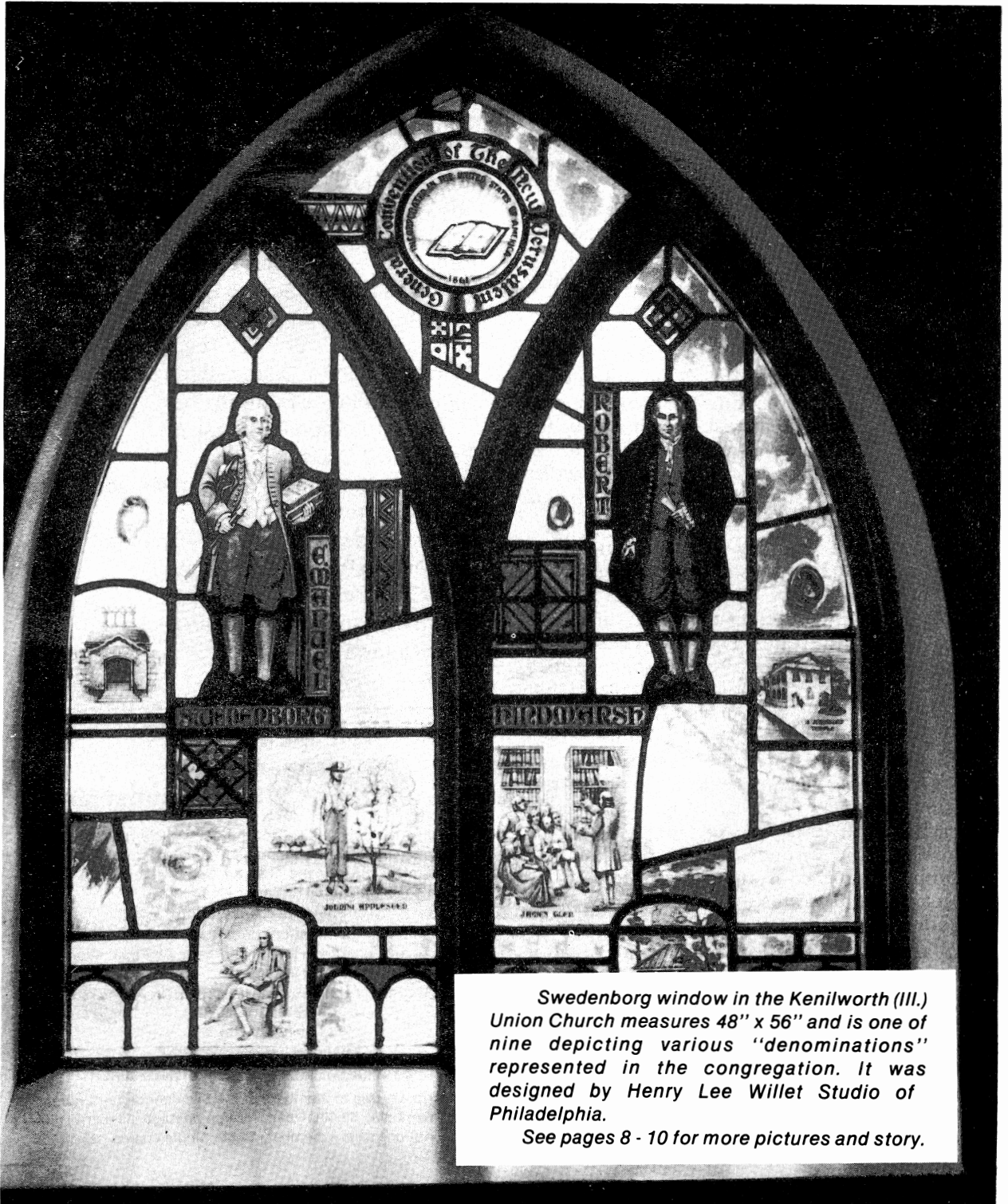


# The Messenger

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH

JANUARY 1978



*Swedenborg window in the Kenilworth (Ill.) Union Church measures 48" x 56" and is one of nine depicting various "denominations" represented in the congregation. It was designed by Henry Lee Willet Studio of Philadelphia.*

*See pages 8 - 10 for more pictures and story.*

*Editorial*

## CONVENTION THEME PREVIEW

In this first editorial of the New Year I thought we might look ahead and take a peek at our Convention '78 theme. In mid - November the Convention Planning Committee spent considerable time wrestling with this issue, finally settling on the theme, "Alive In The New Age".

Obviously this is an umbrella - type theme — you can approach it from a number of different perspectives. What does it mean to *be alive in the world today*? What is our concept of the *New Age*? What is the Lord's plan for *His world*? How do we, individually and as a church, help (or hinder) the *coming* of the New Age? What are the *signs* of the New Age? *What difference* does all of this make in our everyday lives?

Each one of us will have a different view — our own definition — of the New Age, which should make for some interesting discussions at Convention. The New Age may seem very abstract, ethereal — or it may be for us intensely real and down - to - earth. In either case it will be good for us to be together in Kitchener next summer, sharing our thoughts and hopes for the New Age.

Perhaps the one thing we can all agree on is that the world is in constant flux. The essential nature of God's *Life Force* is change. And we believe that the world, on all levels, is gradually changing for the better. The Lord is patient and long - suffering, and He permits some reverses and setbacks in His long range plans, but ultimately His will must prevail. Thus, if we are alert and sensitive we can see the future written small in the present scene. It means: seeing beyond appearances; being open to — and using creatively — forces of change; taking some radical risks; trusting implicitly in the goodness and wisdom of the Lord; thinking through for ourselves what it means to be a new person in the New Age. A sneak preview of Convention '78.

January 29 is Swedenborg's birthday, and it seems appropriate to close with these words spoken by Dr. Thomas French to the Ohio Association in 1889: "So thoroughly was Swedenborg possessed of the spirit of innovation and improvements that he seems to belong to the present age rather than his own. After publishing *A Decimal System of Money and Measures*, he wrote, 'It is a little discour-

aging to me to be advised to relinquish my views as among novelties which the country cannot bear . . . as for me I desire all possible novelties, ay, a novelty for every day in the year,' since 'in every age there is an abundance of persons who follow the beaten track, and remain in the old way, while there are not more than from six to ten in a century who bring forward innovations founded on argument and reason.'"

P. Z.

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## THE MESSENGER

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Paul B. Zacharias, Editor

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# The Starting Line by Eric Zacharias

A time for new beginnings — of resolutions and completing final plans for the January Ministers and Spouses Institute and the General Council meetings in Florida. The New Year is leaving the *Starting Line* fairly at a gallop. All of the universe, seemingly, responds to that internal time - clock which governs the rhythmical flow of life. In all their glory, the seasons have their beginning and ending and so the ever abiding presence of birth and death becomes the promise of the continuity of God's creation.

It is good to be given this opportunity to put behind us the events of the year now past — hold to that which was good, to see the good even in that which was distressing and so open ourselves to a new series of events awaiting us. Events, not so different in character as those of 1977, but offering to us the opportunity for a new and perhaps more mature response.

The year 1977 closed with several interesting activities and the good in these will, I am sure, bear fruit in this new year.

On November 18th, and 19th, the Convention Planning Committee met in Kitchener, Ontario for the planning of the 1978 convention. Participating were Rev. and Mrs. Paul Zacharias, Mr. and Mrs. Carl Heck, Grace Sudden, Nora Rae, Fran McIntosh, Betty Drummond and Stanley Haigh — all members of the Kitchener Society. Roger Paulson of the Central Office and Ginger Tafel of Cincinnati representing the Board of Education were also participants.

One of the most challenging features of the Kitchener meeting was the choice of a convention theme. Here the dialogue rose to an exciting level. What is the thrust that best represents the interest and the need of our people? What is it that we wish to leave with convention participants? Proposals were many and varied. Finally, the vote was cast and, thus, the theme chosen for our 154th annual convention to be held in Kitchener, Ontario, on the campus of Conrad Grebel College on the dates June 28th - July 2nd is, "Alive in the New Age."

The now — is a New Age! Are we alive to it and to its implications? Is this age really new? If so, in what way? Is it possible that we can discover in all of this the ground of our unity

and the purpose of our being as a Church? I look forward eagerly to the pursuit of our theme.

I wish to thank our Kitchener friends for their warm and gracious hospitality during these planning meetings. It will be a pleasure to work with them during the coming months.

It was delightful indeed to spend a few hours with the members of the Detroit congregation on the evening of November 19th. The large gathering at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Bill Locke spent the evening ranging over a whole host of subjects related to the Church. Our Detroit friends worship each Sunday in a rented facility that is comfortably appointed and which serves them well for all church related functions.

On Thanksgiving Sunday, during a well-attended worship service, I conducted a Service of Installation for the Rev. Edwin Capon who assumed his duties as the new minister in September. It is our hope and prayer that the Detroit Society move on into a prosperous and rewarding future.

By now, this writer was beginning to sympathize with the tourist who exclaimed, "It's Tuesday, it must be Rome."

No, it was Sunday evening and it was St. Paul. Here, I met with the members of Rev. Richard Baxter's congregation. This too was a thought provoking experience. We reviewed the program to which these people are committed, the trends that currently are in evidence in the community and the effectiveness of the ministry that is developing there. One senses there a strong sense of mission and we found a minister, his partner and a congregation solidly working together to better understand the direction of their future and to try in some innovative ways to bring the ideals of the Church a bit closer to reality.

Some time ago, I was given a book titled, "Think and Grow Rich" by Napoleon Hill. The author contends that the principles he espouses have helped many along the road to great riches. He writes, "You may as well know, right here, that you can never have riches in great quantities, unless you can work yourself into a white heat of desire for money, and actually believe you can possess it." "Big thoughts". "Belief in oneself". These are the

(Cont'd on page 7)

## 'REGENERATION: WHAT AN EXPERIENCE!'

Calvin Turley  
S.S.R., Newton, Mass.

Regeneration is a process, not a happening. It is a moving - toward, not an arrival. It is both *being* and *becoming*. It is a path to be travelled over with openness and awareness, to be enjoyed for its revealing of ever new vistas and expanding possibilities of choice; it is not a freeway to be raced over as quickly as possible with ever present danger to life and limb. Regeneration is the milieu of the artist at the potter's wheel — an environment that facilitates change with turning and shaping, with re - forming and beginning anew, with letting an idea of beauty ultimate under the tender guidance of time and persuasion. It is working with the resistance of inertia and conditioning until a creation of beauty emerges in an expression that is unique unto itself. Regeneration is not the milieu of the assembly line with its constant pressure of precision and conformity, its repetitious and dehumanizing piece - work, its rewards and punishments, and its production quotas with each unit as nearly as identical to the preceding one as possible.

