

The Messenger

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JUNE 1978



Welcome to Kitchener - Waterloo!



Church of the Good Shepherd



Conrad Grebel College

EDITORIAL

IMAGING THE FUTURE

by Paul Zacharias

In mid - April I had the great privilege of attending a Conference on the future of humankind at the New Wineskins Center in Columbus, Ohio. Leaders included: **Paoli Soleri**, architect and founder of the Consanti Foundation in Scottsdale, Arizona; **William Thompson**, historian and co - founder of the Lindisfarne Association, a "planetary community" in New York State; **William Sloane Coffin Jr.**, senior minister at Riverside Church in New York City, for eighteen years chaplain at Yale University, and very active in the civil rights and peace movements; **Robert Raines**, author of nine devotional books and currently Director of Kirkridge Retreat Center in Pennsylvania; **David Spangler**, author, lecturer and a former co - director of the Findhorn Community in Scotland; and **Howard Moody**, pastor of Judson Memorial Church in Greenwich Village. What a galaxy of spiritual stars! Spiritual energy levels were high that week. The very atmosphere was charged with power. I would like to share with you some of the views and insights I gleaned from the lectures and following discussions.

"And Mary said, Behold, I am the handmaiden of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word; and the angel departed from her." Luke 1: 38

We believe that the Second Coming is an accomplished fact. It began in the eighteenth century, ushering in the dawn of a New Spiritual Age. This is an unfolding process that in varying degrees, is gradually making its presence felt in Everyone and in the world. This means — if we truly believe it — that every moment as it comes to us is eternally new. Every moment is pregnant with New Life, if we are willing to receive it. This is God's will for us and for His world, if we can "let it be" according to His Word. The New Age is coming — it is also here and now.

Synergy

The whole is more than the sum of its parts. We need to look at the totality of life. Every thing — mind, body, and spirit — is God - given. We can, and do, disrupt God's plan for His creation, and to that extent there is evil and suffering in the world; but the spiritual fact

remains that His Divine Plan is still uppermost in His mind and it will prevail. See your life as a whole, unified experience . . . every moment receiving fresh power from the Lord. How does this affect physical and mental healing?

Our Fantasy World

Fantasy tends to become reality. Check this out in your own experience. Our fantasy world, which includes our dreams, day - dreams, hopes, imaginations and plans, shapes our future destiny. The concept of the self - fulfilling prophecy is true. Our tomorrows grow out of our todays. That which is spiritual is ultimately real and gives form to the natural. Examples: ESP, intercessory prayer, placebo effect, hypnosis, stress/grief causing disease, telepathy. We have not yet begun to tap the enormous power inherent in the individual and collective imagination.

Utilizing Scripture

All mystical secrets are known and available. Swedenborgians, of all people, should realize this. The gift of heavenly arcana has been given. Experiential Bible study, privately and in small groups, is essential. This means serious, disciplined study of the Word of God. When

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reading the Bible, ask yourself, "How does this Bible story explain me?" Get inside the passage; what does it say to you now? Example: Jacob wrestling with the angel. How did Jacob feel that evening, facing his brother whom he had cheated? With whom did he wrestle? Why at night? What does the limping signify? What about the new name? Jacob and Mary and all the other Biblical characters are within us. We already have all the resources we need for spiritual living.

Increased Spirituality

All of the speakers, in varying degrees, expressed confidence and hope in the future of humankind. (Hope is not the same as optimism!) In general, the level of spiritual awareness and integrity is increasing in the world. God takes the long view. Life does not unfold in a straight line, rather it zig zags. (Swedenborg would say "spirals".) We are moving into an age where the intuitive, mystical, emotional side of life will be emphasized — moving away from the Church of Peter and into the Church of John. All faiths and all religions are involved. There are hundreds of valid approaches to God. There is no need for everyone to hold the same beliefs, so long as there is mutual love and respect.

The Balanced Life

All facets of our being, intellectual, emotional, social, need to be satisfied. The ebb and flow of life; this is the way God has created us. We need to move toward wholeness on all levels of life — personal, sexual, economic, political and religious. What can I do where I am to usher in the Kingdom of God? We are called upon to live out our significant questions where we are. Where does the spirit lead us in the areas of family living, our jobs, our friendships, our community involvements? Millions of ordinary people following their own stars will change the world.

Simplify

In coming decades economic and world social pressures will force those of us living in North America to simplify our living habits. Our waste of natural resources and energy is sinful; it will not and cannot continue indefinitely. We can be rich in two ways: 1)

We can pile up money and things, or 2) We can have fewer wants. Thoreau said it: "Simplify, simplify, simplify".

The Risen Christ

The concept of the Risen Christ is real and living to millions of people in the world today. They don't have the theological frame - work that we have, but they've gone beyond that to the reality of the experience itself. The presence, the power, the intimacy of the Risen Lord is so visible in the way they act and speak. Christ is in Everyone, and Everyone can be a center for spiritual living. In that sense we are co - creators in the building of the Kingdom. Not that we **create** anything, but that we are active participants in bringing heaven upon earth. And if we don't believe that, how can we honestly pray the Lord's Prayer?

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The Starting Line ————— by Eric Zacharias

Her frame is thin and bent. The body is frail. Only her eyes still radiate a spirit that is strong and very much alive to the world around her. It has been her way for a long time now to give much of herself to the other residents in the Nursing Home. Today, she held up for my appreciation a piece of embroidery. It was a delightful scene of many colors — all lovingly and harmoniously blended to enhance its richness. One felt, indeed, that this work was part of a long life brought to completion by all the events of many hard years.

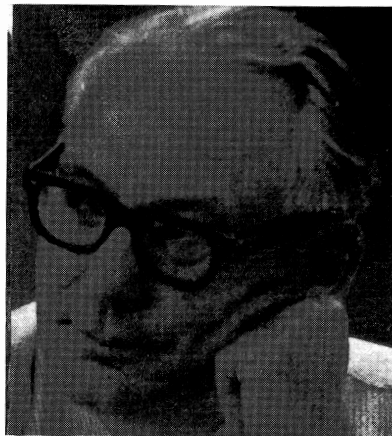
The reverse side of this embroidery also had its unique characteristics. Here there was evidence of struggle. In places the colors clashed, in places the thread had knotted, in places the very design appeared obscure.

I left the Nursing Home with this thought pressing hard upon me. Yes, this elderly friend had shown me a parable — a picture of the church. The Lord is building His church. He takes that which is good in us — blending the rich color that is the contribution of each of us into a scene that is beautiful in His eyes. Its design is well defined and it will ultimately be woven into its completion.

Ah! . . . but the reverse side. There stands out in glaring profusion our struggles, our times of confusion, our frustrations — and also, the signs of our hope and our growth.

See that deep blue thread! At the Council of Ministers meetings last July, the decision was made to study the manner in which revelation takes place. "How is truth posited in the writings?" How does the mind of man serve as an instrument for the channeling and the recording of Divine truth? Language, as a means for conveying the spirit of truth, seems so inadequate. It is so highly vulnerable to subjective thought patterns.

Let your eyes follow the design as it moves off to the right. Here it becomes confusing. How are we, as a church, going to respond to the spiritual need of the homosexual? Do we see this person also as a child of God — one with us in our struggles and our hopes? How are we, as a church, going to respond to those who have chosen a life style quite different from those which have been traditionally acceptable? What is the impact of social upheaval upon our ministry? The letters which have been coming to me from our membership and conversations



which I have had as I visit Societies and Associations reflect a deep concern within the Church.

Into our scene, too, are woven rich reds and gold. I have had opportunity in recent weeks to participate with the New York Association in its annual meeting. Here, too, the discussions were spirited and demonstrated a strong sensitivity to the concerns that are part of an evolving church. It is essential that we recognize our uniqueness as we think through and live into a dimension of the church that is most satisfying to each of us. At the very center of it is the love which the Lord has for us and which manifests itself in the love we have for one another. It is this that binds us into one family.

It was a delightful experience for me to participate in a worship service with Rev. Eric Allison on April 23rd in La Porte, Indiana. The people of the Society are strong in their support of the ministry that is being provided to them and also to the larger community.

I wish to express my appreciation to the people of the New York Association and the La Porte Society for the warm welcome given me during my visits with them.

