

The Messenger

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH
JANUARY, 1979

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ON GROWING OLDER

"Truly, truly I say to you, 'When you were young, you girded yourself and walked where you would; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish to go.'" John 21:19

The beginning of a new year always gives one pause for reflection on the passage of time. January 1 is an artificial benchmark; from almost every point of view it is no more significant than any other day. But in this world we are trained to think in terms of time and space and measurements of all sorts, and so it is that January 1 takes on more than its fair share of freight. But the aging process has no power over us, except that which we give it. Literature Nobel Prize winner Isaac Singer recently made this delightful comment. He was asked, "What do you think of the youth today?" Reply: "The most important thing about the youth of today is that in 40 years they will all be old. Every day I become more like my father." And how do you feel about that?

In general we find that older people don't basically change all that much. For the most part they bring most of their habits and qualities of personality with them into old age. If we consciously work at developing a sound, wholesome outlook on life for the first 50 or 60 years, then the last 20 or so years are almost certain to be satisfying, full years.

It is essential to develop healthy attitudes toward old age while still in our younger years. The story is told about a little boy, his father, and grandfather sitting around a table, eating dinner. The grandfather accidentally breaks his plate, and his son is enraged, ordering him from the table, and makes him eat the rest of his meal, outside, from a wooden bowl. Later that day the father goes out into the yard where he finds his young son carving a piece of wood. The boy looks up with a beguiling, childish smile as he holds up a half-finished bowl and proudly says, "Look, Dad, I'm making this for you." Every generation, every age, has its own glory, its own promise, but so often we fail to see the contributions, the potentials, in ages other than our own.

Ideally, old age can be, and should be, one of the most satisfying and fulfilling periods of life. It depends so much on how we prepare for it. We all know so many people up in their 70's and 80's who are thoroughly enjoying life.

Many writers, artists, statesmen, composers have made their finest contributions in their golden years. Moses was well beyond pension age when he actively served the Lord. Michaelangelo was still painting masterpieces at 89. Goethe finished *Faust* when he was 82. Voltaire, Longfellow, Handel, and of course Swedenborg produced some of their finest works late in life.

In the spiritual world there is no awareness of the passing of time; instead we notice changes of our inner states. Instinctively we already know this to be a fact of life here, too.

Several months ago complimentary copies of *Our Daily Bread* were sent to all *Messenger* readers. As a result of this mailing, over one hundred new *Daily Bread* subscriptions have been received by the Swedenborg Book Center, 2129 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19103. This monthly Swedenborgian manual of devotions and meditation meets a deep spiritual need, both within and outside of Convention, and we commend it to your attention. The subscription rate is \$5.00 per year.

P. Z.

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Paul B. Zacharias, Editor

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The Starting Line ————— by Eric Zacharias

"And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh." Genesis 37:19

I was walking a winding pathway through dense forest. Towering trees stretched beyond my sight. It was warm. Streams of sunlight broke through the green foliage to cast a scene of exquisite beauty. The breeze was gentle and embracing. I looked about me. I was not alone. There were others and our steps moved in one direction only. We walked in silence — but, somehow, there was a joyous intimacy that drew us into closeness.

First, we heard the singing — scarcely audible, then, it burst into a great, jubilant chorus. Now, on looking back on all of this, I cannot recall a physical edifice at all. It was just that suddenly there were many of us joining together in a hymn of praise. The sun shone full upon us. When it was over, an air of hushed silence lingered, and then someone in a voice firm and calm, spoke of the Lord's presence in his life. Another prayed "Father, forgive me my sins — free me from all that holds me down and open my life so that it may respond to you more fully." Then, in one accord, harmoniously united in spirit, we all began to sing once again — with our faces lifted up into the sunlight.

Then, it was gone. On awakening, I cautiously reached out to touch that which was familiar. Where had I been? The buoyancy of the dream resisted the material world to which I had returned. For a moment, I lay quietly — letting the dream have its way for a time longer. The Lord God was so close; I waited for Him to call to me.

Then, thoughts began to flow. The act of worship is the heart of our spiritual life. It is here that what we are as growing persons in relationship to the Lord comes into focus. It is here that what we are as a church finds its expression.

I turned to the writings. "True worship consists in the performance of uses, thus in the exercises of charity. He who believes that serving the Lord consists solely in frequenting a place of worship, hearing preaching there, and praying, and that this is sufficient, is mistaken. The real worship of the Lord consists in performing uses." AC 7038

This is very logical, very practical — and very intellectual. My dream pushed me to something more. And I found it.

"The angels with the men were the same time in the Glorification of the Lord; hence those who sang, and those who heard the songs, had heavenly gladness . . . in which they seemed to themselves to be as it were carried up into Heaven . . . The reason the songs of the Church had this effect, was not only from the fact that gladness of the heart was made active by them, and that it broke forth from the interior even to the extreme fibers of the body, moving these with a glad and . . . a holy tremor; but also because the Glorification of the Lord in the Heavens is effected by choirs, and thus by the harmony of the many."

AC 8261

Our First Order of Service has been carefully thought through. Very logically, it leads us through an experience of worship. The majority of our congregations follow it or a modified version of it. Are we bound too much to it, thereby limiting the expression of spontaneous feelings in worship?

I have again read the chapter in *Heaven and Hell* titled, "Divine Worship In Heaven." What is a truly New Age worship experience? I have difficulty in conceiving this to be a congregation placidly seated in neat rows — listening to a preacher. This is one form and has its place. Worship attains its ultimate form in a life of uses — but, surely, there must also be a place for the unstructured, spontaneous outpouring of praise to the Lord wherever two or three are gathered together, for the sharing of that new life found in the Lord's forgiveness, His blessings and His grace. Surely, to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness is the finest privilege we have granted to us. "Let us make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before His presence with singing." Psalm 100.

May this new year of 1979 be one which brings all of us into the fullness of His joy.

NUNC LICET AND THE NEW AGE

by *Perry Martin*
Palos Verdes, Cal.

In his trumpet call to the new age, Swedenborg wrote "*Nunc licet* . . . Now it is permitted to enter with understanding into the mysteries of faith." Religion had become a matter of faith: you believed because you were taught by the church authorities.

The New Age is characterized by freedom and responsibility. In freedom we are to make responsible choices. We have left the garden of Eden. We have tasted of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. That first bite was the beginning of our journey away from blind obedience into a world of choice. Humans no longer lived like children with all their needs provided. We began our growth into adulthood. It is our ability to choose that makes us human beings in the image and likeness of God.