Regeneration is process, not productivity. In fact, experiencing oneself as a regenerate person isn't characterized by the sense of having produced anything, nor is it characterized by the sense of having arrived anywhere; rather, sensing oneself as a regenerate person is characterized by the sense of experiencing the process - of - regeneration which is the experiencing of the gifts of meaning and fulfilment amid constant change.

Regeneration is both *being* and *becoming*. One way to image this dynamic flux of the nature of regeneration is to sense, in your own consciousness - of - self, the Genesis image that you are created in the image and likeness of God — " . . . and behold, it was very good." The dynamic flux of the nature of regeneration may be sensed and experienced both as *being* in that image and likeness, and at the same time *processing toward becoming* an expression of that image and likeness. It's like standing on the threshold of a doorway. Are you still outside the room? Entering? Or have you entered? From the point of view of *process*, you are none of these yet you are all of them at the same time. Experiencing the process of regeneration is like that: it is the experiencing of being in — and moving toward being in — the image and likeness of God.

Regeneration is a gift, not a reward. If we reflect on the process of regeneration from this point of view, we can see that regeneration is neither hard work, nor is it easy — it's both. It's neither an "idea" nor a "goal" — it's experience. It's not a matter of "correct belief", it's a matter of love — of intention daily lived — out of which one then receives understanding or the gift of knowing. Regeneration, then, isn't a matter of getting, it's a process of receiving.

Well, if regeneration is a kind of processing, changing dynamic — the essence of which is to be in the process, rather than having - arrived — then how can we talk about it? That is a problem! Indeed, there seems to be an ever present danger that the more we talk about regeneration the more we avoid the experiencing of regeneration, and the less we experientially receive the gift of knowing. It's like trying to know a river without ever getting wet. You can watch it go by — ever changing yet ever the same; you can listen to other persons tell of their experience of having been in; but you will never know a river until you jump in — once you have, you will then experientially know the truth of permanence amid constant change. It seems the same with the process of regeneration. If you really want to know what it's like, jump in and pay attention to your own experience.

For the more timid, are there any "guide - posts pointing toward the river of regeneration?" To be sure, there are. Ultimately, however, they are all experiential, not theoretical; they are guideposts for participation, not voyeurism. Within our own religious heritage, there is the example of Swedenborg's own life as one model from which we could take guidance. The model I'm thinking of is not the biography of his accomplishments in the world; rather, I'm thinking of the biography of his spiritual journey, his experience with the path of regeneration and enlightenment. Now, this biography has never been written, and perhaps it should never be, for this seems too much like taking the man's spiritual inventory. But he has left us some records of his own spiritual autobiography in his *Spiritual Diary* and his *Journal of Dreams*, both of which are available from Swedenborgian book outlets. If one

wanted to make the investment of time and effort, there is to be discovered here a very personal recording of the process of regeneration as change, as despair, as joy, as struggle, as giving up, as receiving, as ecstasy, as gift of knowing. If you choose to look here for guide - posts, do so with the deepest gentleness and respect, for you have been entrusted with entrance into the “holy of holies” of another’s spiritual quest.

Another source within which we find “guideposts point toward the river of regeneration” is Swedenborg’s systematic treatment of the subject in his theological summary, *True Christian Religion*. The danger for us in looking to this resource stems from the fact that the treatment of the subject is extremely systematic and intellectual and thus most susceptible to making regeneration a spectator sport to be discussed and analyzed around the hot - stove league (of hell?). Still, a little danger need not keep us from turning to such a spiritual gold mine for guidance. What I’d recommend for our excavations in TCR, however, is that attention be given to our attitude of approach. Try reading Swedenborg’s chapters on “Repentance” and “Reformation and Regeneration” as *descriptive*, not *prescriptive*. In other words, when you approach reading the discussion of regeneration in TCR, remember that you are

reading Swedenborg’s best effort to generalize guideposts for all humankind out of the richness of his own personal experience. In his own inimitable and sometimes redundant style, he is seeking a description of a most personal, dynamic, exciting, and individualized process of spiritual growth and enlightenment. It is not to be expected that any such description, growing out of personal experience, is going to fit the life of another with much precision. What’s awe inspiring, when read from the perspective being suggested, is how relevant and modern and helpful Swedenborg’s model can be to our own spiritual quest — to our own experiencing of the process of regeneration.

If you love the water and swimming, the image of “the river of regeneration” is a good one. Jump in and try your own means of navigation. There are lots of ways to travel a river and every trip has its own unique particulars. One can anticipate some rapids and most likely some falls, there will be stretches of calm and unprecedented beauty, there will be times of invigorating activity as you move with or against the current, and there will be those delicious times of just drifting in the arms of what is. Somewhere along the trip you will come to know that fulfilment and meaning are yours — it is the gift that has been offered to you from the beginning, it was only awaiting your receiving.

Have a blessed trip!

*(The Other Side  
of the Picture.)*

## HELL

*Robert H. Kirven  
S.S.R., Newton, Mass.*

This is an inherently unpleasant subject. Perhaps that is why I have not found a point at which I really want to begin discussing it. But since I am to start, my opening will be a brief reminder of some aspects of Swedenborg’s description of hell which are familiar to most readers of his works because they seem — at least at first — to be less unpleasant or discomfoting than the descriptions afforded by the theories and psychological projections of writers who have never seen, heard, touched, or smelled what they write about.

First, hell is not a place, but a condition. Spiritual conditions (or states of being) that are similar or different from other conditions appear in the spiritual world to be near or far away, just as places are close or distant in our physical experience. In that appearance, hell is a long way from heaven. Also, it is a long way *below* heaven, because whatever is good or true appears higher than anything bad or wrong.

Secondly, no one is sentenced, cast, thrown, or consigned to hell — not by God or any angel, not by any celestial judge, psychic jury, or spiritual police. Everyone who lives in hell entered that condition out of unrestrictedly free choice. Everyone who stays in it does so because no other condition (including heaven) is as desirable to him or her, or even in fact bearable.

Thirdly, hell is not a lake of fire in which souls thrash about in burning agony, poked from time to time by the pitchforks of horned, tailed, red devils. There are indeed fires of hell, but they are evil desires burning within those who live there.

That fact — that the torments of hell are internal rather than external — points back toward the observation that all of this is only superficially less discomfoting than the views which they replace. The fact that no one (but yourself) sentences you to hell means there is no

chance of “beating the rap;” and since no one throws you in there, there’s no one to let you out. And since hell is a condition rather than a place, you don’t get to wait until after death to “go” there: if you are “going to hell” it’s because you are in that condition already, and are beginning to find it a more congenial state of mind and spirit than the heavenly alternatives which are open to you.

So it turns out that there really is very little that is pleasant to say about hell. The best thing I know to say about it is what I just said: *the alternatives to hell are open to you right now.*

It would be a pleasant diversion to describe those alternatives; but since in my own freedom of choice I have accepted being assigned to hell, I’ll stick to the subject.

The point about those alternatives, in discussing the subject of hell, is that they are always open throughout our physical human life, but they are never compelling. The evil condition called hell exerts a continual influence on each of us, stimulating bad intentions in us, and suggesting false (but non - the - less persuasive) rationalizations by which we can excuse or justify those bad intentions. Of course, the Lord is continually working through the heavens to influence us in precisely opposite ways. Since those conflicting influences are equally powerful (and God keeps their power precisely equal), we are not compelled by either influence, but are left free to choose which we will accept. And the important thing to remember about that freedom, in connection with hell, is that *no hellish temptation is ever irresistible.* It may well seem to be. In fact, many temptations are considerably stronger than your own power to resist them: but they are never stronger than the Lord, who will invincibly help you resist them any time you ask him, every time you ask him.

So, “The devil made me do it” is a comical excuse only because it is such a false one. The hells can never make you do anything, unless you reject the Lord’s proffered help, and accept the influence from hell.

As for the horrors of hell, so imaginatively elaborated in sermons and literature to frighten Christians into paths of righteousness, they are neither as graphic nor as realistic as what we know of hell from our own experience. Think back to moments when you were terribly angry, desperately lonely, desolated by the feeling that nothing you were doing was of any real use to anyone. Then imagine becoming so entrenched in those feelings that you blocked out all the loving influences in your experience that

deflect, deflate, and defuse those feelings so that you never felt any other way. Imagine further living in a community of kindred spirits where everyone felt like that all the time, and “took their feelings out” on you as much as you did on them. Wouldn’t that be hell? That is hell.

\* \* \* \* \*

Shifting slightly now, from the subject of hell to a question about hell, at least historical mention should be made of the issue that usually is miscalled “Eternity of the Hells.” The real issue, in what I have heard and read about it, is not whether the hells themselves are eternal, but whether an individual’s abode in hell is inescapably so. In other words, can a spirit’s intentionality ever be changed to permit something corresponding to our sociologists’ term, “upward mobility”?

It may be surprising that such a question is argued among readers of Swedenborg, for there are many passages parallel to the sense of *Heaven and Hell* 480: “To eternity, a person stays the way he is as far as his ruling love or intention is concerned . . . Changing this [intention] for a spirit would be taking away or extinguishing his life.” (A.C. 10, 749, and T.C.R. 399 are other clear examples.)

So what’s the question? Well, there are three passages from *Spiritual Diary*, which I list here with excerpts:

I desire to state this fact, for I know it to be true, for I have perceived it, that many . . . (in hell) have been raised from hell and torments into heaven, where they now live . . . (S.D. 288)

[In a large vat in hell] there are none of those there who perished in the time of the Flood, but they have been brought out . . . and there are those who have been created anew. (S.D. 286)

Also, S.D. 1497, read in the light of S.D. 1218, indicates that certain spirits remain in a dungeon in hell, “for centuries, until their former life is altered . . . Thus their former life dies, although still it remains . . .” after which they are enabled by a “superadded gift” to live among angels. It will be noted that this may be read as complementing H.H. 480, as easily as it can be read as contradicting it.

