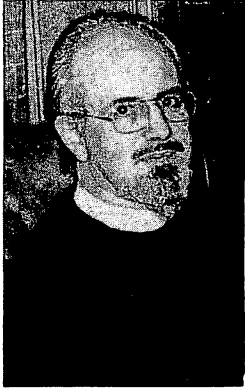


The Messenger

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH

FEBRUARY 1976



Robert Kirven

BIO - FEEDBACK and SWEDENBORG

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Calvin Turley

THE PEACEFUL KINGDOM

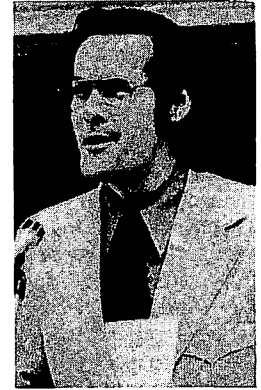
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Editorial

YOUR WORDS RING TRUE, MR. GILES!

Several weeks ago the Canadian government voted into law new economic policies that will have far-reaching implications in every sector of our national life. For the next three years, annual wages and prices may not exceed a set figure. Gas and oil shipments to the United States have been drastically curtailed. New measures have been taken to conserve our natural resources. The defense budget is being examined with a critical eye. Government spending has been reduced by 1.5 billion dollars. This, in part, is Canada's response to the common problems facing every industrialized nation — inflation and unemployment.

But this is only the beginning. In announcing these measures, Prime Minister Trudeau stated that we must accustom ourselves to a totally different life style. He said, in effect, *that our material appetites and expectations have been too high*. Our present prosperous ways cannot be sustained indefinitely. The time is coming, and it's not too far down the pike, that economic realities will literally force us to live a more simple, uncluttered existence. Many frills and luxuries, that are rapidly becoming necessities, will have to go. This may sound harsh, but could this not be a blessing in disguise? Material prosperity has a way of blinding us to spiritual principles and values. Maybe this is God's way of showing us what is really important.

Over a century ago the Rev. Chauncey Giles wrote: "A nation can endure poverty, can wage war, and undergo privations and hardships and yet grow strong. But there are no people sufficiently wise and powerful to withstand uninterrupted material prosperity. We stand aghast and tremble at the prospect of hard times. They are hard and trying and cause much suffering, but they are good times, and without their periodic return no nation could be saved from corruption and dissolution. Men are not yet good enough to bear continual prosperity." And how do you feel about that!

Abraham Lincoln, whose birthday we celebrate this month, shared the same views. See page thirty four.

IN THIS ISSUE

Probably the most dramatic development in psychotherapy in recent years is the concept of Bio-feedback. Briefly, bio-feedback exponents believe that virtually all bodily functions (brain waves, heartbeat, blood pressure, body

temperature, etc.) can be monitored and consciously controlled. Studies indicate that an impressive number of people suffering from migraine headaches, insomnia, high blood pressure, and similar disorders, have found relief using bio-feedback techniques. Drs. Robert Kirven and Calvin Turley, SSR faculty members, look at bio-feedback from the Swedenborgian perspective.

After a too-long absence, we welcome the Rev. David Garrett's return to the MESSENGER pages. In his fascinating description of the "Peaceable Kingdom", Rev. Garrett wrestles with the perennial problem of evil, "the shadow side of life." For me, the article triggered off all sorts of intriguing thoughts: the hint of universal salvation; the necessity for self-forgiveness and acceptance; the need to look upon all of life, light and shadow, joy and suffering, belief and doubt, with friendly eyes. Great! Then some wonderments crept in. What about the inside of the cup? Christ scourging the money changers? Dachau and Buchenwald? Is there room for these shadows in the Kingdom of Light? You helped me open a few doors, David. Many thanks.

The Garden Grove Community Church is one of the fastest growing and most imitated churches in North America today. The Rev. F. Robert Tafel, pastor of our Washington D.C. Society, paints an inviting picture of his experiences there. "Possibility thinking" should be more than a possibility for us.

P.Z.

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Paul B. Zacharias, Editor

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The Starting Line

Eric Zacharias

Your President is continuing a full Convention circuit. It is my desire to take each of you, the reader, as a travelling companion and so to share with you something of the life that pulsates within the body that is our Church.

First, we join the Rev. Randy Laakko at the entrance to the Wilmington church. The messages posted here and at appropriate places within the church demonstrate the approach of this congregation to life with each other and with the Lord. "Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness... make a joyful noise unto the Lord." Should this spirit not be the prevailing atmosphere in all our churches, in our homes, and in our personal growth experience?

We move on. Our purpose in coming to Wilmington is to participate in a meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee of the SSR Board of Managers. We are to think through the SSR admission policies and to make the necessary recommendations that will permit the faculty to function more effectively and which also will help the students move smoothly into the educational process.

Come now to Washington, D.C. Do you detect the beginnings of an exciting concept? Can we make of the National Church truly what the name implies? Can we tell the story of the Swedenborgian movement in America by pictures, photographs, slides, and a variety of other art forms? Certainly, the National Church in the nation's capital suggests this as ideally suited to just such a project.

We participate, too, in the Philadelphia Sunday morning Adult Class led by the Rev. Richard H. Tafel. How do we know when we are genuinely regenerating persons? What is the Lord's relationship to us during this process? "He who lives the life of faith daily does the work of repentance; for he reflects upon the evils that are within him, and acknowledges them... and supplicates the Lord for aid... For of himself man is continually lapsing." A.C. 8391. We are reminded that the complexities of movement toward spiritual maturity are clothed in mystery. It is the Lord quietly at work, doing that which He does best, building the Kingdom within.

Time moves along. It is now December and the scheduled meetings of the Board of Managers of SSR. It is the first full Board meeting for the new members elected at the June convention: The Rev. Dorothea Harvey, Dr. Wilson Van Dusen, Mrs. Virginia Branston and the Rev. Ernest Frederick. The agenda is comprehensive. It includes such matters as curriculum, student progress, budget, the implementation and the status of the new sabbatical policy for SSR faculty, the search for a new SSR president who will assume his duties in 1977.

The deliberations, at times, move into sensitive areas as the SSR educates ministers who, upon graduation, will step into the hard realities of a world society that, from appearance, acknowledges little formal authority, a world that acknowledges no right or wrong but only "difference."

Our final stop on this Convention circuit is Cleveland. Here we are met on December 13th by Mrs. Frances Boyle who has been a very special person to this writer from Urbana College years in the early 1940's. A most delightful dinner and evening discussion group are enjoyed in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Chuck Winter and their two daughters, Diane and Debbie. Mrs. Winter is the daughter of the late Rev. and Mrs. Issac Ens. The Sunday morning worship service and the sacrament of Communion bring this visit to a rewarding close.

There is a uniqueness within our congregations and groups that makes a visit to each center a fine experience. The National Church concept germinating in Washington, D.C., the training of church leadership in Edmonton by SSR faculty, the expanding of the Wedding Chapel and related programs in Cincinnati — all of these and a variety of other efforts of equal significance provide the vehicle by which we serve the uses of the Church.

We have much to learn from each other and thus, by holding before us the blueprints given us for this New Age in the writings, we move toward increasing effectiveness in accomplishing the Lord's work.

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BIO - FEEDBACK and SWEDENBORG

by

CALVIN TURLEY AND ROBERT KIRVEN

Pick up a pencil to write your name. The delicate control of the pressure that you exert on the pencil — enough to make a mark, but not enough to break the point — is casually simple. That is because each change in muscular tension in your arm and hand is measured by your sense of touch, and precise data is fed immediately and continuously back to your brain. That's bio-feedback, a commonplace part of daily life.

Bio-feedback got its name and new importance when technology provided people with some new, artificial "senses" to monitor some body-functions that hadn't been consciously sensed so directly before. Just as touch enabled you to use a pencil (with some trial and error at first, if you remember), these instantaneous and precise instruments permit the same kind of conscious control of anything your body does that can be measured.

