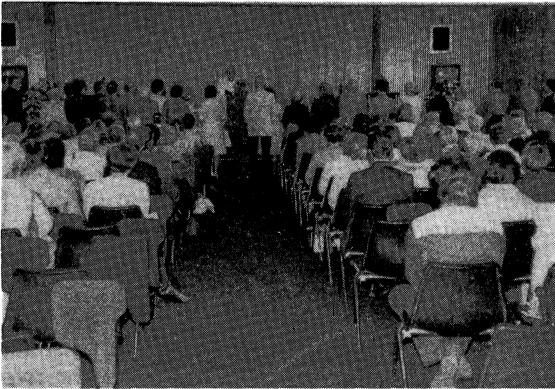


The Messenger

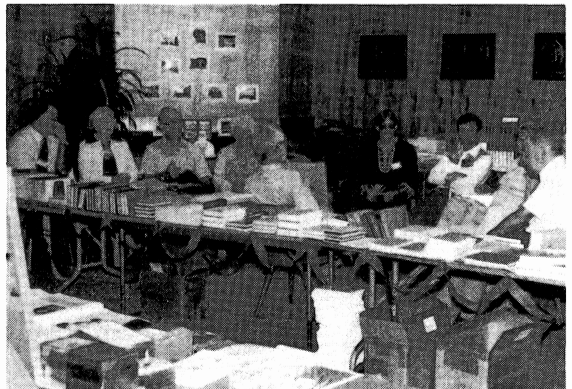
OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH

JULY and AUGUST, 1977

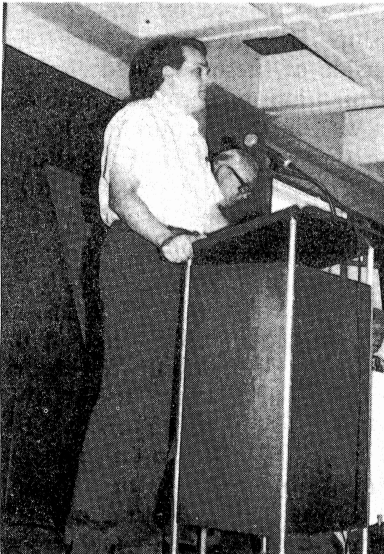
CONVENTION ISSUE



Worship and Dedication



Learning



Business



Fun

CONVENTION REFLECTIONS

It was a good Convention, with between 225 and 250 people in attendance; pleasant accommodations at a very reasonable price; brisk, cool weather prevailing during the week in San Francisco; and a healthy, spirited mood in evidence throughout our sessions. We hope the following pages will give you something of the content and the flavor of Convention '77.

* * *

The main, underlying theme running directly and indirectly through many discussions revolved around the nature of Swedenborg's revelation and the authority of his writings. This ties in with the subject of freedom and responsibility . . . all of which leads to a host of related issues facing Convention today. Some work has been done in this area; much more work will be necessary in the coming years.

But we did take some definite positions at Convention '77.

* * *

Our compliments to the host Society for a superb social program. The delightful buffet luncheon served in the San Francisco parish hall that first Sunday evening . . . the evening receptions, one concluding with a rousing sing-a-long around the piano . . . and who had the brilliant idea of inviting Dallas McKinnon, who actually became "Johnny Appleseed" before our very eyes! . . . and the Chinese dancing troupe on Saturday evening performed with consummate grace and beauty. Perhaps you hadn't heard that the fortune in Harvey Tafel's Chinese cookie read: "Confucius say — Convention like a little baby in certain respects; it frequently needs changing."

* * *

If I were asked to select one "peak experience" at Convention '77, it would have to be the anthem sung by a choir of Convention-goers and directed by Jane Sugden. It isn't very often that a congregation will burst into applause after the singing of an anthem, but here it was fully justified. I doubt that angelic choirs will sound any better.

* * *

As is always the case, the best part of Convention is being with people you love the most. The long talks late into the night . . . earnest discussion over meal tables . . . working together in resolving mutual problems . . . sharing our hopes and dreams

for the future. All of this makes Convention the highpoint of the year. Why not plan now to attend Convention next year? We meet in Kitchener - Waterloo, Ontario, and the dates are June 28 — July 2, 1978.

P.Z.

The Sabol - Reddekopp Mailings

In recent years many of us have received mailings — letters and magazines — from John Sabol in New Jersey and Dennis Reddekopp in Saskatoon. A show of hands at the San Francisco Convention indicated that at least two - thirds of those present have received these mailings. These men do not approve of many actions and policies taken by Convention and the Swedenborg School of Religion, and in their literature they seek support from Convention members in their efforts to overthrow the leadership and the direction of Convention and S.S.R. The tactics they employ have been distressing and pathetic, at the least; and bordering on slander, at the worst. Their techniques include: character assassination, hiding under the cloak of anonymity, distortion of facts, and making sweeping spiritual judgments against many Convention ministers, these judgments usually based on one or two sentences taken out of context.

We are not opposed to responsible dissent. In every organization there is always room for change and improvement, and Convention is no exception. And there are orderly channels set up in our Constitution to effect such changes as are desired by a majority of our membership. But these men have chosen to work outside of these accepted channels, and their machinations have caused much heartache and ill - will in our Church. Many of us, including the President of Convention, have written to these men in a conciliatory vein, trying to reach some ground of mutual understanding, but all such efforts have been rebuffed.

Therefore, in order to put a stop to this cancerous situation, it was voted at our 1977 Convention that all recipients of these mailings are strongly urged to RETURN THE ENVELOPES TO THE SENDER, UNOPENED. This action, based on a recommendation from the Council of Ministers, was adopted unanimously. This same action was subsequently taken by some 70 members of the Western Canada Conference, meeting in Penticton, B.C., on July 9th. If everyone adheres to this policy, the mailings will cease, and we can get on with our Father's business.

P.Z.

CONVENTION SERMON

“ A WORD TO SPEAK ”

Dorothea Harvey

Text: Jer. 1:4 - 12

This occasion has a special meaning for me. As I see Eric Allison, my friend, my student, and now my brother minister, I have a sense of promise for the future, of life ahead for our church.

One of the great pleasures I have in teaching at Urbana College is that every year I teach Swedenborg to a group of students, most of whom have never heard of him before coming to the college. This year one of the doctrines of our church had a special power for me and for the students: the concept of regeneration as a process of individuation, of finding our unique meaning and personhood as a creature of God. According to the writings, all our varied loves, that feel at times so at odds with each other, constitute a kingdom of loves. (HH 477). Everyone is his love (HH480), and there is a kind of divine momentum in the reason for things which supports our finding that particular identity, that ruling love which brings my loves together into one kingdom. This is a powerful idea for college students, as it is for me.

Then during this convention I have felt a strong sense of our need for knowing our identity as a church. The theme of our Convention, “Living Our Love,” speaks to this need. It is this theme: finding our identity, our



Dorothea Harvey, Urbana College, Ohio

purpose before God, that I want to speak to today.

I read from our text from the prophet Jeremiah 1:4 - 12. He is the prophet who broke out of Israel's sense of corporate personality, of finding meaning as a member of the group, a son of Israel, to a sense of conscious separate individuality before God. He was the prophet who lived through the pain of separation from his family, when he was called to speak against the priests of his time, as a conscientious objector against the defense of his country at the time of the Babylonian invasion.

He was forced to stand alone, and he has let us know his feelings about this — both the joy and the pain.

In his call, which I read, he speaks of knowing that God had a purpose for him with such deep certainty that it was part of his nature from his very conception, before he was born.

O LORD, thou knowest . . .

Thy words were found, and I ate them,
and thy words became to me a joy
and the delight of my heart;

for I am called by thy name . . .

I sat alone, because thy hand was upon
me . . .

Why is my pain unceasing,
my wound incurable . . . ?

THE MESSENGER

JULY - AUGUST 1977

Vol. 197, No. 7 - 8 Whole Number 5008

Published monthly, except for the one double issue in July — August, by the Swedenborgian Church (founded 1817, incorporated 1861 as the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America).

Paul B. Zacharias, Editor

The opinions of contributors do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or the Department of Publication, or represent the position of the church.

EDITORIAL, BUSINESS & SUBSCRIPTION ADDRESS:

THE MESSENGER

Box 2642, Stn. B

Kitchener, Ontario, N2H 6N2

Deadline for material: 5th day of the month.

Subscription free to members of the Swedenborgian Church: non - members, \$3.00 a year: foreign postage .25 extra: gift subscriptions from a member, \$1.50: single copies, .25.

Wilt thou be to me like a deceitful brook,
like waters that fail? (Jer. 15:15 - 18)

And this is the prophet who came to the statement of the new covenant which God will make with people:

I will put my law within them, and
I will write it upon their hearts; and I will
be their God, and they shall be my people.
and no longer
shall each man teach his neighbor . . . saying
"Know the LORD," for they shall all know
me, from the least of these to the greatest,
says the LORD. (Jer. 31:33 - 34).

I had taught Jeremiah many times as one of the great prophets who brought that sense of individual awareness into being in Israel. And I had known the emphatic teaching of our church that the Biblical story is the story of the spiritual life of each one of us. We in the New Church know as surely as Israel that we went down to Egypt, that we were delivered from Egypt, that we have travelled through the desert, that we are called to come into the land and make it our own. But I realized just this spring, with power, that this word from Jeremiah is also addressed to me, that I am called to take responsibility for my spiritual identity before God, to speak the word that the Lord would have me speak. And our writings tell us that what applies to us as individuals also applies to us as a church. I have a sense of us as a church, as going through a sort of spiritual adolescence, knowing as deeply as Jeremiah that the Lord has called us to a special identity which the Lord is creating in us, which will make us stand alone as adult persons with our word to speak, and at the same time saying, "No, Lord, I can't, I am only a child."

Jeremiah knew the pain as well as the joy of that word from the Lord. We all know discomfort. Our choice is not whether we feel uncomfortable or not. But when we feel uncomfortable, do we feel abused and say, "I have done everything *they* told me to do, and now why doesn't it work? Why don't *they* fix it?" Or when we feel uncomfortable, do we feel it as contact with a real part of ourselves, a real struggle, which is leading to growth?

I believe that that call of Jeremiah is addressed to the General Convention. I believe it is time we stopped saying, "O Lord, No I am only a child." We know that the Lord has a word for this church to speak, a use for this church to serve in the world, that the Lord is creating this church to be a real church, to face real struggle, and to grow.

How are we to speak that word?

According to the writings, language in heaven flows from love. As angels communicate with human beings, that love strikes or engages particular instances in our experience, in our memory, and makes us aware of the particular form we know of that love. As love speaks, then, it does not mean that I have to memorize someone else's, but that love illuminates facts of my life, as a flame brings to light, and brings out the meaning of what is there.

In what language do we speak?

Do we speak artificial words in which there is no substance, because we are afraid of silence? Do we speak no words, because we are afraid of ridicule if we speak?

Do we speak words that lay on other persons a meaning they must believe, because we are afraid of their response or ours?

Or do we speak a witness to a love which is there, and which illuminates the experience of the other, words in which finally there is no fear, because we know we are touching what is real?

One thing we know: the Lord has not called us to backbiting about each other. To speak the Lord's word we are called to face forward, to that use the Lord would have us do as a church in the world.

How are we to speak? What is that word the Lord has put in our mouth? That identity which we as a church are called to have the courage to find, and then to live in this world? On this point we cannot speak for each other. Each of us has an unique integrity, a truth whose love we must live. But we of the New Church are called to witness to a new age, to the consistency and the power of the world of the spirit of God who is good and true, doing evil to no one, and in this day of awakening and of searching I believe we are called to witness to life beyond death, not as a gimmick to be played with, but as a reality which calls us to be responsible before God, and to trust that our life is in the Lord's hands.

We cannot speak for each other. But I am convinced that as each of us searches in all honesty to know that word which is ours to speak, we will be a harmony which can function as one in the Lord's purpose for our existence.

Our Convention theme has called us to live our love, to know that truth which is ours distinctively as a church, and to live the love of that truth, to speak the word the Lord has put in our mouth to speak. And as we turn to those

(Cont. Next Page)

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Eric J. Zacharias

It is a privilege for us to meet this year on this inner-city campus of the University of San Francisco. May this symbolize for us our readiness to meet the challenge of a swiftly-moving society. And may this experience draw us closer to the reality of a Church radiantly alive to its God-given mission. The President's Address is a vehicle by which I am able to share with you a few perceptions of our Church — something of its beauty and something of the problems which we, with the help of the Lord, must face.

A FEW PRESIDENTIAL HIGHLIGHTS

One of the many delightful features of the office of the Presidency is that invitations from our congregations and Associations tend to come to that office as special celebrations and occasions are being planned. In December, I was honored to have a part in the 75th Anniversary of the dedication of the chapel in Cambridge, Mass. In May, the Fryeburg Society planned a service of dedication for the new Horace W. Briggs educational wing. The construction of this facility was made possible by the granting of a loan by the Convention to the Fryeburg Society. I am sure that the youth of the community will be well-served for many years through this joint effort by the Convention and the local congregation. It was a pleasure for me to participate in the service of dedication.

Urbana College has maintained its ties with the Convention for over one hundred and twenty-five years. Throughout this long history, there have been those periods when the relationship between the Church and the College was ill-defined. There also have been those periods when this relationship was quite strong and the ties more visible. There is now a voice coming from the administration of the College and from the Board of Trustees asking that the Church pursue more aggressively its role in the future of the College. Thus, we now have a Task Force, served by both Church and College representatives, studying, in depth, the goals and objectives of both institutions for the purpose of determining the kind of relatedness that will be mutually strengthening and help us to more effectively address ourselves to human needs in this New Age. It is my hope to see the Church and Urbana College become more involved in one another's future than has been generally the case in the past.