Some might question the authority of the *Spiritual Diary*, especially in such a weighty issue, but the line of thought there suggests a parallel interpretation in A.C. 698 - 9, where the vastations which precede admission to

heaven are described, but without clear specification as to whether these occurred in hell or not; but suggesting, especially in the beginning of 700, that hell is indeed meant. Then, in A.C. 967, we read: "Unless it [evil] could be taken away by means of punishment, those in whom it exists could not be kept in some hell to eternity." Since it can be taken away, does this mean that they are not kept there?

I said that this is a historical reference. The research here is not mine, but is selected with only a few comments of my own from the work of a Convention minister (S. H. Spencer, *Death and the Future State*, Swedenborg Publishing Association, Germantown, Pa., 1900), who took an active part in public controversy over the question around the turn of the century. The issue is not central to my life at this time, and I have not felt compelled to reach a firm conclusion about it.

But I do enjoy interpretive puzzles, and this is a dandy. So I thought it would be a good ending to an article on hell!

## INCARNATION

Out of the realm of ethereal dream  
 Into the chaos of history  
 Wisdom divine materialized  
 Spiritual substance taking form  
 God - Man appeared  
 Out of the passion of Love Divine  
 The rebirth of a world taking form  
 Oh beautiful joy of celestial spheres  
 Angelic paeans of praise  
 Echoing down through aeons of time  
 He assumed the human frame  
 Jehovah - God in humble guise  
 Became our Emanuel.  
 Clothed in the armor of Truth Divine,  
 Assaulted the bastions of satanic power,  
 Restored to man equilibrium  
 Hope and joy regained.  
 Battered, tormented, crucified  
 The Human became Divine  
 Bore our sorrows, assumed our grief  
 Rose triumphant over sin  
 Adored of angels, Savior of men  
 Our Lord and God and King!

Ednah Richard  
 Tacoma, Washington

## TIME

The New Testament has two words for time: *chronos*, which means time in terms of quantity, measured by minutes, hours, days; and *kairos*, which means time as quality. The English language uses the same word for both. When we say, "This is a great day!" we don't mean twenty - four hours; we mean time as quality.

Time as quality means that there is a possibility in each moment for change. With God's help and our response, things can change, and change for the better.

*Pupil Digest*

## CONSEQUENCES

The coming year cannot be looked forward to without reference to the past year, and to all the years before it. It should therefore remind us of the importance of the present moment. "Every moment of time," Swedenborg observed, "has a series of consequences to eternity." Each experience serves to determine and condition every following experience, and we are — and become more surely and forever — the sum total of our experiences. And how many such "moments" there are in just one of our days, each with its momentous experience!

*Philadelphia N. C. Bulletin*

### THE STARTING LINE (cont'd from page 3)

ingredients that generate wealth. Have we in the New Church been thinking too small? Have we allowed ourselves to be conditioned by circumstances and events to thinking small thoughts and so self - limiting our growth and accomplishments? The Lord has promised new life and a New Church to all who are open to his presence, his power, to his love and truth that make us his partners in the creating of a new heaven and a new earth. Surely, there is wealth unlimited that awaits our reaching out in trust and without fear.

Mrs. Zacharias and I wish for all Messenger readers a blessed and "wealthy" New Year.

One of my New Year resolutions? To shorten my contributions to The Starting Line — a resolution already in serious trouble.

# WINDOWS are for seeing BEYOND

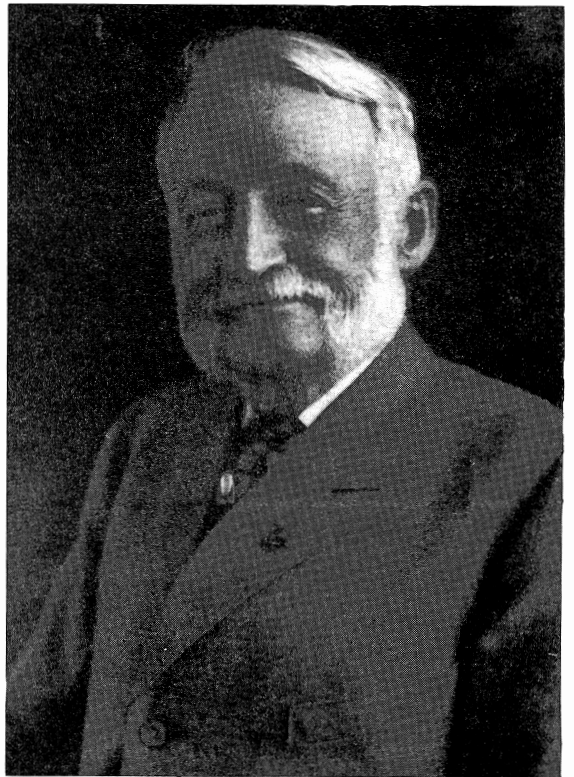
*John B. Townes  
Kenilworth, Illinois*

In a small village on the southern shores of Lake Michigan stands a colorful memento to Swedenborg's far reaching influence, and thereby lies a tale: —

Incorporated in 1896 when the required quota of 300 residents was met by the birth of a son to one of its early settlers, Kenilworth, Illinois, is the creation of Joseph Sears, a second generation New Churchman. Joseph's father John Sears Jr. had come to the Chicago area in 1836 at the age of 23, a year or so after the last of the Illinois Indians had been removed to a western reservation, and Chicago had achieved a population of about 2500 inhabitants. Earlier training as a drug apprentice led him eventually to the wholesale drug business in which with other commercial interests he prospered. Just how this Congregationalist came to knowledge of the New Church is unknown, but five months prior to his wife's death in 1847 his was the eighth signature at the first annual meeting of the Chicago Society incorporated in 1843 through the efforts of J. Young Scammon who had brought Swedenborg and Homoeopathy to Chicago with his own arrival in 1835. Scammon, incidentally, was one of the 1861 incorporators of General Convention.

The three sons of John Sears Jr. received early education at the Garden City Institute, a college preparatory school purchased in 1854 with New Church funds but destroyed by fire in October 1857. Prior to 1859 eldest brother Rasselas briefly attended Urbana College to which Scammon had donated 14 acres, but Joseph and his other brother John were sent to a school near their grandfather's home in Bristol, N.Y. On reaching his 21st birthday, March 21, 1864, Joseph promptly enlisted in the army from which he was discharged in 1865, a First Lieutenant. On June 30, 1868 he and Helen S. Barry, sister of his civil war buddy George Barry, were married in the Church of the New Jerusalem of Chicago by Rev. John Randolph Hibbard. Helen and George Barry, at 19 and 21 years of age respectively, had joined the church in 1862. They were children of Swedenborgians who had become members in 1853.

As is obvious from the preceding, Joseph Sears was not only raised in a Swedenborgian environment, but married into a family similarly enlightened. He became moderately wealthy as vice - president of N. K. Fairbank & Co., successors to his father's business, manufacturers of lard cooking compounds and soaps. Does anyone remember Santa Claus and Fairy Soap or Gold Dust Washing Powder with the Gold Dust Twins on the box? He was living on the same street as Marshall Field, of department store fame, George Pullman, designer and builder of sleeping and parlor cars of railroading days, as well as many lesser known but equally influential and more wealthy Chicagoans when his Kenilworth became first a dream and then reality. Several



Joseph Sears (1843 - 1912). Second generation Swedenborgian who founded Kenilworth, Ill., and in 1829 built the original Union Church.



parcels of acreage, unimproved except for small farms but lying on the shores of Lake Michigan between two already developing communities, caught his eye as a possible site for a home away from the city where he might raise his five children in an atmosphere of the country but with city conveniences. So in 1889, with his own funds, he acquired a total of 223.6 acres for \$150,300 at an average cost of \$672 for land the government had sold 50 years before for \$1.25 an acre.

Realizing that this was far more area than he needed for his own homesite, and with fond memories of an 1883 business - vacation trip to the beautiful Warwickshire countryside of England where he had visited the scenes of Sir Walter Scott's Kenilworth, Sears formed the Kenilworth Company, made up in part with family connections. Improvements were put in and streets layed out eventually being given names entirely selected from Scott's novels. A kindred spirit existing between members of the New Church led Sears to offer them homesites, many of the first residences being built by nearby Chicago Swedenborgians.

The 3000 Kenilworthians of today, with no room left for expansion, are scarcely aware of the vital faith of its few early residents. They knew that to have a community there must be a spiritual unity. Swedenborg had written, "All differing churches would be one church if they made love to the Lord and charity toward the neighbor the principle of faith." Organized as a society during the summer of 1892, they held a number of meetings in the interest of a church "dedicated to the worship of God over and above all minor differences of approach." The Kenilworth Company, of which Mr. Sears was president, soon built a chapel seating 90. At the dedication service the sermon was preached by Dr. Newell D. Ellis, Presbyterian pastor of nearby Evanston, with Rev. Louis P. Mercer of the Church of the New Jerusalem, Chicago pronouncing the dedicatory ritual. Services the first year were conducted by various clergymen called in from Sunday to Sunday which included Rev. Mercer and Rev. Thomas A. King of the New Church. It is worthy of note that the name Kenilworth Union Church was chosen as a name to signify that this church was neither non - denominational nor of a community idea but rather a union of existing faiths and affiliations in one common bond. Such was the influence of Swedenborg's teachings. It is said to be the first Protestant Union Church in America never to be supported by a denomination.

The church, like many others, has had its ups and downs, but over the years has greatly expanded not only in membership but also its physical plant, the most recent of which was only about three years ago. The enlargement program of 1949 included the installation of nine stained glass windows depicting the history of various Protestant denominations, the selection being according to size (thus omitting the smaller denominations), Methodist, Baptist, Lutheran, Congregational, Presbyterian, Episcopal, Disciples of Christ. However "the Society of Friends, because all love Quakers, and the Swedenborgians, because it was the faith of the founder of Kenilworth, were included." The latter window was contributed by Joseph Sears' descendants.