Now it seems as if we are being presented with more choices than we bargained for. Many of the old forms which the early 20th century took for granted are breaking down. Organized religion has lost the hold it had when non-believers were threatened with hellfire and damnation. The once stable communities, whether rural or urban, are no longer available to keep us in touch with our roots. My parents built a house after they were married, and they both died in that house. Now the average family moves every 5 years. I grew up in an extended family of cousins, uncles, and aunts as well as friends who were called cousins or uncles or aunts. My children grew up in a nuclear family far away from their other relatives. In 23 years we moved 6 times.

Customs are changing. Couples are living together without marriage licenses. We have choices about whether or not to have children. Divorce is increasingly frequent. Traditional female roles are being challenged. Our children are questioning the lifestyles and values we have taken for granted as being right and good.

Parents do their best to teach their children what is right and wrong. The child develops a conscience, which psychoanalysis labels a super ego, transactional analysis calls a Parent with a capital P, and Gestalt psychology refers to as "top dog." This conscience is formed mainly by the rules, prohibitions, and behavior the child learns from mother and father. As the conscience develops, the child no longer needs a

parent to decide right and wrong. S/he carries the parent inside, and when parental rules are broken, s/he is punished with feelings of guilt.

As we grow up, we need to start questioning for ourselves these attitudes we have absorbed. My mother taught me that it was all right to play with a black child in my back yard but not in the neighborhood. I was young, but I knew she was wrong.

The precepts that we accept without question are like food swallowed whole. We have not made them our own. In order to assimilate what is taught, we must tear it apart, break it down, examine it bit by bit, as we chew our food into minute morsels. In a sense, we have to destroy it before we can make it ours.

That process is a risky business. There is always the possibility that we may make mistakes. When I first began to make pottery, I had to learn to center the clay on the wheel. In order to make a pot, I then had to risk throwing that lump out of center in order to open it up and pull it up into a cylinder shape. When I learned to make a cylinder that was tall and round and good, I again had to risk destroying it to make it into a more beautiful finished shape that would be my creation. It had to be dried slowly, fired in a hot kiln where it might blow up if it is imperfect; it must be glazed (another opportunity to goof), and fired again. At every stage what has been made so far is subject to destruction in order to make it more beautiful and useful.

Everything that we have been taught we need to subject to scrutiny, tear it apart and put it back together before we understand it and it becomes our own to use. The danger when we fail to do this is that we feel threatened by changing customs. We fear our whole foundation is threatened. We cannot question a Commandment or a ritual or an accepted custom or a paragraph in Swedenborg, because we do not truly know what it means. We are like Robert Frost's neighbor who keeps saying, "Good fences make good neighbors." Frost wanted to ask him, "Isn't that where there are cows? Here there are no cows." But the neighbor will not listen to questions, and he maintains his stance "like an old - stone savage armed. He moves in darkness." We need to know what we are fencing in or out or we move in darkness, armed and ready to react defensively.

Those of us who were brought up in the church or who have been in it for a long time like to refer fondly to our teachings. We like to

talk with enthusiasm about the New Age or the New Jerusalem. But we are as quick as any to decry change, wail that the world is going to the dogs, and to assume that what has been is what should be. But actually these changes offer us an opportunity; we are freed up from taking our past assumptions for granted, and it is our responsibility to find better ones.

We often complain that our ministers or Sunday Schools do not make us understand our church teachings. We may read the green thirty from cover to cover, but until we grapple with the questions of our time, we do not know what we believe. Abortion? Pre-marital sex? Capital punishment? Welfare? Smoking? Women's lib? What makes these right or wrong? There are no simple answers in TCR or

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

We like to speak proudly of Swedenborg's teaching that we are to act in freedom according to reason. We are happy to encourage fundamentalist Christian friends to question the literalism of the Bible stories or their concept of the trinity. Are we willing to question our own faith and our own beliefs? Or is the religion we learned at our mother's knee like food swallowed whole? Such an inherited religion provides us little nourishment or stamina to cope with our changing world. Swedenborg challenges us to figure out for ourselves what makes right and wrong. When we accept that challenge we will be ready for the New Age. And that age is coming whether we are ready or not.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

*by Clayton Priestnal
New York, N.Y.*

In writing about Emanuel Swedenborg on the 291st anniversary of his birth, we do not seek to glorify his person, exemplary as it was, but rather to place before you the use to which he was called by the Lord.

The faith of the New Church is drawn exclusively from the Word of God as interpreted in the light of the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. This Church firmly believes that Swedenborg was granted unique insights and revelations in order that men might understand more fully the spiritual resources available to them in the Sacred Scripture.

We are quite aware that when one who is unfamiliar with the teachings of the New Church is introduced to the writings of Swedenborg he comes at once face to face with a claim which more often than not proves to be too great a strain on his credulity. Here was a man who openly declared that for a period of over twenty - seven years he was permitted by the Lord to experience the life of the spiritual world, while fully conscious and in complete control of his rational faculties. When confronted with such an astounding assertion most readers put Swedenborg aside with some disparaging remark, such as: "The man suffered from hallucinations; he was obviously mentally unbalanced." And the fact that much of what he wrote challenged long - accepted

and cherished beliefs touching virtually every phase of the Christian life does not help to make him more acceptable. We should not by any means ignore the fact that Swedenborg does present to the average reader a serious problem. There are criteria, however, by which anyone who has a sincere desire to know the truth can test the validity of the teachings of the New Church.

Emanuel Swedenborg was one of the most eminent scientists of his day; a man highly regarded in the learned academies of Europe; a scholar in many fields of research; one who moved in the most exclusive intellectual circles in Sweden, the Netherlands, France and England. He was a distinguished statesman who sat for many years in the House of Nobles of the Swedish Diet; his counsel was sought by the political leaders of his native country.

Influential scholars have ranked him among the six or seven most remarkable geniuses who ever lived. These facts are a matter of record and can be verified by consulting impartial encyclopedias, scientific journals and biographies. In the face of such evidence one cannot count himself a searcher for truth and at the same time dismiss Swedenborg as the victim of some aberration. His established reputation for learning and integrity, earn him at least the right to be heard without prejudgment.

The Holy Scripture is the mainspring of all spiritual knowledge. Yet it is admittedly a source of much bewilderment because of its bizarre figurative language, scientific inaccuracies, and contradictions. Certainly men sense that there is far more in the Word of God than meets the eye. It is the teaching of the New Church that the key to the interpretation of the Scripture is based on the fact that every single object in the natural world is an outward symbol, or projection, of some state of the human spirit. The visible earth around us is an image or likeness of the inner world of the soul. Poets and a few philosophers have sensed to a limited degree this relationship between things observable in nature and the unseen qualities of the mind of man.