Respiration, heart-beat, gland functions, and several other activities of your body that go on without conscious control, have been called "automatic" — originally meaning that they operate by "laws of their own." Newer experiments show that they are indeed controlled as the rest of your body is, but the senses that feed back the data — and the control based on that information — are unconscious. There seem to be a dozen or more senses besides the five you usually think of: hunger and thirst are among the more conscious ones, and others sense such things as the amount of sugar in your blood, the need of your cells for oxygen, etc. Whenever one of these unconscious senses is duplicated by an instrument (or is made conscious through special training), whatever it monitors can be intentionally controlled.

Data on muscles that contract unconsciously enable people to relieve tension headaches, by intention alone. With feedback from the heart, people have learned to treat disorders, such as atrial fibrillation — also by conscious control without the help of drugs. Amazingly, it is relatively easy to learn to control even your own brain.

When your brain is registering sights, sounds, etc., or is busy at problem-solving, the electrical energy it discharges forms a recognizable pattern. When it is poised in relaxed readiness, the electrical waves make a different pattern. Drowsily relaxed, it emits a third pattern, and there is a fourth one that occurs in deep sleep. These four

general patterns of electrical emissions from the brain have been labelled with Greek letters: beta, alpha, theta, and delta, respectively.

"Getting Into Alpha"

The alpha pattern of "related readiness" normally appears only for a few seconds at a time, or in only part of the brain, when your eyes are open; and for slightly longer periods when your eyes are closed. The pattern keeps disappearing, because the receptivity that it indicates changes at the slightest stimulation to the kind of activity that produces beta waves. On the other hand, the relaxation that alpha indicates tends to slip very easily into the drowsy - dreamy state that makes the theta pattern. With feedback, however, it is possible to maintain a steady alpha pattern for a few minutes, or even several minutes at a time, in the whole brain. It's a little easier when your eyes are closed, but quite possible when they are open.

This is very interesting. "Getting into alpha" has become a kind of parlor game because maintaining the brain conditions that produce alpha waves is a highly pleasant experience: people who've tried it, like it. It has some practical values as well, for the experience increases a person's creativity, receptiveness, power of concentration, and tolerance to stress. But most exciting of all is the new information that brainwave feedback provides about the nature of the human mind.

The fact is, when you make up your mind what your brain is going to do, your brain has to do it. The mind controls the brain. When you picked up that pencil to write your name, your brain received the feedback, and controlled your brain; but your mind, which made the decision to write without breaking the point, was really in charge. This ability of the mind to control the body deteriorates if it's neglected, and improves with practice. Bio-feedback has been a big help in the rediscovery of this hidden power; and bio-feedback, along with the disciplines that expand sense awareness (such as Yoga, Autogenic Training, Psychosynthesis, Transcendental Meditation, Sylva Mind Control, and others) are helping in the recovery of some of the mind's forgotten capabilities.

Brain – organ of the mind

There is a significant parallel between this data of bio-feedback and Swedenborg's theological psychology. For example, he understood that consciousness, sensing, perceiving, choosing, and willing, were functions of the mind, not of the brain. Further, in his distinctive terminology, the brain is understood as the "organ of the mind." In no way is this distinction intended as a depreciation of the marvelous intricacies of the brain. The distinction does intend to avoid the error of identifying person-ness with the body – to maintain the distinction between the mind and its "earthly loan," the body. Further, as the data of bio-feedback indicates, Swedenborgian psychology understands the significant *causes* of human behavior, to lie "within" the human psyche, not in external stimuli as does the modern psychological theory known as behaviorism.

In Swedenborgian psychology, one aspect of the conscious function of mind is the making of decision based on the perception (conscious *and* unconscious) of what is good and true. Decisions in turn affect the body's actions of brain, nerves, organs, and muscles. Action feeds back the empirical data of consequences to either enhance or distort perception, and the whole process begins again. In terms of knowing both meaning and purpose in life as experience, the source and quality of data processed by the mind would seem to be crucial. Thus, if the alpha state is one of enhanced receptivity to "influx from within," and if Swedenborg is correct that there is an internal influx providing an "intuitive acknowledgement of what is good and true," then it would seem that anything we can do to enhance the state of alpha – be it bio-feedback training, centering exercises, or meditation – is to be explored with positive expectation and openness to consciousness expansion. At least it would seem so within the Swedenborgian perspective of religion and its theological psychology.

Two ways of Knowing

With further reflection, the Swedenborgian understanding of human psychology seems to be both more compatible with, and interpretive of, the new bio-feedback data about the mind than are most modern psychological and physiological concepts. The same may be said with reference to data being gathered through left-right brain research. In brief, this research indicates that the mind has at least two ways of knowing, of perceiving. The left hemisphere of the brain specializes in analytical, cause and effect

reasoning. The right hemisphere specializes in holistic, intuitive perception. Those familiar with Swedenborg psychology will recognize here a suggested parallel with Swedenborg's emphasis on both the rational function of the mind and what he once referred to as "another way of knowing". In A.C. No. 3884 he makes brief reference to this functional distinction between the modes of left/right brain knowing. However, this distinction is most graphically exemplified in Swedenborg's own life as we contrast the analytical genius of his "scientific work" with the holistic perception that came with his more passive "spiritual experience." The difficulty with right-brain-knowing as with Swedenborg's "spiritual experience," is in translating this kind of knowing into the limited and disciplined concepts of analytical reason. For the seeker after experiential meaning and purpose in life, however, the possibilities of "another way of knowing" are both exciting and refreshing.

The data from both bio-feedback and left-right brain research are providing us with new tools for understanding Swedenborgian theological psychology, and the practice of the religious life it suggests. It would seem that we are once again at a new beginning. We may expect an increase in both the number and sophistication of mind/brain research with expanding new knowledge about the exciting enterprise of being human. Not all the scientists conducting experiments *want* to find out that the mind is more than the brain, but most of the data seems to point that way. The whole field is well worth studying by anyone who wants to learn more about the newest scientific data on what human life is and what it might become.

Probably the best summary of bio-feedback research, with an emphasis on the re-discovery of the will, is Barbara Brown's book, *New Mind, New Body* (Harper & Row, 1974). The relation of bio-feedback to other lines of brain research can be found in another popularly written book, Marilyn Ferguson's *The Brain Revolution* (Tapfing Publishing Company, 1973). An excellent summary of left/right brain research, with interpretation and application, is to be found in Robert E. Ornstein's *The Psychology of Consciousness* (Viking Press, 1972).

The Fall did not happen once and for all and become an inevitable fate, but it continually happens here and now in all its reality. In spite of all past history, in spite of his inheritance, every man stands in the naked situation of Adam; to each, the decision is given.

Martin Buber

ISAIAH'S PEACEABLE KINGDOM AS IMAGE OF INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL WHOLENESS

David J. Garrett

The vision of a peaceable kingdom, at least as old as Isaiah's image of it (Isaiah 11: 6 – 9), has sustained mankind over a 2500 year span of time:

"The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid... and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The sucking child shall play over the hole of the asp... They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

In times of war among nations, civil war, political strife, and individual misunderstandings, the potential for reconciliation between opposing sides has brought perspective and hope. As man's self-knowledge advanced, recognition of the need for reconciliation widened to include the inner world. In the 18th century, in the uncompleted work *The Animal Kingdom*, Swedenborg sought a unified image of the disparities in the soul's kingdom. Later when a religious crisis occurred in his psyche the problem of conflicting inner factions became a personal struggle (see *Studia Swedenborgiana*, Vol. 1, No. 4, June, 1975, Swedenborg's Individuation Process, Soren Ekstrom). Out of Swedenborg's work at the depths within, a clear differentiation was made between good and evil and truth and falsity. In the tradition of Dante, St. John of the Cross, and John Bunyan before him, and echoing the mythical heroes of Greek, Egyptian, and Sumerian lore who journeyed to the underworld, Swedenborg confronted the great oppositions and contradictions of human nature in himself (see *The Worship & Love Of God*, the descent of Adam to the underworld, E. Swedenborg). The step was a tremendous one, psychologically and religiously, requiring the utmost courage to embrace the opposing sides without letting them split him apart.