In April and May, Betty and I spent two and a half weeks on the European Continent. Here, we participated first in the meetings of the Continental Association in Zurich. This was followed by visits to our centers in Paris, Copenhagen and Stockholm. Everywhere we found a love for the Church along with an interest and concern for its future.

This past April, there was held at Almont a lay-persons retreat attended by thirty-six

A Word To Speak

words of Jeremiah, seeking the Lord's help, we know them as addressed to us, and we find ourselves in the Lord's presence, conscious of his enabling divine strength.

Now the word of the LORD came to me saying:

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you . . .

Do not say, 'I am only a child';

for to all to whom I send you you shall go,
and whatever I command you you shall go,

and whatever I command you you shall speak.

Be not afraid of them,

for I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord."

Then the Lord said to me, "You have seen well,
for I am watching over my word to perform it."

(Jer. 1:4, 5, 7, 8, 12)

Beloved, we are now invited as a church to come to the Lord's table to receive the bread of life.

Let us pray.

Lord, as we prepare to come to your table to receive the bread of life and the wine of truth in your presence, may that be for each one of us, and for us together as a church, an act of our cleansing, of healing, of newness of life, and of dedication to the task to which you have called us in your world.

Amen.



Convention President Eric Zacharias

participants from the Great Lakes area. This was sponsored by our Board of Education as an opportunity for these people to sharpen their effectiveness as they serve their Church and also, of course, to enhance their spiritual growth. The Board of Education is being encouraged to expand this program, to reach out to our people and on a regional basis give as many of you as possible this opportunity to enlarge your service to the Lord and His Church.

In its richest dimension, the Church is made up of people — people who in their group life and in their private life seek the Lord. It is on this note that I close this portion of my address by relating an experience which came to me the early part of June. While in St. Louis, called there to officiate at a Memorial Service, the opportunity came to spend some time with a young person upon whom there had very recently burst an appreciation and an enthusiasm for the teachings of the New Church. Her new discovery is barely containable — her hunger almost insatiable. How the angels of the heavens must be rejoicing — as they rejoice always when one of God's children seeks that life which is good.

"NEW CHURCH REVIEW" DENOUNCED

During this past year, there has been circulated within Convention, to a limited mailing list, a publication titled, "The New Church Review," under the editorship of Mr. John Sabol of New Jersey. The editor and those who work with him have chosen to viciously

attack the policies of the church, its leaders, its decisions. It appears to me that much of this material is shot - through with distortions, with mis - interpretation and mis - representation of life in Convention. Periodically, in my travels within the Church, I am approached by individuals who are receiving this material. Yes, I am distressed by this activity — not because of what it does to me as an individual, but, I regret that we have this being carried on within the Church, as I see it an activity completely contrary to the spirit of our teachings. The tactics employed are cruel, totally without sensitivity and utterly lacking the discretion of good taste and the spirit of charity.

THE CHALLENGE OF MINISTRY

One of the major areas of responsibility in Convention in need of our attention and concern is that of our empty pulpits. We have a number of churches, among them, Baltimore, St. Louis, Cleveland, Pittsburgh and Gulfport which have been without the services of a resident, ordained minister for some years. While those who serve as Lay Leaders and Lay Ministers are to be commended, we recognize the need and the desire for the ordained ministry. First, I assure those congregations without ministers that those of us in leadership positions in the Church are deeply concerned about this problem. Would that we might wave a magic wand and quickly solve it!

In our Convention at this time, we have a number of ministers who are continuing in their parish responsibilities well past the normal retirement age. The need for parish ministers accompanied by the realities of financially supporting a strong parish ministry may well, it appears to me, apply considerable pressure on our ability to provide the desired services for some time to come. Our young men currently in the ministerial training program at SSR are looking ahead to serve you in your parishes. I encourage all of the congregations, now without ministers, to work with the Advisory Placement Committee in our continuing effort to more effectively utilize our ministerial resources.

The ministry today offers an exciting challenge to our young people. The leadership of the Church in a world struggling to shape its future and to creatively deal with the multitude of implications of an emerging New Age is absolutely vital to the development of a morally and spiritually healthy community. Also, it is not uncommon today to see people in their

middle years changing direction toward the ministry. I encourage all inquiry into the possibility to ministry within the Convention — wherever there is that call to use in service to the Lord and fellowman.

THE GRAND MAN IDEAL

Our teaching of the concept of the Grand Man is very precious to us. I would like to bring this before you as it is presented to us in the writings. We read, "There is such an order in heaven that the Lord rules spiritual things though celestial things, and natural things through spiritual things, and in this way He rules the universal heaven as one man, for this reason heaven is called the Grand Man; and there is the like order in everyone who is in heaven. Man, too, when like this is a little heaven." A911 Continuing, "... therefore the Lord's church is spread throughout the whole world. But the Lord's church itself on earth is like the Grand Man in the heavens." A 9256 And again, "In the Lord's view the universal human race is as One Man; and so all of one kingdom are as One Man; in like manner all of one province; and also all of one city, and all of one house. It is not the men themselves who thus appear together, but it is the uses with them. Those appear together as a perfect and beautiful man who are of good use." D. Love VI.

The General Convention, geographically, is made up of Associations, the Western Canada Conference, the Society of Gulfport and those missionary fields in Europe and Asia which constitute the area of responsibility of the Board of Home and Foreign Missions. To be sure, politically, we are a number of loosely connected entities — each holding to a marked degree of independence. Our congregations within this structure travel an autonomous course, very largely free from the imposition of direction from the national body. Those of our programs that have national character are dependent for their welfare upon the free and willing support given by the local groups. The General Convention chose this way at the time of its inception and we prize this freedom today.

In the heavens, we are told, the various units that make up the Grand Man also have a large measure of independence and each serves the whole in accordance with its particular capacity, and unity is accomplished through the uses served.

Our Planning and Development Committee, a committee of the General Council, has accepted as the purpose of the Church, "To increase among men the love of God and the neighbor. We are together as a Church to use our Swedenborgian heritage to help people as our expression of love to the Lord." And in the Book of Revelation we have painted for us a royal scene indeed. "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." 21:3 To be "the people of God" must surely be the first reason for our being. Bound together, with this as our use — we, all of us, from Fryeburg, Maine to San Diego, from Western Canada to Gulfport, Mississippi, from our missionary fields in Asia to those in Europe, become evermore the servants to the Lord in the Grand Man — "a perfect and beautiful man who is of good use."

OUR APOLOGIES

for the tardy arrival of this Convention issue of the *Messenger*. Following Convention we spent a week in B.C., visiting relatives and attending the Western Canada Conference; then our friends at the Cober Printing Co. closed down for a one week vacation in July. All of which, regretfully, makes for a later *Messenger*. The September issue will also be about three weeks late. After that we should be back on course, the *Messenger* leaving Kitchener by the 25th of each month.

CONVENTION CALENDAR

Bd. of Publication, Newton	Sept. 15 - 17
Urbana College Task Force, Urbana	Sept. 24 - 25
Committee on Worship, Phila.	Sept. 26 - 27
C.O.M. Exec. Committee	Sept. 28 - 29
Ohio Association, Urbana	Sept. 30 - Oct. 2
Middle Atlantic Ass'n Retreat	Oct. 7 - 9
Kansas Ass'n Retreat	Oct. 7 - 9
S.S.R. BOM Exec. Committee	Oct. 14 - 15
Maine Ass'n, Fryeburg	Oct. 16
S.S.R. Bd. of Managers	Dec. 2 - 3
Ministers & Wives Institute	
DeLand, Florida	Jan. 12 - 18
General Council, DeLand	Jan. 19 - 21

ELECTION RESULTS

The names of those elected are printed in bold face type. An asterisk denotes a nomination from the floor or from an Association.

President	Eric Zacharias
Vice President	Adolph Liebert
Secretary	Ethel Rice
Treasurer	August Ebel
General Council	Edwin Capon
	Lorraine Sando
	*Charles McCormick
	Marvin Wood
	*C. Corey Mills
	*Lois Miller
Board of Education	*Ginger Tafel
	Margaret Kraus
	*Horand Gutfeldt
Board of Publication	*Virginia Branstion
	William Woofenden
Board of Missions	Paul Zacharias
	Dorothy Farnham
Nominating Committee	Pat Zacharias
	Cecile Werben
Augmentation Fund Committee	John Keller
Bd. of Managers of SSR	*Margaret Briggs
	Jerome Poole
	Agnes Cowern
	Richard Tafel Jr.
Committee on Adm. into the Ministry	Ernest Martin
	Margaret Briggs

REPORT FROM THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS — 1977

Twenty - four ministers, five lay ministers, and three S.S.R. students attended the Council of Ministers' sessions at the University of San Francisco this summer. We also welcomed overseas visitors: the Rev. Gudmund Boolsen from Copenhagen, the Rev. Joseph Agbaje from Nigeria, and the Rev. Friedemann Horn, formerly of Zurich, now head of the Swedenborg School of Religion in Newton.

We met for two and a half days, during which time we dealt with a number of issues confronting the Council and the Church. These included:

- Holding elections, which saw Randall Laako and Harvey Tafel re - elected as Chairman and Secretary respectively, with Richard Baxter the new Executive Committee member.
- Nominating Ernest O. Martin as the 1978 Convention preacher, with Edwin Capon in the wings for 1979.
- Setting up a Committee to study the whole area of qualifications, responsibilities and privileges of Lay Ministers, Lay Leaders and Missionary Ministers, this Committee to report back by 1978.
- Hearing a tentative report from the Committee to study Human Sexuality, which will require more time to explore the many facets of this subject.



Peter Toot, Ohio, calling the roll.



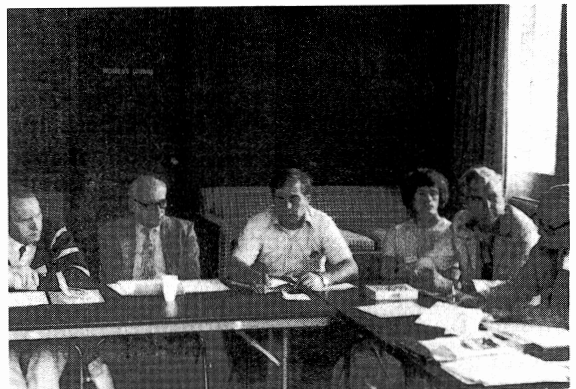
(l. - r.) F. Horn, R. Laakko, H. Tafel, F. R. Tafel.

- Approving the recommendations to Convention that Eric Allison, having satisfactorily fulfilled all requirements and having received a call from the LaPorte Society, be ordained into our ministry at this session.
- Receiving a report from the Committee on Worship, with information that our new loose - leaf style Book of Worship is nearing completion and should be available within the next one or two years.
- Acknowledging with esteem the services to the New Church of the Rev. Horace Briggs, and the Rev. Leslie Marshall, brother ministers who entered into the larger uses of the spiritual world this past year. A new, more appropriate Memorial Service was also adopted.
- Making initial plans for our next Ministers and Wives Institute, which will be held in DeLand, Florida, from January 12 — 18, 1978.
- Recognizing the urgent need for ongoing education for all clergy, brought forcibly to our attention by F. Robert Tafel, and seeking General Council support for continuing professional growth and competency.
- Learning from George McCurdy what it means to be an Armed Forces Chaplain. Convention supports this program financially, and it was enlightening to hear a first-hand account of the many opportunities for Christian service performed by pastors in the military.
- Hearing a report from the Advisory Placement Committee, with information that a public relations brochure will soon be sent to all Societies explaining the uses of this Committee, with the hopes that all Societies desiring pastoral leadership work through the A.P.C.
- Adopting a motion by Richard H. Tafel, Sr., that a committee be appointed to study the question of “how truth from God is posited in the theological writings of Swedenborg” and to report back by our next meeting.
- Endorsing by unanimous vote a statement on “Religious Freedom and Responsibility” to be published in the *Messenger* as a study paper for members of Convention. (See page 169 for this important document.)
- Asking the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers to inform New Church leadership in the United Kingdom and Australia of the true nature of the Sabol Underground Newsletter.
- Approving a motion that a sample of S.S.R. Comprehensive Examinations be sent to all Convention clergy, in order that parish ministers may be better informed concerning the high level of religious education being offered at the Swedenborg School of Religion.
- Endorsing a motion that the Council of Ministers send to the Council of the Clergy of the General Church a letter expressing our distress and our deep concern regarding recent intrusive actions of General Church leadership in Convention affairs.

P.Z.



(l. - r.) R. Tafel, R. Baxter, W. Woofenden, Galen Unruh, H. Larsen, Hank Korsten, H. Gutfeldt.



(l. - r.) G. Boolsen, M. Salvetti, D. Riesntra, E. Allison, P. Zacharias, E. Zacharias.

MINI COURSE REPORTS

DOCTRINAL ISSUES OF FEMININITY AND MASCULINITY

Led by Wilson Van Dusen and Gertrude Tremblay.

This mini - course was well attended, partially due to the current concerns regarding the male and female role in today's society.

Our instructors pointed out that scientifically the cultural influence on behavioral patterns are more easily known than the innate nature of the human, as each individual differs. The physical differences; the male's forceful thrust and the female's nurturing receptivity correspond to their spiritual qualities and there is inherent from creation an inclination to conjoin these.

Swedenborg's *Conjugal Love* is not only a manual on marriage, but treats of the conjunction within each person of the intellectual (masculine) and affective (feminine) qualities. This understanding began with the process of Swedenborg's dream analysis. Dreams speak of one's inner quality and he was made aware of the predominance of his intellectual drives which overshadowed his affective side. This awareness permitted the surfacing of his feelings and led to the conjunction with the Divine. It is our affective nature that conjoins with the spiritual and is the ruling force in performing a use in the world.