The symbolism found in ancient mythology indicates that at one time a knowledge of this correspondence was generally known and accepted. If the Lord saw the need to re-establish the lost understanding of the inter-relatedness of the spiritual world with the natural world, it is logical to assume He would do it through an individual who possessed a thorough and catholic knowledge of the physical universe.

Emanuel Swedenborg was such a person. It has been stated by a prominent syndicated newspaper man, who had no direct interest in the New Church, that no other man in history mastered so completely as many branches of science, philosophy and religion as Swedenborg did. Since in revealing His will to man the Lord operates through the instrumentality of human beings, it must follow that the Divine has to use the quality and quantity of knowledges possessed by those individuals. The spiritual laws which were imparted to Swedenborg could not have been revealed to him without his first having made intensive studies in practically all of the fields of learning of his day. A study of his life will enable the perceptive reader to trace the guiding hand of Divine Providence in a long and arduous preparation for a unique mission. From years of study and practical experience in the fields of mineralogy, mathematics, physiology, psychology and philosophy, he turned, when well over fifty years of age, to the problem of the relationship between the soul and the body. It was only then that the Lord deemed him ready to explore the laws and realms of the spiritual world.

Whatever system of philosophy or theology one attempts to evaluate, the final judgment should not rest upon one or two isolated truths but upon the coherence, the interdependence of

all of its parts. To immediately declare that Swedenborg's intromission into the spiritual world was utterly impossible without first knowing what he has to say about it and its laws is to pass judgment before all of the evidence has been presented. So interrelated and interdependent are the doctrines of the New Church that one can hardly deny a single one of them without rejecting them all. Can one, then, seriously maintain that a man who was deranged could evolve a system of theology which is consistent and reasonable throughout. Where in the history of the human race does one find such an instance?

The real test of any religious philosophy is its effectiveness in the development of the highest potentialities of the soul through a life of useful activity. There are so-called Christian doctrines which if followed to the letter would in the end prove most dangerous to the spiritual life. If, for example, one actually held to the popular belief that salvation consists of nothing more than a simple act of faith, an acknowledgement of the power of Jesus to save by a mere act of grace, what might be the consequences? An individual could lead an unexamined life, a life of consuming ambition and self-love, with the expectation that as he clung to the last tenuous threads of this mortal life he could profess his belief in Christ as his Saviour, then take his last breath in peace and enter into life eternal with the angels of heaven.

Some Christians sincerely believe that the prayers of men can alter the destiny of those who have already passed beyond the sights and sounds of this sorrow-sodden earth. Others are equally affirmative in the belief that the true way of life is to close the eyes to all evil, disease and disorders, to deny their very existence. These are but several out of innumerable tenets commonly held which can be destructive, or at least detrimental, to the proper growth of the soul. **But take any doctrine of the New Church you choose and you will find that if understood and faithfully followed it would lead to a broadening of one's spiritual horizons,** to a fuller realization of all the implications of the Christian life. But a mind closed by prejudice will be unable to test the validity of our doctrines by applying them to life.

The universality, the ecumenicity of the teachings found in the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg should not be overlooked as a further criterion of their authenticity. The New Church holds as a fundamental tenet that what is required of each individual, whether he be Christian, Jew, Mohammedan, Buddhist or

plain heathen, is a life of obedience to what he sincerely believes to be the highest truth. No theology can claim universality which does not have this unalterable fact incorporated in its underlying principles. By this we do not imply that it does not really matter what one believes. The simple faith and limited knowledge of childhood may be quite adequate for the plastic years of adolescence. **But mature adulthood demands additional truths**, truths more fully developed, with which to meet the far more perplexing problems of life. There should be a growing, an expanding mind in each individual, otherwise the spirit will eventually become stunted and increasingly unable to cope with the demands of a complex society. Man should live according to the truth he has, and this is all the Lord expects of him, but he should be constantly looking for higher truths which can stir within him his latent capacities for spiritual discernment and growth. The universality of the doctrines of the New Church gives a person these powers far beyond those promulgated by any other religious body, or so we believe and declare. Thus we invite a comparison between the doctrines of our church and the theology of any other denomination in the light of reason, in the light of the Scripture, and in the test of life.

The above or any other criteria we might suggest for testing the validity of our teachings may not in themselves be sufficient to convince the skeptical. In the end the great imponderables of faith are not accepted by ocular proof, or reason alone, but by an internal acknowledgment or assent. The person who has a passionate desire to know the Lord's will and is ready to remove from his nature all of the qualities which interfere with his whole-hearted response to the Lord's love will say when he hears a particular doctrine: **"That is the truth, therefore I will live according to it."**

Real faith is an acknowledgement of a thing because it is true. This inner perception is not dependent upon worldly scholarship; it is given by the Lord to those with loving hearts.

To all those who feel disposed to reject the teachings of the New Church because of their incredulity, I ask these four simple Questions:

Can you direct me to a theology which gives a fuller knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ in His Divine Humanity?

Can you show me an exposition of the Scripture which demonstrates more convincingly than does the New Church that the Book is truly the divinely inspired Word of God?

Have you found a more reasonable explanation of the spiritual laws of the universe than is found in the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg?

Have you knowledge of a religious philosophy which presents more vividly and completely the requirements of a useful Christian life?

We of the New Church are most grateful to the Lord for the truths He has revealed to us through His servant Emanuel Swedenborg. The possession of the means of entering with the understanding into the mysteries of faith carries with it added responsibility. Now we can know the Lord better, see more clearly His will, be more familiar with the laws of His Divine Providence, and what He desires us to do. Such knowledge increases our obligation to live according to what we know. To do this is no easy task, of course, but the blessings it brings are great and enduring; we experience the exquisite delight of serving others with wisdom and compassion.

CLARIFICATION OF OUR NEWTONVILLE STORY

Our intent (in the December issue) was not to portray Mrs. Carter as the last living member of the Newtonville Society — but as the last living member of an early generation of the Newtonville Church.

We in Newtonville are a working, viable, active group that meets regularly for worship. In the past few years we have been host for the Swedenborg Birthday celebration in the Boston area.

SPECIAL ISSUE

We invite contributions on the theme:

"Holistic Health and Healing"

for a special issue on this subject.

Deadline: March 5, 1979

THE CONNECTING POINT

by Gwynne Dresser Mack
Pittsfield, New Hampshire

THE GREATEST NEED

Does human nature change? Does history repeat itself? If the answer to the second question is "yes", then the answer to the first is "no" — for the history of people on earth is the record of the tendencies of human nature and their effects, good and bad. The existence of mankind is punctuated with tendencies toward greed, aggression, and violence — in this 20th century as much as in Old Testament and medieval times.