At the top of the window, the seal reading "General Convention of The New Jerusalem" is on a blue field, the inner circle inscribed "INCORPORATED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA - 1861" being on yellow gold surround the "OPEN WORD" book all white. Besides Emanuel Swedenborg four other figures are pictured; Robert Hindmarsh, the English printer, who organized New Church groups in England and sent Swedenborg's books to America; the Reverend John Clowes, seated figure at bottom left side panel, of St. John's Anglican Church, fluent scholar in both Greek and Latin who translated several of Swedenborg's books and spread the doctrine in England although he never left the established church during his nearly sixty years in the ministry; James Glen, well educated Scotsman who introduced it to America in a lecture series in 1784 in Bell's Book Store, Philadelphia, and in Massachusetts following which a number of prominent men supported the teaching and spread thousands of writings of the New Church; and John Chapman (Johnny Appleseed) who sowed the Gospel and appleseeds in the middlewest. Also in the window is John Clowes' house in the woods where he translated 17 volumes of Swedenborg's works and published over 50 volumes of defence. The structure on the extreme left, next to Swedenborg, carries six stars above, and NUNC LICET on the arch over the door.

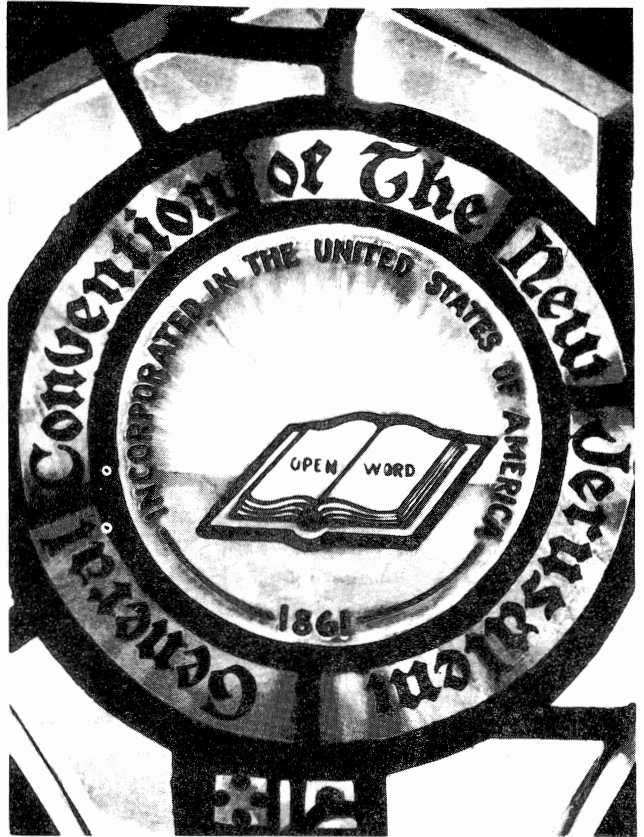
As is often the case, members of the congregation who regularly assemble for worship services pay little heed to the significance of the beautiful windows which adorn their church. However visitors are often

struck by the unique character of these windows and their appropriateness in a "Union" church. That the church does exist is due to the understanding of its village founder who put into use his Swedenborgian concept of

a universal church which cuts across all denominational doctrines. While it has no present connection with the New Church it was ancedored by Emanuel Swedenborg and bears his mark on the pages of its history.



Detail of Kenilworth (Ill.) Union Church window. Blue coat, darkish green trousers, and taupe stockings create a colorful figure.



Close - up of the General Convention seal in the window. Joseph Sears and his wife "kept the faith" all their lives with attendance at the Union Church he built for Kenilworth.

### FAVORS ISLAND LIVING

Dear Editor,

I enjoyed reading the article in the Nov. *Messenger* entitled "Island In Common". Let us have more articles on East Coast Island living. Perhaps someone will be inspired to give up the race peculiar to city life, and return to the simple, wholesome life of our forefathers.

George Marks  
Elizabeth, N.J.

### WANTED

"On Holy Ground" and "Swedenborg On Three Vital Points" by William Worcester. If you have either of these books and are willing to dispose of them, contact:

Mrs. Horace Briggs  
Intervale, N. H. 03845

# “Codicil”

This  
I  
ask  
when  
I  
am  
gone: —

If for a moment you would pause to remember me, remember me as *you* knew me, not as someone else describes me nor as the photo image of a fleeting instant, not as facts or figures of what and when and who I was, not as what I might have been or should have been, not just my hopefully, better side. Remember me as *you* knew me.

Perhaps I was young, or maybe old and gray, perhaps it was a playful mood or in a somber moment. Was I strong and energetic, was I weak and ailing? Was it spring, fall, winter or maybe in the summer of the year or of life? Is it many times, many moods all bundled into one recollection? Did I give to you as a friend or was I withdrawn, aloof, diffident, difficult to approach? Did I laugh, did I cry? Did I try to sing but didn't do very well? Did I become angry or opinionated or fearful or rude? Remember me as *you* knew me, perhaps sometimes this way, sometimes that way, and hopefully not always the same way. Don't try to paint the picture in softer tones, in warmer colors, for I was human too then and far from approaching perfection, whatever that may be. May your memories be gentle, but may they be faithful to how I was to you!

I shall be eternally grateful for just a moment of reflection on your part, but make it just a moment in passing and then go on living, for I too will go on living, probably much as you knew me on here on earth. Amen. (I'll see you later.)

John B. Townes  
Kenilworth, Illinois

# AT THE WAYFARERS' CHAPEL

*Bess Foster Smith, Weiser, Idaho*

*(Bess Foster Smith first visited the Wayfarer' Chapel when she was 64 years old. The Chapel was still incomplete, nevertheless she caught the potential of it even then, as recorded in the following moving article. The author is 90 years young.)*

Scientists are now confirming what men of faith have always believed, namely: that we are still in the throes of Creation with immeasurable possibilities before us.

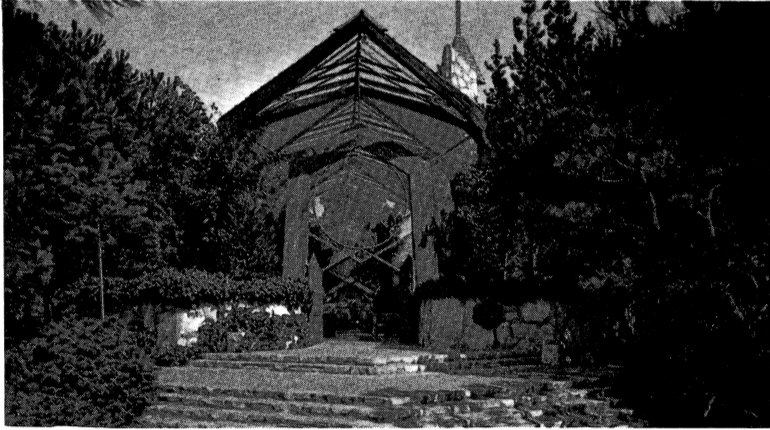
It would be a thrilling experience to live one hundred years hence, say the latter part of the twenty - first century, for within that time, our prophets say, the “crust of custom” will be broken and much that is now new and unpredictable will have become a commonplace reality. Even now, in the realm of art and architecture, this new and unpredictable creative trend is finding expression. In the dawn of this era a few such spots are springing up to dot the face of the earth.

One of these, that it has been my good fortune to see, is the Wayfarers' Chapel — an all glass structure of unique design in panels framed in redwood beams. It nestled like a diamond in the bend of the Portuguese peninsula that juts out along the southern coast of California.

It was a raw, windy day when it became a reality to me. A friendly man opened and shut the door for me quickly to shut out the wind and roar of the sea. All at once I experienced a sense of warmth and security. Everything had suddenly grown still and calm, yet I was seeing the waving trees, the sky and the sea as if out of doors. More than this, I seemed to be a part of it all.

We did not speak for a few minutes. Here was a physical demonstration of the spirit of Love and Understanding that made a fitting memorial to the great seer and searcher after wisdom, Emanuel Swedenborg. Centuries ahead of his time, he sought to blend science and religion into a living philosophy. The Chapel's warmth and light denote divine love and wisdom from which all life exists.

The little chapel is not only a new concept in its very structure; it also conveys a feeling of complete safety and harmony, and as my eyes



traced the prisms of light I mused on my good fortune.

“Allow me to introduce myself,” a big, booming voice said. The man who had let me in stood waiting. “I am Lloyd Wright, keeper of the chapel. Could I be of help?”

“Not the great Frank Lloyd Wright?” I stammered.

“No, only his son.” He smiled. “But this is one of my creations.”

“It must be wonderful to make one’s dreams come true, like this,” I said.

“It is a thrill,” he continued, “but there are many who do not like what is new and untraditional. They are afraid to accept the larger freedoms — such as our great founding fathers hoped for when they gathered together the colonial fragments and builded a nation — a freedom to carry out new and greater ideals.”

I began repeating to myself, “Build ye more stately mansions, O My Soul, while the swift moments roll — ”

“Tell me,” I begged, “How you catch the inspiration. Can anyone condition himself to partake of this creation of The New Freedom?”

“O yes; I think everyone can and should have some part in bringing it about. In my father’s house, which we call The Taliesin, I was one with fifty other young architects studying new forms. We lived a very simple life together, sharing our chores in a very democratic way. It made for an atmosphere of harmony with soft lights and beautiful music. In this uninhibited atmosphere we learned to think and dream of what is and what can be. Our minds actually became creative.”

I had read how Frank Lloyd Wright designed for the future. I asked, “Is it true then, that there are plans stored away in the archives which look like fantastic dreams, but which

will, one day, be made into whole decentralized cities?”

“That is true. In my father’s house, you might say, there are many mansions.”

“And why,” I ask, displaying my ignorance?” “Does he call his retreat ‘Taliesin’?”

“Have you not heard about that bold Celtic bard, Taliesin, who urged his people to rise up and ‘Animate the Clay’?”

I shook my head.

“He was to the Celts what Homer was to the Greeks. Every race, according to Renan (Ernest Renan — “The Poetry of the Celtic Race”) comes at last to its Predestined Hour. He calls it passing from simplicity to reflection — the time when the treasures of our nature are brought to light — for us it is now.”

He spoke with such authority I was completely caught up in the dream. “O, I see.” I felt glad I was part Scotch - Irish. “Taliesin awakened the people to their greater possibilities as Frank Lloyd Wright is hoping to do for us. We must achieve greater things. . . .” What a wonderful thought! I pondered it long after my car wound its way down the rocky slopes.

What a fitting manifestation the Wayfarers’ Chapel is of what Love and Wisdom can do to bring in a Second Coming of the Christlike way of life. A great thankfulness comes over me for being alive and a part of these times when new ideals are a - borning — when there is a merging of simplicity into reflection and of vision into reality.