After the lectures, concerns were formulated into questions and these were dealt with at subsequent meetings. The issue of homosexuality brought out intense personal feelings and strong opinions. We broke into smaller groups focusing on three main areas of concern.

The "Marriage and Divorce" group decided that everything should be done to preserve family life and the truly conjugal relationship which is to eternity. The group discussing "Women's Role" concluded that the cultural indoctrination to which all persons are subjected must not hamper one's innate talents and abilities. In the group dealing with "Homosexuality", most felt that it is a disorder but lack of time did not permit them to reach a conclusion.

The session ended with the statement that Swedenborg's writings are to bring one to an inner relationship with the Divine and not to be used in judgment of others and that:

1. We can never change another person.
2. The value of discussion is to explore and enjoy differences.
3. The way of the writings is to love and have charity towards differences.
4. The only absolute is God.

Valerie Brugler and Virginia Branston

DEATH AND DYING

Leaders: Randall Laakko and Perry Martin

As our group began, we were asked to introduce ourselves and share why we chose this particular mini - course. We soon became aware of our common attitudes concerning death. After a word association exercise our feelings about death came to the surface. Later after using crayon and paper we were able to verbalize some of our fears in regard to our own deaths and the death of those around us.

We all had a desire to share our beautiful teachings of life after death with others and came to the realization that if we really wanted to help others face dying, we would do it! "Ask - seek - knock - and it will be opened to you."

Pat Zacharias

MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT

Leaders: Dick Tafel and Gloria Toot

Our discussion began by exploring some of the myths of marriage. It was agreed that these myths are perpetuated by all aspects of the media. These myths, when accepted as fact, are potentially dangerous to the marriage situation. Briefly, some of these myths are: 1) Being married is the ideal state for happiness. 2) Two children are necessary for a happy marriage and 3) Women are born to be mothers.

It was emphasized that as much as possible we should show our true self and our true feelings and attitudes to our mates. The need for honest and real reactions versus pretense

was high on our list of priorities. It was also pointed out that we must have respect and responsibility within for our feelings and actions.

After seeing a film on sexuality and communication we realized the immense power of emotions and conditioned responses with regard to our sexual relationship. We saw that many of our negative feelings and attitudes can become positive just by the way they are communicated. Creative, educated communication is essential in every marriage. One of the most important discoveries made during this film was that all our conditioned actions, responses, verbalizations and sexual actions can be re-learned for a happier, more joyful marriage.

We also explored how to share and negotiate with our mates. What does it mean to give and receive a "gift" of time and / or energy from our partner? We must try to give graciously of ourselves without resentment or expectation of something in return.

We touched briefly on the need to direct our anger and tensions constructively. We can share these feelings with our partner, but should not make them the butt of an attack when our real source of anger is elsewhere. We should share these frustrations — and also our joys — especially our joys.

In our last hour together, we eagerly spent each minute sharing ideas, problems and possible solutions. We came to see that our problems and frustrations are not unique, how common they really are. This was a great relief for some of us.

We offered constructive suggestions to each other in the spirit of building a happier, friendlier and more joyful marriage.

We parted warmly, friends anew and with a good feeling about tomorrow.

In conclusion we thank our leaders who opened their lives to us and in turn helped us to tune into ourselves.

Nancy Windhorst

"BIBLE STUDY - learning to use the Bible in daily life situations"

Leaders: Dorothea Harvey and Horand Gutfeldt.

An excellent group of about twenty - five began by sharing how they had turned to the words of the Bible in times of need. Then we moved to practice sessions in letting the Word of God speak to us.

We responded to all the elements in the stories of the call of Samuel and of the raising of Lazarus as aspects of our own nature and religious experience. We used dramatization as a way of feeling the power of the Lazarus story.

We heard input from Horand on the nature of correspondence.

The group concluded that the words of the Bible are an open threshold to awareness of God's love and support which give us the courage to let fears or problems come to consciousness, and to deal with them. This response does not mean applying verbal rules mechanically, but having the strength to do what we know at an inner level we should do. We realized that each person's response is valid, if it is authentic for him or her. It does not have to be the same for the whole group.

This was an illuminating experience for both leaders and members of the group. It went well.

Dorothea Harvey



... letting the word speak.

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS' WORKSHOP

Leaders: Louise Woofenden, Martha Richardson and Margaret Briggs.

CHILDHOOD IS LIFE ITSELF

"All education is an opening of the way" —
AC 1495

One need not be a professional teacher to teach Sunday School. We are our own people. The goals we can achieve are chosen by the Lord. Sunday School will help the child choose heaven and help the children form a new will.

"All education is an opening of the way for the angels."

Every child ought to be allowed to be himself. In one sense man's potentialities from

birth cannot be anything but what it is. The New Church aim is not to change personality but to fulfill it.

"It is by means of knowledge that man becomes man." Knowledge must precede intelligence and wisdom. What we really are addressing is the will, but since we can't change the will, and since the child cannot will something he does not know, our work as teachers lies in seeing that the child has the truth. See AR 161. We must teach the true idea of God from the Word; we must teach with love, with respect for order, with moral integrity and with social responsibility.

We're helping the Lord plant remains. During the first five years of life, when celestial angels are in the child's environment, the child desires deeper things. When spiritual angels come into the child's environment, selfhood asserts itself. During the teens, when angels from the natural heaven are in the environment of the young people, then physical growth, moral, ethical, and religious interests appear.

"Delight is the key." To keep the children's interest use games, crafts, drama, and songs; use color, imagination, touch, warmth, love and above all, use Truth. Be natural and don't draw attention to yourself. Repeat, and review. Keep teaching simple and a part of yourself.

Mary McCormick

MID — LIFE DECISION MAKING

The mini - course on Decision Making in Mid - Life had seven participants, each one finding it a worthwhile experience. Even though three of us were the "leaders", it soon became evident that we didn't need formal leadership since we each had our own views on middle - life concerns and all were willing to share. We drew upon our personal experiences — talking about important decisions that we have made and will have to make.

Our discussion initially centered upon defining what mid - life is — which at first puzzled some since there was nearly a fifty - year age span in the group itself. Age however was soon set aside in our definition, and attention was focused on our feelings toward mid - life, and how we use our teachings in the process. Our definition evolved as: Mid - life for us is the realization that we are in the midst of Providence through realizing the abilities and limitations that we have in the control of "My Life".

From this we explored its implications in terms of working with the Lord, in planning our lives and in helping ourselves and others to set goals and objectives for daily living.

We sensed a strong feeling of our church's teachings coming "alive" in the course. We were each feeling the teachings, and sharing how these can be used as real, viable tools for living.

It was a good experience.

Eric Allison



... taking charge of life at mid - stream.

CHURCH ORGANIZATIONAL ETHICS

Leaders: Gus Ebel, Eric Zacharias

We began the mini - course with a general discussion of the broad area of ethics — how our individualized code of ethics plays its part in our conduct, our decisions and our inter - relationships. We soon discovered that the connotation which each of us had of the word "ethics" varied. Is our ethics related mainly to our civil and moral conduct? Is it our conscience? Is it in reality an outer manifestation of our spiritual state?

What was the Lord's ethical code? Here we looked at such passages as the parable of the Good Samaritan, the Golden Rule and the spirit of the relationship of the Lord in his dealings with others. The following is a quotation from, "Ethics in a Permissive Society", by Wm. Barclay. "The Christian ethic is the passionate ethic; it is not the ethic of the man who carefully calculated every risk; it is the ethic of the man who flings himself into life." To what degree can we demonstrate this "agape" love in our code of ethics? Several individuals in the course related this to their personal life.

In the teachings of our Church there is this quotation, "Those who are in external truths

know only this general: That the neighbor is to be loved and they believe that everyone is the neighbor in a like degree, and thus everyone is to be embraced with a like love, and thus they suffer themselves to be seduced. But those who are in internal truths know in what degree everyone is the neighbor, and that everyone is a different one." AC. 3820

Some time was spent in a discussion of such questions as: "What are internal truths? Can we really know what our state is? What is there then that helps us to build our code of ethics?"

Our resources for the nurturing of a code of ethics are: 1) The Word, 2) The teachings of our Church and 3) Life experience. Using these as a foundation, we began to set down what we considered an ethical code helpful to us in many areas of our church life.

E.Z.

BUILDING ON OUR STRENGTHS — HUMAN RESOURCES AND NEEDS IN THE CHURCH

Leader: Alice Blackmer Skinner, PhD.

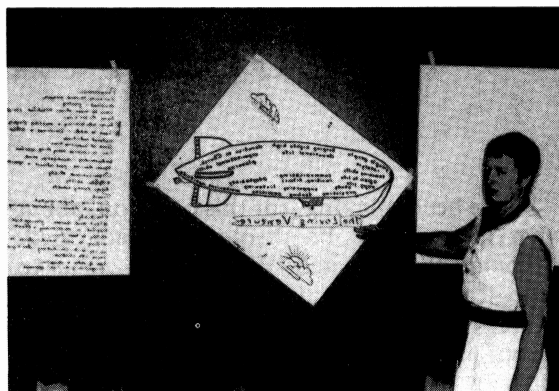
How does one go about condensing a symphony, without destroying, or so distorting, as to render it a sheer mockery? Yet, the writer has been delegated to do this difficult task.

Briefly, then we teamed up with another group member whom we had not known before. We gently probed the depth of our characters and personalities, to find our strengths and our sources of redeeming values, so as to uncover our well - spring of spiritual redemption.

We were then asked to name three uppermost, present areas of life, or concerns which were ever present in our lives. We were then asked to bring these together, and Lo! it became at once apparent that we had within the hidden strengths we all possessed, the rich vein of silver ore, with which to offset our weaknesses, and augment our small triumphs, into challenging victories for the human spirit.

Through gentle leading, we became able to acknowledge freely and give up, that which was debilitating of spirit, so that we might then take on, and assume as our own the mantle of victory, in the name of the Lord.

Thornton O. Smallwood.



Alice Skinner and the "Loving Venture"

NEW CHURCH LITERATURE

Leader: Dr. William R. Woofenden

Dr. Bill Woofenden charted our tour through the New Church Garden of Literature with a splendid outline listing nine categories of collateral works. In each category he listed the more important works in that area indicating which are still in print. We found this outline to be invaluable. We examined each tree and shrub as he said something about its habits and manner of growth and told us about the gardener who had planted it and nurtured it to maturity.

There are plants of all sizes and growing habits in the garden. There are shrubs and even grasses represented by our tracts and pamphlets. Many of the newer plants are already sending out healthy new shoots and give promise of growing some day into stately trees to match any in the older part of the garden.

The guide to the floral wonders of our Garden — more accurately entitled: "Categories of New Church Collateral Literature — A Selection," should be in every New Church library. The garden of Literature is beautiful when viewed overall, but one must walk through it and inspect each plant carefully to appreciate it fully.

Henry Swanton



EDUCATION FOR LIFE

Dorothea Harvey

I have been thinking, for this occasion, about what it means to be theologically educated. *Theologically* educated. What does it mean to be logical about anything? For me, my *logos* is my reasoning ability, the capacity of my mind to put in order, and to be aware that that capacity in me is part of the *order* of the universe and part of its creative power. My *logos* is also the word that I speak, my language, whether verbal or the act I undertake to do, as a conscious human being taking my place in relation to my world.

What does it mean to be educated, to use my mind to take its part in the orderly functioning of the universe, to speak my word consciously in relation to my world? I get trapped in trivia, in other people's pastimes. I cannot learn to think or to speak without learning the concepts, the words of a particular culture. The meaning I give to words is already limited to the pastimes of my particular phase of American, or whatever, culture. And I cannot learn to speak without learning the words. And so I need to be free to use my words with integrity, to speak what I really am, a child of God, and a member of a whole universe of nature, and of heaven, and of *all* human kind. And that freeing, first from the inarticulate into the words of my culture, and then from the trivia and the pastimes, to take my place consciously in relation to my world — I think that is my education.

And so now we come to it: What does it mean to be theologically educated, to be freed to use my whole mind in relation to God, to

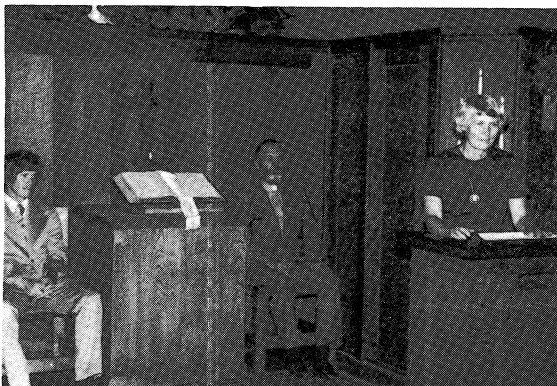
know the Lord, the source of all nature, the sustainer of all angels and all spirits, the reason for my existing, and to speak from that ground?

I was asking myself these questions in my back yard in Urbana, and I stopped to say good - bye and good trip to my neighbor who was going away for a few days. The doctor had given her 3 to 6 months to live, and she was off to see another doctor, in Indiana, to see if he could help her to live longer now that chemotherapy no longer seemed to be of any use at her stage of lung cancer. And I knew then what it means to be theologically educated. We are all finite beings who will die, and who search for that thing that will help us live. Theological education, if it exists at all, must exist to make us ready to respond with our whole being to moments like that, to speak to and to care for our neighbor and her need, and to do this knowing that we stand in the presence of God.