Swedenborg's way of dealing with the great opposites of heaven and hell, once they had been

established as psychic facts, was to keep them separate. It was apparently the only way open to him. The gulf between the heavens and the hells, he said, was unbridgeable. The dream of seeing the soul as a unified whole, attempted in *The Animal Kingdom*, was never realized. However, it is interesting to note Swedenborg's comment in a later period that even the highest angels are let into their propriums every so often to keep contact with their less manageable sides (A.C. 5672, 6110, etc.). And that angels minister to those in hell, ameliorating their pain (H. 391). He also realized that a person's freedom lies in being in an equilibrium between heaven and hell (H. 597 - 603). He saw, if only dimly, the real need for each polarity in the soul.

Blake, Jung and Paul on sin

After Swedenborg's death, William Blake, who had been influenced by Swedenborg's work, wrote his poem *The Marriage Of Heaven And Hell*. Isaiah's theme of the peaceable kingdom echoes throughout the verse. Blake envisioned a reconciliation of the soul's conflicts, not forcing them to keep their place by law and authority, but integrating them through the divine gifts of grace and imagination. Through openness to the duality within, imaginative dialogue between different sides, and the urging of love, the fragmented psyche could be integrated and healed.

In the 20th century, the religious psychotherapist Carl Jung illuminated psychotherapy's task as bringing together the psyche's contradictions. "Healing may be called a religious problem," he wrote. "In the sphere of social or national relations, the state of suffering may be civil war, and (it is said) this state is to be cured by the Christian virtue of forgiveness and love of one's enemies. That which we recommend, with conviction of good Christians, as applicable to external situations, we must also apply inwardly (in the treatment of ourselves). This is why modern man has heard enough about guilt and sin. He is sorely enough beset by his own bad conscience, and wants rather to know how he is to reconcile himself with his own nature – how he is to love the enemy in his own heart and call the wolf his brother." (*Psychology & Religion*: West & East, n. 523). Sixty years of Jung's life were devoted to the integration of the soul.

What does Isaiah's peaceable kingdom, seen as inner possibility as well as offering hope to the outer situation, say as promise, or prophetic challenge, to the Church? The Church has always been aware of the problem of the thorny and

obstinate parts of human nature that catch the person unaware. In the first century, Paul lamented, "I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate . . . For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do" (Romans 7: 15 – 19). Paul spoke of a desired unity within the soul: "Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5: 17 – 19). But the Pauline way of dealing with the unregenerate man was to pray for its removal and not allow it room; to let the new man in Christ supplant the old man enthralled in sin. The Church adopted Paul's method. The dark side of human nature was to be shunned as a scapegoat and the light side was to be enthroned. Gradually, over the centuries, the peaceable kingdom slipped from the Church's vision of a unified human being. And what has been the result? The difficult side of human nature inevitably came up when no one was looking bringing destruction in its train. At the same time, the compliant side turned out to be obnoxious and rigid, exclusive in its attitude of rightness, and blind to the hurt caused by its well-meaning judgements against the dark side. Nothing was resolved. The opposing sides remained estranged and the soul continued to be divided against itself.

Western man divides life

To look at the bivalent polarities in the personality gives an idea of the extent and depth of the complexity to be dealt with. In the Western psyche, they are typically: mind/body, soul/substance, conscious/unconscious, masculine/feminine, rational/irrational, good/bad, inner/outer, spiritual/sexual, love/justice, compassion/anger, to mention some. At first sight, it is tempting to deny the incompatibility of the polarities and rationalize the split between them as superficial. Looked at honestly, one recognizes there is a long tradition which keeps them apart and makes one aspect preferable in each pair. Mind is valued over the body. Is the body consulted for its wisdom in a matter? The conscious side is counted over the unconscious. How much have we sought to know of the unconscious until recently and, even so, how much is it taken seriously by the general public? Soul aspirations are confused with actual accomplishment. How aware are we of the

dearth of substance in church, governmental, and personal pronouncements that seem to offer much and deliver little? We reward the good and punish the bad. Do we respond with feeling and intellect to the backlash of the punished, outside and inside? We attend to the needs of the outer world. What do we know of the needs of the inner world? We try to be compassionate and sit on anger believing it to be a compassionate thing to do. Do we ask the source of our somatic complaints, our sudden resentful outbursts, the inadequacy of our caring? We assign certain tasks to the masculine and keep the feminine "in its place." Do we really hear what the feminine inside us, and the outer woman, are asking for? We can go on in this vein through the range of qualities preferred over their unpreferred opposites.

The fact of experience is that as a result of the traditional view of human contradictions people lead split, hurting, one-sided lives. From these splits, havoc and suffering ensue, and the splits become the real occasions of sin and not the human qualities we think are the culprits. It is the undealt with splits, the untransformed contradictions, the unhealed wounds derived from our one-sided ways that produce what is theologically called sin. By rejecting the suspect sides and favoring the acceptable ones the wholeness of the human being is violated. The problem of sin is not solved by leaving out qualities of human nature deemed undesirable. What is left out becomes the abscess that infects communication, relatedness, objectivity, inner freedom, and freedom with one another. The need is to include the qualities as integral parts of the whole and work at their healing and reunion with their opposite sides (opposite, not in the sense of opposing, but as one half of the bivalent polarity in human nature necessary for its dynamism and growth). The vitality and strength so often sought by people are in the rejected sides: the wolf, leopard, lion, and asp of Isaiah's vision; the body, substance, unconscious, feminine, irrational, bad, inner, sexual, love, and anger referred to above.

Moving toward wholeness

The inclusive attitude of Isaiah's vision, from a therapeutic viewpoint, is the foundation for the Church's ministering to the totality of man, inwardly and collectively, and for helping people form religiously committed egos to integrate the

totality. The ego becomes egocentric, defensive, and inflexible when it excludes parts of the personality considered unwanted. The ego that seeks to love the inner enemy and be reconciled to the wolf at the inner door is religious in the deepest and best sense of the word (*religio*: binding the disparate parts). For such an ego will seek out the hurts and dissonances, within and between people, and work for their transformation. This kind of ego is capable of honoring and making possible man's wholeness.

When seen against this background, the teaching of Jesus about love, understood as inclusiveness and the healing of hurts, refers to wholeness. Loving the neighbor, for example, is achieved only as we learn to love ourselves. The enemy, inner and outer, is helped not by resistance but by love. The beam in our eye is to be seen and accepted as our problem to work on before attempting to remove the mote from our brother's eye. The wheat and tares are to grow together until the harvest, not prematurely separated. From the standpoint of the total person's needs, it is not clear to the ego what is to be kept and what is to be set aside. At the time of maturity, vision is clearer and the tares may be burned; that is, transformed by the fire of love. In Jesus' story of the Good Samaritan, Jesus chose an outcast in touch with healing as the one who acted to help the wounded man. It is the rejected side (or person), transformed by acceptance and integration, that is free to act for healing. In the saga of the Prodigal Son, it is the risking, hurting son who finds himself and through the father's welcoming attitude is included in the family. The older brother who was obedient to what he thought the father wanted is angry and excludes himself. He is one-sided and unyielding. In the parable of the two sons sent to work in the vineyard, the one who says "yes" in a one-sided, dutiful response to the father doesn't go. While the one who says "no" eventually does go because he allows himself the freedom to consult the "no" and "yes" in him and, as a result, can act decisively from a unified inner center.