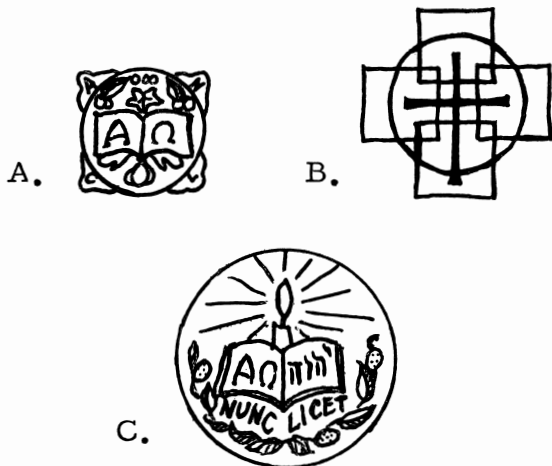
The thought lingers that these trends in art and architecture are crystalizing in the minds of men and are being freed in fields of religion, science, inventions, government and all human endeavours. We are forced to come to the conclusion that what the Lord has promised is surely coming to pass. “BEHOLD I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW.”



*Marion Priestnal, Editor*

## WHAT IS YOUR PREFERENCE?

Shown here are three sketches of the designs for a Womens' Alliance pin that received the most votes at Convention, from about a dozen on display. **WHAT IS YOUR PREFERENCE?** Your opinion on the most appropriate final design is much desired. Even if you already voted at Convention, please send your vote as soon as possible to Lisa Reddekopp, President of Women's Alliance, 361 - 31 Avenue, San Francisco, California 94121.



The designs are sketched larger than the desired lapel pin size so the motif will be visible. Design A. is the former New Church League badge, designed about 1910. The symbolism includes the circle, square, Word, grape, fig and olive. Does anyone know if the original die is still available? Design B., the church logos derived from "Project Link," would probably be easiest to reproduce by a jeweller. Design C. includes Latin, Greek and Hebrew inscriptions embodied in the symbolism of the Word.

## WHAT THEY ARE THINKING

In late September we sent to 25 or 30 women a questionnaire designed to elicit their ideas, suggestions and criticism about the Alliance Bulletin, its contents and its effectiveness.

Eleven people to date have returned the form. We hasten to thank those eleven and to add that this is actually a high percentage of response. Statistics show a 10% reply rate to be average on all mail inquiries; this is about 40%; so you can see that in this, as in everything, we are above average. (!)

There is, however, one small catch. In the desire to reach especially articulate people who would be likely to respond and to express themselves freely we unintentionally contacted four or five women who never (or rarely) have been involved in women's groups within the New Church. Consequently, they have no first-hand knowledge of the programs, the problems and the aspirations of these groups and they freely stated that this was so.

Among those five were several who said they almost never read the Alliance pages because they assume the material will be "concerned with trivia." We hope to change this impression since we think — speaking **ONLY** for the Bulletin — that we have tried to put together provocative material that would interest and even challenge all women in the Church — and men too if they cared to read it.

Looking back over 8 years of being its editor (for some 25 issues when the Bulletin was a separate paper) among the subjects used as the focus in a particular number we found the following — other items appeared in these issues of course, but the central theme was:

- 1969 The Church In The Individual (in careers, etc.)
- 1969 Adventures In Learning (Urbana, Fryeburg, Convention programs, etc.)
- 1970 The Generation Gap — Does It Exist
- 1970 Reports From Alliance Groups (February and June)
- 1971 The Fryeburg New Church
- 1971 What Can Women Do? (To be of greater use in the world, the community, the church)
- 1972 How Do We Communicate? (Experience in writing, teaching, being a librarian, etc. three writers.)
- 1972 Sunday Schools — Past and Future
- 1973 How Far Can We Reach? (Ideas, programs, etc. for reaching young people — 6 contributors of college age.)
- 1973 What I am Looking For In The Church (Three young members)

- 1974 On The Wings of Man; Mooki visit; (2 issues)  
 1974 History Of The Alliance Of New Church  
 Women (70 years ago; 50 years ago; etc.)  
 1975 What Is A Minister? (6 contributors)

To return to the recent questionnaire — from many of the eleven responses we received helpful suggestions and constructive criticism; such as:

### SUGGESTIONS

- Alliance members should be persuaded to write articles on the teachings of the church.
- More information about local groups & an over - all summary of the kinds, the location and programs of all Convention Groups.
- News of New Church women in other countries.
- Articles on "How being a New Church woman influences my role in the community."

- Articles showing the New Church woman's views on the problems of today.

### CRITICISM

- Not enough on the changing role of women.
- Not enough on the "compelling issues" of our times.
- What about human sexuality and homo - sexuality?
- Clearer identification of writers.
- Too slanted by editor's views and opinions.

The object of this limited survey was to learn and we did. We hope others will benefit too. If you would like to answer the questions either for yourself or to return the answers and aid the editor, they were:

1. Do you read the Messenger regularly? Thoroughly? Why? Why not?
2. Do you always read the Alliance Bulletin pages? Why? Why not? Occasionally? Never?
3. In your opinion how can these (Alliance) pages best serve the women's groups of the local churches? That is, what general policy concerning content would be most useful, inspiring and illuminating? Please be specific.
4. The same question in relation to the larger Alliance.
5. The same question in relation to the Church as a whole. *Specific* suggestions gratefully received.

In every issue we invite you to disagree with anything — with everything! We urge you to write letters, we plead for a response of some kind. An occasional "we think it's wonderful" is all that has ever been received. This is nice, but it is not communication.

If the Bulletin fails to meet whatever needs YOU HAVE for its effectiveness, don't tell others —

TELL US!  
 WRITE SOMETHING!

plan an issue.

The Editor

## OUR NATIONAL CHURCH

By Janet H. Harms

The women's group in the Washington, D.C. Church of the Holy City, though small, is the "leaven that lightens the loaf." Indeed, it does, at times, seem to move mountains.

Last June, our Ladies Aid gave a "Wedding Breakfast" in honor of couples married at the Church at the Holy City over the years. It was a most delightful affair, held in the Church dining room complete with delicious food, tiered wedding cake, champagne and following the breakfast, a brief "Couple Communication Program." We have decided to plan on it as a yearly event.

In addition our group sponsors a Wedding Chapel Committee, members of which stand by and assist at actual weddings.

In October, a most interesting event occurred. We discovered that we were included in a Smithsonian Institution Walking Tour, which ended at our Church. The Fine Arts Commission architecture believes our building to be one of the most beautiful in Washington. Our women served coffee and doughnuts to the tours on Saturday, October 15, and 22, and Veterans' Day, October 24. Much good - will, fellowship, and down - right gratitude from tired walkers was generated. As a result, the Fine Arts Commission has decided to include the Church in Volume I of a new book it is putting out about Buildings on 16th Street.

Along financial lines, the Ladies Aid contributes a \$500.00 per year pledge toward pastoral expenses. We also furnish coffee and cookies for the weekly after - Church coffee hour.

On November 12, we held our Annual Bazaar which was a financial success. It included a Bake Sale; Herb, Gift and Plant Tables, plus a White Elephant Sale. We have also raised funds through clothing sales and antiques auctions.

## THE CLEVELAND CHURCH

*By Jean Bestor*

The Cleveland Church has no active Women's Alliance for several reasons — limited numbers, members who work, and the fact that most members live a considerable distance from the Church. During the past year, because of a sudden drop from four lay leaders to one, the women rallied around and have arranged schedules, conducted services and led the lessons from the Dole notes in addition to taking care of the altar and the usual duties.

Having been without a minister for 10 years, Cleveland tries to have a visiting minister roughly once a month, with a Saturday evening meeting, Sunday Service, Communion and a luncheon afterwards. We feel very fortunate to be able to "borrow" ministers, and appreciate the fact that other Societies are willing to co-operate.

Following the recent visit of our much-loved and sadly missed Brian and Jill Kingslake who served Cleveland from 1964 to 1967, the women of the church have started a fellowship group, meeting every other week with the goal of mutual support and personal growth.

### A REGIONAL ALLIANCE

In Massachusetts there is a regional New Church Women's Alliance which usually meets at the Boston Church, about once a month, on a Wednesday.

Their stated purpose is: "Cooperation for mutual benefit with a view toward greater usefulness in every department of life and the promotion of a life of charity in accordance with the teachings of the Church of the New Jerusalem."

Meetings begin with luncheon, followed by a business meeting and a planned program; in November the subject was "When Prayer Seems To Fail", led by the Rev. Wilfred Rice of the Cambridge Society. The theme for programs to be held in the spring is "Old Testament Leaders Who Represent the Lord."

Societies represented are Boston, Cambridge, Brockton, Bridgewater and Elmwood.

### ROUND ROBINS STILL FLY

*By Evelyn W. Woods*

For most of this century the Women's Alliance has sponsored a Round Robin (letter writing) program as a means of keeping in touch with the many who live where they are isolated from an active Society of New Church people. For the greater success of this program it is desirable to have a good nucleus of women who are active in a local Church Society.

Under the early leadership of Mrs. Charles Mack and Mrs. Louis Dole the program flourished with over 100 women writing in 24 groups, among which the letters circulated and friendships were formed.

With the decline of available household help concurrent with the ever increasing demands for women in voluntary or remunerated work, 15 or 20 years ago the number of women in the Round Robin program dropped to about 45. It is therefore a pleasure to report that today, under the chairmanship of Jean Heydon Hoyt in Yucaipa, there are 60 Round Robins (3 in Canada) with 9 women in charge of the 11 groups into which the program is divided.

Are there women reading this report who would like to join this program, or who have daughters who could be interested in it? My mother signed me up 22 years ago and it has been a rewarding experience.

## HOW CAN WE HELP?

Recently we listened to a panel discussion on the subject of SUICIDE among young people. The figures show a marked increase, in fact the number has doubled in the last 10 years.

In the last year for which there are complete statistics — 1974 — there were 4,730 suicides in the adolescent and early college ages.

Students who were interviewed had either attempted suicide, or had thought seriously about it, or had lost a good friend by suicide.

This is what they said, in brief:

The present is so awful and the future so uncertain that suicide seems attractive.

It is the exceptional student who is more likely to try suicide, not the average student.

The pressures in modern society for the young are too great — pressures about careers, drugs, alcohol, sex, etc.

That is, peer pressure against parental or social pressures creates conflicts that the young cannot withstand. The options are too many, there are no accepted standards by which to distinguish wrong from right anymore. Suicide seems to promise surcease of confusion and anxiety.