The church on earth is emerging anew. Yes, it is imperfect and at times it misses the mark of its striving. However, in His patience and with love, the Lord holds it in His hand. What a beautiful work He now is fashioning! It unfolds before Him with all of its colors harmoniously blended and prepared to serve a restless, yearning humanity.

THE HISTORY OF OUR CONVENTION HERITAGE

STUDY PAPER

During the Washington Convention in June 1948, the Council of Ministers appointed a committee to prepare a positive statement of the positions of Convention as to its message, its work, and its field of service, for publication in the *Messenger*. This report appeared in the issue of February 12, 1949. At the Los Angeles Convention in July 1949, on recommendation of the Council of Ministers, the Convention adopted the statement and voted to publish it in pamphlet form. In this form it was titled "The Cause of the New Church: positions of the General Convention on message, work, field." The pamphlet stated that this report is now "distributed for use in the Church. It is not a statement of doctrine, but of the positions which the Convention has taken historically on its message, work, and field of labor." Reprinted in 1953, this statement was widely used for several years.

When the Council of Ministers assembled in San Francisco in June 1977, a number of factors indicated a need for an updated position paper, a timely reminder to Convention of its historic affirmation of the basic attitude of freedom with responsibility. Among these factors were attacks on Convention values and

practices by certain individuals, as well as what seemed to be some explicit infringements on Convention's organization at the local level by the General Church. The time seemed ripe for a reaffirmation of some of those basic values members of Convention have always cherished.

A first step toward effecting this reaffirmation was the appointment of a committee to draft a statement. The authors of that statement, realizing they did not have sufficient time at Convention to do justice to all the details of its subject matter, and also being aware of the need for feedback from Convention at large, recommended that it be adopted as a **study paper** to be distributed to members of the General Convention together with an urgent request that the article be studied and that reactions, impressions and concerns be directed to Convention's officers. To date seven written responses have been received, five from individuals, one from a Society and one from an Association Board. In addition several verbal reactions have been passed on to the committee. As a result of these responses the paper has been greatly revised, and is again submitted to Convention for its consideration as follows:

OUR CONVENTION HERITAGE

A Study Paper, Revised

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. Our understanding of His Word is by means of or in light of the heavenly doctrines of the New Jerusalem revealed by the Lord to Emanuel Swedenborg.

The Convention, congregational in mode of 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 described. To acknowledge this authority of truth, the human understanding must be able to move freely: freedom of inquiry is the path to such acknowledgement. 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. Thus we are disturbed by the tendency of some who

on the one hand advocate Swedenborg's writings but on the other hand take the stand that those whose interpretations differ from their own are spiritually dead. Convention's way has been to recognize that an ongoing dialogue between traditionalists and innovators is not only a sign of vitality but imperative for a fuller understanding of the doctrines and requisite for growth.

Under what we have come to call the "umbrella" of Convention — embracing a great variety of positions — some find it personally difficult to take an individualistic approach to the teachings of our church. For such people, however, is it not possible to be open to the thought that such a position can be quite sincerely taken by others and therefore should not be treated as an offense to be condemned? Insistence upon being allowed in some thought areas to make one's own interpretation of Swedenborg's writings is a position which Convention has often defended and should be seen as a sign of life in our organization rather than of death.

Judgmental attitudes which would condemn those who question a particular interpretation of Swedenborg's teachings are seen by Convention as effectively denying the right to freedom of thought and thus also denying our church's concept of charity. It is therefore 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 tendency to condemn.

It is characteristic of the outlook 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. This freedom, however, carries with it a correlative responsibility. Dogmatic attitudes, such as claims 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 — run counter to this spirit of freedom.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that to preserve this heritage, 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.

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 anyone's freedom to choose to dissociate himself or herself from our organization. Those who persistently feel impelled to contravene the will of the majority by resorting to innuendo, vituperation, vilification or character assassination should properly be censured, and if such conduct persists, be counselled to associate themselves with another organization more in harmony with their thinking.

At the same time 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. We heartily invite into the fellowship of Convention all who wish to serve our Lord Jesus Christ in his Second Coming as seen from the many perspectives of the General Convention.

*Quoted from the pamphlet, "The Cause of the New Church," adopted as a position paper by Convention in 1949.

BLACKMER MEMORIAL PLAZA

Construction work has now been completed on the new plaza and vestibule entry for Oak Hall on the Urbana College campus, and the plaza will be officially dedicated on Saturday, June 3.

The renovation project, which began last fall, was initiated by Urbana College trustee Dr. Alice Skinner, who pledged a challenge gift of \$5,000 toward the renovation cost. Under the terms of the challenge, the Blackmer family agreed to match all contributions, up to a total of \$5,000. At the end of April, donations from alumni, community members and other friends of the college totalled \$2,500.

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STOP THE ARMS RACE!

In recent months I have read a number of excellent articles spelling out the perils and the insanity of the world - wide arms race. The best of these was written by Harold Fey in the April 26 *Christian Century*. Mr. Fey was formerly editor of the *Christian Century*, and is now president of the World Affairs Forum in Claremont, California. We need to hear and heed some of the key ideas in this provocative article.

"The General Assembly of the United Nations has set aside five weeks, May 23 — June 28, for a special session on disarmament. Since the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. are lagging, the U.N. is doing its best to pressure the superpowers to break their stalemate. This special session is intended to build that pressure. If it succeeds, it will have saved the world from unparalleled disaster."

U.N. Secretary General Kurt Waldheim recently noted that "stocks of nuclear weapons have already for many years been sufficient to destroy the world many times over, and yet the number of nuclear warheads has increased fivefold in the past eight years." Annual world expenditures for arms now exceed \$350 billion. Waldheim observed that 25 percent of the world's scientific personnel and 40 percent of all research and development spending are committed to military purposes — "a profoundly unhealthy situation" which "menaces the independence and security of every nation." He said, "the question of disarmament lies at the heart of the problem of international order . . . affecting all other relations and disturbing the economy."

"Almost as much is spent on arms today as the total income of the poorer half of humankind. The arms bill contributes to the devaluation of the dollar, to inflation, to pollution, to exhaustion of essential resources. Progress in education, health and housing is held back because the money goes for arms. Our cities and transportation systems are neglected as the arms race grows more dangerous, more complex, and more firmly entrenched.

"Every time a new invention appears, the spiraling arms race goes up another round. We invented the atomic bomb; Russia followed. So with the hydrogen bomb. We invent the cruise missile; the Russians retaliate with the Backfire bomber. And so it goes. Now with the arms factories turning out more weapons than the great powers can possibly use, the exportation

of arms has increased from \$3 billion in 1970 to over \$13 billion today."

It is argued that jobs are at stake. If war industries lag, economic depression will result. Seymour Melman, Columbia University economist, explodes this myth in his 1974 book, *The Permanent War Economy*.

For example: in the U.S. \$1 billion spent on arms production provides 76,000 jobs, but the same amount devoted to government - run civilian programs would create 100,000 jobs. If the \$1 billion were released by tax cuts for private consumption, it would create 112,000 new jobs. Melman believes that the nation has lost an average of 884,000 jobs each year because of excessive military spending. He attributes the flight of U.S. capital abroad and the growing noncompetitiveness of American industry to the same cause.

Melman advocates the transfer of about 40 per cent of our military outlays to conservation, transportation, health services, education, economic development, urban development and law enforcement. He believes this cut - back would not adversely affect the ability of our military forces to meet their commitments.

The U.N. has fought against rising armaments since its beginning, with limited success. In recent years agreements have been reached prohibiting the placing of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction on the sea bed and in outer space. Treaties banning atmospheric testing and prohibiting biological warfare have been signed. But this is a very modest beginning.

The present stage of the arms race is critical, perhaps fateful. Richard Stout, Washington correspondent of the *Christian Science Monitor*, believes that "Russia and the United States are hell - bent on a nuclear confrontation."

The hour is very late. Every arms race in history has ended in war. The present rivalry will come to the same conclusion unless some way can be found to reverse the spiral very soon.

What can governments do? What can the Churches do? What can you and I do? Millions of people, working and praying for peace, can shape history. We need to be informed on the issues, aroused to the dangers involved, and care enough to act responsibly at every opportunity to further the cause of peace — in ourselves and in the world.

P.Z.