The anthropologist Margaret Mead has said that primitive tribes in out - of - the - way places have no juvenile delinquency, because tribal authority is absolute, and obedience to it is the way of life consistently impressed by adults upon their children. Is this simple ordered conformity inferior to our "progress" which is so tainted by neglect of children and crime among all ages?

Prehistoric man has been imagined to represent the human race in its crudest stage, until archeological diggings found sophisticated carvings and sculptures created 30,000 years ago by the Cro - Magnons of an ice - age! So perhaps actually they were much like today's people (and others before or since their centuries here). These skillfully executed artifacts made from mammoth bones and tusks, surviving from dim prehistory, are extraordinary evidence of human expression as capable then as now.

Babies are born without one scrap of knowledge in their minds; they have to begin from nothing, as did their ancestors, learning by means of inherited tendencies reappearing through milleniums of individuals. Thus every generation born for eternal life must start in the same way: with a raw supply of human nature, and a necessity for acquiring knowledge according to current customs - by using whatever tendencies have been passed along. Since history, as records clearly show, does repeat itself, and since humans create history, it seems that indeed human nature does not change.

We are not born "equal", however; we are born "unique", individually different although within a definite group which has tendencies in

common setting it apart from gorillas, pelicans, jellyfish, and every other form of life. What, then, is the meaning of it all? Where does human performance stop running parallel to animal existence? It stops at the point where beyond the instinctive impulses of human nature something more is functioning.

The "something more" is that special part of creation which we call the human spirit. Within this spirit is freedom of will which is the control for human nature. We **can** if we **will**, decide not to follow the sudden impulse. Being "born again" — that is, starting to regenerate — is the process of stepping up from the level where human nature dominates to that of the human spirit where God is. This does not reform any - one overnight, nor give any sudden merit. It simply turns us in the right direction and connects with the Divine Power by which we may control tendencies. These do not change, but can become ordered and disciplined according to the change which is **development of the spirit**.

The human spirit within each generation can and does improve itself, thereby fulfilling God's plan for an affinitive and eternal, ever - growing family. Created by Him to give as well as to receive love, this family develops by individual choice into His own image and likeness. It is an awe - inspiring reflection of one of His aspects — the one which we call "infinity" — that every person is unique, no two in all of existence exactly the same; yet each fits if he so desires, precisely into the overall design for the growth of God's Heaven. The human race is like a jig - saw puzzle: each piece different from all the others and meaningless until fitted into its own particular place in relation to the organized whole.

This is an individual effort and commitment, a personal connection with the Lord which must be continual, not just occasional, if spiritual control is to become permanent. The need for it is greater than for anything else so that, whatever we may pray for from day to day, we must especially and most frequently talk with God about the progress of our spiritual selves. Someone has written that "the

human spirit is stronger than anything that can happen to it"; but this is true only if the spirit stays in contact with its Creator. "Pray without ceasing" said the apostle Paul.

Through the centuries there have been basic knowledges used for a period of time but gradually forgotten, then re-discovered. Meditation, as practiced by the wise ones of milleniums past, has been coming to the fore again — but for everyone now, although not always with the same approach or focus. It is an attempt to receive enlightenment, which varies according to whether it is searched for within self or beyond.

In the voluminous "readings" collected from the notebooks of Edgar Cayce (famous psychic healer during the first half of this century), "meditation" is equated with "healing" since both bring body, mind and soul into harmony. To meditate in any sustained way, one has to relax all over, excluding sensory stimuli from the mind's attention and thus activating mental control of the body.

Prayer is a form of meditation insofar as it does more than just ask. True meditation

ponders, questions, and in prayer — if the mind is enough relaxed and humbled — receives an influx of answers from the Divine Wisdom which is listening.

At present people are fond of saying "The world has changed; things are different now." This becomes an excuse for all sorts of erratic behaviour, especially in regard to personal freedom and rights. Customs, knowledge, beliefs do change; not the world, but people's activities in the world. Yet always and forever there is that which never changes: the spiritual Truth concerning Divine Laws governing the universe. Only the individual spirit can know this Truth and, if willing, pursue and incorporate it into life. From meditative prayer grows perception, and with it comes obedience to Divine Order.

Then a wonderful experience takes place. The upreach of the human spirit enables it to regenerate through connecting its unchangeable human nature with the Divine Nature which also does not change! Within this miracle rests the secret of immortality.

STRETCHING YOUR MIND

by **Bess Foster Smith**
Weiser, Idaho

If you feel a need to exercise and stretch your mind, as you do your muscles, read the poem, "Creation", written by James Welden Johnson. It sent me looking for the way others have tried to express their thoughts on the subject.

I find a great many of our great thinkers believe that creation is "Unfinished Business." It is still going on and we are responsible for some of it — perhaps I should say, much of it.

Alan Devoe, a well known naturalist, describes creation as "the perpetual flow of the essence tumbling and pouring from creative sources into all manner of forms and infinite variety — of which man is the only thinking part."

