

THE MESSENGER

Official Organ of the Swedenborgian Church

MARCH 1972



CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT PROPOSED

The Amendment Committee recommends Article 14 of the By-laws be amended by striking the existing By-law in its entirety and substituting the following:

“The Board of Trustees of the Pension Fund shall consist of the Treasurer of Convention, ex-officio, and three members, one minister, one layman, and one woman who shall not be a minister’s wife or widow. Beginning with the Convention in 1973 one member shall be elected annually by the Convention to serve for three years, but members heretofore elected shall continue to serve until the expiration of the terms for which they have been respectively elected. Three members shall constitute a quorum. The committee shall select its own chairman from its membership and a secretary who need not be a member of the Board.”

*Philip Alden, Chairman
Committee on Amendments*

THE MESSENGER

March 1972

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The Treasurer, Swedenborgian Church
Chester T. Cook, Box 25, Deer Isle, Maine 04627

Officers of Convention: Rev. Ernest O. Martin, President, 48 Sargent St., Newton, Mass. 02158; Adolph T. Liebert, Vice President, 626 Park Place, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15237; Mrs. Wilfred Rice, Recording Secretary, 31 Poole St., Brockton, Mass. 02401; Chester T. Cook, Treasurer, P. O. Box 25, Deer Isle, Maine 04627

Department of Publication: Rev. Richard H. Tafel, Chairman, Mrs. E. Ellsworth Seibert, Rev. Paul Zacharias, Miss Cecile Werben, Edward Bohlander, Dr. Robert H. Kirven, Rafael Guilo, Tomas H. Spiers, Mrs. Richard H. Tafel, Rev. Ernest O. Martin

KEMPER ROAD CHURCH APPEAL

It is not easy to ask for help, yet this is exactly what the fellowship of Kemper Road Community Church is doing—asking for your help.

The Swedenborgian Church in the Cincinnati area has endured some very trying times in the past ten years: the Northeast expressway taking the beautiful stone church building at Oak and Winslow; the lease for new and temporary quarters being cancelled at the last moment; water pipes in the temporary church quarters freezing up; and difficulty in getting the new and flexible church structure built within the architect’s estimates.

Despite the many setbacks encountered along the way, the courage and optimism of the members and friends of the Swedenborgian Church did not diminish. Rather they grew into a vision of greater usefulness as ministerial and other factors in the whole midwest began to change.

The potential for service and possibilities for future growth are unlimited: ministries to other Swedenborgian churches in the midwest; one-day conferences; training events for the midwest area; development of a wedding chapel; center for dissemination of Swedenborgian literature; exploration of a retreat center concept; and development of a community-oriented ministry to youth, adults, and senior citizens.

Financially Kemper Road Church is at the crossroads of her ministry. We must raise more income or cut our ministry and program way back. Thus we are asking your help. Our goal is to raise capital funds which will be invested in Kemper Road Church’s share in Convention’s Common Fund. The increased income will be used to help balance our yearly operating budget.

You have already received a Kemper Road Church publicity pamphlet which was mailed to everyone on Convention’s mailing list. This brochure is one endeavor of sharing with you what is taking place at Kemper Road. We feel something exciting is happening here and ask you to become a part of this excitement by contributing to our capital funds drive. Responses to this brochure have started coming in—from East and West, North and South. Will you help? Send your contributions to:

Kemper Road Church
9035 E. Kemper Road
Loveland, Ohio 45140

REPORT OF MID-WINTER MEETINGS OF GENERAL COUNCIL

General Council convened at 8 P.M. on Thursday, January 20, 1972 in Philadelphia. Present were the Rev. Ernest O. Martin, President, Adolph T. Liebert, Vice-President, Ethel Rice, Recording Secretary.

Council Members: The Rev. Messrs. George D. McCurdy, Harvey A. Tafel, Richard H. Tafel and Paul Zacharias:

Mrs. Virginia Branston and Messrs. August Ebel, Ernest Ekberg, Carl Heck, Roger Paulson, E. Ellsworth Seibert and Robert W. Tafel.

The Rev. F. Robert Tafel was present as Secretary of the Council of Ministers.