These young people seemed to be lost, lacking the firm guidance that was part of growing up in early generations. This observer finds their unhappiness to be a tragic indictment of the permissiveness and the vacillating of their parents, teachers and perhaps adults in general. What do YOU think?

Even if nothing of this kind holds true in the New Church, as part of the larger world in which we live, it is possible that something we say or do could be an influence.

## THE NEWS FROM HEAVEN

Along the Miami River in Ross County, Ohio, Johnny Appleseed often sought shelter in the home of Isaac Bradford, pioneer settler. Here he found an eager listener to his "news straight from Heaven". Isaac Bradford gave Johnny's tracts close study and discussed them extensively with his family. As a result his children, Phillip, Lucinda and Marsha were imbued with a deep knowledge and respect for the writings of the Swedish scientist, an interest they retained all their lives and which resulted in their joining the New Church in later years.

Phillip Bradford married and had eight children. His wife, Mary, although she did not take an active interest in her husband's religion, did nothing to prevent her children from becoming acquainted with it. Myrta Bradford, the eighth child of that marriage, early in life found it necessary to travel to Indianapolis to seek work.

She quickly found employment there, made many friends, and was persuaded by them to join the Methodist Church. She also met Fred Minger, a young man from a large German Swiss family, and before long they were "keeping company". Fred and his family were genial people who found life worth

celebrating frequently by special occasions, dancing, card parties and other pastimes. All such activities, at that time, were severely frowned upon by the Methodist Church and before long Myrta's minister suggested to her that she should either mend her ways or leave the church.

Myrta and Fred, now engaged to be married, discussed this dilemma, for Fred too was unhappy in his religious affiliation. They decided to find a church they could both accept. By this time the Indianapolis Society of the New Church had been organized and because of her previous knowledge of New Church writings, Myrta persuaded Fred to visit the little chapel with her. They both grew to love it and to realize this was the faith they had been seeking.

At their wedding in April, 1889, well-wishers filled the little church and overflowed into the church yard. One week later Myrta and Fred Minger were received into the faith of the Church Of The New Jerusalem.

Johnny Appleseed's news from heaven had bridged the years and many miles!

Adapted from the original  
written by Myrta Minger's  
grand-daughter, Margery Scarborough Jester

**END OF ALLIANCE BULLETIN**

## RECENT NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES' DECISIONS

NEW YORK, Nov. 11 — In a three-day meeting that ended here today, the Governing Board of the National Council of Churches heard Ambassador Andrew Young pay tribute to the churches' influence on foreign policy, adopted a major policy statement advocating majority rule in southern Africa, joined a boycott of J. P. Stevens products and received a telegram from President Carter expressing appreciation for the council's endorsement of the Panama Canal Treaties.

During the closing session this morning, the 252-member policymaking body approved a resolution urging the President, Congress and states to end discrimination in the public funding of legal abortions.

While stressing that the National Council of Churches has no policy on abortion "as such," the resolution declares that "a right guaranteed to all by law must not be denied to any because of economic status."

It points out that the U. S. Supreme Court "guaranteed the legal right of women to obtain

an abortion" and contends that legislation currently in Congress "in effect denies that legal right to poor women."

Father Vladimir Berzonsky, a delegate of the Orthodox Church in America from Seven Hills, Ohio, said during the debate on the resolution that the Orthodox delegates could not vote for it "because the Orthodox Church has unequivocally renounced abortion in any form."

Peggy Billings, an executive of The United Methodist Church, New York City, said that the resolution does not address the issue of abortion but addresses the issue of discrimination. "The burden is being placed unequally on poor women," she said.

William P. Thompson, president of the National Council, ruled that "the issue before us is not the merits of abortion. The issue is whether a decision of the Supreme Court is to be applied equally to all citizens, and on that



the National Council has a policy." His ruling was sustained by the house.

### **Carter Says He is "Heartened" by Council Endorsement of Canal Treaties**

In a telegram received here today by Thompson, President Carter said he was "heartened" by the Governing Board's decision Wednesday to support the Panama Canal Treaties.

"I greatly value and appreciate your welcome endorsement of this critical foreign policy issue," the President said. The wire was thought by National Council staff to be the first acknowledgement of a council action from the White House in at least 16 years.

### **Policy Statement Directs Closure of Accounts in Banks Linked to South Africa**

In a major policy statement on southern Africa adopted without dissent yesterday, the Governing Board said the National Council will "undertake to withdraw all funds and close all accounts in financial institutions that invest or make loans to the South African government or businesses." The board added that it would ask the council's 31 member church bodies to do the same.

The statement strongly supports majority rule in southern Africa and calls for churches to back liberation movements there. The board said that, in making the statement, it was "guided by its commitment to Christian principles." That commitment rules out any possibility of support for violent tactics, Thompson said in the meeting.

### **Ambassador Andrew Young Speaks**

Adoption of the policy statement followed an address by Andrew Young, chief U.S. ambassador of the United Nations and a former staff official of the National Council of Churches.

Young credited U.S. churches with affecting major changes in U.S. foreign policy over the last 30 years. "Nothing happens in this country until the churches respond," he said, adding that "out of the preaching and teaching of the missions of our churches, we have created a ferment in the world."

This ferment, he said, is a result of the church's "insidious doctrine that all men are children of God. When people begin to believe they are children of God, they don't want anyone else to determine their destiny."

### **Other Actions**

In other actions, the Governing Board:

- Commended President Carter for his efforts to achieve peace in the Middle East and supported "the bringing together for negotiations the recognized representatives of all parties, including the Palestinians."
- Urged the provision of reconstruction aid to Vietnam and the extensions of visa privileges to Vietnamese religious leaders seeking to visit the U.S.
- Voted in the National Council of Community Churches as the 31st member communion of the National Council of Churches.
  - Warned against tax reforms that could hurt church giving.
  - Called for an end to nuclear weapons production and a halt in funds for the neutron bomb.
- Recommended new efforts to integrate the handicapped into church life.
  - Endorsed the National Women's Conference to be held in Houston, Nov. 18 - 21 and asked delegates there to work out ways of removing "barriers which prevent women from full participation and equality in all aspects of . . . life."
- Proposed church participation in the United Nations' International Year of the Child.
- Asked Soviet Union President Brezhnev to include imprisoned Baptists, Catholics, Jews, Moslems, Orthodox and other believers in the amnesty he declared for political dissenters in observance of the 60th anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution.

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## **CONVENTION CALENDAR**

C.O.M. Exec. Com., Newton	Feb. 13 - 15
Dept. of Pub.	Feb. 23 - 24
Urbana Trustees, Urbana	March 2 - 4
Bd. of Missions, Newton	March 5 - 7
Bd. of Education, Newton	March 10 - 12
Planning and Development, Boston area	April 12 - 15
C.A.M., Newton	April 17 - 18
Ex. Com., Urbana Trustees, Urbana	April 19
S.S.S. Bd. of Managers, Exec. Com., Newton	April 20, 9 a.m.
S.S.R. Bd. of Managers, Newton	April 21 - 22
Urbana Trustees, Urbana	June 1 - 3
<b>1978 CONVENTION,</b>	
Kitchener, Ont.	June 28 - July 2
Post Convention Conference	July 2 - 8

# MY TRIP TO THE RANCH

*Roger Dean Paulson  
Newton, Mass.*

Esther Perry's ranch in the Santa Cruz Mountains seventy miles south of San Francisco was homesteaded in 1885 by her grandmother, Alice R. Skinner (no relation to Alice B. Skinner), who named the property "Whiffle Tree Ranch" because pieces of harness were found on the land. The land had supported a vineyard of late ripening table grapes for the San Francisco market. Some of the old vines still remain. The ranch, about a mile up the mountain, is reached by ascending a precipitous spring wagon road which has barely accommodated itself to modern automobiles, but is easily managed on foot. Once on the property it's like entering a verdant green time-machine. Civilization has made no inroads on the peace and tranquil beauty of virgin stands of majestic redwoods and madrona trees. The road has washed over at several points and supports sapling volunteers of the species mentioned as well as quantities of poison oak! The Gutfeldt family declared all-out war on the poison oak last year, however, not without Horand sustaining distinctly uncomfortable consequences of the poison oak fighting back!

As we walked back into the property we discovered the remains of a cabin, long since destroyed by the weather of ninety odd years. Further along what had been the ranch's private wagon road is another small cabin still erect, but very tired. A fine old barn nearby sighed and collapsed a number of years ago, but the lumber remains and because of the sheltering bay trees is in remarkably good and usable condition.

We rested in the shade and welcome coolness of a ring of fragrant bay trees planted nearly one hundred years ago by Esther's grandmother. Nearby a refreshing spring yielded fresh cool water to drink. Two springs in the vicinity were still active in spite of three years of severe drought conditions in northern California.

The view to the west, of the majestic Santa Cruz mountain range, was breathtaking in the

intense late afternoon sun which cast green, brown and purple tones over the landscape. One hated to leave but the prospect of an easier descent made the leavetaking less traumatic.

The ranch, an undeveloped quarter section (160 acres) in Santa Clara County, has been offered as a gift to the General Convention by Dr. Perry who envisions its use by Church camps, retreats, and wilderness experiences by members of our Church.

Next year's Board of Education's planned "Swedenborgian New Age Pioneers" camp (see following page) will be a two week program for hearty Churchmen of all ages, to look into future development and use of the area and to work at restoring the private access road and campsite last refurbished in the early forties. The work aspects of the session will be to reclaim the basically sound access road and to establish a campsite in the redwood grove and to survey the property for possible easier access and to plan for further use. Being hale and hardy physically is important, as well as being able to withstand the primitive camping facilities available. The Pacific Ocean is 17 miles to the west of the land and the town of Santa Cruz is nearby for mail, supplies and medical care. However, there will not be telephones, hot baths, or similar creature comforts available. Truly this is primitive camping at its finest. The leaders appointed for the session are the Rev. Eric Allison and Miss Ruth Martin. Eric has had extensive training in wilderness survival techniques and Ruth has literally single-handedly carved out and built her own house in the Maine woods; so both leaders are well prepared for this wilderness experience. The Church will provide bus transportation to and from the campsite and a subsistence allowance while there to those who apply. There is no age restriction but the ruggedness of the program does impose physical limitations on those who may apply. So — all those hale, hardy and of a truly pioneer spirit take notice! It's a challenge and promises to be an enriching experience for those who wish to participate.