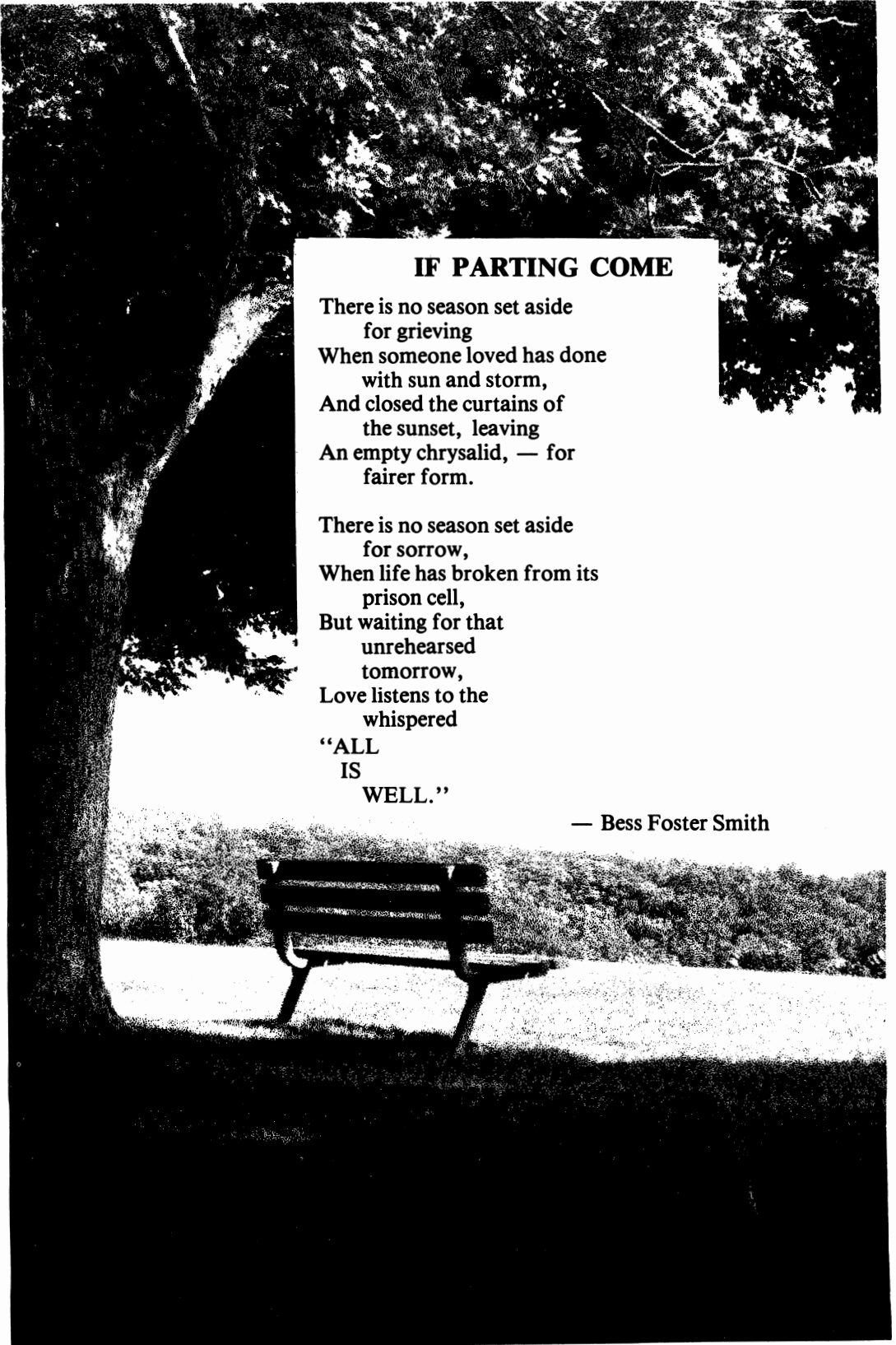
Swedenborg, an 18th century seer, called God "The Great One" creating from Himself and not from nothing. He calls mankind "The Little Ones" who are choosing and creating their own small universe with God-like power. God's inhaling and exhaling breath in a kind of rhythm keeps the universe alive, as our own

breath keeps us and our small world alive. Everything we do creatively is in correspondence to God.

Alfred North Whitehead, one of the world's greatest scientists, whose work I do not pretend to understand, speaking of creation as now going on, calls events that have not yet happened "eternal objects" — they are of infinite possibility. When a choice is made by the thinking mind of man, (like making a computer, airplane or symphony), combinations of these eternal objects are put together by that choice and become "actualizations". He says the combination of man's choices, thoughts, and desires create these actualizations. There is no limit to this process. ...

A more readable book for most of us is one written by Margaret Blair Johnson called *Creating Your Own Tomorrow* — it seems to express ideas much like those of the great scientist but clothed in more every day language. She says we can, if we look, "Find every bush and tree on fire with God", or, she says, we also have the ability to blindly and thoughtlessly destroy ourselves.





IF PARTING COME

There is no season set aside
for grieving
When someone loved has done
with sun and storm,
And closed the curtains of
the sunset, leaving
An empty chrysalid, — for
fairer form.

There is no season set aside
for sorrow,
When life has broken from its
prison cell,
But waiting for that
unrehearsed
tomorrow,
Love listens to the
whispered

“ALL
IS
WELL.”

— Bess Foster Smith

(We are delighted to share these fine contributions from Bess Foster Smith, 91, with Messenger readers. Ed.)



Marion Priestnal, Editor

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE WOMEN'S ALLIANCE:

Greetings from your new President!

I start my term as President of the Alliance with strong feelings of humility and inadequacy, and the hope that with the assistance and prayers of all the members I can fulfill my duties.

I am good at carrying out the ideas and plans of others, although I am not an originator myself. So if any of you out there can think of things the Alliance might do to help Convention, our individual churches, our communities or each other, please let me know. I am open to all suggestions.

I would hope that we might all learn more about our church and its teachings, reach out in love to our own members and those outside our group, and so live that others will know we are followers of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Dorothy B. Farnham

Once each year we publish a list of the current officers and their addresses.

ALLIANCE OF NEW CHURCH WOMEN

President: Mrs. Alan W. Farnham (Dorothy B.)
318 W. Palmetto Avenue
DeLand, Florida 32720

1st Vice Pres.: Mrs. Donald R. Saul (Mareta)
1575 N. Dorn Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22304

2nd Vice. Pres.: Mrs. Douglas Gilchrist (Jean)
12020 - 60th Street
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
T5W 3Z5

Secretary: Mrs. Alice L. Dullea
101 Huntington Street
Brockton, Mass. 02401

Treasurer: Mrs. Robert W. Tafel (Doris)
115 Treaty Rd.,
Drexel Hill, Pa. 19026

Mite Box Chairman: Miss Margaret S. Sampson
330 East 84th Street
New York, New York 10028

Religious Chairman: Mrs. Alice P. Van Boven
446 Chestnut Avenue
Redlands, California 92373

Round Robin Chairman: Mrs. Jean Heyden Hoyt
12942 Third Street
Yucaipa, California 92399

Publications Chairman: Mrs. Clayton S. Priestnal (Marion)
112 East 35th Street
New York, New York 10016

The New York Ladies Aid Society A Brief Report

During the past year our Ladies Aid group has sponsored a number of programs for the benefit and enjoyment of this Society as well as for those beyond our local membership.

Last February, to commemorate Swedenborg's birthday a special luncheon and program were arranged by the Ladies Aid Society at which Dr. Friedemann Horn was guest speaker.

We finance and are hostesses for the weekly Coffee Hour, which follows the Sunday service and provides an excellent opportunity for both light and serious conversation for all present. Frequently at this time one sees our pastor surrounded by a group of young members and visitors who are eagerly asking questions as well as exchanging opinions about what they believe.

Our recent mini-bazaar, held on two Sundays after church, is an annual event which helps to swell our Treasury. On alternate years we open it to the public also, on a Saturday in early December.

Several Ladies Aid members regularly attend the Sunday morning discussion group. Last January we began the study of **The Structure of New Church Teachings** by Alan Grange; and this fall we are reading and discussing **True Christian Religion** and discovering how much there is to know.