The divine union

References have been made in this article to the Old Testament, New Testament, Swedenborg, Blake, and Jung, and by doing so, may raise questions as to how religious texts may be used. Religious texts take on added depth and healing

when they are read and applied from an integrative viewpoint. In worship, counselling, study groups, the life of the church community, and the church's social action, religious literature may be approached from three major standpoints (though not exclusively three). What does it tell us and illustrate of the splits in ourselves and our society? What does it say and illumine for the healing of these splits? How does it engage the religious ego and direct it? Such an approach nurtures an openness to wholeness and involves the ego in work at the peaceable kingdom within as well as outside oneself. One is made aware of the tendency to resist and repress what one doesn't want to see in oneself. A way is opened to non-defensively admit incongruities and antagonisms — the things about ourselves traditionally shunned. Work at their inclusion, transformation, and integration is expected and entered into as a matter of course.

A further purpose of religious texts is that they arouse deep feeling and memorable imagery and offer containment for working at them (see Swedenborg's point about the literal sense of the Word as a container). However, a one-sided human tendency is to only feel; or to put the feeling outside, often on others; or to push feeling down and suffer the consequences. Neither solves anything. A religious text may be used to arouse feeling, contain it, and provide inspiration and guidance to work at it. Furthermore, the religious text supplies and evokes imagery which speaks to the imagination and problem solving part of the psyche. Again, there is a one-sided human tendency to intellectualize the imagery and not let it touch the core of the person. However, the text may be used so that image and feeling combine and there is neither all feeling nor all intellectualizing. When feeling and imagery work together within the containment of the text, the whole of a person participates in working at what the text arouses. Feeling, imagination, and containment invoke heart, soul, strength, and mind; feeling, intuition, sensation, and thinking. The religious text thus becomes therapeutic without losing its inherent character as story and teaching and violating the essential religious core (see *The Myth of Analysis*, part 2 on Psychological Language, James Hillman).

This is a necessarily brief and compact presentation of possibilities within Isaiah's image of a peaceable kingdom. The image is timeless in

its profundity and directly related to the problems that have become tragic absurdities of our time. The article may suggest directions for exploration in the Church's self-understanding and in its ministry to itself and to the world.

* * *

The Rev. David J. Garrett is a Convention minister practising a counselling ministry in El Cerrito, California. He served churches in St. Louis, Mo., Wilmington, Del., and El Cerrito, Ca., between 1954 – 1971. He trained to be a religious psychotherapist in the Jungian tradition with the Guild for Psychological Studies, San Francisco, 1965 – 1974. He is currently enrolled in the Doctor of Ministry program at San Francisco Theological Seminary. He is married to the former Priscilla M. Alden of the Boston, Mass., society. They are the parents of 4 sons and 1 daughter.

INTEGRATION

i had such a warm day with you
a place of rest in a time of such change
i'll keep today
all the pleasant comfortable nice things
thank you

soft warm pliable
today melted by
with sweetness and warmth
new doors have opened
to a different kind of world
soft sharing
feeling so comfortable
i've been off the road too long
and all those things my grandmother meant to me
are coming back
the part of me i have denied and locked up
memories of sweet childhood dreams
swell inside and i like them
times of tenderness and love
you've helped to bring them back

Jan Puppe
Kitchener, Ont.

FINDING A NEW HOME

The Cambridge Joy of Living Group isn't the first Group that circumstances forced to find a new meeting place . . . but it may be the first group that benefited enormously from the change.

Harvard Square Unitarian Church, squeezed by economic considerations and safety considerations, first raised our rent, then installed an alarm system which meant we had to reschedule our meeting time to 7:30. Because of the earlier hour, attendance dropped off and we were increasingly hardput to pay the increased rent.

The sexton, who had to remain on the premises, asked for greater monetary consideration for his time.

The group conscience wanted to provide coffee and books, to attendees and support to central service but was turning over all its financial resources for rent and services.

Finally, the group already in debt to Central Office for books, was notified it had to purchase its own coffee pot.

A search began. Harvard University, Mt. Auburn Hospital and five Harvard Square churches were contacted . . . and one of the churches and the hospital offered facilities for little rent.

The group visited the church . . . the Church of the New Jerusalem (Swedenborgian) . . . and couldn't believe it. There were two choices for a meeting room . . . both beautiful, and both at no extra cost to the group . . . parking facilities and a coffee pot.

Furthermore, the Swedenborgians wanted the group to come . . . "Not enough people use our facilities and A.A. is a first priority group . . . it is a group that we most want to be here," the minister said.

A short walk from the subway, the church is a priceless example of English Country Gothic architecture, and the parish hall entrance is flanked with lovingly-tended plants . . . including orchids. The group will meet at 8:30 p.m. in the church . . . across from Memorial Hall on Quincy Street . . . beginning immediately.

The above news item was taken from a recent Cambridge, Mass., newspaper. The Rev. Wilfred Rice, pastor of the Cambridge New Church Society, adds this comment: "Every Thursday evening 40 – 50 members of an A.A. group meet in the downstairs Sunday School room, while their relatives and friends are given a tour of the Church and library. Over a hundred people a week visit our building for meditation, prayer and worship."

A CALL FORWARD

(October 5, 1975, marked the dedication of the new premises, and the Centenary, of the Sydeny, Australia, New Church Society. Following is an excerpt from the Rev. Obed Mooki's dedication sermon.)

You will see, my dear friends, you will see from what I have been saying, that we must engage in the dissemination of truths and that these truths are the business for which we stand; are the reason why we are here. And men will say, when they see the truths that we stand for, and when they see the love with which we disseminate these wonderful truths, and when they see the life that we live not only here but also in our homes, they will say, "We will go with you because we have heard that God is with you." And there will be a growth of the New Church. And I believe you will see the growth of the New Church is dependent upon four things. Firstly, our study of the doctrines. Secondly, the attitude that we must adopt to the writings, and Thirdly, a life according to them. Most important, we must study the doctrines; we must read them for ourselves. A wonderful library is going in Sydney. We must make use of it, and we must study for ourselves. And then we must have an attitude, a positive attitude. We must come to realize that these are the Revelation which the Lord has given to the world because He wants to establish a new order, a new world, a world full of men and women who love God and their neighbor as never before. And then we must have an attitude, a positive attitude, towards these writings. We must have a positive attitude toward them, we must not take them haphazardly, neither hot nor cold, in between. We must be determined that these are the Revelations given to the world by the Lord, and that positiveness must be followed by a good life. We must live well in our homes. It will not be necessary, you see my friends, even to go about looking for people and asking them to come and see the wonderful things that we teach or that we offer. If we study these wonderful truths that have been given to the world and if our attitude is a positive one, not a negative one, and if we live according to them, the people will come. You will not know what to do with them. You will not know how to cope with them. They will say, "We will go with you. We heard that God is with you. We heard that you have the truth." And they will come from the south, and they will gather together in the House of the New Jerusalem.

HAVE YOU SEEN THE MOOKIS?

Many of you who were at Convention saw and enjoyed the Mooki film. This was an interview with the Rev. and Mrs. Mooki by the Rev. Ormand Drake, Professor Emeritus at N.Y.U., on the CBS program, "The Way to Go."

The interviewer was gracious and appreciative and framed his questions in a way that brought out richly informative responses from Obed and Eulalia. The film projects their personalities in a remarkable way and they were able to give a graphic picture of their activities, besides presenting some of our basic New Church doctrines simply and clearly.

The interview was arranged through the efforts of Rev. Priestnal and Virginia Branston, both of whom are members of the Radio and TV Dep't of the Council of Churches of New York City. When they saw the broadcast they were so enthusiastic about it that they immediately entered into negotiations with CBS for a copy of the film prepared from the original program at considerable expense.

The New York Ass'n now owns the film and will make it available to other Associations and Societies on a rental basis. It is a 16mm video tape in color with sound and rents for \$25, post paid. The renting society is responsible for the cost of returning it. The N.Y. Ass'n voted to give all the proceeds of the rentals to the Mookis themselves as it was they who made the film so successful and who certainly deserves the benefits of it.