## ***BE A SWEDENBORGIAN NEW AGE PIONEER (SNAP)***

- How?** Participate in a brand new project sponsored by the Board of Education, made possible by the use of 160 acres of wilderness land among the redwoods in the Santa Cruz Mountains in California, made available by Dr. Esther Perry.
- Why?** This is an opportunity for creative church work. Picking up on the interest in land use, ecology and homesteading in this New Age, you will be a part of the planning process for the potential this land holds for our church.
- Program:** The first step will be to clear the camp site of poison oak and to make possible an access road by cleaning undergrowth. Then we are prepared for an ongoing study of terrain and potential use.
- Leadership:** Co - Directors Rev. Eric Allison and Miss Ruth Martin will head the staff.
- Dates:** August 19, 1978 thru September 2, 1978.
- Cost:** We Pay You. Funds are available on a first come, first serve basis for round trip bus fare, tent and board, plus \$50 per week.

Further information can be had by contacting Nancy Perry, Executive Secretary of the Board of Education, Central Office, 48 Sargent St., Newton, Mass. 02158.

## **SLIDE AND CASSETTE SHOWS AVAILABLE**

### ***THE CITY OF JERUSALEM***

drawings by Louise Woofenden, narrated by Bill Woofenden — sponsored by the Sunday School Assoc.

### ***THE FOUR SUMMER CHURCH CAMPS***

arranged and narrated by Louise Woofenden — sponsored by the Board of Education.

These interesting and informative shows are suitable for use by a society, Association, retreat, or for viewing in your own home. They may be had upon request for \$5.00 to cover the cost of handling and mailing from

Nancy C. Perry  
Central Office  
48 Sargent St.  
Newton, Mass.,  
02158

## ***OFFICE MANAGER for the SWEDENBORG FOUNDATION***

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## We Get Letters

### A DIFFERENT VIEW ON CHURCH GROWTH

To the Editor:

In the September issue, you asked again that old question, Why is the Church losing members? As you suggest, it is a question that should be considered seriously and responsibly at all levels of Convention.

I find myself coming up with dozens of answers, but then the reverie is stopped by another question: Am I thinking of ways in which the Church could work more creatively, or am I thinking of ways in which the Church fails to attract more people? Those are very different questions. In fact, the answer to one may have nothing to do with the answer to the other one. It is also possible that something which would make the Church more creative would also make fewer people want to get involved with us.

Since we are asking only about the current state of our relationships with people, then, I feel a hunger for some basic facts. Our total membership is going down; but is that because all churches in Convention are losing members, or is it because some churches are losing enough to offset gains by other churches? If there are some churches which are gaining members, what are they doing to attract them? Another question is, Are we coming down from a previous high to a level which is, in the long run, more typical? Near the turn of the century, people in unprecedented numbers were responding to our lectures and attending services. Many Swedenborgians felt the Church was finally entering a kind of Golden Age. Are we losing the momentum we acquired then, or are we losing more?

About seven years ago, (maybe longer), Convention made a study of Church membership and concluded that if trends continued, Convention would die, to all intents and purposes, in ten years. There isn't much time left, and things are fortunately a little better. But have any follow-up studies been made? What would we say now about long-term trends?

Hiding within this question about declining membership may be a clue to the role that an overtly Swedenborgian society must play in the world. By learning *why* Swedenborgian churches are so small, we may learn not how to

make them larger, but what they are intended to be in the long run of history. Individuals and organizations tend to reflect a larger purpose, whether they want to surrender to it or not, once they are seen in a large enough perspective. Consequently, what we may get from the answer to such mundane questions about membership figures is more understanding and acceptance of what we are. Then we will be freer to build and elaborate that role more effectively.

Sincerely,  
Steve Koke,  
Oakland, Cal.

### A CALL FOR HELP

Dear Rev. Zacharias:

The American New Church League has a message box which was filled with messages and locked at the start of the A.N.C.L. We have discovered though that we do not know where the box is or where the keys to it are.

We are supposed to open this box on our Anniversary, which won't be for a few years, but we want to find it.

We were wondering if you could present our problem in the *Messenger* and ask if anyone has any leads and if they do, please write to me at my home address:

Kim Truax  
656 Page Avenue  
Elgin, Ill. 60120

Thank you very much,

Sincerely,  
Kim Truax

### FROM KANSAS, WITH LOVE

Dear Editor:

In the letter by S. P. Libiszewski, he allegedly cites the example of the three divisions of the New Church as a SIGN of progress, but to me this very ignoble fact seems to be a definite lack of progress . . . quite strange when all are using the same Bible and the same doctrines!

Also, S. P. Libiszewski states that "the true Light is OUR church, for our Lord is within it," (just as though this LIGHT could not exist nor be found inside or outside of another church), and he supposedly believes that those within the walls of this established New Church can see this Light, but the world cannot, so he evidently expects the rest of the world to come to this one particular group to find the True

Light. This is a very narrow and almost absurd concept. Millions of people have already searched for and found this glorious Truth and Light without even knowing of the existence of the New Church, Emanuel Swedenborg or the doctrines drawn out by him — and I thank God for these enlightened people who are Light -bearers for the rest of mankind.

It certainly is true that divine truths are perceived, only by a spiritual mind, but these truths can be, and have been, attained by millions of people within other groups and outside of any established church groups. Many people are still seeking for more genuine truths, but it is quite evident that they are not flocking into the existing organized and established New Church groups — simply because it is not necessary. This is exactly the point that I have been trying to make; we need to broaden our concepts and to realize that the New Church for the New Age will really be a Universal Brotherhood, and it most certainly will not include ONLY those in the Swedenborgian churches, but all who believe in the ONE GOD, who is the ONE GREAT SPIRIT, and those who have real love for the Heavenly Father and all of His children. I believe that LOVE is the chief of all requirements — the love of God, which is to love all that is GOOD, shunning all evils and living righteously.

Whatsoever we may learn about the heavens, the hells, the higher dimensions and the Soul -life beyond the veil is good and useful knowledge to have and to hold, but it is not really requisite for a continued life in the next realm.

It seems to me that all controversies which have caused the three divisions of the New Church should be dropped and forgotten, and that each congregation should meet to worship, pray, sing and fellowship together. It is an absolute fact that no two people in the whole world are going to agree on all religious subjects, so why do we continue to try to force or urge people into one group and out of another? Why not allow each individual to make his or her own decisions about abortion, women ministers and the Third Testament, etc. If a local minister does not make an issue of these and other debatable topics, then the people would be RELIEVED of the burden of trying to follow the beliefs and teachings of a MAN and each would have complete LIBERTY to worship and believe as his own Heart dictates.

Our spiritual development does not depend on the beliefs and teachings of a minister, but

on our own beliefs, actions and LOVES. So if anyone thinks any male or female minister is hindering his Soul - growth, then that one should stay at home or attend another church.

Allegedly, the Mormons, Jehovah Witnesses, Catholics, Baptists and most other denominational groups also think the rest of the world will eventually join their ranks in order to find the True Light, and this confusion has reigned for more than 1600 years, even though our Lord pleads with all “to come out of this Babylon and partake NOT of her sins.” The Universal Brotherhood that is now forming is OUTside of all existing church organizations and is a building of Living Stones who are the real Sons of God.

Each child of God is a ray of that Divine Light with a direct line to the Angel Hierarchy, and the indwelling Spirit, who is your Father and my Father, is with us constantly, so those who are seeking for this Light in any church organization will eventually find that He is always at Home in His Temple, which Temple is your very own Soul.

Bessie Behrendt  
Great Bend, Kansas

## MORE THOUGHTS ON THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN

Dear Rev. Zacharias:

I am writing in response to Gertrude Tremblay's article in the November issue of the *Messenger*, “Women in the Ministry”.

I agree whole - heartedly with Mrs. Tremblay. A woman is every bit as capable as a man, both physically and intellectually, to be ordained into the ministry. There may even be times when a woman's sympathetic understanding could be of more value than a man's. I agree also that the status of women has changed tremendously since Swedenborg's time, and when he recorded in his writings what a woman symbolized, I am sure he was not considering what society would be like in 200 or 300 years.

I refer now to Mrs. Tremblay's statement, “We do have a certain amount of symbolism in the sacraments and rites, but it seems to me a regression to allow the New Church to be encumbered with representatives.” This to me was a real disappointment. I have always felt that it was through Swedenborg's writings and his interpretations, correspondences, and symbolisms that our church, the New Church, was given something no other church has. We should value this and not allow the

corresponding and representing only to be used to suit the situation. Sometimes I feel that people of the New Church, who have always had the privilege of hearing and talking with others of the same Faith, do not appreciate its value. Something like not being able to see "the forest for the trees." You have to be taken away from them to really see how great our teachings are.

I am an isolated member of the Western Canada Conference, and it is a rare privilege for me to attend a New Church service. For the last sixteen years my family and I have attended the Presbyterian Church. Some ministers have been better than others; this happens in any denomination. However, there has never been a Sunday when I haven't come home with an empty, "what did I go for" feeling. They just do not have what we have. They try, and are able to apply some of the simple parables to our lives, but they do not have the knowledge of correspondences, which Swedenborg has given in his writings, and therefore are not able to give anything but an historical explanation.

This is why I feel, if we truly believe in the writings and their symbolism, a woman should not be ordained into the ministry. However, there are many times and places when a woman, even though she has not been ordained, can be of invaluable help in performing duties that will further the teachings of the church. It may be from a pulpit as a lecturer, a Friendly Greeter, or as a minister's wife. Every woman can have a part in bringing something special to the life of the church.

Regardless of symbolism or representatives, I still think a man looks better in the pulpit than a woman, and I'm not against "Women's Lib".

Sincerely,  
Margaret Frizzell  
Three Hills, Alberta.

### MAKING DREAMS COME TRUE

Dear Paul,

I would like to pay tribute to the faculty of Urbana College for their dedicated work at Marysville Reformatory for Women.

It brought tears to my eyes as I read "An Impossible Dream Come True."

And it set me thinking of ways and means of how to bring the Word of God, and His boundless love to those unfortunate people, who doubtless lacked the guidance of loving family and parents.

Would it be possible for one of our dedicated ministers to hold a Vesper Service, perhaps

once a month, and a committee of women to accompany the minister, to mix with the women after the service!