A project originated by one member of the Ladies Aid Society is the Reading Room, open to the public on Tuesdays and Thursdays and attended by one of our members.

We have pledged to contribute regularly to the expense of maintaining the organ; each year we send a sizeable contribution to the national Alliance to be used in summer camp programs, and we were glad to be able to contribute to the Building Fund of the Fryeburg Sunday School Annex.

In the By Laws of our Ladies Aid organization our purpose is stated thus: "The objects of this organization are to further the interests of the church, to assist in its charitable efforts, and to cultivate a spirit of love and goodwill."

Jessie Selee and Garda Quis

ARE WE CONTEMPORARY?

In a periodical published for church administrators recently, this title caught our eye:

HOW CONTEMPORARY IS YOUR CHURCH?

The writer proposed a series of questions. The reader was to check an answer; then read a description of the "right" answer to see how his church measured up. If you are not "contemporary" apparently you are not in the picture at all. A - ha! we said, maybe we will learn something. Following are some of the questions included in the questionnaire. Your editor attempted to answer for the New Church but finally consigned the questionnaire to the waste - basket. You might like to see what other churches are thinking about:

1. Q. Has your congregation prepared a written statement of purpose or aim?

A. Yes — More than one hundred years ago!

2. Q. Is your congregation wide open to the acceptance of new members?

A. Yes — We have always been.

3. Q. Are your members here because they have chosen this church as their own, rather than because of family connections?

A. There is a healthy mixture; perhaps weighted in most societies toward descendants of earlier members.

4. Q. Is your congregation generally optimistic and expectant rather than apathetic?

Here we felt the need to qualify the answer. In the New Church at present we seem cautious about expressing optimism. Are we affirmative? It seems to have gone out of style to be clearly affirmative about who we are and what we believe.

Of course these qualities can still be found — but not everywhere. The fresh winds of change need to blow, bringing new hope, trust and affirmation. Low score on this question, we felt.

5. Q. Is there a predominant and pervasive spirit of joy abroad in your church?

A. No — But there could be. Easily! Perhaps we have forgotten how wonderful are the ideas which we have and how joyously they would color our hopes and shape our lives — if we would allow them to.

6. Q. Are women treated as fully equal with men in your Church?

A. Yes. Thanks to our teachings we know that the unique contributions of both men and women are needed in every situation, and are equal tho' distinctive.

7. Q. Are individual members of your church active in a "ministry to the world?" The writer of the questionnaire explains: "Do people live the Christian ethic in their daily work?"

A. Yes — This is the very essence of New Church teachings; that charity is best expressed by the individual in his daily work. "All religion has relation to life".

Is this what they are calling contemporary? We have been believing and doing all these things for 150 years!

8. Q. Does your church strongly affirm the Holy Spirit at work rather than relying too heavily on the authority of the Scripture? (The questionnaire writer explains: "The **contemporary** Christian church teaches, preaches and practices an **orthodox doctrine of the trinity.**")

A. **Then by that particular criteria we are not "contemporary", and we do not want to be. We had thought that many churches were now liberated from the untenable doctrine of the trinity.**

The questionnaire author goes on to explain: "The contemporary church teaches the Bible as a means to an end".

To what end? we wanted to reply. The phrasing of that comment somehow sounds derogatory, almost like a deprecating of Scripture, as though the Scripture were not valuable in itself. Perhaps we misinterpreted.

"HOW DOES YOUR CHURCH RATE?" asks the author of the questionnaire — meaning, do the answers as a whole indicate that you are "contemporary"?

If **CONTEMPORARY** means progressive in teachings and in our way of looking at life's meaning and life's problems then this editor feels that in the New Church we are way out ahead. In the particular questions (not all are given here) where our answer would have been "NO", questions like: "do you have movable furniture in your sanctuary?"; "do you have several types of ministry in a parish?", etc., we feel that either the question being asked is trivial or irrelevant; or that saying "YES" to it is the equivalent of deciding to spend lots of money not too wisely.

But on the basic, important questions we are not only up - to - date but eons ahead. How can we let people know this? How can we tell the world that we are not only contemporary but that even in this "en - lightened" era, many of our ideas are in fact **NEW**? Somehow we should be able to do this. But we have not succeeded. Any suggestions? Advertising in a different way? More pamphlets? Radio scripts? What should we do? How can we find the way?

Our difficulties are not in the tenets of our teaching, but in our failure to communicate the ideas.

M.P.

THE WOMEN'S SERVICE CLUB OF DE LAND

Our women's group has a membership of about 25, fifteen of whom live nearby and the rest are scattered throughout Florida and the southeastern United States. Non - residents contribute generously of money and goods for the yard sale which is held annually in late October or early November.

By means of this, we raise between \$300 and \$400 each year to help in financing various church projects. Among the things we have helped to finance are: installing a soundproof door between the kitchen and the family room where we hold our services, installing two rest rooms, remodelling an abandoned building for Sunday School rooms, buying two new stoves for the kitchen, painting the inside of the cottage, reroofing the buildings, and the purchase of a riding lawn mower. We are now working on earning enough to paint the living and dining rooms of the house.

Our members do all the cooking and meal - planning for the Conferences and other meetings held in DeLand. We are helped enormously by the husband of one of our group who is our Chief Cook. This is a second source of income for our church.

We have no study group since we all participate in the discussion meeting held each Sunday after church.

Once a month one of our members bakes a birthday cake for all those who have birthdays during that month, and this is served during the coffee hour after church. On other Sundays, various members bring cookies or cake for the same purpose. This is a dedicated, loving and supportive group of women, members of a larger family.

From Far - Away Lands . . .

It is nice to know that our efforts here in the United States reach out to distant places, and that what we have done to raise funds and the uses to which we allocate these funds may someday have an effect on people we will never know or see, but who may nevertheless become our truest kin. The following letters have come as expressions of appreciation.

619 South Main Street
 Urbana, Ohio 43078
 August 18, 1978

Mrs. W. Farnham
 President
 Alliance of New Church Women
 318 W. Palmetto Avenue
 DeLand, Florida 32720
 Dear Mrs. Farnham,

I acknowledge with immense gratitude the cheque for the amount of \$1,319.41 given to me by the Alliance of the New Church Women in the U.S. and Canada. I shall use it for the prosperity of the church in Nigeria.

I appreciate and will always remember your kindness.

Thanks and may God bless you all.

Sincerely yours,
 Joseph Agbaje

Kwasi Agbemador
 Wood Complex Kaasi Ltd.
 P.O. Box 8738
 Ahensan — Jumais
 Ghana — W. Africa
 September 28, 1978

Dear Mrs. Farnham,

I have just received a letter from Mr. T. H. Spiers, Executive Secretary, Swedenborg Foundation stating that the Alliance of New Church Women has provided the cost of mailing to me a complimentary copy of A DICTIONARY OF BIBLE IMAGERY for my use here.