Some of you may know that the building of the Mooki Memorial College, in which the Mookis made their home, was condemned and has been torn down. It had been poorly and hastily constructed and was in very bad shape, with leaking roofs and sagging walls. A new building will cost the College \$50,000 or more, and no one knows when that amount of money can be gathered together.

Meanwhile the Mookis themselves have had to find housing elsewhere and are hard-pressed. They will appreciate even the comparatively small amounts that showing their interview will bring them. We can assure a half hour of great pleasure to any Society that rents the film and we not only recommend it highly but urge you to view it.

Send all inquiries to Miss Margaret S. Sampson, 330 East 84th Street, New York, N.Y. 10028.

MEET YOUR BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Board of Education met in Urbana, Ohio, last fall to evaluate activities carried out during the year, and made plans for the year ahead.

Convention members may not be aware of the many activities sponsored by this active "arm of the Church". Where once its area of concern was essentially limited to Sunday School material, your current Board considers Religious Education to be an integral part of life itself, and is involved in all the activities of Convention.

The Retirement Conference in Florida and the Women's Conference in Urbana were two new activities sponsored this past year. Plans to continue both programs are now being made. Additional conferences in Leadership Skills, and in Human Sexuality are being considered in the near future.

LEI, for many years a B.O.E. youth program, moved into a new form last year with a new name: WEYS. This wilderness experience, held in New England, will be developed further in the North-west next summer under the leadership of Don Lovell.

The Mini-Courses at Convention these past years have been developed by the Convention Planning Committee, assisted by the Board of Education. So many educational techniques now being used in secular education are compatible with Swedenborg's concept of learning. In this light, the Board has adopted the rich Theology of our Church in training sessions for teachers and students alike.

The Board welcomes inquiries from Societies, Associations or individuals regarding areas to be explored currently, and in the future.

Betsy Young.

ADULT LEARNING IN A NEW CONTEXT

*Perry S. Martin, Chairman
Adult Education Committee of the
Board of Education*

I wondered as I started down the escalator at the Cincinnati airport how I would get to my destination and whether I would learn anything relevant to our small church. When I stepped off a man flashed a sign saying MARYDALE. He greeted me and led me to a station wagon where other passengers bound for the conference were waiting. In the five minutes it took to introduce ourselves, we reached Marydale Conference Center, and drove up a lovely winding road past a little lake which reflected the last red and yellow leaves of October.

I registered, found my room, and unpacked slowly to put off the moment when I would have to make my way into a world of strangers. To my surprise, I heard a knock and in came Ron Brugler, a welcome fellow Swedenborgian to join me at the National Council of Churches conference on education.

Ron attended the children's forum, and I the adult, so we went in separate directions to learn different material and meet different people. (See Ron's article in the January MESSENGER).

In the adult forum we were given a brief experience in androgogical learning, which is self-directed and self-motivated education. We were introduced to a structure which helped us to define our learning goals, assess our competencies and needs, locate resources, and evaluate results. The androgogical approach puts the responsibility for learning directly on the learner. I gained new insight into how easy it is to shift the blame to the leader or teacher if we are not learning what we think we want or should. I recalled many adult Sunday School classes that started up hopefully because people thought they wanted one or should have one, but petered out, leaving the leadership with a sense of failure and frustration. I realized if class members really assessed what they wanted to learn and how they might go about it, an adult class would become an exciting time when they shared their new insights as well as faced the difficulties they were encountering. Leadership for such classes could be readily trained — not to answer any question posed by the Green Thirty, but to lead and encourage people in their quest for

Grownups have a strange way of putting themselves in compartments and groups. They build up barriers . . . of religion, of caste, of color, of party, of nation, of province, of language, of custom and of wealth and poverty. Thus they make prisons of their own making.

Nehru

answers. Printed resource material is available for such leadership ¹, and training sessions might be sponsored regionally or at Convention by the Board of Education.

Succeeding sessions of the adult forum offered participants an opportunity to learn what the various denominations are doing in the field of adult education. Some of the larger denominations stressed the production of printed materials. Smaller denominations reported that they made use of material produced either by other denominations or by inter - denominational approaches. ² I was struck by the fact that many share similar concerns that have become apparent in our church recently, especially concern for the aging, the singles of society, and others often ignored by the community and the church. I noted that several have established posts for social justice, recognizing the role of the church in following the precepts of the New Testament. I felt regret that we are neglecting this area of responsibility now. Among these professional church workers who represented a fraction of their educational staff, however, I began to feel a pride that we are doing so much without fulltime workers.

My report of adult educational activities of the Swedenborgian Church described our Post Convention Conferences, Women's Conference, and Conference for the Retiring Response was especially elicited by the assertion that we stress the Swedenborgian concept of wholeness, seeking to educate body, mind, and spirit.

Of particular relevance to our church was a presentation of the concept of intergenerational learning. Instead of each age group being isolated, learning takes place in this kind of program among the generations, enhancing each person's sense of belongingness and ability to share with and contribute to others' learning. Such a program requires considerable planning by the leadership and commitment by the participants. One program described was a series of meetings of family clusters — a group of 25 — 30 people, including three or four entire families and at least three generations. The intergenerational approach might provide a solution to our perennial problem of small classes and teacher shortages.

A final session of evaluation in small groups produced another learning experience for me personally. In our group I kept stressing the process of learning which makes education meaningful. An elderly gentleman from what I suspected was a fundamentalist church kept talking about not losing sight of the content. "We must teach the Bible," he kept saying. After much parrying back

and forth, he sought me out at a coffee break. I told him my concern that when material is presented without regard for how people learn and make it relevant in their lives, then little actual learning takes place and the material is "forgotten." He shared with me his fear that in the emphasis on the learning process, we would forget the Bible, the Word of God. As we both acknowledged the concern of the other, he said, "I believe we always need to have this tension between content and process so that neither is ever lost sight of but they both become valued." This encounter left me with the faith that when we learn to listen to each other such bridges can be built within our struggling church.

- 1 Ingalls, John, *A Trainer's Guide to Androgogy, Its Concepts, Experiences and Applications*. U.S. Dept. of Health, Education, and Welfare, Government Printing Office, Wash., DC 20402
- 2 e.g. Joint Educational Development. Information available from Arthur O. Van Eck, Reformed Church in America, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y. 10027.

A FRIENDLY VOICE FROM THE PAST

(The spectre of declining enrollment and rising costs again haunts the Trustees of Urbana College. The following insights, from a 1956 MESSENGER editorial, may today be ripe for picking.)

After the second world war there was a large influx of ex - service men to the colleges. Urbana, at that time, had a good staff and was under a capable administration. Yet after the first influx of students was over enrollment began to drop. The relatively high expense of operating a college, a small endowment and a small student body all conspired to make continuation as simply a junior college difficult if not impossible. Would not that experience repeat itself now? I still feel that the prospects for Urbana as a Junior College are not bright.

As a research center specializing in the things relating to spiritual life it could have a great future. At least we should not be so tradition-bound as to rule this out. I recognize that there are many obstacles in the way and some of those may prove insurmountable. But this possibility should be looked into carefully.

Bjorn Johannson,
Cincinnati, Ohio.