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?

or, Exploring the Concept of *Proprium*

by George Dole Newton, Mass.

It is difficult to retain an idea which we cannot put into words. The idea itself may not be as complex as some we are accustomed to dealing with, but if we have no verbal "handles" for it, we are likely to find it too slippery to handle.

In the present instance, we are dealing with a concept for which Swedenborg found a very nice and flexible Latin word, *proprium*. However, there is no satisfactory equivalent English word, and we may therefore have difficulty in understanding the reality to which it refers. Often, it seems, we find ourselves substituting one partial function or aspect of *proprium* for the whole — that is, oversimplifying. And since such oversimplification tends to complicate things, I should like in the interests of eventual simplification to complicate the idea of *proprium*.

At present, the closest I can come to a fairly brief English equivalent for *proprium* is "the self-conscious self," which calls for some explanation.

Backing up to get a running start, let us first observe that people are designed to be active. They are most "human" when they are doing something. When I, then, am totally absorbed in what I am doing, I am in some way most complete, most human, most "me." I am also quite unselfconscious at such times.

But the moment self-consciousness arises, the wholeness is impaired. The "self" that is doing something is narrowed down to that self which I think I am, or ought to be, or ought to seem to be — at best perhaps to that self which I presently perceive.

This "self-conscious self" does bear some relation to the more whole self that was functioning in the state of selfforgetfulness, but it is smaller and less alive. It is smaller because it is limited both by my ability to perceive and by my willingness to accept what I do perceive. It is less alive because it is my own construction and not the Lord's.

These are essentially conclusions drawn from material in the *Arcana*. Let me then present some of this material in versions which lie

somewhere in the limbo between translation and out-and-out paraphrase. The diligent reader may compare with the Standard Edition.

"'And Jehovah God said, It is not good that the man be alone. I will make him a help that fits him.' 'Alone' means he was not happy being led by the Lord, but longed instead to be led by himself and the world. The 'help that fits him' means the self-conscious self, later called the rib built into a woman (138)."

"(On the naming of the animals) — Even though earliest man recognized the beauty and truth of the affections and insights God was giving him, he still kept reaching for a self-conscious self — he did not find a help that fitted him (142)."

"The rib, a chest bone, means a self-conscious self which is relatively lifeless, and more specifically that self-conscious self which the individual holds dear. The flesh in place of the rib means a self-conscious self that has something alive in it. Sleep means the state we are assigned to in order to seem to have a self-conscious self. This state is like sleep because when we are in it our whole awareness is of living and thinking and talking and acting on our own. When we begin to realize that this is not true, it is like being roused from sleep and being awake (147)."

"The heavenly marriage is a kind of event that takes place within the self-conscious self We can only state that angels perceive that they are living from the Lord, but that when they are not thinking about it, their whole awareness is of living on their own. But there is a pervasive affectional "nerve" that alerts them to a change when there is the slightest falling away from their best love or their truest faith (155)."

"Charity and innocence are what not only excuse but virtually erase the self-conscious self, or what is evil and false in us. You can see this in little children. When they are loving each other and their parents, glowing with childlike innocence, their very evil and false traits are not just inconspicuous, they are actually pleasant (164)."

“For a person in the Most Ancient Church, the heavenly marriage took place in that self-conscious self which he felt emotionally. But for a person of the Ancient Church, the heavenly marriage took place in that self-conscious self which he conceived mentally. Once man’s felt self was totally corrupted, the Lord effected a miraculous separation of the conceived self from that corrupted felt self, and formed within that conceived self a new motivation called ‘conscience.’ He instilled charity into conscience, and innocence into charity, and so joined Himself to man — or in other words, established a covenant (1023).”

“For a body - centered or world - centered person, the self - conscious self is all he has; he is blind to anything but that self. If he were to lose that self, he would think he was dying. For a spirit - centered person, the self - conscious self seems much the same. For even though he knows that the Lord is the life of everything, . . . he still does not trust that knowledge. But a heaven - centered person recognizes the fact that the Lord is the life of everything, the Giver of thought and action, because he perceives that this is true and does not crave a self - conscious self, the Lord gives him one that is coupled with a total perception of what is good and true and with a total happiness . . . (141).”

“People who exercise self - discipline in resisting what is evil and false, even though they think initially that this is being done on their own, or by their own strength, . . . cannot be led by evil spirits in the other life . . . This means that we ought to discipline ourselves to do what is good and to say what is true. Herein lies a secret, namely that this is how we are granted a heaven - centered self - conscious self by the Lord. This heaven - centered “self” is formed within our mental effort. If we cannot maintain that effort with apparent self - discipline, there is no way we can maintain it without self - discipline . . . It is through the freedom (we have in temptation) that we acquire a self - conscious self in which the Lord can do what is good. Without this freely gotten or given “self” there is no way we can be re - formed, because we cannot receive that new motivation called “conscience” . . . Whatever we do from love, seems free. But within that freedom, when we discipline ourselves to resist what is evil and false and to do what is good, there is a heavenly love that the Lord instills, using it to create a self - conscious self for us.

So it is the Lord’s will that this seems to be ours even though it is not . . . The Lord wants to share His own possessions, His heaven, with everyone, in such a way that it seems ours within us even though it is not. Angels live in this kind of selfhood, and to the extent that they live in an awareness of the truth that everything good and true comes from the Lord, they live in the joy and happiness of that self - conscious self (1937).”

Some closing comments. The self I think I am — the one that varies with my mood — is not the self the Lord created and is creating. It is not alive because I am constructing it, and I cannot create anything living. I can however “see” on theological grounds that there has to be and is a living, God - created “me”. As I begin, by self - discipline, to do the Lord’s will for me, the gap between the self - conscious self and the God - created self narrows. The God - created self begins to be felt as real, the inner to flow into the outer. It is no longer merely theorized.

I am a paradox — a contingent being, an independent dependent — and I can therefore be what I am only by living at the intersection of my dependence and my independence.

CAN YOU HELP?

If anyone has a large altar Bible not being used presently, a good use for it would be in our Georgetown, Guyana New Church. Mr. Llewellyn Fraser writes that their church was burglarized early in April and the altar Bible was stolen, among other things. They would preferably like a Bible containing only the Word but if this is not available a full Bible would do.

Mr. Fraser’s address is: 71 Hill Street, Lodge, Georgetown, Guyana, South America. If you would prefer to have us forward it, you may contact Roger Paulson, Central Office of Convention, 48 Sargent St., Newton, Mass. 02158.

Driving To Convention?

If so, please remember that Ontario is on the metric system. The signs posted along route 401 (a freeway) read 100 k.p.h., which is about 63 - 65 m.p.h. Also, in Ontario the wearing of seatbelts is compulsory.

CORRESPONDENCE ON CORRESPONDENCES

AND OTHER MATTERS *by Robert H. Kirven*
Newton, Mass.

I do not know very much yet about the full possibilities of teaching theology by mail. Neither do I know all the limitations of the enterprise. But about a dozen students have signed up for my correspondence course, "Overview of Swedenborg's Doctrines," and I have received assignments back from most of them by now (some are approaching the mid-point of the course), so I am developing an idea of what to expect. The responses have been very interesting to me. Formulating my response to the students has been challenging in a way that I enjoy. It has been fun, sometimes even exciting. That's good, because in classes and tutorials, sessions that I have had fun teaching have been valuable to the students: I suppose it works the same way in correspondence.

I would like to share some of the interest, the fun, the excitement. I do not expect to be able to share it fully, because it is tied to the work that the students and I have done together. For the course, Swedenborg's theological system has been divided into forty-six topics, and each of the fourteen lessons focuses on one or a group of these. The students read a presentation of mine concerning the topics (usually about sermon-length, though the later, more abstract lessons are longer), and a chapter or two in Swedenborg (or a list of shorter readings). Then they answer ten or a dozen factual questions on what Swedenborg said. Those who take the full course (Course 1) also write three or four short essays on their understanding of the topics, and have a chance to ask me questions. (Auditors — those taking Course 2 — receive the factual questions, and two opportunities during the course to ask questions of me.)