Absent: Chester T. Cook, Treasurer

The President called the meeting to order, and at his request the Rev. George McCurdy offered the opening prayer. It was announced that Mr. Cook was ill and unable to be present. Copies of the tentative 1972-73 Budget had been prepared and were distributed to Council. Schedules for Friday and Saturday sessions were agreed upon, and Council members expressed a wish to attend the worship service at the Philadelphia Church on Sunday if time permitted.

With only a few minor additions, the Docket was adopted, as prepared.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT Mr. Martin referred to a report of his activities as printed in a recent edition of *The Messenger*. He stated he would prefer to comment on items as discussed, rather than make a formal report.

REPORT OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT Mr. Liebert stated he had tried to fulfill the duties of the Vice-President as outlined in the *Convention Journal*.

REPORT OF THE RECORDING SECRETARY Mrs. Rice spoke of the work involved in readying the 1970-71 *Journal* for publication, and expressed her appreciation for the assistance and fine cooperation she had received from Mrs. Leona Freedman, the President's office secretary. She also spoke of various ways in which she was attempting to standardize the work of the Recording Secretary, for more efficient operation.

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS The Rev. Paul Zacharias and the Rev. F. Robert Tafel reported on some of the matters discussed at the Council's Executive session held in early December:

a) *Ordination of Women.* The Executive Committee plans to recommend to the Council of Ministers in June that women who are qualified will be welcomed into the New Church ministry.

b) *Restructuring of Convention* Duties and responsibilities of the President of Convention under the proposed new set-up.

c) *Roll of Ministers* Five special categories would be listed; Active, Retired, Miscellaneous, Inactive and Lay.

d) *New Developments in Alberta* The Council of Ministers recognizes wholesome development in the request by three lay persons to set up their own lay ministry, serving the entire province.

e) *Return of Ministers to Active Service* The Rev. Jaikoo Lee to serve the DesPlaines Church, and the Rev. Thomas Reed to serve Gulfport.

REPORT OF THE DEPT. OF EDUCATION The President reported that Department members had met recently with the Leadership Education Committee and the faculty of the Swedenborg School of Religion in a week-end workshop to discuss philosophy of education. Council members expressed concern over the lack of study material for adult classes. Upon motion, it directed the Department of Education to review this subject and submit a report at the January 1973 meeting of General Council, proposing a concrete program for improvement as necessary. Further, the Department was directed to submit to General Council in June 1972 an interim report of its progress in this area.

REPORT OF THE SWEDENBORG SCHOOL OF RELIGION The Rev. George McCurdy, as a member of the Board of Managers of the School, reported on recent developments. A "Covenant" relationship between students and faculty will allow curriculum to be tailored to the individual student, with variation in studies and field work.

REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLICATION The Rev. Richard Tafel spoke of four new works by the Rev. Paul Zacharias, including a book of meditations. Other than these, the Department is concerned about the lack of material available on what the Church teaches. He presented a request from Dr. Kirven for an appropriation of \$3,000 for A. B. Dick duplicating machines which will assist in the production of literature on a more economical basis than regular printing. The President outlined for Council members the personnel and equipment now at the Central Office, and the plans being made to supply the publishing needs of the Church.

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF MISSIONS Mr. Robert W. Tafel gave a full and comprehensive report on the recent meeting of the Board, touching particularly on the foreign field. A general 10% raise in salary was voted for all the men in the foreign missions field. It was announced the Board of Missions would advise the Alliance of New Church Women that the Korean Church under the leadership of the Rev. En Bo Chung would be an ideal recipient for Mite Box donations.

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES OF THE NATIONAL CHURCH Commander Ebel reported the Trustees have no special requests. Recent fire damage has been satisfactorily repaired. The building is presently being used for several community functions.

REPORT OF THE WAYFARERS' CHAPEL The Rev. Harvey Tafel, newly-installed minister at the Chapel, reported the backlog of work was gradually being taken care of. The President told Council members that special thanks should go to the Rev. Rollo Billings who served at the Chapel for three months until the Tafels arrived.

REPORT ON THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES Mr. Martin stated he had attended meetings of the General Board, which he found stimulating and challenging. The Rev. Richard Tafel asked that something be printed in *The Messenger* to refute the statement made in a nationally circulated magazine that the Council of Churches is Communist-inspired and controlled. It should be emphasized that we have in no way given up our doctrinal positions.