THE EAST BRIDGEWATER SOCIETY of THE NEW JERUSALEM

Elmwood, Massachusetts

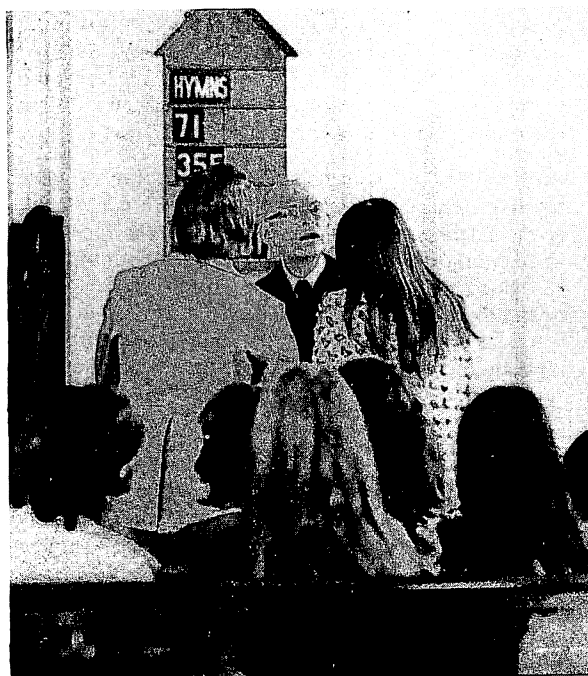
Where two very old Highways meet stands the Elmwood New Church — Route 18, the venerable Port of New Bedford to Boston Turnpike — and Route 106, stretching from Rhode Island to Plymouth, America's "Home Town". A microcosm of the country passes by our door. Conscious of our visibility, we have redecorated our premises this year in white and bicentennial blue. Our three - faced steeple clock is about to serve the community again after a hiatus of twenty - five years.

Exterior impressions are only part of our history and present day activity. In 1830, eleven well - known and respectable gentlemen of East Bridgewater met together and pledged the sum of \$45.00 toward defraying the expenses of the Rev. Adonis Howard, should he see fit to preach every other Sunday to those friends of the New Church doctrines. The subscribers were duly organized under the Statutes of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Rev. Adonis Howard found it convenient to preach to the Society and then to represent it at the General Convention some two years later (1832). Within four years a Sabbath School was established and a teacher "hired". After a period of seven years meeting in the homes of members, Mr. Churchill's Hall was selected as a meeting place. This hall was on the second floor of the building (at present housing the Elmwood Post Office) and had an extra wide stairs to accommodate the voluminous skirts of the ladies. The present meeting house was erected in 1854 with the Legal Society as trustees of the property.



Interior, Elmwood New Church.

A succession of faithful and distinguished pastors have served the church. The Rev. Timothy Otis Paine, son - in - law of the first minister, the Rev. Adonis Howard, had a forty year ministry. In Pastor Paine's later years, he had an assistant in the person of the Rev. Clarence Lathbury. It is noteworthy that Rev. Lathbury's sister, Miss M. A. Lathbury, was the author of one of Christendom's great devotional hymns, "Break Thou the Bread of Life". Mrs. Maude Churchill, our 102 year old member with the marvelous memory, recalls the several times Miss Lathbury visited her brother in Elmwood to share in the Divine Services. During Mr. Lathbury's pastorate a flourishing Young People's League with over one hundred members provided the incentive and wherewithal to build an addition to the church. A large new hall with professional type stage was dedicated in 1900, as well as an addition known as the Ladies' Parlor for the Elmwood Sewing Circle, an organization with over a half century of service to the church. Following the ministry of Mr. Lathbury were those of Harold Gustafson, Merritt Buckingham, the twenty - five year pastorate of Warren Goddard, and in the post World War II years, Edwin Capon, Paul Zacharias, Wilfred Rice, and from 1966 to the present, Arvid Anderson.



Rev. A. Anderson baptizing April Walsh in June, 1975.

Traffic by our door is very fast and heavy and we would wish it was much slower. We observe a wear and tear on people's body and spirit. After one hundred and forty - five years, Elmwood New Church is still a sanctuary for worship, study, and fellowship. The Church School has a thirty - six Sunday schedule with a student body of twenty - five pupils, a teaching staff of nine, using a Co-operative Protestant Curriculum known as Standard Graded Bible Series. The Joppa Guild, organized in the 1930's is the work group that raises an important part of our budgetary needs. The venerable Elmwood Sewing Circle, with a history of serving the church, community, and nation in peace years, and especially during four wars, is still doing an estimable work for the society and community. Our Boy Scout Troop 33, with a continuous chartered record of sixty - four years, was started in 1911 by the late husband of Maude Churchill, Col. Percival Churchill. The Parish also houses two Girl Scout troops. We are justifiably proud of our civic outreach in supporting these youth organizations that build citizenship and morality. The Senior Youth League, comprising of young people ages 14 - 17, meets bi - monthly and serves the church in various ways, notably providing the usher corps for worship services and teaching in the Church School. This group is the nucleus for the Pastor's Confirmation Class. Periodically, we conduct an adult class based on theological subjects or Biblical books. Music enhances and enriches our worship experiences, a feature for which the Elmwood Church has long been noted. There is the Carl Edson Memorial Organ, a magnificent instrument, purchased and rebuilt with the assistance of parishioners and friends of the late Carl Edson, a professional musician, organ builder, and devoted member of the church. Competent and dedicated members of the Senior and Junior Choirs add to the ministry of music throughout the year.

Set here in southeastern Massachusetts in a town purchased for and settled by Plymouth Pilgrim Fathers, the Elmwood Church faces an uncertain future. So it was in the beginning and the Lord went before them. The Joppa Villagers own the church property; the New Church at large provides material and spiritual encouragement; and we can but hope and pray we are worthy of our spiritual heritage and present responsibility

Arvid L. Anderson — Pastor
Lucille B. Flagg —
Legal Society Clerk
and Historian.

FROM CHURCH RECORDS

MARRIAGES

MARPLE — CHURCH — James Marple and Neda Church of Meadow Lake, Sask., were married at Meadow Lake on November 8, 1975, the Rev. Henry W. Reddekopp officiating.

KNOLL — STORER — Peter Knoll and Jeanette Storer were married in Kitchener, Ontario, on December 12, 1975, the Rev. Paul B. Zacharias officiating.

CONFIRMATIONS

BRISTOW, LANGE — Peter Lee Bristow and Stefan Lange of St. Paul, Minn., were confirmed into the faith of the New Church on Sunday, September 28, 1975, the Rev. Andre Diaconoff officiating.

ROBBINS, ZAHARAKIS — Donald K. Robbins of Lake Oswego, Oregon, and Michael G. Zaharakis of Portland, Oregon, were confirmed into the faith of the New Church on Sunday, November 30, 1975, the Rev. Andre Diaconoff officiating.

STEWART, STEWART — Jon S. Stewart and Fern E. Stewart were confirmed into the faith of the New Church in St. Petersburg, Florida, on Sunday, November 30, 1975, the Rev. Leon C. LeVan officiating.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

CAPON, ZATSCHKA — Esther Capon and Lilly Zatschka were received into membership of the New Church in Manchester, N.H., on December 21, 1975, the Rev. Edwin G. Capon officiating.

BAPTISMS

BERGE — Catherine Jessica, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. John Berge of Jacksonville, Florida, was baptized at Swedenborg House, Deland, Florida, on October 12, 1975, the Rev. Ernest L. Frederick officiating.

BRYAN — Jared Joshua, son of Mr. & Mrs. Craig Bryan of Winnipeg, Manitoba, was baptized on October 26, 1975, at Roblin, Manitoba, the Rev. Henry W. Reddekopp officiating.

SMITH — Melissia Ruth, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Robert Smith, was baptized on December 14, 1975 at St. Petersburg, Florida, the Rev. Leon C. Le Van officiating.

DEATHS

GRABER — Mrs. Walter (Marie) Graber of Pretty Prairie, Kansas, died on October 18, 1975. The resurrection service was held at Pretty Prairie Church, the Rev. Eric Zacharias officiating.

UNRUH — Mrs. Leo (Rose) Unruh of Larned, Kansas, died on October 14, 1975. The resurrection service was held on October 16, the Rev. Galen Unruh officiating.

SCHWARTZ — Mrs. Ben (Alice) Schwartz of Pretty Prairie, Kansas, died on September 21, 1975. A memorial service was held on September 23, the Rev. Eric Zacharias officiating.