One example of what makes it interesting is the variety in the responses. On the subject of human nature — "spirit clothed with a body" (AC 69), several students emphasized Swedenborg's statements about the primacy of spirit to the point of neglecting statements about the importance of natural ultimates in the wholeness of human life: one said that the spirit is the "real man." In that case, I replied that "although the spirit is eternal, and is the sole life in human nature, still a human being is both body and spirit — the spirit enveloped in the body, with the two so linked that when they

are separated the human being no longer exists: what is left after the body dies is a spirit." Another clearly saw the two-world citizenship of a human being, and noted that "the human race is the basis and foundation of the heavens and so, too, the body is the basis and foundation of the spirit," and called the body "the training ground for the spirit." I liked that. Another correspondent saw so vividly the importance of physical existence in the development of spiritual character that he wondered how one life in a body was enough to serve the purpose! In the course of answering that, I referred to "Swedenborg's radical emphasis on the importance of life in the physical world, down to the importance of every small, apparently insignificant, half-conscious choice that we make," adding that that does not make life "ominous . . . just significant." I suggested reading *Heaven and Hell* 428 - 535 in that last connection: "Leading a heaven-bound life is not as difficult as people believe it is!"

On the subject of *freedom of choice*, which Swedenborg describes as a fundamental characteristic of all human life, most students saw that it remains as a quality of the spirit even if a man is imprisoned and in chains. One went so far as to describe the guards who would keep a man in chains as being less free than the prisoner, developing that thought in a beautiful way!

In connection with freedom of choice, Swedenborg discusses the equilibrium of spiritual forces which maintain it. I have asked for examples from various branches of science which would illustrate equilibrium of forces in other contexts. Somewhat to my surprise, several replies saw no examples of equilibrium in the sciences, because science has no place for freedom. In reply to one of these, I noted that "Astronomers see an equilibrium of gravitational forces and the forces of momentum keeping the solar system and the entire universe of galaxies in their consistent order. In the life sciences, from botany to neuropsychology, a delicate balance of chemical forces is essential to the normal functioning of the cells and life systems. The Freudian view of man is almost mechanical in its vision of the equilibrium between the id and

libido on the one side and the super - ego on the other." One student went beyond this kind of illustration entirely, seeing the process of growth in all knowledge, including scientific, as involving free choice in the equilibrium between what has been known, on the one hand, and the creative urge to discovery on the other! That's an exciting way of looking at things — including the exploration of what Swedenborg means for our lives today.

Some examples are too complex to summarize briefly: corresponding with thoughtful Swedenborgians involves some pretty long letters. Teaching by correspondence can be time - consuming, as when a student asks how it is possible to find hidden meanings in every word and thing in the Bible! But the questions are challenging, and answers to my questions are provocative. It is an interesting way of teaching.

CASSETTE PROGRAM

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

Please order by CATALOGUE NUMBER. Send \$3.00 for each cassette to Miss Margaret S. Sampson, 330 East 84th Street, New York, N.Y. 10028.

Sermons by Rev. C. S. Priestnal; Music by N.Y. organist and choir. Numbers A 101 and 102, 15 min. each side; others 22 min. each side.

- A 101** Side A — A Woman of Samaria
Side B — Who Am I?
- A 102** Side A — The Good Shepherd
Side B — Anointing the Lord's Feet
- A 103** Side A — His Abiding Presence
Side B — Our Debt to Doubt
- A 104** Side A — Judge Righteous Judgment
Side B — God Never Punishes
- A 105** Side A — Vanished Vision
Side B — All About Angels
- A 106** Side A — Not Knowing the Hour
Side B — A Royal Feud
- A107** Side A — The Lord is Good to All
Side B — When To Be Alone

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

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

Sermons by Rev. Louis A. Dole; read by Rev. Dr. George F. Dole. Music by the organist and members of the New York Choir. 22 min. each side.

- A 301** Side A — The Three Essentials
Side B — Jesus Christ
- A 302** Side A — The Problem of Evil
Side B — Advent
- A 303** Side A — His Life and Ours
Side B — Ascension
- A 304** Side A — Providence
Side B — The Word
- A 305** Side A — Heaven
Side B — Hell
- A 306** Side A — Use of the Word
Side B — The Three Degrees
- A 307** Side A — Coming of the Kingdom
Side B — The Task of the New Church

Adult Study Material; Condensation of Arcana Coelestia, Vol. I, Ch. 1 & 2. Text arranged by M. S. Sampson. Read by Robert W. Tafel.

- E4 001** Sides A and B, Chapter 1, nos. 16 — 22,
Genesis I, vv. 1 — 31.
- E4 002** Sides A and B, Chapter 2, nos. 67 — 167,
Genesis II, vv. 1 — 25.

BLACKMER cont. from page 138

The new plaza will be designated the Blackmer Memorial Plaza, in memory of the late Reverend Franklin H. Blackmer, Dr. Skinner's father, who served as president of the college from 1926 to 1932. Prior to his death last year, Rev. Blackmer was a frequent visitor to the college, where he served as college archivist and supervised the development of the Swedenborgian collection in the library.

Built in 1856, Oak Hall is the second oldest building on the Urbana College campus, and was originally constructed as a dormitory.



Marion Priestnal, Editor

CONVENTION PROGRAM

After a business meeting and luncheon on Friday, June 30th, the *Alliance of New Church Women* will turn its thoughts to the Convention theme: "Alive In This New Age." A panel of three speakers will consider the topic from three angles:

Mrs. Polly Baxter from the Minneapolis Society, representing the younger years of life; Dr. Dorothea Harvey of Urbana, the middle years; and Mrs. Jan Siebert reflecting about the period we designate as "retirement".

A worthwhile hour has been arranged for you!

* * * * *

If you could choose the person you would most like to hear from we think it would be — for you as it is for us — Eulalia Mooki! We wrote to Eulalia about a month ago, asking for recent news.

Her reply follows:

My Dearest Marion:

Yes, it is too long that I have been quiet. Yet, four years ago I had breakfast in my house, and had breakfast the following morning in your lovely home; so near each other we can be. As you rightly say, Marion, uncertainties and anxiety have played a big role in causing this.

The Lord has saved us personally from all that is bad and sad. But what has been happening around us had kept us not knowing — what next. Perhaps it is better for us to forget, now that things seem to be shaping differently. Children are back in school. There is general quietness though a slight tenseness. Church bells continue to ring and we even see the young moving towards attending services.

At home here, even in the church as a whole, we see and hear reports of progress. Our building here is getting too small for us — in fact it has been for some time. The members are also raising funds to improve the church. Their idea is that as soon as the college is completed, they should start on the church.

We have not started on the building yet, Marion. (Obviously Eulalia refers to the second phase of the plan.) Who could take the risk, when everything was so explosive and uncertain? But thank God, we now see a way of light and I think when we write next we shall be having something better to report. Even our administration seems to be changing — which has been one problem. I mean the civic administration.

The Women's League and Junior League continue to grow. As we have a League membership in every Society, we have close to one thousand, two hundred members of the Women's League and between seven hundred to eight hundred Junior League members.

As you will remember my telling you, they have regular Conventions held separately from those of the Ministers, or Conferences shall I say. In spite of the disturbances that have been in the country, we have held our Conventions. In 1976 the Convention should have been held in Orlando, but had to be transferred to the quieter free - state town of Bothaville. The attendance was a handsome two hundred.

Last year we thought things would be better and still planned the Convention for Orlando, but it was still not sufficiently quiet when October came, so we moved to another free - state town of Knoonstad. There again we had a beautiful attendance of two hundred and fifteen. The total money they brought in was R 7,307, (\$8,403.05) which was divided into helping towards the college building, helping widows' pensions, and printing.

Over the Easter weekend, the Junior League met in Convention at a small town of Roster. Many years back this town was predominantly New Church. At this Convention the young girls surprised us by bringing forward an amount of R 2,020 (\$2,323.00). A thousand they gave to help with the building of the college. By the way, their duty is to maintain the college. And they are keenly looking forward to seeing the college go up. I am sure the whole New Church World is waiting, waiting, and waiting. I am sure we now do not have too long to wait.

This is just to let our sister know that the women in the church here in South Africa continue to work hard, apart from having doctrinal lessons and benevolent meetings, to raise the standard of their church.

They love their New Church sisters the world over, and are looking forward to the college going up.

Obed continues to be well and active. Our love goes to you all.