I sent my sincere thanks to the Alliance of New Church Women for their kind gesture and hope they will continue to help the Foundation and myself so that the Message presented would widely be disseminated in Ghana also.

May the Almighty God Bless the Alliance of New Church Women in their undertakings.

My warm greetings,

Yours faithfully,
 K. Agbemador.

During the Women's League Convention in Mamelodi, Pretoria, last September, Eulalia Mooki took the delegates on a sight - seeing tour of the Union Buildings. While they were there, a Mrs. Liebenberg, an Afrikaner who was also looking around "fell in love", as Obed Mooki writes, with the uniforms of the women's League and started to take pictures. Subsequently she sent copies and the negatives to the Mookis. Here is one which shows Eulalia in the front line of her "troops", smiling the broad and beautiful smile that we all recall with joy.



A COMMUNITY OF DISCOVERY

THE NEW CHURCH COLLEGE

*by Matthew Zacharias
Manchester, England*

Together we live. Together we learn. Together we grow. Of course, this isn't always true, but to the extent that we do live together, the other two miracles seem to follow along naturally.

This year there are five students at the New Church College in Manchester, England. Two of us live on the premises, the other three live out. Two of these are a married couple, Ruth and Julian Duckworth. Julian is in his third year of training for the ministry. Ruth, his wife, is taking the one year course that the College is offering for the first time this year. Richard Keyworth, the other ordination student, is in his first year of training. He and his wife and three children have recently arrived from New Zealand. David Fitzjohn, a graduate art student, and myself are two others who are taking the one - year course.

The New Church College has undergone a radical transformation in the past five years, when the former College in the outskirts of London was sold. Ian Johnson kept the College together for the next two or three years until the present building was purchased. With the acquisition of the new site, the New Church College has begun a new phase under the leadership of Michael Stanley.

Today the College is free to grow and develop anew. The attitude of the College does indeed reflect the attitude of its students and tutors; there is nothing else that overshadows this spirit. For example, if over mid - morning coffee break the topic of conversation runs to something of interest to all, the scheduled lecture waits until the subject at hand is finished.

There are two breaks a day shared together in the common room over a cup of coffee or tea. A mid - day meal is prepared by a gourmet cook who hasn't yet prepared two meals even vaguely resembling each other! Yet the quality remains excellent. Everyone in the building comes together for this meal.

The days of the week seem to be split so that we have a different tutor for every day of the week. Monday Chris Hasler comes from



New Church College
Manchester, England

Derby, 80 miles distant. Tuesday Norman Ryder comes from Chester (the old Roman Walled City) 50 miles to the west. Every third week Herbert Mongredien comes from the south coast of England to teach two full days, Wednesday and Thursday. Fridays are Michael's days, although he teaches courses here and there all week since he's always around.

Every week there is a time set aside for open discussion. It seems as though this is just a continuation of whatever is in the air at that time. We often voice our ideas on the importance of the Church and how we see it taking shape in the future. The one year students are in a unique position in that they can give candid opinions on how they react to the Church's approach to "outsiders". The problem of how to "reach out" to others is turned over and over in our minds. (The author finds no problem in this but the Church as a whole must; as declining numbers point out only too clearly).

The College is in a very early stage of rebirth, in one sense. On the one hand the faculty members teach the things that have always been taught in New Church colleges, but on the other hand everyone here is very well aware of the elements of change that are needed in order for the Church to continue effectively into the New Age with ever increasing light.

The importance of working together as **one community** is gradually being realized. It is in this atmosphere where the individual can grow. This growing of the individual is the element that creates community with other people as well. Community results as we understand ourselves more fully.

Religious communities spring up in ever increasing numbers around the world as the leaders who start these new groups grasp more and more deeply the Universal truth in themselves. Communities spring spontaneously from one individual's perception of truth. But what the Lord wants us to realize is that He is the **only leader** that can give us the guidance we need and the perception we seek. We cannot place our trust in anyone except the Lord (though as if from ourselves). We have to trust ourselves too, realizing all the while that it is the Lord who leads us. Community results in the **true belief** of our own convictions. In challenging others with petty arguments of doctrinal belief we are actually voicing the doubts within ourselves. When will people be ready to chuck out their antagonizing approaches to others? When will people realize, and act accordingly, that the differences between us are what make us real and beautiful in the Lord's sight? In accepting people's differences we simply clear the fog that has hidden a part of ourselves we never knew was there! Everyone has a place in us if we would only be tolerant and patient enough to let that place be discovered. The angels of heaven form together into the body of the Grand Man. Every part of that body is a heaven on a smaller scale. Every angel in the last part is a heaven in miniature.

In launching the one - year programme the New Church College feels it is taking the first step toward meeting the needs of people who are not intending to become ministers, but who wish to serve the Church in some useful, unique function not previously defined. The reason for taking the course might simply be to further an understanding of the church in yourself. The reasons are as varied as the number of people who sign up for it. There is no doubt that in taking the year course one receives an uncomparable insight into the workings of the organized church.

Through a specially designed programme such as this, the Church can grow. Courses needn't last for a whole year. Wouldn't it be great to have an on - going study center to go to at any time during the year for as long or as brief a time as you wanted? It strikes me as

bearing a remarkable resemblance to heaven! Should we not take seriously the teaching that this whole life on earth is but a training ground, a seminary for the next? The learning arrangements are for us to create.

The church must move in this direction if it is to remain meaningful and also reach out to people "out there" who have lost touch and are seeking for the church's new message in the world today.

MUST WE ALL THINK ALIKE?

If you and I are both guided by the Lord, how can we disagree? What's wrong?

There may be nothing wrong! The Lord can give us each some perception, according to the truths from which our understanding is formed. But neither of us has the complete truth, and so our insights may differ. "People may have conscience from any doctrine whatever, . . ." Swedenborg tells us (In *Arcana Coelestia* 2831.2), but that does not make them infallible. Your conscience is right for you at the moment. It enables the Lord to lead you along your path to Heaven, and to use you in leading others along their paths. And the same with me. Our disagreement need not matter. Indeed it may be useful in enabling us each to grow in understanding and sympathy. The Lord wants variety in His Heaven.

It will be wrong, of course, if one of us despises the other's guidance, or tries to show off his superiority in argument, or puts cruel pressure on the other to change. But then that will not be following the Lord's guidance any longer! Rather should both humbly think again, to see whether he can learn from the other.