I ask at the next meeting of the Alliance that we pray for the greater fulfillment of our mission as women, and then perhaps our "Impossible Dream May Come True."

Garda Quis  
Brooklyn, N.Y.

### MOVIE REVIEW

## OH GOD!

God appearing on earth in the form of George Burns may seem like an irreverent thought to the strictly religious mind. But suppose he — He — were to appear on earth to you or to me. What would he look like? Would he be clothed all in white? That would look a little strange and he might well be taken for a hare krishna. Or if he appeared like the pictures of Jesus but dressed in modern clothing, he'd be the spittin' image of my son Paul. And who would believe a fellow that looked like a hippie? Well, what *would* he look like? Why not a spare, genial white-haired man of 81 with a baseball cap?

And if he *were* to appear to you or to me, why not to an energetic young supermarket assistant manager as handsome as John Denver? Why not?

More important, what would he say? Now that's a hard one. What would *you* have him say?

The message of "Oh God" is essentially a simple one. God is alive and well and with us. Mankind is treating neither his environment nor his fellow humans with love and respect. "Why don't you take care of it, God?" John Denver asks. Creation is good. We are given our freedom and it's up to us. Freedom and responsibility is the message. Sound familiar?

The materialistic world of business and the money-grabbing revivalist preacher are satirized to a hypocritical pulp. The theologians pose some pretty hard questions and in a scene reminiscent of Rumpelstiltskin John Denver gets the answers. Pretty good answers we Swedenborgians would have trouble improving on. Did God create the world in six days? He said he thought about it for five days and actually did the work in one. But "days" are not necessarily as we know them. When he got up that morning, he said, Sigmund Freud was still in school.

What would God ask you to do if he visited you? Maybe your task would not be to spill your story to the Los Angeles Times, but undoubtedly you would be asked to put his work before your job, your income, your reputation.

Would he be a park attendant picking up the public litter, or would she be black? Would God make people laugh? I hope so.

Perry S. Martin

## CONVENTION PEOPLE AND PLACES

The REV. EDWIN G. CAPON was installed as minister of the Church of the Holy City in Royal Oaks, Michigan, on Sunday, November 20, 1977, Convention President Eric Zacharias officiating. Mr. Capon was president of the Swedenborg School of Religion, Newton, Mass., for 21 years. He previously served churches in Bridgewater and Elmwood, Mass., and was a vice president of the Mass. Council of Churches from 1957 to 1959. The Detroit New Church dates back to 1839.

Several interesting items in the last KANSAS PLAINES BANNER. This fall EDNA WELCH is holding a series of inspiring, well attended Bible Study Classes in her home, where people come together regularly and explore great themes in the Bible. This could be done throughout Convention. All it requires is good leadership and sufficient interest. What a blessing this would be for the whole Church! . . . And our New Church friends in Kansas had a grand RETREAT this fall, so much so that plans have already been made for another Church Retreat next October . . . And Copies of *Insights Into the Beyond* have been placed in mortuaries throughout the state, and condensed versions of Raymond Moody's *Life After Life* are now available from most New Church Book Centers. This material helps people to "feel comfortable and at home in two worlds that in essence are one world."

Early in December the Church of the Good Shepherd Fellowship in Bellevue, Washington, held a service of separation, in which the members commemorated the ending of one phase in the group's life, and celebrating the beginning of another. The Bellevue church property has been sold after serving usefully for some fifteen years, and now, with patterns of Christian worship and service changing, the Fellowship has decided to move into accommodations near the University District in Seattle.

And in Wilmington, Delaware, the Church of the Holy City sponsors a blood pressure checking station on the last Sunday of each month. This public health service is being headed up by JANE SINGLES and ALISON MERRIL, both registered nurses . . . Also in Wilmington, the REV. RANDALL LAAKKO is conducting weekly devotional services at the

Crestview Apartments on Tuesday afternoons. The service lasts about one - half hour with a reading, prayers, hymns and a short sermon, with the senior citizens forming a small choir.

Belated but very warm birthday greetings go out to MRS. FANNY SCOT RUMELY, of LaPorte, Indiana, who was one hundred years old on November 8th. The REV. ERIC ALLISON visits her regularly and a small family celebration was planned for Nov. 8th. Mrs. Rumely still enjoys relatively good health.

Cooperating with Church Women United, the Philadelphia Ladies Aid has knitted some 29 baby blankets which, with thousands of others, will go all over the world through Church World Service. Love in action keeping the babies of the world warm!

## ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLES

**Code - O - Gram:** "What mighty works are wrought by His hands!"

**Minus One:** away, way, ay, a; began, bean, ban, an, a; heard, hard, had, ad, a; hands, hand, and, an, a; house, hose, hoe, ho, o.

**Words from synagogue:** say, sag, soy, son, sun, sue, sen, sea, yes, yen, yea, nay, nag, nog, aye, ago, age, gas, guy, gun, use, ego, egg, eon.

Send in your anagrams from "Swedenborgian".

**The word puzzle:** The children and adult words were relatively easy, and I assume everyone got those. If you need help with any of these words, drop the editor a postcard. The superhard clues were more difficult. Here goes: softly = *muted*, in lower half; that's all = *ended*, in upper half; *lady* of Spain, in upper half; rustic = (this is highly embarrassing, but I've lost track of "rustic" myself. If anyone finds a word in the puzzle meaning "rustic" please let me know immediately, because this is driving me straight up the wall.) Existere = *esse*, in lower half; *sands* of time, in upper half; *Anna* K., in upper half; with apple in mouth = *boar*, in top half; meaning of Paul = *small*, in lower half. What a disaster! How is it possible to lose "rustic"?

## *First California Family Camp*

August was a terrific month for those who attended the first annual California Family Camp.

We met August 22 - 26 at Lake Lopez Campground, near Santa Maria, California.

All told, twenty people and one dog attended, quite a turnout for Swedenborgians.

Convention has Almont, Fryeburg, DeLand and others, but nothing for the South West. Split Mountain Camp is great for the teenagers but many of us are too old. We have retreats but they are generally too expensive for families with children.

Family Camp was formed for those persons enjoying nature, camping, and rousing conversation in a New Church environment.

Marge Ball, and her bag of books, did a great job of helping us in our informal discussions. All sessions were volunteer so those wishing to enjoy quiet could have it, (providing they could hear themselves think with the wind blowing). It was voted by those not blown away that Lake Lopez was a bit too windy and a more permanent home for Family Camp should be found, the Yucaipa property receiving the most acclaim.

Wednesday evening Rev. Horand Gutfeldt led us in a discussion of our expectations for present and future family camps. This, after all, was our primary objective for our first campout.

The opinions ranged from complete rest and recreation to deep and searching discussion. All were agreed that Family Camp has a future in California.

Our youngest camper, seven month old Daniel Conger, son of Karen and Stan Conger, wasn't too sure about his tent at first but soon settled right in. Three year old Stasi Samsonov decided that Rev. Gutfeldt and his sons were her own private property and also was frequently seen going on walks with Allison Ball.

The campers were very glad the Miller family came. Their blue wind break kept us all cosy.

We were pleased by the arrival of an isolated member and her sons. She lives in Santa Maria and read of our camp in the *Harbinger Newsletter*. Our fame is spreading.

Next summer's Family Camp will be announced well ahead of time to allow for reservations and planning for vacations. Move over Almont, California Family Camp is growing.

## FROM CHURCH RECORDS

### BAPTISMS

**ANDERSON** — Laura Catherine, daughter of Lieutenant and Mrs. Eric B. Anderson of Chesapeake, Virginia, was baptized into the Christian faith in the Elmwood New Church on September 25, 1977, the Rev. Arvid L. Anderson, Laura's grandfather, officiating.

**CAMPBELL** — Matthew Scott, son of Mr. & Mrs. Richard Campbell, was baptized into the Christian faith in the Elmwood New Church on October 16, 1977, the Rev. Arvid L. Anderson officiating.

**CHISHOLM** — Richard Alfred Jr., son of Mr. & Mrs. Richard Chisholm, was baptized into the Christian faith in the Elmwood New Church on October 16, 1977, the Rev. Arvid L. Anderson officiating.

**COSTELLO** — Shannon Rose, daughter of Donald and Gloria (Guiu) Costello, was baptized into the Christian faith in Cambridge, Mass., on October 2, 1977. The Rev. Wilfred G. Rice officiated, with Mr. Rafael M. J. Guiu assisting.

**LANE** — Tenley Beth, daughter of Elvin and Veneta Lane, was baptized into the Christian faith in Pretty Prairie, Kansas, on September 11, 1977, the Rev. Eric Zacharias, Tenley's grandfather, officiating.

**SEARIE** — Llerena Guiu, daughter of Colgate and Cecilia (Guiu) Searle, was baptized into the Christian faith in Cambridge, Mass., on October 2, 1977. The Rev. Wilfred G. Rice officiated, with Mr. Rafael M. J. Guiu assisting.

### MARRIAGE

**JOHNSON — LIBBY** — William and Mary Libby of Fryeburg, Maine, were married on October 29, 1977, the Rev. Robert H. Kirven officiating and Mr. David Rienstra assisting.

### DEATHS

**GILES** — Katherine Giles, sister of Mrs. George Gascoigne, a Pittsburgh Society member, died Nov. 2, 1977. Funeral service was held Nov. 4, Lay Leader Thomas B. Zehner officiating.

**HAMBLIN** — Justin H. Hamblin, 89, of Fort Lauderdale, a charter member of the Miami - Deland Church died on October 16, 1977. A memorial service was held at Deland on October 23, the Rev. E. Frederick officiating. Interment at Norfolk, Virginia.



**KELLER** — Mrs. Albert (Mayme) Keller, of Columbus, Ohio, passed into the higher life at the age of 91. A resurrection service was conducted on September 22, 1977, by Rev. Dorothea Harvey.

**LINDOW** — Mrs. Irene Rosenfelder Lindow, age 92, lifelong member of the Pittsburgh Society, died August 27, 1977. Funeral service was held August 30, the Rev. Richard Tafel, Jr., officiating.

**PENNER** — Mrs. Philip (Justina) Penner of Rosthern, Sask., peacefully passed into eternal life in the Rosthern Union Hospital on November 9, 1977, at the age of 85. The resurrection service was held from the New Jerusalem in Rosthern on November 12 with Rev. Henry Reddekopp officiating.

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