SPREIER — The Rev. Galen Unruh conducted graveside services for Paul Spreier in Pawnee Rock, Kansas, on November 22, 1975.

REGAMEY — The Rev. Alfred Regamey of Lausanne, Switzerland, died on Dec. 24, 1975. A more detailed memorial will appear in the March Messenger.

HATHEWAY — Katherine B. Hatheway, of the Boston Society, died on Dec. 22, 1975. The Rev. George McCurdy officiated at the resurrection service in Melrose, Mass.

CARTER — Mrs. Barbara Carter of Holbrook, Mass., died on Dec. 13, 1975, with the Rev. George McCurdy officiating at the resurrection service on Dec. 15th.

FINDING HOPE

by Rev. F. Robert Tafel

(NOTE: This year Garden Grove Community Church and Dr. Robert H. Schuller are celebrating twenty years of service. Articles about this Church and minister are appearing in many magazines, including the *Christian Century*. The *Messenger* editor has asked me to write from the perspective of my involvement.)

My first contact with Garden Grove Community Church was in April of 1974, a few weeks before Easter. For the first time in many months, I had Sundays off. My family and I decided we would begin attending church services again; the question now was "where?" The drive to our church in Los Angeles or the Wayfayers' Chapel in the midst of the gasoline shortage was out of the question. Besides, we wished, at least temporarily, to be free from the usual problems. Twelve minutes away by car was the walk-in drive-in sanctuary of Garden Grove Community Church. The advertisement in the paper was intriguing; the sermon title was dynamic and positive sounding. We decided we would give it a try.

Then I did something I had not done for several years: I checked two books out of the library and outlined them by the end of the week. They were both by Dr. Schuller (I wanted to know something about him before I went): *Move Ahead With Possibility Thinking* and *You Can Become the Person You Want To Become*.

What is it like to go there and become involved? Excitement, anticipation, joy, hope, encouragement — these are some of the feelings a visitor gains. These feelings persist beyond the novelty of a new experience.

When you visit, you find a steady stream of people doing what you are doing: finding a parking place, walking the block or so to the sanctuary and Sunday School, leaving children at the nursery and Sunday School classes, and then, being welcomed by the ushers.

At 9:30 or 11:00 the tympanies roll, the trumpets sound and the Hour of Power Choir walks in briskly followed by the ministers. The service begins. Watch "Hour of Power" and you'll get some idea of what it is like (with the usual difference between being at an event and seeing it on television). But to the casual observer this might seem just a show. I am convinced one cannot understand this ministry apart from the human needs it meets. If you are in need of "possibility thinking", hope, and encouragement, then it makes sense and has meaning.

"Possibility thinking." Never giving up. Not making excuses for failure, or rationalizing other people's success. Removing a "disadvantage complex." It is an affirmative outlook, combined with specific suggestions to help open up your vision to see the many possibilities surrounding you.

I am not a creed - writer. I am by temperament not prone to push creeds or the conformity they usually suggest. Yet, I found myself attracted to Dr. Schuller's "Possibility Thinker's Creed."

When faced with a mountain

I WILL NOT QUIT!

I will keep on striving until

I climb over, find a pass

through, tunnel underneath —

or simply stay and turn the

mountain into a gold mine,

with God's help!

To say that Dr. Schuller has faced mountains himself would be an understatement. He alludes to these mountains from time to time, so you know he speaks from experience.

Garden Grove Community Church did not, of course, spring up overnight. Dr. Schuller began by preaching atop the projection room and refreshment stand of a drive-in theatre. Many mountains must have been faced and still are there. But to turn a mountain into an inspiring ministry is a creative process. If his ministry can be called "successful", it is through service: inspiring people in their darkest hours not to give up hope; helping people to see the many possibilities and open doors God sets before them.

"Possibility thinking" has much to offer us. It has changed my perspective and ministry. One of my hopes is to re-organize the basics of Swedenborg's theology in relation to the insights I have found in Dr. Schuller's books. I believe we will find that Swedenborg was quite a "possibility thinker" himself — although he never used these words.

It was just what I needed. Between Sundays I was a relief-manager in a chain of restaurant dinnerhouses. I would leave home around four in the afternoon and get home around two-thirty in the morning. Then I would practice "possibility thinking" till around five-thirty. Sometimes, I would write letters to type out the next afternoon.

During these hectic and exhausting times Dr. Schuller became, in effect, my minister — although I had not had any direct conversation with him personally. The nurturing atmosphere of "possibility thinking" helped me discover the way back to an active ministry.

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BICENTENNIAL ESSAY CONTEST**

CASH PRIZES

First Prize	\$100.00
Second Prize	\$75.00
Third Prize.....	\$50.00

THEME

"PATRIOTISM IN THE LIGHT OF THE NEW AGE"

CONTEST RULES

- All entries must be neatly typed and double spaced.
- Attach your name on a separate piece of paper to your manuscript.
- Essay length: 1000 to 1200 words – about three typed pages.
- All manuscripts become the property of the MESSENGER.
- An Essay Committee appointed by the editor will judge all entries, and its decisions will be final.
- Entries will be judged on originality of thought, clarity of expression, and literary style.
- All manuscripts must be in the editor's hands by April 20, 1976.
- The winning essays will be published in the MESSENGER.
- ALL READERS OF THE MESSENGER ARE ELIGIBLE.

ARE YOU INTERESTED?

The Board of Education invites you to inquire about a position as Executive Secretary. This is a part - time, salaried position. Responsibilities include: attendance at Board meetings, implementing programs, co - ordinating activities with other groups, planning and administrating conferences and workshops, and assisting with agendas, budgets, notices, evaluation, etc. If you are interested, please contact –

Rev. Dorothea Harvey,
619 S. Main St.,
Urbana, Ohio 43078

RECIPES!

The League is still trying to make a New Church Cookbook. We need around 150 – 200 recipes, and we only have 20 so far. We decided on this idea because people like to share recipes and this cookbook would be a good way to do it. It would also help us, the future leaders of the Church.

I would like to thank all of you who have sent recipes. But to those who haven't, it only takes 13 cents to send a couple recipes. Send them to:

Barbara Casper
c/o S. Odhner
2704 Huntington Pike
Huntington Valley, Pa.
19006

We Get Letters—

Re: Theology in Heaven

Dear Paul,

You ask, "How can heavenly inhabitants misunderstand basic theology?" In the first place, not all heavenly societies look to the Lord. Some worship an angel, because an idea of the Lord is beyond their grasp. Nevertheless these people are of a heavenly nature and are given a place in heaven with an angel in charge over them.

I believe the idea of reincarnation might have its origin in the fact that spirits can enter into each other's memories to such a degree that each one thinks the other's memory is his own. It seems to me an exquisite form of telepathy, but, confusing, to say the least. However, it could convince a person of the existence of reincarnation.

Then, too, each society is composed of varying intelligences. Within the higher societies, behavior and use toward the neighbor are stressed and developed, while opinions on intellectual subjects are developed individually. There is no such thing in the higher societies as mass indoctrination. Each person is allowed his God-given right to develop as a unique, created individual. Each person is loved and respected for contributing his own special gifts, as long as he isn't infringing on the rights of others, and as long as his intention is to do good for others. In this way each person is free to develop his unique abilities, and is therefore a more prolific contributor to the larger society.

Sincerely,
Beryl Foster
Halifax, Mass.

"On Forgetting Vietnam" — No, Yes, and Maybe

Dear Paul,

I do not like to hear politics and economics from the pulpit. I often disagree with the minister.

Alice Van Boven
Riverside, Cal.

Dear Paul,

The Nov. issue of the MESSENGER was particularly good. Such a variety of interesting things in it . . .

Mrs. Philip Carter
Cambridge, Mass.

Dear Sir,

Taking Mr. Ford's remark about putting Vietnam behind us, if taken out of context, might elicit an opinion such as expressed by Mr. McCaffee Brown. Mr. Ford's statement indicated to every intelligent person that we put it behind us, and turn our efforts and energy to solve the issues that confront us at the present time.

