis Ozechowski, Mike Passmore, Ian Scade, Grant Serink, Lyle Tabler, Sherwin Tabler, Patty Vanbergen, Wynanda Vanbergen, Alan Watson.

Mrs. Dorothy K. Meachem was confirmed in the Church of the New Jerusalem on Sunday, June 9, Rev. Leon C. LeVan officiating.

MARRIAGES

On April 2 Mary Ann Lewis and Ken McGinley were united in marriage by the Rev. Harvey Tafel of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

Cora Snyders and Bob Todd were married by the Rev. Harvey Tafel of the Church of the Holy City in Edmonton, Alberta, on April 13.

Myrna Runka and Pete Sware were united in marriage on May 18th. The Rev. Harvey Tafel officiated at this ceremony also.

On June 15 Nancy Laura Brennemann and Frank Cosway were married in the Church of the Good Shepherd, Kitchener, Ontario by the Rev. Paul B. Zacharias.

Betty Shuh and Clive Whitby were also married by the Rev. Paul B. Zacharias in Kitchener. Their marriage took place on July 1.

On July 20 Rev. Paul B. Zacharias united in marriage Penny Marguerite Cooley and William J. Dallner. The marriage took place in the Church of the Good Shepherd in Kitchener.

DEATHS

The Rev. Bjorn Johansson, Swedenborgian Minister, died July 20 in Mercy Memorial Hospital, Urbana, Ohio, after 75 years as journalist, pastor, teacher, and--from 1954 to 1966 --Editor of The Messenger.

Graduated from Valparaiso Indiana University, Chicago Theological Seminary and the New Church Theological School, he was ordained in 1927, and served churches in Copenhagen, Denmark; Bath, Maine; Portland, Oregon; Buffalo, New York; and until 1963, Cincinnati, Ohio. Since 1958, he



Bjorn Johansson in March, 1967, at the Ground-breaking for Urbana College Library; with Pres. Jones and Rev. Franklin Blackmer.

served as General Pastor of the Ohio Association, and since 1963, he was Professor of Religion at Urbana College.

He had been in failing health for the past year, and suffered a series of strokes. He is survived by his wife, Josephine, three children and six grandchildren. Services were conducted by the Rev. Franklin Blackmer.

A suitable memorial to him and his warm, strong and dedicated ministry will appear in a future issue of The Messenger.

Leo T. Zacharias, resident of Moose Jaw, Sask., passed into eternal life on May 10th. The resurrection service was held on May 14 with Rev. Henry Reddekopp officiating.

Mrs. Mary Graber, a member of the Church in Pretty Prairie, Kansas, passed away on April 20th.

Col. Marion Unruh, also of the Pretty Prairie community, died in a plane crash near his home on Easter Sunday. Memorial services were held at the Elliott Chapel in Hutchinson on April 17th.

James Rodger Hoag, 85, communicant of the St. Petersburg Church, passed away on May 23 following a short illness. Interment was in Memorial Park, St. Petersburg, the Rev. Leslie Marshall officiating.

The following parishioners of the Boston Church of the New Jerusalem have passed into the spiritual world:

Irene O. Atwood (Mrs. Laurence R.) on Jan. 18
Miss Annie W. Cobb on April 30
John E. Hanson on May 13
Miss Marion Midgley on May 14
Frederick S. Atwood on June 12

LETTER - Cont'd. from p. 137
symbols argues a return to a more superstitious, less rational age.

These "flower children" with their message of "love -- and do what you will" now show forth fully developed the fruits by which they may be known -- promiscuity, bisexuality, disease, dulled and damaged brains.

I sincerely hope this is not Dr. Reid's "New Man". It is hard to tell, since "the deeply stimulating and provocative evening (was) so deeply involved with its dialogic character that a printed description is inadequate..." Is this the "rational" church I joined ten years ago?

I have not meant to criticize but to question, and to ask: Are the Ten Commandments part of the "rigid moralism" from which we must be free?

Sincerely troubled,
Nan Hepp

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