Scholarship is one element in theological as in other kinds of education, but scholarship alone is obviously a snare and a delusion as preparation for this task. It is no wonder that Swedenborg commented so often about the danger of too much learning which may weaken and obscure the wisdom of the ordinary person who responds immediately to the essentials of the human situation. From what Swedenborg says about scholars who write, I gather the thought that the average person in the street may well have more to teach about theology than a whole faculty of people who have written Ph.D. dissertations (DLW 361).

ESSENTIALS OF REFLECTION

But I am a scholar, and I have written a dissertation, and it is my whole being, including my mind, I would put at the service of the Lord. What do I need, then, to keep me true to my task of responding to a fellow human being? One essential is, of course, a realistic awareness of what it means to be a self in relation to other selves, to have a grounding on which I can stand firm, so that I do not have to play up others' need of me to give me confidence that I exist. Van Dusen comments that Swedenborg came to theology out of the search to understand himself, not from the



(l. - r) Eric Allison, Edwin Capon, Dorothea Harvey

theoretical perspective of a theologian, but while struggling to understand what was happening to him in his dreams and in his religious experiences. Correspondences were no theory for him. They were for him, as for most Far Eastern searchers, the spontaneous inner language of dreams and of the spirit. (POW 180) Self awareness is necessary, and Van Dusen finds three elements necessary to self-reflection that can lead to awareness: peaceful leisure, experience of what is, and then mulling it over. (NDinM 51) It has taken some reasonably painful lessons to convince me that peaceful leisure is necessary for survival. I admit I know this now more often from experiencing its absence than its presence. But these elements, at least, I know I need to keep my scholarship alert to its reason for being.

Self awareness is essential. But no awareness of what I am can end with self alone. If I am a particular form of love, then I must sense what love is in order to know myself. I know nothing on which our church's teaching is more emphatic: love is loving. It is not a theory to be thought about. It is not an object I can put in a glass case, even in the most holy or scholarly of places, and look at. Flames put in glass cases go out. Love is loving, not in general, and not in mirrors, but quite concretely and actually loving particular others. To love others is to know their reality to enlarge and deepen my understanding of them, and to live.

And if I am a particular form of love, an actual, concrete, existing form in a particular historical setting, I am unique. My particular form must know its particular way of loving. It is the love of that truth that I will live as I find my integrity, my reason for being.

THE ALIVENESS OF DOCTRINE

And if I am a particular form of love, then I must keep a deep, inner connection with love itself, a constant receiving of the Lord's life in order to survive at all. Our doctrine is equally emphatic that we live in two worlds. Our conscious, conceptual response to sense experience and to the externals of the natural world is one fact of our experience. Our prior, intuitive awareness, moving from the spiritual environment in which our inner person lives, is another. Both are involved in any thought process, and both are examples of the presence of divine love and divine wisdom in our natural world. The angels are quite definite: A person's connection with the First Being of life exists by means of the heavens; and whether he knows that or not, if that connection were broken the



Eric Allison receives graduation diploma from retiring S.S.S. President, Edwin Capon.

persons would have no thought process at all, but "would instantly fall dead. (HH 302) Swedenborg saw his mission as "to present to (human) view the quality of both" heaven and hell, to let people know that "the spiritual world flows into the natural world and actuates it in all its parts," even to the quickening life principle in trees and plants.

And so Swedenborgian doctrine will never stay put as doctrine to be learned. As soon as it is learned it persists in turning into doctrine to be lived. And the order of our reasoning as we think about doctrine will never stay put as a system to be laid down and finished. As soon as it is seen, it turns out to be a living harmony among distinctly different and always deepening forms of loving. And the order of our reasoning will not stay limited to the externals of the natural environment. As soon as it is present in our awareness, it is itself an instance of our connection with the Divine and with heaven, and by its very nature, points beyond itself. There is no way, then, that the theology of the New Church will ever stay put in theoretical boxes of human construction. As soon as we let ourselves study it, it brings us back from theory to life, to loving our particular neighbor, to being there with her as she goes off to find the medicine that will keep her alive.

IMPLICATIONS FOR NEW CHURCH EDUCATION

What implications can be drawn from all of this for New Church theological education?

For one thing, we may not need to worry quite so much about our methods. The doctrines themselves will send the student back to real life as soon as he lets them speak to him. Students see through our games a lot sooner

than we do ourselves in any case. And I know Eric as at least one student who will remind us that we need to come to our own task of searching to understand what the Lord has to say about the meaning of our lives.

For another, we have no business trying to mold any student to fit in to our scheme of things. Eric is his own particular and unique form of love. I mean that in all seriousness, and I rejoice in it. It is his integrity which he must find, with the help of the Lord, and with all the help and the support that we can give.

There are tools of analysis and of reflection that we must teach as well as we know how. But we must teach them as tools and not as truths in themselves. I have a feeling that the natural animist in every small child is probably closer to Swedenborg's sense of spiritual presence in all nature than all the arguments of theologians about creation. Any teaching that takes away that sense of presence and wonder, or that makes us close off the connection with life itself, is moving in the wrong direction. We must teach the theories of this world, for we all have to live in this world. But I hope we don't teach our theories so well that our students feel at home in them and try to construct a living space in them. I hope we know all our theories as imperfect, one dimensional sorts of maps, that can be very helpful in reading the terrain, the ups and downs, the water sources and obstacles. But I hope we know the world we live in is not one dimensional, and that my path, on which I travel, moves in both dimensions, and has never been laid out on anyone else's map.

Eric, I believe that theological education is one of the highest, most sensitive tasks that the Lord has asked anyone to do. I believe that a teacher must be a true witness to both the worlds we live in. She must struggle always to be coherent and to be articulate, while at the same time she is aware of the mystery of presence beyond all human coherence or words. She must be committed to live whatever she knows of what is true, and at the same time respect and value the fact that others see truths differently. She must be sensitive to what others are asking, and be confident that she can find instances enough to point to, to help others find their vision. But this confidence comes because she knows she is imperfect and needs the Lord's help to stay alive, much less to teach.

I believe that you can do this task, because you have become aware of your calling, and once you are aware of that spiritual journey, there is no way the awareness will let go of you.

That is the task *you* will be doing, as minister, with one specific group of fellow human beings. The things I have been talking about will happen, with God's help, in LaPorte in Indiana. God bless you, Eric, Amen.

THE ALLIANCE OF NEW CHURCH WOMEN

The Alliance of New Church Women held its 69th Annual Meeting on the University of San Francisco campus on July 1, 1977, with 112 members present. Following an inspiring worship service on the theme, "The Five Senses and their Meaning", the following officers were elected:

President	Lisa Reddekopp, San Francisco, Cal.
1st Vice President	Dorothy Farnham, DeLand Fla.
2nd Vice President	Marion Courtney, L.A., Cal.
Secretary	Janet Harms, Washington, D.C.
Treasurer	Doris Tafel, Philadelphia, Pa.
Mite Box Chairman	Margaret Sampson, N.Y.
Worship Committee	Alice Van Boven, Riverside, Cal
Round Robin Committee	Jean Hoyt, Cal.
Publications Committee	Marion Priestnal, New York, N.Y.
Nominating Committee	Annella Smith (1982)

Actions included: Combining the offices of Recording Secretary and Corresponding Secretary; and voting to use the Mite Box next year for New Church missionary work in Nigeria, under the supervision of the Rev. Joseph Agbaje.

Recommended that \$75.00 be given to each of seven Church camps — in Almont, Fryeburg, Blairhaven, Kansas, Paulhaven, Split Mountain and Kemper Road.

A payment of \$200.00 will be made to the *Messenger* for publications of the Alliance pages.

The sum of \$300.00 will be given to the wife of Convention's President, to help with travel expenses.

\$200.00 will be donated to the Projects Fund of the Swedenborg School of Religion. Other contributions include: \$500.00 to assist Joseph Agbaje with tuition expenses, up to \$200.00 for Johannes Horn, if required, for studies at Urbana; \$50.00 for the Scholarship Fund; \$150.00 to help defray Convention meeting expenses, and \$75.00 for the Alliance speaker (which later was turned over to charitable purposes).

A WARMING EXPERIENCE

Mrs. Freda Burnside, western regional consultant for the Family Service Association of America, generously shared herself at a public Women's Alliance meeting on Friday evening. She began by vividly describing a number of social evils confronting Americans in the late 1970's. We've all heard the list before: poverty, crime, pornography, drug and alcohol addiction. Cold statistics are bad enough, but think about the people . . . the children . . . caught up in these vicious cycles. Every person should have — must have — the basic necessities of life. Generally speaking, the federal and state levels of government are unable to provide these basic necessities of life. HUD was cited as an example of an inefficient, wasteful agency; so often the real needs of the people involved are ignored. Some brief quotes:

"The incredible potential for goodness in every child . . . The church, at its best, is the Family of God . . . Regardless of our age, we are all children and in the larger sense, we are all parents. There is always someone who looks up to us and respects us, thus we are parents for that person, and we in turn look up to others, and ultimately to God, thus we are all children . . . Our main task in life is to be truly human . . . Man is created as a beginning, always evolving toward more complete personhood . . . People are always more important than things . . . God is patient with our upward striving."



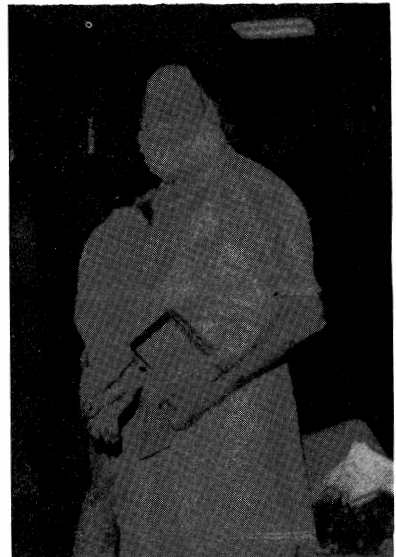
Freda Burnside's love for people shone through.

Mrs. Burnside's love for life, and for people, shone through her words. It was, indeed, a warming experience.

GOOD NEWS FROM JOHNNY APPLESEED

Look in the heart
of the smallest seed
for a thought
From the greatest mind.
Each is a Genesis of life
as a gift
to all mankind.
Slice an apple on the side
and you'll see a perfect star;
or up and down
a pair of angel wings
holding seeds of love
for sharing near and far
From the giver of this Heavenly Fruit
and all the joy it brings.
Look oft enough and long enough
with the wisdom to concede
'thou we can count
the seeds in an apple
Only God
knows the apples in a seed.

from "The Musical Story of
Johnny Appleseed"
by Dallas McKennon



Dallas McKennon as Johnny Appleseed.

Convention Views



"Dick" Perry and friend staff the registration desk.



Henry and Ethel Swanton took us on a tour of the spiritual world.



Gudmund and Laura Boolsen, Copenhagen, Denmark



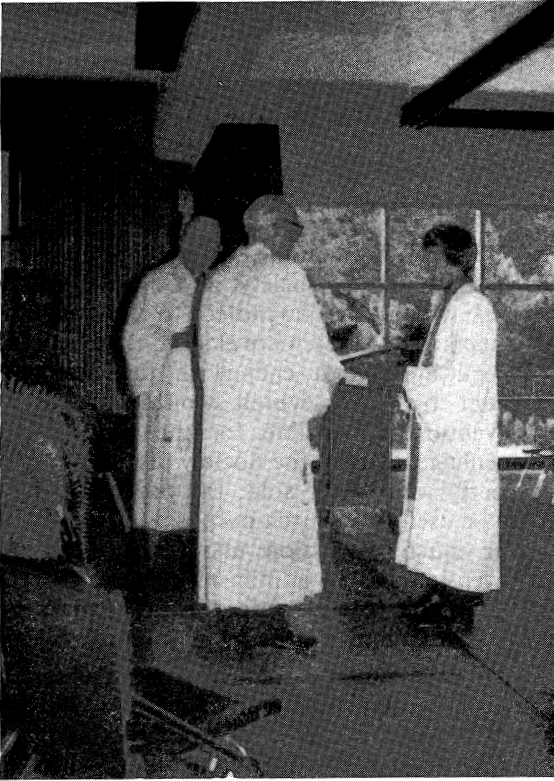
Some Leaguers in casual pose.



Dr. Friedemann Horn, new President of S.S.R.



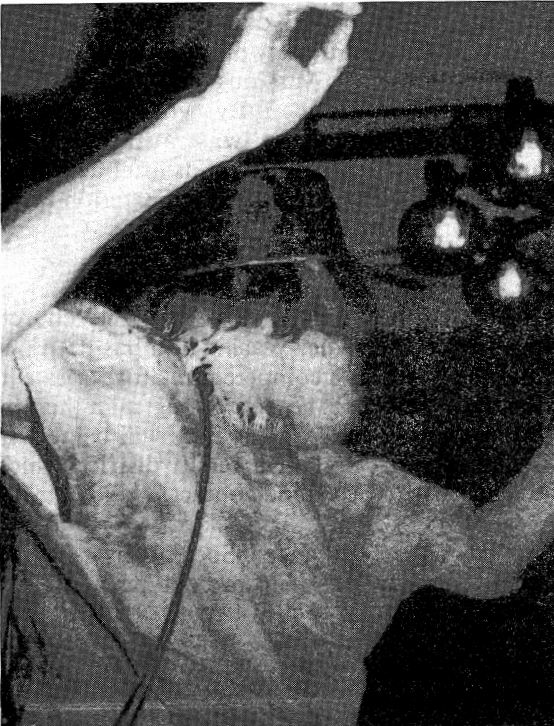
With friends in the lovely S.F. Church garden.



President E. Zacharias ordaining Eric Allison, with E. Reddekopp assisting.



Browsing through the "good stuff."



Who put out the lights?