1972 CONVENTION PLANS The Rev. George McCurdy recounted some of the difficulties he has experienced in finding a campus site for the 1972 Convention. He submitted to Council drawings showing accommodations at a newly constructed Radcliffe College Center. Announcement of room arrangements, prices, and other details will appear shortly in *The Messenger*. Council VOTED to authorize Mr. McCurdy to represent Convention in any arrangements to be made with the college.

1973 CONVENTION PLANS It was announced that Mrs. Paul Tremblay is the new Secretary of the Western Canada Conference, and the new Chairman of the Planning Committee for Convention in Edmonton in 1973, as presently planned. Council VOTED to accept this invitation.

REPORT OF URBANA COLLEGE Council members heard Dr. Paul Zehner, President, and Mr. Jonathan Slott, Vice President for Resources, report on the status of the college. Dr. Zehner urged Council to appoint members to a Church-College Committee which would be helpful to both bodies. The college also hopes to re-finance its indebtedness and free its endowments. Educating the community to the advantages the college affords the town is an immediate necessity. Council VOTED to authorize the President to appoint Church members to the above named Committee.

REPORT ON EVALUATION OF THE CENTRAL OFFICE Because of the illness of both Mr. Cook and Mr. Poole, this Committee has not had an opportunity to meet. It will report to General Council at its pre-Convention meeting.

SALE OF CHURCH PROPERTIES It was reported that the Frankford, Pa. society has disbanded and the building is for sale. The Portland, Oregon church and parsonage have been sold and Mr. Cook is receiving monthly payments from the purchasers.

LETTER FROM THE BOSTON STUDY GROUP Mr. McCurdy stated that members of this group had discussed the "Case Study" which appeared in *The Messenger* a few months ago and wished to comment on it. A letter was sent to *The Messenger* for publication, with copy to the President, to which all members of the group signed their names. Mr. Martin stated, however, he would have preferred meeting with the group at the time of the discussion to answer questions and offer explanations.

PROPOSAL RE 1980 Council referred to the Council of Ministers the matter of contacting other Church groups with a view to getting together on the North American continent in 1980, as proposed by Mrs. Van Boven at Convention in Urbana.

RESOLUTION BY NEW YORK ASSOCIATION A resolution to continue the Executive Committee of the 1970 World Assembly was discussed by Council, but it was decided this had been an Ad Hoc Committee which was disbanded when its goals were accomplished.

CONVENTION PROPOSALS Proposals made on the floor of Convention at Urbana by the Rev. Harold Larsen were brought to Council's attention. Decisions on these were as follows:

- 1) Mr. Paulson was instructed to consult with Dr. Harvey and Dr. Gutfeldt about converting the replica of the Wayfarers' Chapel to a wedding chapel for the Urbana campus.
- 2) The Secretary was instructed to write Mr. Larsen for clarification of his proposal to hire Urbana students for summer work for the Church.
- 3) General Council was in agreement that capable people have handled Convention publicity, and that otherwise our organization is too small to merit a full-time public relations counsel.
- 4) The use of radio and TV spots and commercials was considered. It was decided to publicize the work of Dr. Dole in Cambridge and Mr. McCurdy in Boston in *The Messenger*, and ask for reports from other Churches engaging in such work.

FORMATION OF MEN'S ORGANIZATION

A proposal regarding the formation of an organization for men, comparable to the Alliance for women, was submitted by the New York Association. Council felt there was no ruling against such an organization, and asked the New York Association to introduce a definite plan of action.

COMMUNICATIONS The Secretary read a report from the Department of Education stating that a study made of the feasibility of establishing a Day-Care Center in an urban area disclosed no interest in such a project. Council VOTED to thank the Department for its preliminary work.

A letter from the Chairman of the Department of Education advised Council of changes in the Department's budget requests, notably the employment of Mrs. Marilyn Turley to visit Churches in surrounding areas to learn the educational needs of our Churches.

Request for an appropriation of \$1,000 to cover cost of a program for the Ministers' Wives at Convention was read, and Council VOTED such an appropriation, but recommended every effort be made to keep costs down.

KEMPER ROAD CHURCH General Council heard a report on the progress of this Community Church, and a request for an appropriation over a three-year period. Council members discussed all aspects of this matter, feeling there was not enough information at hand to formulate policy. It was at length VOTED to recommend to the Augmentation Fund Committee the appropriation of \$6,000 for one year, with the suggestion that Kemper Road be encouraged to seek additional support from other sources.