Eulalia

The Mooki Memorial College Building Fund is still active. Checks should be made payable to The New York Society of The New Church: Mooki Fund, and mailed c/o Mrs. Clayton Priestnal, 112 East 35th Street, New York City 10016

A Spiritual Basis for World Order



Alice Sechrist

At the Convention held in California in 1949 Alice Spiers Sechrist was the speaker at the meeting of the Women's Alliance. Her topic was *A Spiritual Basis For World Order*. Mrs. Sechrist's scholarship, lucid thinking and vigorous devotion to the New Church are known to us all.

She proposed a striking and challenging idea at that time. We herein attempt a digest:

"WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN A REVELATION FROM OUR LORD SECOND TO NONE PUBLISHED TO THE WORLD, AND WHAT HAVE WE DONE WITH IT?"

"... The late Alexis Carrell in his book 'Man The Unknown' speaks of the world's need for a Science of Man. We quote:

" 'Modern civilization has been erected without any knowledge of man's nature . . . MAN should be the measure of all . . . On the contrary he is a stranger in the world that he has created . . . The only possible remedy for this evil is a much more profound knowledge of ourselves . . . The Science of Man has become the most necessary of all Sciences!'

"Now suppose that we so-called New Church people, who have a wonderful revelation, were to turn our attention to developing a Science of Man. ' . . . He opened his mouth and taught them . . . ' That is what we should be doing — TEACHING — if we want to be of real use to the world and not just another sect or cult.

"To establish a spiritual basis for world order we must work from *within* — not from without as do Communism, Socialism, the various peace movements, and such organizations as Union Now and the World Federalists.

"From without is the only way these groups can work; and unfortunately the churches do the same insofar as they attempt at all to make the world a reflection of heaven. They ALL work from the outside because they haven't the necessary enlightenment to do otherwise.

"We have had some 1900 years of Christian churches and Christian teachings but the condition of the world today tells the story! By their fruits ye shall know them.

"We need TEACHINGS, we need definite scientific instruction as to man: what he is; where he came from; how he came; *and what he is here for.*"

If in the New Church we are feeling frustrated, unappreciated and ineffectual, quite possibly it is due to unwisely directed efforts on our part. Do we honestly seek to promote the particular and unique strengths of the New Church? Here is an idea both forward-looking and provocative — more so than many we have pursued. Could we not become better informed and especially prepared to correlate and share our knowledge of the nature of mankind? Could we not train those particularly well suited to the task to develop and teach a *Science of Man*? WHY NOT? Would this not give new impetus to our educational programs and a central thrust to our efforts in communication? (Ed.)

ERA — A SWEDENBORGIAN FEMINIST DECIDES

by Mary C. Ebel, Washington, D.C.

On August 26, 1977, 4000 people commemorated the 57th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th amendment (which gave women the right to vote), with a precision march down Washington's Pennsylvania Avenue to the White House. The format of the march was a reenactment and completion of the 1913 Women's Suffrage March that was halted by violence. I want to share the feelings and thoughts that filled me while marching.

Since it was summertime, there was little opportunity for me to meet with groups of like-minded women, so I had to work up enthusiasm for participating in the parade. It was difficult because I did not picture myself as a demonstrator. Finally, dressed in a white outfit, draped in a sash of suffrage colors, gold, purple and white, I joined those dedicated people in one of the most thrilling events of my life.

Imagine! 4000 people from 80 organizations gathering on the historic mall before the Capital, forming lines, adjusting banners, listening to our parade marshals, taking up the beat of the nearest school band and stepping out onto Pennsylvania Avenue. Encouraged by our leaders, I threw inhibition to the winds and chanted as fervently as my neighbor. It was marvelous. I was part of an important happening.

America had grown up a little since that disastrous day in 1913 when the marching women were spat upon, pelted with stones and mud clods, called degrading names and put to rout, all because they dared to demand a voice in choosing those who would govern them.

Why was I there? Why did I feel that way? Why do I believe in this Women's Movement? Why am I committed to helping pass the Equal Rights Amendment? It is because I am an American Swedenborgian Feminist — a feminist as a result of the first two. Feminism is "the principle that women should have political, economic and social rights equal to those of men." That is what it is all about for me, rights, choices and the freedom to pursue them. As an American the Constitution guarantees me many freedoms, but not the freedom from being discriminated against as a woman.

Although casual reading of the 14th Amendment appears to protect me, the courts have not applied it to cases of sexual discrimination with consistency.

The proposed Equal Rights Amendment is concise and clear. The full text reads:

- "1. Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.
2. The Congress shall have power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.
3. This amendment shall take effect two years after the date of ratification."

To me it poses no threat and it provides a protection which I feel should be my right.

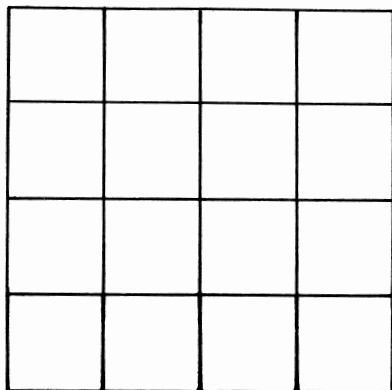
As a Swedenborgian, I agree with Laura Curtis Bullard, who wrote more than 100 years ago, "Women should no longer accept the ideal of womanly character which society offers them, but rise to the conception of the free and independent being that God intended a true woman to be . . . They should demand a freedom of thought and freedom of action equal to that which a man demands for himself, and which God designed as the true means for development of both sexes."

A cornerstone of my faith is the firm conviction that God has given me unrestrictedly free choice as to what I will believe, whom I will love and how I will live. One of my responsibilities from this gift is to become increasingly more sensitive to the arbitrary and often subtle restriction placed on anyone's freedom. It is a responsibility which I invite everyone to share. As the pioneer suffragette Elizabeth Cady Stanton wrote in 1856, "We shall never get what we ask for until the majority of women are openly with us; and they will never claim their civil rights until they know their social wrongs."

I am grateful to the many courageous women who fought for ME, enduring gross inhumanities far worse than those of today. I am proud to be a part of the struggle that will make a better tomorrow for our daughters and their daughters.

Something For Everyone

How many squares do you see?



At first glance one might count 16. But look again. 17? 22? Look once more. There are thirty squares.

How was your initial perception limited? How often we are deceived by "appearances" of truth!

If You Are Unhappy

Once upon a time there was a noncon-forming sparrow who decided not to fly south for the winter. However, soon after, the weather turned so cold that he reluctantly started to fly south. In a short time ice began to form on his wings and he fell to earth in a barnyard, almost frozen. A cow passed by and dropped some manure on the little sparrow.

The sparrow thought it was the end, but the manure warmed him and thawed his wings. Thus, warm and happy and able to breathe, he started to sing. Just then a large cat came by and, hearing the chirping, investigated the sounds. The cat cleared away the manure, found the chirping bird, and promptly ate him.

Three Morals

1. Everyone who drops manure on you is not necessarily your enemy.
2. Everyone who gets you out of the manure pile is not necessarily your friend.
3. And if you are warm and happy in a pile of manure, keep your mouth shut.

Author unknown

Got Nothing To Do?

Judge Philip Gilliam of Denver, Colorado gave some advice to the young people of his community that is worth repeating.

It was by way of an answer to the cry of many High School age boys and girls, "What's there to do? Where can we go?"

"Go home" the judge says. "Hang the storm windows, paint the woodwork. Rake the leaves, mow the lawn, shovel the snow. Wash the car, learn to cook, scrub the floors. Repair the sink, build a boat, get a job. Help the minister, priest or rabbi. Visit the sick, help the poor, study your lessons. And when you are through — and not too tired, read a good book.

"Your parents do not owe you entertainment. Your city or village does not owe you recreational facilities. The world does not owe you a living. You owe the world something. You owe it your time and energy and your talents so that no one will be at war or in poverty or sick or lonely again."

"In plain, simple words: Grow up, quit being a cry baby, get out of your dream world, and develop a backbone, not a wishbone, and start acting like a man or lady. You're supposed to be mature enough to accept some of the responsibility your parents have carried for years. They have nursed, protected, helped, appealed, begged, excused, tolerated and denied themselves many things so that you could have every benefit."