Exquisite grace and beauty



Fond farewells after the Sunday service. Til next year.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MEETINGS OF GENERAL COUNCIL

June 29th and July 2nd

In addition to routine reports and other matters which must be dealt with, the following items of business were transacted:

Council voted to approve two recommendations made by the Treasurer:

(1) an increase of \$520 in the Board of Publication's budget, to be used to purchase 8,000 reprints of the *Reader's Digest* condensation of the Moody book, *LIFE AFTER LIFE*; and the authorization of Chester T. Cook to serve as Auditor of Convention's books for the year ending March 31, 1977.

The President shared with Council a report from Mrs. Priestnal on the Mooki Fund. Between January 1, 1976 and June 15, 1977 contributions totaled \$4,962.50. \$4,000. was sent to the Mookis last October, and the account currently shows \$2,006.73. Mrs. Priestnal plans to wait for further contributions before sending another check to the Mookis.

It was voted to authorize the Vice President to represent the General Convention in the final sale of the Frankford (Pa.) Church property. Mr. Liebert has been working for several months to finalize this transaction.

In response to a recommendation by the Council of Ministers that a task force on continuing education for the ministry be formed in General Council to promote an awareness of the need for such education by the laity, it was voted that Council recognizes the importance of such education but wishes to refer the matter back to the Council of Ministers as the proper body to form this task force.

General Council also voted to support the recommendation of the Council of Ministers that the proposed amendment to the Constitution allowing Lay Ministers to have a vote in Convention sessions be postponed for a year.

At its post - Convention session Council gave consideration to the following matters:

The Rev. Gudmund Boolsen presented a request from the Society in Copenhagen, a group which has dwindled to just a few members, all of whom are elderly, that General Council approve a change in the Society's present by-laws which would make the Convention responsible for the property in Copenhagen should the Society disband. If the property were to be sold, the proceeds could only be used for Church purposes in Denmark. After much discussion about the difficulty Convention has in administering foreign real estate, it was voted to refer this problem to the Executive Committee.

General Council heard a graphic presentation by the Rev. Henry Korsten of the Lay Ministry Training Program which has been taking place in the Western Canada Conference, with the assistance of specially selected faculty members of the Swedenborg School of Religion. This program has proved highly successful and Council was asked to underwrite some of the cost of continuing and possibly expanding the work. Council voted to declare itself in favor of funding the Lay Ministry program as developed by the Board of Missions and the Western Canada Conference. By vote also, the Executive Committee was authorized to appropriate the necessary funds after action by the Board of Missions, the Augmentation Fund Committee and the Western Canada Conference.

Council heard a report that the church property at Bellevue, Washington has been put into the hands of a competent realtor for sale in the near future. The counseling and therapy groups which the Society offers will be held in rental property in the University district, which would seem to be a good contact.

The Paris, France Society is seeking permission to sell their present property and purchase a larger tract of twenty or thirty acres with two buildings on it, where a New Church Center can be established. In line with the Society's request, General Council voted to give the Rev. Claude Bruley power of attorney as an

(con't. on page 170)

All Convention Associations, Societies and members are urged to study the following statement. Send your reactions, impressions and concerns to the President or Secretary of Convention. This subject will come up for further discussion, and action that is deemed appropriate, at the 1978 Convention.

**A STATEMENT
PREPARED AND ADOPTED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF
THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
June 28, 1977, at San Francisco
for distribution as a study paper to members
of the General Convention**

OUR CONVENTION HERITAGE

We are all committed to the goal of making the New Jerusalem a living reality in the world today. We have chosen to work in this direction within the framework of the organization called the General Convention of the New Jerusalem (Swedenborgian). In identifying ourselves with Convention we give our primary allegiance to the Lord and His Holy Word as understood in the light of the heavenly doctrines of the New Jerusalem, and our secondary allegiance to the outlook and attitudes traditionally associated with the General Convention.

A statement adopted by Convention's Council of Ministers in 1949 reads in part as follows:

“The Convention, congregational in mode or organization and prizing freedom of inquiry in religious thought, takes a position characteristic of it. It thinks that ultimate religious authority resides not in an ecclesiastical body or in a ministry, not in ways of stating things or in texts, but in the truth, and in Him who is the Truth. The Lord's mind, his Spirit guiding into all truth, are to govern our thought and life. Whether in the Bible or in the theological works, the mind of Convention finds authority in the truth descried. To acknowledge this authority of truth, the human understanding must be able to move freely; freedom of inquiry is the path to such acknowledgment. A supreme motto of the teachings of the New Church is that it is now the privilege of mankind to enter with the understanding into the mysteries of faith.”

In the spirit of this motto which we of this generation enthusiastically reaffirm, we commit ourselves to the premise that freedom demands a corresponding responsibility. This requires that we think as clearly as possible, act as honestly as possible and love and respect others for themselves and for their individuality. Thus we should be deeply disturbed by the tendency of some who champion Swedenborg's writings taking the stand that those whose interpretations differ from their own are spiritually dead. The “fundamentalist” position in any religious organization, including our own, should be seen as a permission of divine providence intended to challenge others to think for themselves. This thinking for ourselves, this very spirit of freedom of inquiry, is something we all cherish in the General Convention.

Under what we have come to call the “umbrella” of Convention some find it difficult to take an individualistic approach to the teachings of our church. Those, however, who find themselves in this situation should at the same time be open to the thought that such a position can be quite sincerely taken by others and should, therefore, not be treated as an offense to be condemned. Insistence upon being allowed in some thought areas to make one's own interpretation of the writings is a position which Convention has traditionally

defended and should be seen as a sign of life in our organization rather than of death. In fact, those who choose not to do their own thinking, while they may be members of the organization, have perhaps not really caught the spirit of Convention.

The judgmental attitude which would condemn those who question a particular traditional interpretation of Swedenborg's teachings is seen by Convention as a form of denying the right to freedom of thought and as a denial of our church's concept of charity. Although such a stance must perform a use in the divine scheme of things (or else it would not be permitted), it is at the same time alien to the spirit of Convention to condemn those of us who in all sincerity may believe particular interpretations to be correct — interpretations which others of us may find unacceptable. The underlying danger is not in the existence of divergent or even conflicting interpretations but in the effort to control the minds of others, the hellish urge to cast stones, the tendency to condemn.

It is the position of Convention that it is essential to the protection of freedom of thought that the presentation of different points of view continue to be encouraged rather than stifled.

The heritage Convention has bequeathed to us is essentially one of spiritual freedom: the right to inquire freely, to evaluate freely and to make our own way unfettered toward truth. A dogmatic attitude, such as claims (based on quotations taken out of context) that one must believe that Swedenborg's writings are a part of God's Word instead of aids to its understanding — or any other such appeals to arbitrary authority — runs counter to this spirit of freedom. Swedenborg, by the grace of God Who is moving "to make all things new," lays no additional chains on us but instead leads us into greater freedom in the pursuit of truth.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that to preserve this sacred heritage for ourselves and for those who come after us, we now dedicate ourselves anew to proclaiming and working for that free intellectual and spiritual climate which we of Convention believe is so necessary for holding and embodying and sharing our vision of the descending New Jerusalem.

We freely and joyfully welcome all shades of opinion, interpretation and understanding of the doctrines upon which the New Church is being, and is to be, established by our Lord.

By its very nature, however, the broad perspective of Convention excludes as well as includes. Freedom and unfreedom cannot exist together. Nor can tolerance and intolerance, inclusiveness and exclusiveness, trust and suspicion.

Thus we stand ready to accept and respect everyone's freedom to choose to dissociate himself or herself from our organization. At the same time we feel it proper that Convention reserve to itself the right to expel from membership anyone who, by his or her actions, seems bent on destroying some of the values we hold so dear.

But let not this statement end on a negative note. Let our final word be that we heartily invite into the fellowship of Convention all who wish to serve our Lord Jesus Christ in his Second Coming as seen from this perspective of the General Convention.

Highlights of General Council Con't.

agent of the Convention, to complete the necessary transactions.

It was voted that the Rev. Jerry Poole and Paul Giunta be appointed to the Planning & Development Committee.

It was voted to approve the recommendation of the Council of Ministers that funds be appropriated to allow the President to visit and

offer supervision to newly ordained ministers.

The Rev. Ernest Martin reported that the new addition to the Visitor's Center at the Wayfarers' Chapel will be started on July 5th. Part of the initial cost can be paid out of Chapel funds.

Respectively submitted,
Ethel V. Rice, Rec. Sec'ty

AMERICAN NEW - CHURCH SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

The Sunday School Association has had a busy and exciting year, culminating with the 105th Annual Meeting held at the University of San Francisco on July 1, 1977.

Volume II of the Bible Study Notes is now available and the remaining four volumes are in type. Only lack of funds prevents the rapid completion of the project. A new phase of the fund - raising campaign was begun as several donations were received at Convention. One fourth of the stock of Volume I, published in October 1976, has already been sold, and a number of copies of Volume II were sold at the Association exhibit table this year.

Our Sunday School paper has been of excellent quality, and the circulation has increased by 125 subscriptions this year.

A three - session teacher training course was held in Fryeburg during the Assembly Session last August.

A new project has been initiated in the field of teaching aids. A number of slide shows, games, puzzles, tapes and teacher suggestion sheets are planned, and some of these will be available for the 1977 - 78 school year.

The Association sponsored a teacher - training mini - course at Convention this year, under the leadership of Margaret Briggs, Teacher Training Chairman, with the help of Martha Richardson and Louise Woofenden.

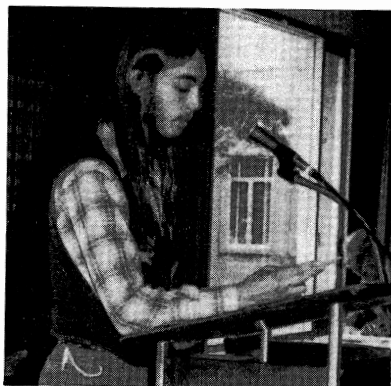
The president, Tom Zehner, has guided the association vigorously this year with the accomplishment of much valuable work.

Louise Woofenden
Secretary



S.S. Ass'n officers (l. - r.) Franklin Blackmer, David Rienstra, Louise Woofenden, Martha Richardson, Tom Zehner.

ANCL PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT 1976 - 77



League President, Trevor Woofenden.

The American New Church League had a very productive year this past year. From a rather low state a few years ago, the ANCL has grown again and redeveloped into a fully active educational branch of Convention.

The ANCL publication, the "Clear Blue Sky", is reaching a wider audience, including many more Leaguers, the ministers of Convention, and even a library!

We have had five successful ANCL Retreats: one in Fryeburg, Maine, on the topic of "Correspondence", two by the Bridgewater League at Camp Blairhaven in S. Duxbury, Massachusetts, on the topics of "Parables" and "The Trinity", one in Washington, D.C., which discussed the New Church concept of dying, and our annual Christmas Retreat at Almont, Michigan, the topic being "An Introduction to the Arcana Coelestia" (our most daring undertaking, I might add). We are now looking forward to an ANCL Post - Convention Retreat in California on the topic: "Divine Providence and Human Freedom."

This year the Poole trophy was awarded to the Bridgewater, Mass., League.

We are looking forward to as good a program this coming year led by our new League officers: President, Ted Gutfeldt; vice - President, Lynn Zimmerman; Secretary, Kim Truax; Treasurer, Kim Poole; Editor, Trevor Woofenden and League Chaplain, Pop Woofenden.

Trevor Woofenden, ANCL President 1976 - 77

PROJECT — SOWER

Each year at Convention (for the past 3 years) the Leaguers have worked on a project during their stay. The first year we built a model of a palace described in *Conjugal Love*.

The second year we designed and sewed a banner picturing the "Nunc Licet" temple from *True Christian Religion*. This year we had a dramatic presentation of the "Parable of the Sower". We acted out the sower, birds, rocks, thorns, and plants to music written and played by Trevor Woofenden, while Pop Woofenden read the story from the Word.

We all gained from this experience in working with each other and bringing a part of the Word a little closer to ourselves.

We also had an afternoon discussion on the internal sense of the Parable. We discussed growing gardens of truth, tending them with love, and how to compost our thoughts. It was a great experience and I am glad we had so many cooperative and willing Leaguers at Convention this year.

Lynn Zimmerman



...and some fell among good ground.

MINISTERS' WIVES GROUPS

The Ministers' Wives were fortunate in having three excellent leaders this Convention. They were: Maureen O'hara whose emphasis was meditation and creative work, Robert Carey who stressed personal and spiritual development, and Carroll Saussey who focused on basic growth needs and the way we meet these needs in our lives.

Although we divided into three groups, part of each day was spent with the three groups meeting together under the leadership of one of the above.

We all wish to thank the ministers' wives of the Pacific Coast Association for providing such outstanding leadership for us.

Pat Zacharias

SUPPORT FOR URBANA COLLEGE



Urbana College President Roland D. Patzer (second from left) accepted cheques totalling \$16,000 from the Swedenborgian Church at the annual Board of Trustees meeting held on the Urbana College campus early in June.

Presenting a cheque for \$15,000 on behalf of the General Convention of the New Church was August Ebel (left), treasurer of the Convention. Alice Skinner (second from right) presented a cheque for \$1,000 on behalf of the Illinois Association. Also pictured is Mr. Roger Paulson, director of the Central Office of the Swedenborgian Church.