In fairness to the Presidents in office at the time, when it appeared that a small nation was being taken advantage of, we, the American people, have always responded with a full heart. Now we see the error, but how did it look at that time! I am sure no Administration wants our country to go to war, but when a principle is involved, our country always came to the rescue . . . To Mr. Brown I say, "Use your talents to the building of faith, idealism and pride in our country and in our administration." In closing . . . see the words of BOW No. 364 — "We would be building."

Sincerely,
G. I. Quis
New York, N.Y.

Revelation requires a quiet, open attitude

Dear Sir:

What is Swedenborg's claim that he received a revelation supposed to accomplish?

Bob Kirven's interesting discussion of the Church's attitudes toward Swedenborg's writings gives me an excuse to offer a personal theory.

Some commentators have suggested that Swedenborg seems to make an unreasonable demand on our ability to believe by presenting his claims at the very beginning of his books rather than at the end when the reader could judge them with a lot more perspective. At the beginning of a book, they seem impossible to judge and may even warn some new readers that this guy is probably a fanatic.

Another point of view is that Swedenborg must tell us where his ideas come from so that we may know what authority they have. This, I think, is part of the truth; but as it stands it is vulnerable to the observation that we still must choose our authorities. Something within, a sense of Reality, must have something substantial to go on. It must see something real and cannot respond to an unsupported claim.

So what was Swedenborg trying to do? I think that he was writing primarily for the quietly receptive reader, not for the argumentative philosopher or the reader with a "Show me" attitude. Swedenborg's revelatory claims are addressed to the reader who is willing and ready to be led into a new world *if* the experiment seems worthwhile; he has a waiting attitude. Given that kind of openness, Swedenborg presents his claim early in order to signal the reader that in order to judge the material properly, he must open up his deepest levels of intuitive understanding. A revelatory claim is essentially a statement that the following material is inwardly of the greatest depth and that its reality can therefore be felt only in one's own depths. The reader can then open up his mind at the proper level. But he is not really being asked to believe. That must still wait on the outcome of the experience (which *can* take a lifetime to emerge).

If one's deepest sensitivities are not brought to the situation, one can still tune in to the more philosophical aspects of the material where it addresses the conscious mind directly. But he will have missed the experience of tuning in to it totally.

It therefore matters a great deal how receptive we are. The depths are not automatically open. The revelatory claim is only to an extent a fact presented to us for conscious assessment. It is in a sense mainly an index, a strong indication, of how deeply to listen.

Sincerely,
Steve Koke
Oakland, Cal.

HAVE WE FORGOTTEN GOD?

Abraham Lincoln gave voice to many utterances that are as valid today as when he first spoke them. Among these we would include the following:

"We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth, and power as no other nation has ever grown.

But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these things were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own.

Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us."

FROM THE NEW CHURCH HERALD

My theme, (during my Presidential term), will be the spiritual and numerical growth of the Church, and I would like to place emphasis on the idea of the Church as a body of people. We all know the doctrine that the Church is the Lord's kingdom within man and that we should direct our attention to the problem of improving the quality of our Churchmanship, but it is possible that an over-emphasis of this teaching could be a defence mechanism covering our unwillingness to do anything about increasing our numbers. We should ask ourselves whether it could be remotely possible that among the fifty million people who inhabit these islands, that not one per cent are longing for what we have to offer? If the figure was only one tenth of one per cent, and if we could make contact with them, we would have five thousand people more enjoying the teachings we value so much.

We have often heard it said that the New Church, like the woman clothed with the sun we read about in Revelation, is in the wilderness for a time and times and half a time. Now, without going into details, "a time and times and half a time" means a completed state and a new beginning. Can we not decide that now is the time for a new beginning?

Rev. John Booth

NEW ADDRESS

Mr. and Mrs. Alan Farnham
318 West Palmetto Ave.,
Deland, Florida 32720

Mrs. David Mack
23 Main St.,
Pittsfield, N.H. 03263

Endlessly men prate about freedom, and shout and demonstrate and riot and demand congressional legislation and civil rights. All in vain. The fetters are inward, the bondage is spiritual.

Robert DeRopp

Cassette Program

*Produced by the
Board of Missions*

The Board of Missions is offering worship services on cassettes, listed here, for all who cannot attend worship services.

Please order by **CATALOGUE NUMBER**. Send \$3.00 for each cassette to Miss Margaret Sampson, 330 East 84th Street, New York, N.Y. 10028. If cassette is returned in good condition within six weeks, \$1.50 will be refunded.

Sermons by the Rev. C. S. Priestnal, music by Wm. Mount or Victor Byrd.

Numbers A 101, A 102, 15 min. each side; others 22 min. each side.

A 101	Side A	—	A Woman of Samaria
	Side B	—	Who Am I?
A 102	Side A	—	The Good Shepherd
	Side B	—	Anointing the Lord's Feet
A 103	Side A	—	His Abiding Presence
	Side B	—	Our Debt to Doubt
A 104	Side A	—	Judge Righteous Judgement
	Side B	—	God Never Punishes
A 105	Side A	—	Vanished Vision
	Side B	—	All About Angels

Sermons by the Rev. R. H. Tafel, Sr.; Phila. Choir, 30 min. each side.

A 201	Side A	—	Faith in Christmas
	Side B	—	No Room in the Inn
A 202	Side A	—	Gideon
	Side B	—	Let Your Light Shine
A 203	Side A	—	Give Thanks to the Lord (Thanksgiving)
	Side B	—	Thank God for God
A 204	Side A	—	Palm Sunday
	Side B	—	Easter Sunday
A 205	Side A	—	Our Church Mother (Mother's Day)
	Side B	—	The Lord Reigns (Memorial Day)
A 206	Side A	—	Eternity Now
	Side B	—	Make Up Your Mind

Sermons by the Rev. Louis Dole, read by the Rev. Dr. George Dole. 22 min. each side; music by Wm. Mount and Victor Byrd.

A 301	Side A	—	The Three Essentials
	Side B	—	Jesus Christ
A 302	Side A	—	The Problem of Evil
	Side B	—	Advent
A 303	Side A	—	His Life and Ours
	Side B	—	Ascension
A 304	Side A	—	Providence
	Side B	—	The Word
A 305	Side A	—	Use of the Word
	Side B	—	Heaven

CONVENTION CALENDAR

S.S.R. Board of Directors	Feb. 7
Dept. of Pub. Narberth, Pa.	Feb. 19 - 21
Worship Committee Narberth, Pa.	March 7 - 9
A.C.A.M., Newton, Ma.	March 11
C.O.M. Exec. Com. Newton, Mass.	March 9 - 12
Dept. of Education Urbana O.	March 19 - 20
CONVENTION '76 Philadelphia, Pa.	June 30 - July 5

In the March issue

Dr. Elizabeth Kubbler - Ross's views on life after death.

Prof. John Hotson analyze's the economic plight of the western world.

Rev. W. Rice on "State, Church and Taxes".

Abortion: Two viewpoints.

Plus, we hope, all the regular features.

MESSENGER Index Available

Copies of the 1975 MESSENGER INDEX are available, without charge, from the editor.

PICTURES WANTED

Urbana College is interested in locating portraits or paintings of the following College founders. If you have these pictures - or information leading to same - please contact Dr. Roland Patzer, Urbana College, Urbana, Ohio, 43078. James P. Stuart, Chauncey Giles, J. R. Hibbard, Jabez Fox, Thomas Gwynne, David Gwynne, John Niles, William Murcock, and J. Y. Scammon.

CORRECTION

In the November MESSENGER the Rev. Dr. Ivan Franklin was incorrectly given the rank of Chaplain in the U.S. Navy. We are informed that he is a psychiatrist with the Navy, as well as pastor of the San Diego New Church Society.

THE MESSENGER

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