"This they have done gladly, for you are their dearest treasure. But now, you have no right to expect them to bow to every whim and fancy just because selfish ego instead of common sense dominates your personality, thinking and requests. In Heaven's name, grow up and go home."

from the Vancouver, B.C.
New Church Newsletter

God

The Church is very comforting
When you go to pray,
The people of the Church are
Always bright and gay.
But everytime I close my eyes
To pray for the things I have,
I get this funny feeling,
This really funny feeling,
That God is with me every day
In every shape and form and way.

Sandi Heck, 13
Kitchener, Ont.



Almont New Church Assembly

July 23 — August 6, 1978

Theme:

“THE GRAND MAN”

This is a fascinating doctrine telling us about the Lord's Humanity; about how the societies of heaven work together for the good of the whole; and how man is made in the image and likeness of God. An appropriate theme for Almont, where persons of all ages and from different New Church societies work and play and study together.

The Staff this summer will include the Revs. Walter Orthwein, Edwin Capon, George Dole, David Holm, F. Robert Tafel, Kurt Nemitz and Mr. Ray Guiu. Other instructors will provide leadership in crafts and recreation.

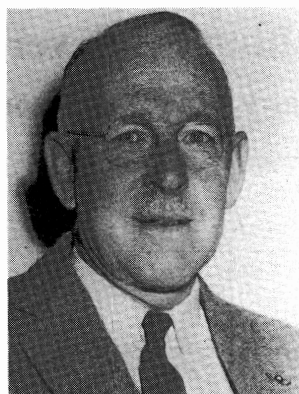
RATES

Room and Board per week:

Adults	\$63.00 — Heritage Hall
	\$55.00 - All other buildings
Children	\$46.00 — 12 — 17
	41.00 — 8 — 11
	27.00 — 3— 77
	10.00 — Under 3

For more information write:

Mrs. J. W. Keith
16300 Tubspring Road
Almont, Michigan 48003



Dr. Robert B. McClure

Convention Keynote Speaker

Dr. McClure was born in Portland, Oregon in 1900, when his mother was a refugee from the Boxer Rebellion in China. He spent his childhood in China, returning to Canada in 1915.

After graduating from the University of Toronto Medical College in 1923, he returned to the bandit - infested area of N. Honan, N. China, serving there until 1937. He set up the first inland cancer clinic in China; developed paramedical personnel for public health and rural medical clinics; and was Field Director for the International Red Cross along the Yellow River front during the Sino - Japanese War. From 1941 - 48 he was director of the Friends Ambulance Unit along the Burma Road. In the following years he served in the Anglican Mission Hospital in Gaza, Palestine and in the Ratlam Christian Hospital in Central India, working primarily in the areas of cancer and leprosy.

From 1968 to 1971 he was the first lay Moderator of the United Church of Canada. In the autumn of 1971 he went to North Borneo where he served the long - house tribes for 2½ years. In 1975 he spent six months with the Amazon tribal people in Peru. He served five months as a volunteer surgeon to a mission hospital in Zaire in 1977.

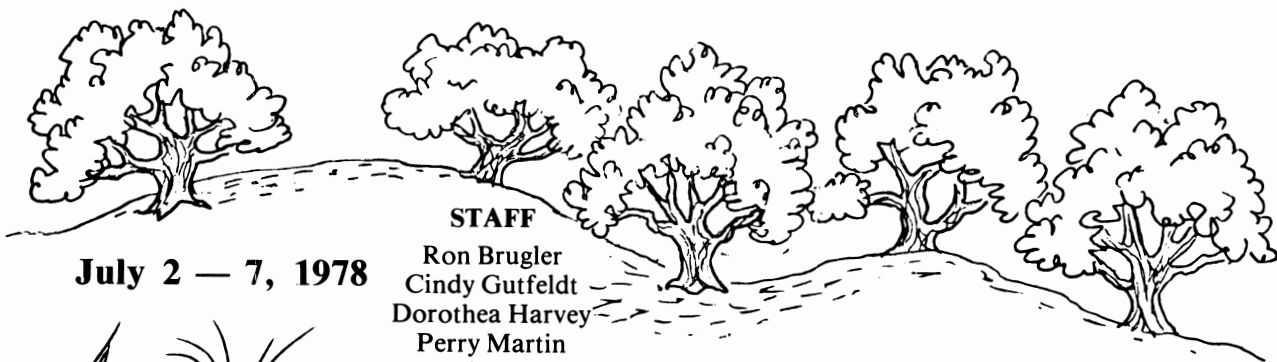
Dr. McClure is probably the best known Protestant in Canada, well known to radio and TV audiences throughout the country. He is an outspoken man, bold, imaginative, colorful, and we look forward with a great deal of anticipation to his presence with us during Convention. Dr. McClure will address our assembly at 8:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 29 in the Main Hall, Conrad Grebel College.

1978 CONVENTION PROGRAM

(Subject to change)

Sunday, June 25	Ministers and Wives Registration
6:30 p.m.	Buffet Supper and evening of fellowship at the Church of the Good Shepherd.
Monday, June 26	Ministers and Wives meetings.
Tuesday, June 27	Ministers and Wives meetings.
Wednesday, June 28, a.m.	Ministers and Wives meeting.
	Registration.
1:30 p.m.	General Council Meeting.
1:30 p.m.	Board of Missions Meeting.
7:30 p.m.	Convention Opening
	Worship Service: Rev. Calvin Turley
	Convention Preview
9:00 p.m.	Reception.
Thursday, June 29	
7:00 a.m.	Communion Service
9:00 a.m.	Worship
	Convention Business Session
	League Meeting
10:00 a.m.	Nominating Committee Report
1:30 - 4:30 p.m.	Mini - Courses
4:30 p.m.	Orientation for newcomers
4:30 p.m.	Senior Swedenborgian Service
8:00 p.m.	Keynote Speaker: Dr. Robert McClure
9:30 p.m.	Reception
Friday, June 30	
7:00 a.m.	Communion Service
9:00 a.m.	Worship
9:30 - 12:00 a.m.	Mini - Courses
12:30 - 3:00 p.m.	Alliance Luncheon Meeting
1:30 - 3:00 p.m.	Men's Interest Group
1:30 - 3:00 p.m.	League Meeting
1:30 - 4:30 p.m.	Board of Publications
3:30 - 5:00 p.m.	Sunday School Association
3:30 - 5:00 p.m.	Augmentation Fund Committee
7:30 p.m.	S.S.R. Graduation — Grebel Chapel
10:00 p.m.	Film: "The Man Who Had To Know"
	Reception
Saturday, July 1	
8:15 - 9:30 a.m.	Farmers Market (optional)
10:00 a.m. - 1 p.m.	Business Session
	Elections
	A.N.C.L. Report
	S.S.R. — B.O.M.
Afternoon	Sight - seeing, walking tours, free time
6:30 p.m.	Banquet and Entertainment, Alpine Club
	"German Oktoberfest"
Sunday, July 2	
10:00 a.m.	Worship Service, Church of the Good Shepherd
	Consecration of officers, Ordinations, Communion
	Sermon: Rev. E. O. Martin
1:30 p.m.	General Council, Board of Missions
5:00 p.m.	Post Convention Conference — Five Oaks, Ont.
Make your reservations and travel arrangements early. All reservations must be in by June 1.	

POST - CONVENTION CONFERENCE 1978



July 2 — 7, 1978

STAFF

Ron Brugler
Cindy Gutfeldt
Dorothea Harvey
Perry Martin
Lorraine Sando

COMING ALIVE IN THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

For those of you who want to step out in Faith into a new spiritual adventure of living your religion. Take that step into the supportive nurturing atmosphere of the 1978 Post - Convention Conference. Here you will explore something new yet very old. Give yourself the opportunity of being immersed in the love of God and fellow pilgrims on the journey. Discover new ways of sharing and caring as you



COME ALIVE IN THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

Post - Convention Conference 1978, sponsored by the Board of Education, will take place at Five Oaks, a beautiful conference center overlooking the Grand River Valley and the glen at the mouth of Whiteman's Creek, 30 miles from Kitchener, Ontario. Hiking trails throughout the valley invite both the adventurous and those who prefer quiet walks by the river. Swim in a 70° pool or canoe in Whiteman's Creek to stretch your body as you expand your spirit.