AN IMPOSSIBLE DREAM COME TRUE

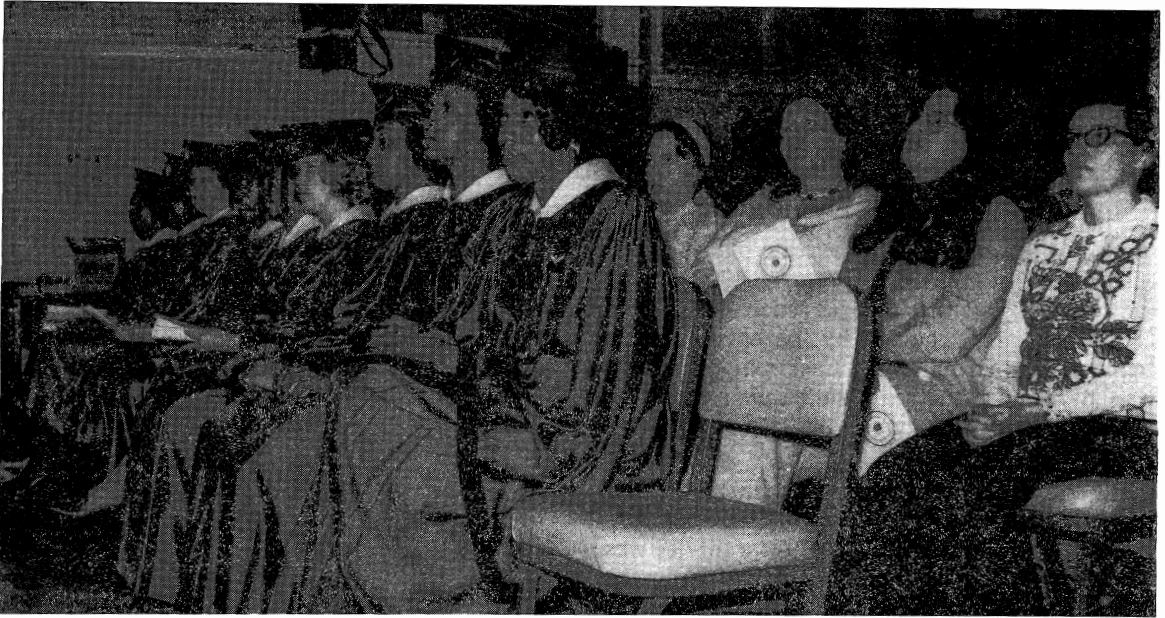
On June 6, 1977 at a ceremony full of academic tradition, with robed faculty, a procession and commencement address, nine inmates at the Marysville Reformatory for Women last night became the first women in Ohio penal institutions to receive college degrees.

The women received associate of arts degrees from Urbana College President Roland D. Patzer, who told them: "There is no doubt that tonight you are making history."

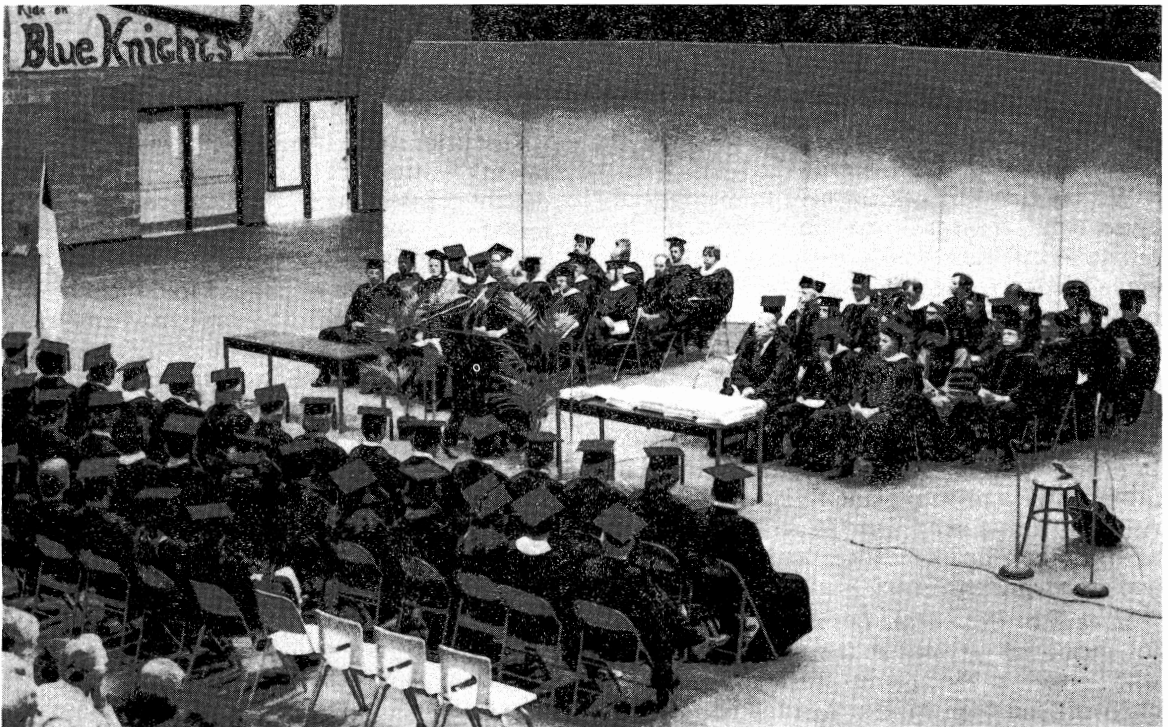
"To dream the impossible dream, to reach the unreachable star, this is my quest", sang graduate Betty Robinson, of Springfield, Ohio, during the ceremony, which included an address by John P. Canney from the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections.

The class salutorian, Mildred Parker of Cleveland, told the assembled audience of inmates, Urbana College faculty and the graduates family and friends, "We are the first, but there will be many more to follow us. We are living proof that the goal can be reached."

(con't. on page 178)



URBANA COLLEGE GRADUATION CLASS



Seventy - three students graduated from Urbana College at the 7th commencement exercises held at the college's Swedenborg Memorial Library on Sunday, June 5, 1977.

Graduating students received bachelor of science degrees, bachelor of arts degrees and associate of arts degrees, the first AA's to be awarded since the College re - introduced a two - year associate degree program last year.

The Chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents, Dr. James A. Norton, guest speaker at the ceremony, was granted an honorary degree by Urbana College President Roland D. Patzer.

MINISTRY TO THE WAYFARER

Ernest O. Martin

The Wayfarers' Chapel is known throughout the Los Angeles area as a favorite place for the celebration of marriages. Nearly 600 couples are married at the Chapel each year. The Chapel is also chosen by parents for the baptism of their children. Last year 85 infants were baptized at the beautiful baptismal font.

Not so well known is the ministry the Chapel staff performs for the bereaved. A growing number of people are asking that memorial services be held at the Chapel for their loved ones who have died. In April 1974 a service was held for the 6 crew members who died in the crash of a Pan American flight in the orient. Pan American flew the families of the deceased to Los Angeles from all parts of the world. Harvey Tafel conducted the service and a Roman Catholic priest participated on behalf of 2 Catholic crew members. The policy of the Chapel is not to permit the casket in the chapel. Emphasis is placed upon the person's resurrection into newness of life rather than on the physical body which is no longer able to serve the spirit.

We say that services are held in memory of loved ones. If we stop to think about it, the family and friends who survive are those who are in need of service and ministry. They are the ones who are griefstricken and who will feel the loneliness brought on by the separation of death.

Last Memorial Day a high school boy was killed diving into a river in central California. In February an 11 - year - old girl was killed in the crash of a private plane flying back to Los Angeles from a ski resort. In April a middle - aged mother died of cancer and left children and grandchildren.

In each of these cases family members asked for memorial services at the Chapel. The girl who died in the plane crash was bright, cheerful, and fun - loving. As I talked with her family about the service, they stressed her sunny disposition and felt close to her in a chapel bathed with sunshine. Through the miracle of electronics, John Denver sang "Sunshine on My Shoulder" and Cat Stevens sang "Morning Has Broken" during the service.

The daughters of the cancer victim talked with me about the kind of person their mother was. I said that in the memorial service I would not pretend to have known their mother, and I would like them to prepare a brief statement of what their mother meant to them. On the day before the service, the women came to the chapel with their husbands to make the final arrangements. The four of them had worked together on the personal tribute and asked me to read it at the service. A granddaughter had written a poem that she wanted me to read.

As the women spoke of their mother's freedom from the pain and suffering of her body, I told them of Helen Keller's testimony:

"I am conscious of the splendour that binds all things of earth to all things of heaven — immured by silence and darkness, I possess the light which shall give me vision a thousandfold when death sets me free."

They asked me to share this reading from Helen Keller in the service for their mother.

Just prior to the service, I met with the family in my study. The college - age granddaughter asked me: "Why did you become a minister?" Her parents were embarrassed by her straightforwardness, but seemed curious to know how I would respond. I told them briefly of my brother's death 35 years ago when I was a young college student in business administration, and how I grappled with the basic questions of life and death and providence. The agonizing struggle that followed my brother's death led me to a decision to prepare for ministry in the Swedenborgian Church. One of my major goals was to help families deal with the crisis of death.

During the next 10 minutes we discussed several questions relating to life after death. Granddaughter asked, just before the service began, whether I was still glad I chose the ministry. I replied that I would not want to change jobs with anyone, whether it be the President of the United States or the President of General Motors.

The Wayfarers' Chapel is not a typical church. It is open every day of the year, and over 300,000 people visit or attend services

(continued next page)

MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES MAY 4 — 6, 1977 CINCINNATI, OHIO

Membership in the National Council of Churches is valuable to us as Swedenborgians for the exposure to the larger world of Christian churches. Roger Paulson and I attended the Governing Board meetings and participated in a variety of events.

Perhaps the most important accomplishments were the position papers and policy statements that were passed.

They were:

1. **On the United Nations** — Adopted a major policy statement supporting the U.N. and proposing that the U.S. take the lead in promoting human rights, disarmament and redistribution of natural resources in the U.N.

2. **On nuclear testing** — Called for a comprehensive test ban treaty.

3. **On abuses of the bail bond system** — Authorized the National Council president to visit the U.S. attorney general and selected congressional and state leaders to express "grave" concern and "elicit their commitment" to change.

MINISTRY TO THE WAYFARER CON'T

every year. Those who come to be married, to have their children baptized, or to have a memorial service usually have no formal church affiliation. They are attracted first by the spectacular beauty of the Chapel and its setting by the sea. As they sit down with the minister to plan their service, they experience an acceptance that is often unexpected. The variety of religious, cultural, and economic backgrounds is respected. People are encouraged to participate with the minister in the planning of the services.

The entire staff of 14 is united in its desire to minister to worshipers and visitors. We want to share with all wayfarers along life's path our conviction that there is an integral relationship and harmony between the beauty of God's natural world and the inner world of our spirit and personality. Life's journey holds the promise of continued growth and development and in the life beyond.

4. **On day - care facilities** — Advocated federally funded day - care facilities for "all children of working parents."

5. **On grand jury abuse** — Attacked the use of the grand jury as "an instrument of investigation" and adopted comprehensive procedures to protect confidential church data from grand jury probes.

6. **On the President's energy proposals** — Expressed support, cautioning against measures that would increase costs to the poor.

7. **On Cuba** — Endorsed proposed legislation to lift the embargo on Cuba "as a step toward normalizing relations."

8. **On human rights** — Urged that President Carter apply "the test of human rights" to all countries receiving U.S. aid.

One evening we were guests of Archbishop Joseph J. Bernardin, President of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. After his talk there was a question and answer period that was noted for its pointed questions about Roman Catholic dogma. This was followed by a worship service in the cathedral of Saint Peter in Chains, largely musical, in which we were led by a choir of nine, plus a piano and guitar. The final hymn was *The Church's One Foundation* and it never sounded better.

Nancy C. Perry

NOTICE

Collections and accumulations of Postage Stamps, covers and Picture Post Cards, formerly sent to the late Rev. Leslie Marshall, may now be sent to:

Philip M. Alden
Box 54,
Swarthmore, Pa. 19081.

Mr. Alden will arrange for their sale, the proceeds going to Convention's Board of Missions.

The Upper Room

THE CHURCH IN OBSCURITY AND GLORY

Leon Le Van

The 12th chapter of *Revelation* presents a glorious woman clothed with the sun. The moon is under her feet. She is crowned with twelve stars. She is ready to give birth to a man - child.

But a great dragon is ready to devour her child at birth.

The child is born. He is caught up to God and his throne and the woman flees to the wilderness to a "place prepared of God" where she is protected and nourished. The dragon's hostilities fail.

This brief outline shows the sun - clad woman in three successive states.

First, she is seen in glory, clothed with the sun and crowned with twelve stars.

Secondly, she is confronted by the dragon and has to flee to the wilderness.

Thirdly, she is protected and nourished in that wilderness in a "place prepared of God."

Lastly, (in the closing chapters of *Revelation*) she is seen in her true and ultimate triumph, the Bride and Wife of the Lord.

Thus, we see her in the role of woman, mother, fugitive, bride and wife.

Her role is one of glory, danger, protection, obscurity, anticipation, fulfillment.

LIKE THE CHURCH

Here are heights and depths strikingly similar to the struggles, hopes, fears, and finally - anticipated triumph of the Lord's New Church whom this woman represents.

The sphere of the sun encompassing the woman pictures Divine Love; the moon under feet Divine Wisdom.

Next comes the birth of the man - child signifying the doctrines of the New Jerusalem. The "child" is caught up to God and His throne. That means the New Church doctrines are protected by the Lord and the Heavens. They shall not pass away.

HARDEST TO BE BORNE

The third state in the woman's vicissitudes is the hardest to be borne. She flees into the wilderness and is apparently lost to view. The church is sorely tried. It remains in obscurity. But the woman is in a "place prepared of God." And she is nourished there.

They who "nourish her" are the Heavens. They who "nourish her" are the angels.