PROGRAM LINK Two representatives from the Bellevue Church presented their budget for the coming year, with a request for an appropriation to cover an expected deficit. Wishing to lend its support to the venture, but feeling the requested sum was not in line with other appropriations, Council VOTED to recommend to the Augmentation Fund Committee an appropriation of \$12,000.

CONSIDERATION OF THE BUDGET With only minor changes, General Council approved the proposed budget for 1972-73, showing an adjusted deficit of \$1,386.00.

STEWARDSHIP AND CONVENTION APPEAL Mr. Martin advised Council he planned to work with Mr. Jonathan Slott in preparing stewardship material for Convention. He also stated that some people have questioned whether the Church's Common Fund investments have been scrutinized to see if any of these are in industries which are manufacturing war materials. It was VOTED a Committee be appointed to study our holdings in this light.

VACANCY IN COUNCIL It was VOTED not to fill the current vacancy, since the elections in June will bring Council up to full strength again.

NEXT MEETING OF COUNCIL will be held on Wednesday, June 21st at 7 P. M. or at the discretion of the officers. The Post-Convention meeting will be held on Sunday afternoon.

APPOINTMENT OF CHAPLAIN Council VOTED to refer to the Council of Ministers the matter of finding someone to succeed the late Rev. Robert L. Young as Chaplain to Conscientious Objectors.

ADJOURNMENT General Council adjourned its three-day session at 11:45 P. M. on Saturday, January 23, 1972.

Respectfully submitted,

Ernest O. Martin,
President

Ethel V. Rice,
Recording Secretary

L. E. I. 1972

Dates: August 27th -September 5th
Place: Urbana College, Urbana, Ohio
Sessions in Student Union-Pool Available
Director: Jerry Poole
Staff: Don and Pat Lovell, Jim Zehner, Selma Swing, Owen Turley and others
Ages: 16 through 21

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300 Delaware Avenue
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THE THIRTY GREEN VOLUMES

A Series on the Writings of Swedenborg
by Brian Kingslake

7. "The Consummation of the Age"

Swedenborg was not one of those cheerful cranks who go around waving a banner and declaring: "The World is coming to an end; the Last Judgment is upon us!" And yet. . . in a more scholarly fashion, that is exactly what he was saying, throughout the whole of the *Arcana Coelestia*! But, by the *World*, he did not mean this familiar physical universe. Our physical world, he admitted, would not last forever; all material things are finite, and will eventually wear out. But our world has not reached that state yet; millions of years will pass before it is ready to be scrapped on the cosmic junk-heap! Swedenborg meant, by the world that was about to come to an end, the religious dispensation which Jesus established when He came into the world; the epoch, the era, or, as Swedenborg called it, the "Church." (Please note carefully, that Swedenborg was not referring to any specific man-made organization when he spoke of the Church. The Church is the Kingdom of God with men.)

The belief that the physical world would be liquidated by the Last Judgment had arisen partly from a mistranslation of the Greek which appears in the King James version of the New Testament. The original Greek does not say "the end of the *world*," but "the end of the *aion*"—meaning, the eon, or epoch. And Swedenborg, with his eyes open on the other side of the veil, was increasingly aware that conditions were reaching the breaking point, and that something catastrophic was about to take place. How was it that people on earth were unaware of this? Because of the utter hypocrisy in which nearly everybody, high and low, was immersed, especially within the so-called Christian Church. (If you don't know what I mean, read any social history of Europe during the first half of the eighteenth century.)

Swedenborg introduces the subject in a short section toward the end of Volume II of the *Arcana* (Nos. 2120-2134.) When people died and woke up in the World of Spirits they threw off all hypocrisy and revealed themselves as they really were inside, which was usually pretty bad. The region was be-

coming so full of evil spirits that "I have wondered that there ever could be so great an abundance," he says. "By their means the souls who come from the world are frightfully infested." Moreover, they were bringing malign influence to bear upon men and women on earth, to such a degree that the angels were unable to avert them. Goodness and truth flowing from the Lord through heaven into the World of Spirits was being twisted into what was evil, obscene and profane before being passed on into the world, so that men were ceasing to be capable of perceiving anything good and true. The balance of equilibrium was swinging over dangerously to the side of hell. "Evidently," declares Swedenborg, "the last time is at hand."