The conference will begin with supper on Sunday, July 2, after the close of Convention. We will end after breakfast on Friday, July 7. In order for you and the rest of the group to have a full experience of community, it is necessary to be present for the entire session. The cost is \$100 per person. Accommodations will be in double rooms. Please send \$25 non-refundable registration fee to Nancy Perry, Executive Secretary, Board of Education, 48 Sargent St., Newton, Mass. 02158, before June 1st.

Make checks payable to the Swedenborgian Church.

Name

Address

.....

Will you need transportation from the Convention site to Five Oaks?

ADVANCE CONVENTION REGISTRATION

Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario

June 25 - July 2, 1978

Name

Address

Accompanied by:

Names

Relationship

Age of children

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Mode of transportation

Arrival Departure

(Give date, hour, and COMPLETE flight information — if applicable.)

Most arrivals at Toronto International airport will be met, PROVIDED WE HAVE FULL FLIGHT INFORMATION. In some cases limo service may be required, which will cost \$17.00. Bus and train (Canadian National) service is available to Kitchener. Motorists will be sent information regarding the location of Conrad Grebel College. *We hope you will consider driving to Kitchener for Convention '78.* Excellent roads, free parking during Convention, vacation sight - seeing before and after Convention for those driving.

Registration will be at College Center. Room assignments, keys and assistance with luggage will be available at the Registration Desk.

Any special medical or dietary requirements?

July 1 — 2 is a **holiday** weekend in Canada, so book flights early.

RATES

Room and Board, based on double occupancy, is \$18.00 per person per day.

Children age 10 and under, \$9.00 per day. (Cots provided, in parents' room.) Young people between 11 and 18, \$12.00 per person, per day. Children under 2, free.

Camper trailers, in limited numbers, may be parked and used on College Parking lot. This reduces your rate by \$5.00 per day.

Registration fee is \$15.00 per person 18 years or older. Registration fee MUST accompany your registration form. The Registration Fee will be \$25.00 per person if postmarked AFTER JUNE 1st, 1978. This Registration Fee covers cost of receptions, Saturday banquet, local transportation, audio - visual equipment, etc.

Due to local accommodation and transportation logistical factors, all Convention '78 registrations MUST be received in Kitchener by June 1, 1978. Early reservations will be greatly appreciated. Make cheques payable to: "Swedenborgian Convention '78".

Send this application and registration fee to:

Swedenborgian Convention
Church of the Good Shepherd
Queen St. N., and Margaret Ave.
Kitchener, Ontario. N2H 2H7

News From The Swedenborg Society

There is a need for a new biography of Emanuel Swedenborg to replace Trobridge's *Life and Teaching* when stocks of the present edition are exhausted. The Council has in mind a comparatively short work, easily readable and well illustrated. Dr. Freda Griffith has given some thought to the project and has been invited to prepare a draft synopsis. The Council has consulted a publisher about the possibility of interesting a general publishing firm in it: this would have the advantage that the book would reach a wider public than if the Society were to publish it itself. But we have not yet found an author! Suggestions of people with the ability and time to consider undertaking this valuable work would be welcomed by the Secretary, Miss Madeline G. Waters.

The Society's report for 1977 records a great deal of activity. The most important event was the Translators' School at Purley Chase. The purpose was to help young scholars to understand what is involved in translating the Writings and to encourage them to gain experience in doing so. It is essential to ensure that we continue to have able translators if Swedenborg's works are to be made more widely available and read by more people. It is a work vital to the future of the Church. Sixteen students attended, eight British and eight from the U.S.A., and the School was directed by Dr. John Chadwick, of the University of Cambridge, assisted by the Rev. J. E. Elliott and the Rev. N. Ryder. It was considered to have been highly successful both by the tutors, who were impressed by the standard of the students, and by the students themselves.

The great task of preparing a new English edition of the *Arcana Coelestia*, which is being undertaken by the Rev. J. E. Elliott, continues. Members of the Society's Advisory and Revision Board are acting as consultants together with Mr. E. Bruce Glenn of Bryn Athyn. A new translation of *The New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrine* (undertaken by the Rev. E. E. Sandstrom and the Rev. G. T. Hill) and a revision of *The True Christian Religion* (the Rev. H. G. Mongredien) are in hand.

The Society sold over 7,500 books last year and over 1,200 booklets. Turnover totalled more than £13,000, well up on the previous year. Membership was slightly up at 914.

D. F. C. Mann,
London, England.

From Church Records

BAPTISMS

HAYES — JOHNSON — Rhoderick Chadborn, son of Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Hayes, and William Bruce, son of Mr. and Mrs. William Johnson, were baptized into the Christian faith in the Fryeburg New Church on April 9, 1978, the Rev. Robert H. Kirven, assisted by Mr. David Rienstra, officiating.

CONFIRMATIONS

MYERS, WELCH, UNRUH — Kris Myers, Kim Welch, Ronald, Donald and Bennie Unruh were confirmed in Pawnee Rock Church, Kansas, on Easter Sunday, March 26, 1978, the Rev. Galen Unruh officiating.

EICHORST — Clifford Eichorst of Lake Oswego, Oregon, was confirmed into the faith and life of the New Church on Sunday, April 9, 1978, in Portland, Oregon, the Rev. Andre Diaconoff officiating.

WEDDING

ANDERSON — SEFTEL — Stephen Anderson and Kelly Seftel were married in the Church of the Good Shepherd, Kitchener, Ontario, on May 6, 1978, the Rev. Paul Zacharias officiating.

DEATHS

SHANER — Norman M. Shaner, Sr., of Dewey Beach, Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, a member of the Philadelphia Church, died on March 12, 1978.

STRAUB — Robert E. Straub of Lansdale, Pa., died on April 6, 1978. The resurrection service was held on April 9, the Rev. Richard H. Tafel officiating.

KROEKER — Mrs. Frank (Matilda) Kroeker, 89, of Great Bend, Kansas, died on April 11, 1978. A memorial service was held on April 13, the Rev. Galen Unruh officiating.

FLANDERS — Eva Mae Flanders was born in Pittsburgh, Pa., on October 22, 1880, and died in Van Nuys, Cal., on January 23, 1978. She lived many years in Chicago, Illinois, and was an active member of the Kenwood Parish. She was a sister of Mrs. Walter B. Murray.

TAFEL — Mrs. Immanuel (Margaret) Tafel, Chicago, Illinois, mother of the Rev. F. Robert Tafel, Washington D.C. died on April 19, 1978. An appropriate tribute will appear in the next *Messenger*.

BURNELL — Wallace R. Burnell of Fryeburg, Maine died on April 27, 1978. The resurrection service was held in Fryeburg on April 30, Mr. David Rienstra officiating.

WE GET LETTERS

A PLEA FOR HELP

Dear Editor:

Last fall I wrote a letter to the editor (Nov. '77, p. 236) requesting names and addresses of young people in the church so we can send them "Clear Blue Sky", the League publication. This letter was sent to all Convention ministers, and to the church president in those churches without a minister. I sent out 85 letters — and I am very discouraged to report that I got only 18 responses.

I would like to publicly thank the following people for taking the time to respond to my plea: Rev. Clayton Priestnal, Rev. Galen Unruh, Rev. Harold A. Taylor, Rev. Jerry Poole, Rev. Harold B. Larson, Mrs. Alice Van Boven, Rev. Erwin D. Reddekopp, Rev. Eric Allison, Mr. Dale McDonald, Rev. Paul Zacharias, Rev. Friedemann Horn, Rev. Kurt P. Nemitz, Rev. Ernest Frederick, Rev. Edwin G. Capon, Mrs. Helen Schellenberg, Rev. Eric J. Zacharias, Rev. Randy Laakko, and Mr. Michael Chaplin.

As for the rest of you . . . We are trying to bring our mailing list up to date, so please, **please** take a little time to dig up the addresses of the Leaguers in your area. If there aren't any young people from 13 through college - age in your church, a post card saying so will take you off my blacklist. But stop a moment before you dash off that post card, and think if there are any young people who **don't** attend regularly — how about that Christmas and Easter crowd? We especially want to reach those who aren't church - goers.

So let's do better on the second time around, o.k.?