The "place prepared of God" is the church's state of devotion to Divine Good and Truth.

The wilderness, indeed, has hardships. But it also has consolations.

Repeatedly defeated and disappointed, the New Church dwells in its "prepared place" until the time when its "wilderness state" shall be finished — "and the days of its mourning ended."

THE BRIDE AND WIFE

The last state of the star - crowned Woman is that of the Lord's "Bride and Wife" as shown in *Revelation* 21.

John, the Revelator, had been taken up into a great and high mountain in the Spiritual World.

He was shown a great city, the "New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of Heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

In a natural state of mind when we read of a Scriptural "city" we think of an earthly metropolis.

In a spiritual state, we think of a "city" as signifying the doctrinal teaching of the church.

In the inmost state, we think of a "city" as the church itself, the "Bride and Wife of God." "From Heaven He came and sought her to be His Holy Bride. With His own life He bought her, and for her life He died."

The "Bride prepared for her Husband" represents the New Church conjoined with the Lord by His Word.

TAKE HEART FROM THE PROPHECY

We who suffer because of the lowly estate of the church; we who mourn; we who "daily die" because of the church's obscurity in the wilderness, should take heart from the Bible's prophecy for the glorious sun - clothed Woman.

She will not remain in the wilderness forever. She is to be transformed.

In God's own time, she is to appear in her "New Jerusalem glory." The Lord's New Church, the Bride and Wife of the Risen and Glorified Lord.

THAT'S A GOOD QUESTION

Richard H. Tafel Sr.

If you saw the play, "Jesus of Nazareth", given on television on Palm Sunday and Easter, would you care to give your reactions? Especially from a New Church point of view? While in general I enjoyed and appreciated it, there were quite a few parts that disturbed and troubled me.

I was unable to see the first part of this film, but I did see the second part shown on Easter evening. I was delighted with it up to the events of Easter Day. For me, the concluding part was the weakest and most disappointing, and rather spoiled what otherwise was an excellent piece of work. I am sorry that I did not see it from the beginning.

I thought that the scenes and dialogue were beautifully done, and were in general faithful to the Gospels. The acting and the directing were all that I could hope for, and I felt myself deeply involved in the unfolding events. The character of the Christ was sensitively and masterfully presented. His face was strong, at the same time gentle and sensitive. I shall never forget his eyes. I had the very definite impression, as the play proceeded, that the figure of the Christ became more commanding and magnetic.

There have been, and probably always will be, those who would prefer not to have the Lord played by an actor but represented by a light. But in this play of strong characters, how unfortunate it would have been if the person of the Christ had been left a blank! He was always the center, and watching him was truly a religious experience. I would not have been so captivated and impressed if he had been represented by some kind of a light.

I think I would have said beforehand that I would prefer not having the Crucifixion enacted step by step as described in the Gospels. I had always thought it was more impressive to lead the Christ to the Cross, and then to look back at it from a distance, perhaps shrouded in shadows. But here it is shown in all its horror and terror, the driving in of the nails and all the subsequent torture. But we are the richer for it, due in no small measure to the magnificent way in which the Christ is portrayed. He seems to grow in stature and strength, towering over pain and outward circumstances, made strong

in weakness. However, I missed the jeering and mocking of the crowd, which to me represented an important aspect of the Passion. Attention is fixed on our Lord's mother and on the Centurion in charge. These two characters are sensitively portrayed, and we sense something of our Lord's Passion through them, but I kept expecting to hear the Centurion say, "Truly, this was the Son of God!"

My criticism of the play is essentially with the way in which the Resurrection and the Post-Resurrection events are treated. The Resurrection is not a climax, but rather a let down. We do not see the opened tomb. We neither see nor hear angels. There is no earthquake, with dazed guards. They are posted some distance from the tomb, which is hidden by trees and shrubs, and anything could have happened there without their knowing it. All that we know about what took place in the tomb is what Mary tells the skeptical disciples, who do not run to see for themselves. It is only after lengthy discussion that they come to believe Mary's testimony.

It is at this point that the Risen Lord appears to them. To me this closing theme is the weakest and poorest of all scenes I saw. The Lord appears exactly as he was before; there is no indication of any glorification in the tomb, no rising in glory. The disciples do not seem surprised at his coming to them, because they had already convinced themselves that he had risen. I thought it was very ineffectual, if not confusing, how the Risen Lord explained his continuing presence among them. It seemed almost as though he was saying that his part was now finished, and that he was going away but would still somehow be with them.

But the most objectional part of all is when he says, "Now is God reconciled with the world." Not only putting the words of St. Paul in his mouth, but misquoting him as well! You'll remember that Paul said, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," which is quite another matter! It is indeed a pity that the old idea of an angry God and the outworn theology of the Vicarious Atonement had to creep in to spoil what was in so many ways a most excellent proclaiming of the Good News!

Capon Retires as Head of Swedenborg School of Religion

About eighty guests attended a farewell reception and dinner honoring two decades of service as president of the Swedenborg School of Religion by Edwin Gould Capon on May 19, 1977.

Representatives of New England Theological Schools and Colleges were invited as well as the Boards of Managers and Directors and officers of Convention and faculty and staff of the School and spouses.

Rev. Capon was presented an inscribed silver bowl and matching candlesticks by the grateful governing boards of the Swedenborg School of Religion for his years of service at two campuses, Cambridge and Newton.

Rev. Capon has accepted a call to a parish ministry from the Detroit Society and will move to that city this summer. His new address is: 26349 Dundee, Huntington Woods, Mich. 48070.



At reception for retiring SSR President Edwin Capon, (l. - r.) Calvin Turley speaking of Mr. Capon's 21 years as president, Edwin and Esther Capon and George Dole.

Edwin Capon has done an outstanding job of administrating our theological school and shall be missed greatly by colleagues and students alike.

URBANA COLLEGE TRIBUTE

BE IT KNOWN to all that the Urbana College Board of Trustees sends its greetings to EDWIN GOULD CAPON on the occasion of his retirement from the Presidency of the Swedenborg School of Religion.

WE KNOW and respect you for your

- quiet assessment of facts in Board discussions.
- receptive listening and support to Urbana College students considering study for the ministry
- understanding of educational problems facing students and faculty and administration
- consistently reasonable voice supporting consideration of change without pressing for radical solutions
- conscientious effort to do your job to the best of your ability and as you see the right, and your willingness to accept the wisdom of others in decision making
- service as spokesman for the Swedenborg School of Religion in the interaction between the Theological School and the College

— patience and sensitivity to all persons with whom your many tasks have given you the occasion to work.

WE GREET you as a friend to education in the Church.

THIS RESOLUTION unanimously adopted at May 11, 1977 Executive Committee Meeting of the Urbana College Board of Trustees.

Charles F. Johnson
Chairman

IMPOSSIBLE DREAM CON'T

The women have all been taking courses at the reformatory from Urbana College faculty, who started teaching at the institution in September, 1975. First started in 1974, the college program in Ohio prisons now involves seven colleges and over 800 inmate students.

Urbana College faculty also teach courses at the London Correctional Institution, where it is anticipated that some students will be ready to graduate by the end of the summer.

Our Church in Riverside, California

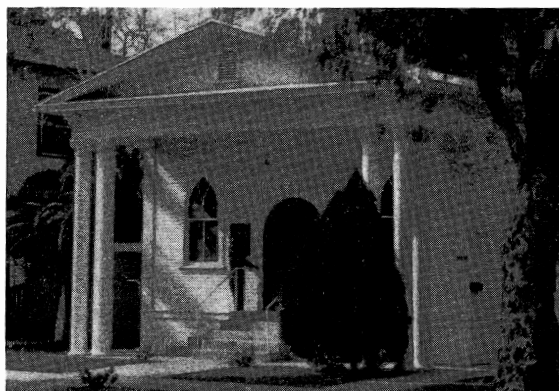
The organizational meeting of the Riverside Society was held May 17, 1885. The constitution was adopted May 24, 1885 by twenty - two charter members. Rev. Barry Edmiston was minister. In October 1885 the old Arlington School building was bought for \$400.00 and moved to a quarter acre lot on Central Avenue. The building was renovated at a cost of \$896.36 which was paid for and ready for occupancy in July 1886. Rev. Edmiston said that the Lord had prospered him so greatly that he needed no salary. He supported his family by working his farm, and as a hired hand for others. He wrote his sermons in the evenings. Attendance at services was second largest of the New Church Societies in the State; San Francisco being first.

In November 1902 the church property was sold and the lot at 3645 Locust Street was bought and the building of the present church begun. It was dedicated on Easter Sunday, April 17, 1904.

Rev. Barry Edmiston, 81, resigned in April, 1911, because of failing health. On April 30, 1911, a reception was held to commemorate his golden wedding. He died August 6, 1911.

Rev. Albert Bjorck served from 1911 until 1915, when Rev. Lloyd Edmiston became the minister. In 1924 Rev. Lloyd Edmiston moved to Seattle to organize a church. In October 1928 Rev. Walter Brown Murray became minister. His salary was \$100.00 a month, the same as his predecessors. He lived in Los Angeles, where he lectured, driving to Riverside Sundays with his family. Failing health caused his resignation in 1943. Rev. Charles Matthias came to Riverside in 1945 and served about a year. Mr. Edward Nutter of Redlands served as Lay Leader for a time, until Rev. T. Denton Lee joined the New Church in 1947 and became the pastor. He resigned May 16, 1952. Mr. Paul Habeny served as Lay Leader until September of that year when Rev. John L. Boyer became pastor. In 1957 Rev. Henry K. Peters became minister and served until his retirement in 1961. Eugene Denning was Lay Leader for a time, and Rev. Robert L. Young served as minister for a year, 1962 - 63, when he left to serve at the Wayfarers' Chapel. Rev. John W. Spiers was the next minister and continues to serve occasionally, although officially retired. David Barnhill served as Lay Leader from 1975 until May, 1977.

The Riverside church is one of the oldest church buildings in Riverside. It is the oldest



Riverside New Church

which has been in the hands of the same congregation since its construction. The external appearance of the church, painted white, is the same as when first built.

Inside a few changes have been made. New carpets in the sanctuary and in the basement room. The basement room is used for Sunday School classes, for the meeting of the "Johnny Appleseeds", our youth group, and for potlucks. A separate kitchen which meets all fire requirements, a sink which requires a pump because the basement is lower than the sewer, a gas furnace which replaced the old wood and coal furnace, and cupboards for dishes, etc., have made the church more functional.

The building is classical in design. The corinthian columns and pediment are Greek; six windows are Gothic. The front door and two large windows are Romanesque with rounded tops. The combination makes a pleasing design.

At the front is a small entry flanked by two library rooms, which are also used for Sunday School rooms. The sanctuary seats about 80 people. There is a small chancel, with space for a small choir on one side.

In the rear garden, Mrs. J. C. Perry planted Biblical trees about 50 years ago. There is an olive, a grape vine, a fig, a pomegranate, a cedar of Lebanon, a cypress, a carob, a myrtle, and a laurel. Some of these were planted later by Mrs. Perry's daughter, Alice Van Boven.

There has been much effort put into encouraging the young people to study and participate in the life of the Church. Because of these efforts we were able to hold our first summer Bible School last summer.

I would like to extend to you all an invitation to visit us when you are near Riverside.

Alice Van Boven

NEW LIFE IN RIVERSIDE

I am a new comer to the Riverside New Church. When I first visited the church three years ago with my 7 year old daughter, Rebecca, I was reminded of my own childhood church. Everyone was so friendly. The Sunday School was like that of my childhood days. We have been Sunday School and Church goers all our lives. My four older children attended a very large Sunday School. I was astonished at how little they seemed to get out of their lessons. When my family became smaller, I decided to visit other churches. I wanted little Rebecca to remember her Sunday School days with fond memories as I remembered mine.

After we had been going to the New Church for awhile, more neighbourhood children began to come. I was able to talk to my husband about the church, and finally convinced him of the fact that he would no longer be bored with church if he attended this one with us. Previously he has said church was no challenge. Now, three years later, I am beginning my second year as Sunday School Superintendent, and my husband, Charles (Mac), is beginning his second year as the church president.

We have a lovely group of children ranging from 3 years to 18. The first part of the Sunday School is mainly for the younger children. We have songs with hand motions; a special thought each Sunday is given by a member — whether they be 6 or 86. Alice Van Boven dismisses us to our classes after we sing, "For Daily Bread". After everyone returns, each class comes forward, and their teachers ask the children questions regarding the lesson. The adult teachers also give a report on their class. (It was this part that made the biggest impression upon me when I first attended the New Church.) So often, in the past, my older children could never remember doing much in Sunday School, except "to colour". Following the class reports, we then ask if there have been any birthdays, or anniversaries. A penny is dropped in our missionary plate for each year celebrated, and a song is sung to the celebrated one.

We have a junior church during our regular church hour. The children have a lesson, songs, and sometimes a craft to go along with the lesson. Children 10 years and over stay with the adults.

The Youth Group, "The Johnny Appleseeds", meet on Wednesday evenings. They have their own handbook, earn awards

and receive patches. The handbook was put together by Fran Skinner, leader of the group. The patches correspond with each phase of the handbook, beginning with the seed, roots, sprout, leaf, etc. They received a membership card at the beginning. They have shirts with the emblem of Johnny Appleseed on the back. We would like very much to have this program accepted and approved by one of our national educational bodies.

Mary McCormick, Superintendent,
Riverside Society Sunday School

WE GET LETTERS

Dear Paul,

I recently received a communication from a Mr. Sabol in the mail at my home address, the content of which was so appalling to me that I was distressed to have my name on it. I understand that Mr. Sabol is not a member of Convention and I therefore wonder how he got my name. I hope that The Messenger mailing list is not available to him or anyone else who would expose us to this kind of abuse.