He points out that there have been Last Judgments before, bringing earlier religious epochs to an end. The first, or "Most Ancient" Church, ended with the flood—an inundation of falsities springing from evil. The "Ancient" Church ended with a number of local judgments, represented by the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the drowning of the Egyptian army in the Red Sea, and so on, The Israelitish Church ended with, first, the dispersion of the Northern Tribes by the Assyrian, and then

the dispersion of the Jews by the Romans after the destruction of Jerusalem. Swedenborg himself had witnessed some minor "judgments" in the spiritual world, where evil societies were broken up and scattered. "There was heard a hubbub that rose and fell with a loud roar. The spirits were seized with consternation and terror, resulting in complete confusion; they ran this way and that, and no one knew where his companions were. Some uttered lamentations, some lost all heart. In a word, a sense of danger as of a final crisis seized on all." By means of such disjunctions and dispersions, all were at last reduced into order by the Lord. (A.C. 2128). Doesn't this remind you of the way in which panic seized the enemies of the Children of Israel in so many of the battles described in the Old Testament Scriptures?

Exactly when the general Last Judgment would take place, Swedenborg did not know. (Even the angels did not know, which is not surprising since the angels are outside the dimension of time.) But the pressure was becoming so strong that he knew something must soon "give." He also knew that the Last Judgment would be followed by the

second coming of the Lord, but how this would be accomplished he does not seem to know. Obviously it would not be a coming in the physical body, because the Lord already had the physical body which He took on Himself at His first coming and which He had since glorified or made divine (the "Divine Human.") Sometimes Swedenborg speaks of the Lord about to come "in glory" (A.C.900, 931). Elsewhere he says (and this is the view he held to later) that the Lord would come by the opening up of the internal sense of the Word: "for in the Word, the Lord is present, since all things of the Word are from Him and relate to Him." Swedenborg himself was instrumental in the opening up of the Word in these very volumes of the *Arcana Coelestia*, which associated Swedenborg rather uniquely with the Lord's Advent. Again he says: "The Lord's Coming is His presence in everyone, which happens as often as the gospel is preached and anything holy is thought of." Jesus, in fact, would come "as the Spirit of of Truth." As for the timing of the great event, Swedenborg was content to follow the Lord's own admonition: "Watch, therefore, for ye know not in what hour your Lord cometh."

The monograph dealing with these topics in the *Arcana Coelestia* runs from Volume IV No. 3353 to Volume VII No. 5071. It has been extracted and printed as a separate little book of 90 pages by the Swedenborg Society in London, under the title "The End of the Age." It makes a neatly tailored mini-version of the "Apocalypse Revealed," only the "apocalypse" of which it gives the spiritual meaning, verse by verse, is not the Book of Revelation, but that remarkable dramatic discourse given by Jesus on the Mount of Olives overlooking Herod's sparkling new temple on the built-up rocky platform opposite, across the Kidron gorge, in reply to the question of the disciples: "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the age?" The Lord's discourse, called by scholars "The Little Apocalypse" covers the whole of Matthew 24, and also includes the parables of the ten virgins, the talents, and the sheep and the goats in Matthew 25. Swedenborg's monograph is a gem of Biblical exposition. It can be read in a couple of hours, and will give you a wonderful insight into the author's methodology and thought, and will prepare you for the actual Last Judgment which took place during the year 1757, shortly after the last of the *Arcana* volumes had come from the press.

CONVENTION 1972

June 22 (Thurs.)–25 (Sun.)

Headquarters: Currier House, Radcliffe College,
Cambridge, Mass.

Room and Board:

\$14.50 per day – single room
\$12.50 per day per person, double occupancy
\$25.00 per day per couple
\$ 5.00 per day per person (for Leaguers)

Saturday night Banquet – \$7.00

Sunday Lunch at Swedenborg School of Religion
open house; supper at Rev. and Mrs. George
McCurdy's open house

For information and advance reservations write to
Church of the New Jerusalem, 140 Bowdoin Street,
Boston, Mass. 02108.

Travel Plans: there will be a Convention booth at
the airport at the TWA desk, so if you have a
choice, TWA will be the most convenient way to
arrive.

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