And please note my new address:

Hopefully,
Trevor George Woofenden
"Clear Blue Sky" editor
168 Congdon Street,
Providence, R.I. 02906

Responses To The Martin Article

To The Editor:

The article entitled MARRIAGES AND WEDDINGS, published in the April issue of the MESSENGER, moves me to make the following reply:

Marriage, the most intimate of all human relationships, is the very fountain - head of human fulfillment here on earth, and in heaven as well. This sacred bond between a man and a woman should be cherished and preserved as one of life's most vital responsibilities. In an age of freedom and indiscriminate tolerance there is danger that the centrality of marriage will ultimately become displaced.

It may seem paradoxical to some, but a sublime truth when used to justify a deviation from divine order becomes an insidious falsity. It is most true that the quality of wedlock depends upon the inner spirit of the couple involved rather than on external rituals and behaviour. But when this same truth is used to make it seem acceptable, or morally right, for a man and woman to live together before a marriage ceremony takes place, it immediately is transformed into a rank falsity.

There is a proper order to be followed if the union between man and woman is to blossom into true conjugal love. To omit these progressive steps is to impair the unfoldment and growth of the most precious, fragile and intimate of all relationships. In heaven a definite procedure is observed when a couple meet and know by unerring intuition that they belong to each other. (See the chapter on betrothals and nuptials in Swedenborg's CONJUGIAL LOVE.) If heavenly marriages follow a divinely prescribed pattern, how much more important it is for those on earth to conscientiously adhere to proprieties, both sacred and secular, in order to establish a favorable environment in which the seeds of a spiritual union can flourish.

True, ceremonies, legal documents, and the benediction of a clergyman, do not insure marital purity and bliss. But to deliberately forego these external formalities encourages

those who enter into such a relationship to lose sight of the heavenly origin of conjugal love. This conclusion is not the judgment of churchmen alone; psychologists who study human behaviour and assess the social scene are generally agreed that couples living together out of wedlock, without a prior solemn commitment made in public, put their relationship under a severe handicap, and more often than not in jeopardy.

Should not the church, particularly the New Church which claims to possess unique insights into the divine origin of marriage love, be especially wary of following the wayward course of society which is notoriously unspiritual. For the church to compromise under public pressure, or from some other undue influence, the ideals which it is dedicated to promote and uphold is to diminish and even destroy its usefulness in the Kingdom of God.

Clayton Priestnal
New York, N.Y.

Dear Paul:

Kudos to John Harms for his article "Another Point of View" in the *Messenger*, April 1978.

He offers dignity and support according to the teachings of our Church to any woman, one of whose important positions is being the keeper of the conjugal.

Sincerely,
Marjorie E. Gale
Jamaica Plain, Mass.

To The Editor:

To say I was shocked at Rev. Ernest Martin's article on Marriages and Weddings, would be putting it mildly. When I think that Mr. Martin is a Marriage Counselor at Wayfarers' Chapel, I would suggest he reread *Conjugal Love* in its entirety, instead of using a sentence or two out of context, to suit his personal thinking.

At this day and age, when young people are looking for leadership and guidance, what better time than the present for parents and ministers to give them ideals to live up to. True, some children like to use the course of least resistance, but with love and a deep commitment to the teachings of the New Church much could be done to change their attitude.

I very much admire Mr. Harm's article, "Another Point of View," and I would suggest that copies be made and given to our young people at Retreats and Church Camps, where, I

have learned, the young people want and love instructions on pertinent questions.

True, the Lord forgives the children whose parents lacked the courage and fortitude to instruct them in the tenets of their church.

My experience has been, a greater respect is given to those who do not deviate from their principles and doctrines.

I trust this is "clear, concise, and to the point."

Garda Quis
Brooklyn, N.Y.

MY FAVORITE PRAYER

"O God, take possession of my heart and mind and body, that I may be filled with a sense of well - being.

Plant in me new seeds of faith, and stir me to cultivate my soul intelligently. Give me the sense and the strength to let go all the fears that make me tense . . . to shake my mind clear of the mistakes and disappointments of the past as I would shake the dust from my clothes. Give me the courage to plan and live in the spirit of adventure, and to be considerate of others without giving in too much to their demands.

Show me how to carry the knowledge and memories of responsibilities I must carry without being weighed down by them . . . how to enjoy my possessions without being possessed by them . . . how to outgrow the problems that are too complicated for me to solve.

When moods of uneasiness come upon me — whether distress because of my own or others' weaknesses, or discontent because of my own fate — show me how to accept them as passing moods . . . how to use them as springboards for decision.

Give me not only my daily bread, but the desire and the will to earn it. And in all my crusading for my rights and the needs of others, let me not neglect the hungers of the mind and spirit.

For all that I have been given and all that I have been spared, let my thanksgiving be expressed through my habitual poise and goodwill."

Dear Paul,

I found this prayer in one of Othmar's Bibles. I do not know if he wrote it, or if it had been copied from some unknown source. At any rate, it is a good prayer.

Margit Tobisch

THE UPPER ROOM

THE UNJUST JUDGE

Leon LeVan
St. Petersburg, Fla.

Earlier this year a Justice of the Supreme Court made the statement that up to half the judges sitting on the bench are incompetent. Such a statement turns our minds to the “unjust Judge” in the *Gospels*. It was Jesus who told us about that “unjust Judge” who lived in a “certain city”. Our Lord declared that the unjust Judge “did not regard God nor man,” but was eventually moved to do what was right by the persistent pleading of a widow who also lived in that city.

Whenever we seek the spiritual meaning of any portion of the Divine Word, we must transfer our thoughts instantly from some ancient historical setting to our own day and our own lives. Both the “city” and the “unjust Judge” are something real and relevant to us as we look for the spiritual meaning. Where is that “city” and who or what is its “unjust Judge?” Clearly that “city” does not refer to New York, London, Tokyo, or any similar community. The certain “city” is where you and I live in our thoughts. It is the “city of your mind.” It is the focus of your daily conscious thinking and willing. For practical purposes, we may think of the Scriptural “city” of which Jesus spoke as being our daily mental activity — our conscious mental life.

A “judge” in Scripture represents our power of choosing, our power of determining, our power of saying: “I will do this” or “I will not do that.” This particular “judge” is called “unjust” because every person living an unregenerate life invariably judges, thinks, and decides in favor of his own hereditary evils, his own natural ideas.

But there is also in the same “city” — in the same life — an otherwise unidentified “widow”. We think of that widow as a symbol of something good; for she kept going repeatedly to the judge petitioning for justice. Why? Because an “adversary” kept imposing on her.

Throughout the Scriptures there are two recurrent warnings from God to man. The one is to “judge righteous judgment.” The other is to “defend the widow.” As the “unjust judge” in our mind’s “city” symbolizes our thinking and choosing in favor of self, so the “widow”

represents our “love of truth” from God. Our “love of truth” keeps appealing to our judgment — to our thinking and willing — to make a true decision.

No man in an unregenerate state can think by Heavenly light. No man by nature alone is truly rational. Every person must expect his natural mind to be indifferent (and even hostile) to the welfare of his soul. The “widow,” our “love of truth,” pleads within us that we should regard both the Lord and His Kingdom; but our natural mind (our “unjust judge”) does not wish to hear.

Jesus said that the widow pleaded her cause urgently and persistently. She cried for true judgment “day and night.” “Day” is a state of clear thinking. “Night” is a state of obscurity. During states of both clearness and obscurity, our love of truth should seek our Heavenly Father. Jesus was only 12 years old when He said: “I must be about my Father’s business.”

When the widow came to the judge seeking justice, she said: “Avenge me of my adversary.” She was not seeking revenge. She was only seeking the rights of which the adversary had deprived her.

When our “love of truth” is persecuted by evils and falsities (as it must be when our characters are mixed) we look to our intelligence — our thinking faculty — to deliver us by choosing what is good and true.

“Seek ye the Lord while He may be found,” strikes a powerful blow against the indifference of our “unjust judge.” “Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth,” has power to make the “unjust judge” tremble. That is what Jesus was talking about. He was talking about your life and mine and how to change it. The “judge” finally decided to render a “righteous judgment.” He heeded the widow’s voice by judging in her favor and finally granting her petition. That is the decision that you and I must reach. It is the eternal voice of God in the souls of men. For even our natural thinking — our own natural intelligence — can presently be won to the Lord’s Kingdom if we heed the pleading of the “widow,” the love of truth in our souls.

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