Nancy Perry,
Village of Nagog Woods, Mass.

The Messenger mailing list is used only for its intended purpose; no one else has access to it. Mr. Sabol is not a member of Convention, and I can only surmise that he obtains his mailing list from the Convention Journal, which is public property. Along with you, I deplore his vicious, hateful "smear" tactics. At Convention this summer it was recommended that all recipients of Sabol mailings RETURN THE ENVELOPES TO HIM, UNOPENED. We urge that all Messenger readers follow this policy.

P.Z.

ON NEW CHURCH GROWTH

Dear Editor:

I would like to comment on the articles recently submitted by Richard Miller, Wilson Van Dusen, Ernest O. Martin, Steve Koke and others, regarding the New Church growth, or lack of it. It is a good sign that more and more Swedenborgians are becoming concerned about the dwindling membership and the great need to promote, advertise and give to the world the genuine Truths that we have had for so many years.

However, I believe it is an impossibility to try, at this late date, to try to convert the world to be followers of Swedenborg and his writings when these truths have already been surpassed by other more knowledgeable groups. Whatsoever is Genuine Truth will remain so, of course, but no religious group can stand still for more than 200 years without retrogressing. The phraseology in the writings is not acceptable nor understood by most people, and a number of statements are quite confusing, to say the least. For instance, we say that the Second Coming was in the year of 1757, and that this was accomplished through the man, Swedenborg, then we also say that "the Second Coming is now," and without any suitable explanations.

Also, since Mr. Swedenborg himself urged us not to limit ourselves to the mind of one man, why is it that the ministers do not encourage and even URGE the members to read other good, more modern scientific and philosophic literature? As Mr. Martin wrote, "Swedenborg is not imprisoned in the 18th Century Europe" so why should we remain in the dark and expect the rest of the world to come to us seeking The Light!

Sincerely
Bessie Behrendt
Great Bend, Kansas

COMMENT ON "TAXES FOR NONMILITARY USES"

Dear Editor:

No one enjoys paying taxes; merely preparing form 1040 is irksome. How much more difficult and even depressing it is for a conscientious objector to war, knowing that a huge portion of federal revenue goes to maintaining the military establishment and developing the most sophisticated destructive weaponry that advanced technology can devise.

There are few honorable effective ways to protest. One may deliberately keep taxable income below the minimum or refuse to pay part or all of the tax in which case income is attached or assets seized. The Hatfield bill (S 800) creating a World Peace Tax Fund (W.P.T.F.) provides an honorable and constructive alternative.

The bill may appear minimally effective or to some no more than a symbolic gesture, yet symbolism, especially for Swedenborgians, should not be derogated. More people are becoming aware of powerful lobbies and local

pressure groups, not hesitant to employ scare tactics, whenever Congress considers the military budget. Doubtless similar pressures are also employed by their Russian counterparts.

The W.P.T.F. would, by example, provide a small but significant impetus to a saner international climate. Politically it would permit the citizen a choice to counter special interest groups and if enough taxpayers felt morally moved to direct the use of their taxes toward peace related activities, it might even move the SALT talks off dead center.

Gustave J. Bischof
Garden City, N.Y.

FROM CHURCH RECORDS BIRTHS

BRAUN - Congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. Albert Braun of Saskatoon, Sask., on the birth of their daughter, Daphne Ann, on April 28, 1977.

DAIGLE — Congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. Norman Daigle, of Fryeburg, Maine on the birth of their son, Neil Joseph, on January 22, 1977.

FOSTER — Congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. Henry Foster of Fryeburg, Maine, on the birth of their daughter, Trisha, on February 9, 1977.

LEACH — Congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Leach, Fryeburg, Maine on the birth of their son, Jeffrey Alan, on March 1, 1977

WEBSTER — Congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. David Webster, Fryeburg, Maine on the birth of their daughter, Susanna Haley, on March 16, 1977.

STARBUCK — Congratulations to Taro & Cynthia Ann (Turley) Starbuck on the birth of their daughter, Maya Bree, on June 12, 1977.

BAPTISMS

BRAUN — Daphne Ann, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Albert Braun of Saskatoon, Sask., was baptized on June 5, 1977, the Rev. Henry Reddekopp officiating.

EASTMAN, HATCH — Melvin James Eastman and Iva Mildred (Miller) Hatch were baptized at Fryeburg, Maine, on April 17, 1977, the Rev. Robert H. Kirven, assisted by Mr. David Rienstra, officiating.

FOSTER, LEACH, LEACH — Trisha, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Henry Clarence Foster; Jeffrey Alan, son of Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Wayne Leach; and Thomas Wade, son of Mr. & Mrs. Terry Francis Leach were baptized at Fryeburg, Maine, on May 22, 1977, the Rev. Robert H. Kirven, assisted by Mr. David Rienstra officiating.

HODGSON — Tanya Ann, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Jack Hodgson, was baptized in Saskatoon, Sask., on June 30, 1977, the Rev. Henry Reddekopp officiating. (The first baptism ever performed by the officiating minister was infant baptism for the child's father, Jack Hodgson, on November 27, 1948.)

CONFIRMATIONS

KOPA — Richard Kopa was confirmed into the faith of the New Church in San Francisco, California, on April 3, 1977, the Rev. Erwin Reddekopp officiating.

WARINER — Helen Elizabeth Wariner and Robert James Wariner were confirmed into the faith of the New Church in Riverside, California, on May 8, 1977, the Rev. John Spiers officiating.

WOOFENDEN — Lee Woofenden was confirmed into the faith of the New Church on April 3, 1977, in Bridgewater, Mass., the Rev. Dr. William R. Woofenden officiating.

COLLINS — William Peter Collins was confirmed into the faith of the New Church in St. Charles, Mo., on May 16, 1977, the Rev. Richard M. Baxter officiating.

DAVIS — Edgar L. Davis was confirmed into the faith of the New Church in Portland, Oregon, on May 28, 1977, the Rev. Andre Diaconoff officiating.

CHAPLIN, ELA, THOMPSON, THURSTON, EASTMAN, HATCH — Jeffrey Kevin Chaplin, Cynthia Ann (Oliver) Ela, Lori Ann Thompson and Violet Marjorie (Hutchins) Thurston were confirmed into the New Church at Fryeburg, Maine, on April 17, 1977, the Rev. Robert H. Kirven, assisted by David Rienstra, officiating. Melvin James Eastman and Iva Mildred (Miller) Hatch were received into membership of the Fryeburg New Church on April 17, 1977.

MARRIAGES

BOVE — BAKER — Dr. Louis Gregory Bove and Patricia Ann Baker were married in Fryeburg, Maine, on June 11, 1977, the Rev. Franklin H. Blackmer and the Rev. Francis W. Vye officiating.

DION — UNRAU — Arthur Dion and Eleanor Unrau were married in Saskatoon, Sask., on May 14, 1977, the Rev. Henry Reddekopp officiating.

McGEEHAN — STUART — James E. McGeehan and Alice Stuart, daughter of Leona Rosenberger, were married in the Virginia Street Church on April 23, 1977, the Rev. Richard M. Baxter officiating.

HARRIMAN — LEWIS — Michael Harriman and Elizabeth Lewis were married in Fryeburg, Maine, on June 25, 1977, the Rev. Walter Vanhoek officiating.

TROTT — BRINE — Paul Eugene Trott and Sharon Lee Brine were married in Fryeburg, Maine, the Rev. Richard Beebe officiating.

DEATHS

BAXTER — Mrs. Celestine M. Baxter, 80, a member of the San Francisco Church, died in Alameda on April 4, 1977. The resurrection service was held in Alameda on April 6, the Rev. Erwin Reddekopp officiating.

BOWIE — Mrs. Ruth White Bowie, aged 89, died on April 11, 1977 in Greenbrae, California. Ruth was married in the San Francisco Church in 1910 with the Rev. Joseph Worcester officiating. The memorial service was held on April 24, 1977, the Rev. Erwin Reddekopp officiating.

HERRMAN — Flora W. Herrman, 85, of Portland, Oregon, died on March 16, 1977. A memorial service was held on March 20, the Rev. Andre Diaconoff officiating.

SKEEN — Mrs. Malinda Skeen, life - long member of the Pawnee Rock Kansas Church died on September 14, 1976. Memorial services were conducted by her son - in - law Eldon Smith on September 18 at El Cajon, California.

WIEBE — Emmanuel Wiebe, 42, of Saskatoon, Sask., died on May 5, 1977. The resurrection service was held on Monday, May 9, the Rev. Henry Reddekopp officiating.

HALLIWELL — Charlotte Halliwell, 73, of Toronto, Ontario, a lifelong and devoted member of the New Church, entered into the higher uses of the spiritual world on June 15, 1977. Funeral service was held June 17, interment in Kitchener, Ont.

ZIBELL — Mrs. Ida Zibell, 84, of St. Louis, Mo., died on June 5, 1977 following injuries sustained in a fall at the Illinois Ass'n meeting on May 15th. The memorial service was conducted by the Rev. Eric Zacharias on June 8, 1977.

MURDOCH — Miss Florence Murdoch, a well known New Church woman long active in the Ohio Association, died on June 22, 1977.

GOLDEN WEDDING CELEBRATIONS

On June 17, 1977, Howard and Frances Ives, of Stockbridge, Michigan, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. Congratulations also to Mr. and Mrs. Donald Beales, Toronto, Canada, who observed their 50th wedding anniversary on June 11, 1977. Mr. Beales is a nephew of the late Rev. William Beales, pastor of the Detroit New Church for many years. And Mr. and Mrs. John Sawatsky, Grande Centre, Alberta, celebrated their Golden Anniversary on July 9. To all we extend sincere congratulations and best wishes for continued health and happiness.



Howard and Francis Ives

CONTENTS

Convention Reflections	150
The Sabol - Reddekopp Mailings	150
Convention Sermon	Dorothea Harvey 151
The President's Address	Eric Zacharias 153
Convention Calendar	155
Report from the Council of Ministers	156
Mini - Course Reports	158
S.S.R. Graduation Address	Dorothea Harvey 162
Alliance of New Church Women	164
Good News from Johnny Appleseed	165
Convention Views	166
General Council Highlights	168
"Our Convention Heritage" Statement	169
Sunday School Association Report	171
A.N.C.L. Report	171
Minister's Wives Groups	172
Urbana College News	172
Ministry to the Wayfarer	Ernest Martin 174
National Council of Churches Report	175
The Upper Room	Leon LeVan 176
That's a Good Question	Richard Tafel Sr. 177
Capon Retires as Head of S.S.R.	178
Our Church in Riverside, California	179
We Get Letters	180
From Church Records	181

BOOKS WANTED

Philemon Foundation is looking for the following publications as a gift, tax deductible donation, or for sale.

Iungerich, "Rebirth and Glorification"
"The Palace of Wisdom"

Buss "What the New Church Teaches"

Chetty "Chidambara Rahasyam Revealed"

Dasa "Swedenborg the Buddhist"

MacLagen "Book of Leviticus Interpreted and Explained"

"Book of Numbers Interpreted and Explained"

"Two Books of Kings Explained"

Contact: W. Van Dusen, 705 Willow Ave.
Ukiah, California, 95482

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

As of Sept. 1, 1977, the address of the Rev. and Mrs. Wilfred Rice will be:

31 Poole St.

Brockton, Mass. 02401

(Mrs. Ethel Rice is Convention's Recording Secretary.)

Rev. David P. Johnson
10232 N.E. 62nd St., Apt. 10
Kirkland, Wash. 98033



We are grateful to Robert Kirven and William Woofenden, who supplied the photographs for this special issue of the *Messenger*.

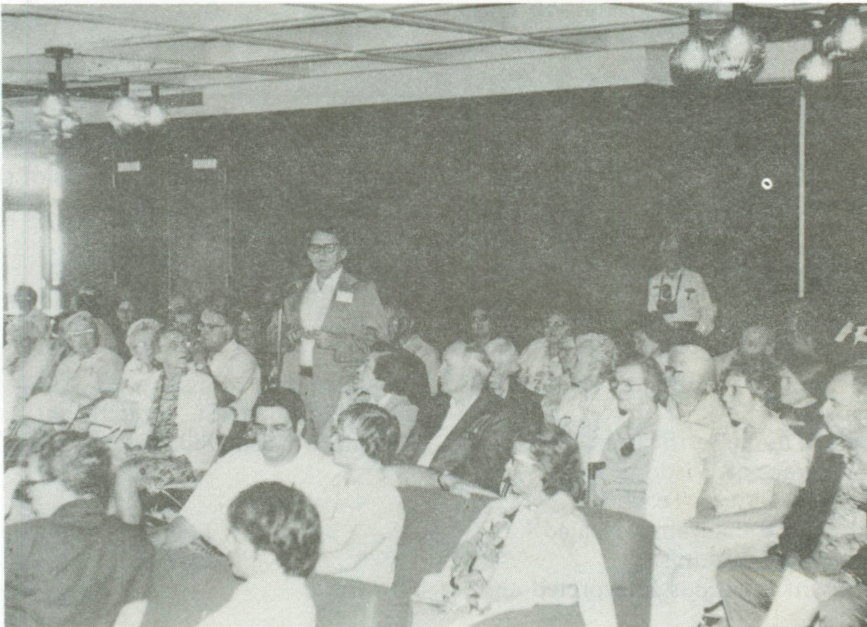
THE MESSENGER

Box 2642 Stn. B
Kitchener, Ont. N2H 6N2

RETURN POSTAGE
GUARANTEED



WOFFENDEN



Roger Paulson has an attentive audience