Our disagreement may cause us pain. It may mean we cannot work together. We may get angry (in a certain sense) as Jesus got angry with His disciples. I think we have to accept that this is all necessary to growth in heavenly life. One of the most difficult lessons we have to learn is that people who disagree deeply with us — in beliefs and actions — may still be true servants of the Lord, worthy of our respect and love. When we have learned that lesson, our anger and pain at disagreements will be less. Our trust in the Lord will be greater.

Conference "Lifeline"

STUDY OUTLINE

ALLIANCE OF NEW CHURCH WOMEN

*Alice Van Boven
Riverside, California*

It was suggested that this year a study outline of the New Testament parables be prepared. I regret that I have been so long in getting it started. I find there are too many parables to cover in a one - year outline for the Alliance, so I decided to use those that are in Matthew, (although some are also in other Gospels). Another year we can use those that are in Luke but not in Matthew.

Reference material can be found in the following:

Parables of the New Testament by Edward Craig Mitchell, published in 1888 by the New Church Board of Education.

The Sower Volume IV or the older *Sower Notes*.

Dole Notes, Volume IV.

Also Clowes, *The Gospel According to Matthew*

The House On The Rock And On The Sand Matt. 7 : 24 - 27 (also in Luke 6 : 47 - 49)

Mitchell pp. 27 - 36 *The Sower*, Vol. IV page 67 *Dole Notes* Vol. IV pages 324 and 327. See also *Apocalypse Explained*, 644d (24)

Here, showers and rivers mean temptations, in which man conquers or yields. Waters mean the falsities that usually come to us in temptation. The winds that blow and beat are the thoughts that come from the falsities (induced by evil spirits). The house is the mind of man, and the rock on which the house should be built is the Lord as to Divine truth. Remember, there are two parts to the mind: will and its affections, and understanding and its thoughts. It is important to receive the Lord both in the understanding and in the will. One who receives Divine truth in both parts of the mind conquers in temptation.

New Cloth In Old Garments And New Wine In Old Bottles Matthew 9: 16 - 17, also in Mark 2: 21 - 22 and Luke 5: 36 - 38

Mitchell pp. 37 - 49 *The Sower* Vol. IV pages 92 - 93.

Apocalypse Explained, 376e (28) and *T.C.R.* 784

Wine signifies truth; old wine the truth of the old, or Jewish church, and wine skins the statutes and judgments of the Jewish church, with their sacrifices and representative worship. Fresh wine skins are the precepts and commandments of the Lord. The representative worship of the Jewish church was not in agreement with the truths of the Christian church.

From TCR: A new heaven is formed before a new church is established on earth . . .

Just so far as this new heaven, which constitutes the internal of the church with man increases, does the new church descend from it. This cannot take place in a moment, but takes place as the falsities of the former church are laid aside.

Children In The Market Place Matt. 11: 16 - 17 (also Luke 7: 31 - 33)

Mitchell pp. 50 - 61. *The Sower* Vol. IV p. 121.

I find no reference to this one in the Writings, but Mitchell is interesting. The children are the "remains" of good which are placed by the Lord in every child. These remains are things of heaven which remain throughout life. The pipe, a wind instrument, relates to our affectional nature. These remains mourn and call us to repent. John the Baptist preached repentance; he "mourned" to the Jews and they did not lament. Jesus piped to them and they did not dance.

In Matthew 3: 1 - 52 several parables are recorded. The first four were told by the seaside. The best known is the parable of the Sower; this one is also in Luke 8: 4 - 15 and in Mark 4: 1 - 20. The one of the mustard seed is also in Mark 4: 30 - 32.

These parables are explained in the *Dole Notes* Vol. IV pages 344 to 356, and in the *Sower* Vol. IV pages 148 to 167. Mitchell devotes a chapter to each of the parables, comprising pages 62 - 166.

The parable of the Sower is quoted in the *Arcana* 3310 (2). A field is the good of life.

Spiritual truths of the church are to be implanted in one's life. There are four kinds of ground in the field. The seed is the Word of the Lord, truth. The good ground is good that comes from charity, for it is the good in man which receives the Word. Thorns are evils. A stony place is truth that has no root in good. The hard path is falsity. (Compare "Broad is the way that leads to destruction.")

Page 154 on the *Sower* explains the meaning of a hundred fold, sixty fold, etc.

For the **Wheat and Tares** read A.E. 426 (3) and 374 (15).

The man who sows means the Lord. The field means the spiritual world and the church, in which there are both good and evil. There could be no separation until the time of the Last Judgment, meant by the harvest; this was the consummation of the age. It was while men slept that the enemy sowed the tares. To sleep means to live a natural life separated from the spiritual; the enemy means hell, and the weeds the evils of falsity.

For the **Grain of Mustard Seed** see *Arcana* 55 (3) and 9258 (3).

The grain of mustard seed is man's good before he becomes spiritual, and it is the "least of all seeds", because one thinks he does good of himself, and what is solely of oneself is nothing but evil. When in a state of regeneration the good in man is the least of all.

Arcana 7906 explains the meaning of Leaven as falsity, when the children of Israel were told to allow no leaven in their homes at Passover time. Spiritual combats, or temptations are

fermentations, like leaven, for at that time falsities try to join themselves with good, but when truths reject the falsities and cast them down, they then purify. In this sense the kingdom of heaven is like leaven. See also D.P. 25.

In A.E. 840 (10) we read that the treasure hidden in the field means the Divine truth that is in the Word. The field means the church and its doctrine. Selling means to set aside what is one's own, and to acquire for oneself the Divine truth that is in the Lord's church. No. 840 opens by saying that to buy and sell is to acquire knowledge and to communicate them to others, thus to learn and to teach.

A.E. 840 (9) says that pearl means knowledge and truths. The one of great price is the acknowledgment of the Lord. To sell all that we have means to set aside all things of one's own love, and to buy is to procure for oneself that Divine truth.

A.E. 513 (17) explains the net cast into the sea as the separation of the good and the evil, for fishes mean natural men in respect to knowledges; at the time of the Last Judgment, or close of the age, such are separated from one another; for there are good natural men, and also bad. The separation of these in the spiritual world has the appearance of a net cast into the sea, drawing fish to shore.

The Instructed Scribe, dealt with by Mitchell pages 159 - 166 is not mentioned in the writings of Swedenborg.

(to be continued)

NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES



1979 International Year Of The Child

Concern For Effectiveness

"The purposes of the International Year of the Child is for each nation to review its own services for children and its policies regarding international assistance for children particularly in the developing countries.

The IYC in 1979 will be the 20th anniversary of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child. It is of great concern to the world community that these rights are often still not respected and that an appalling number

of children are still without the most rudimentary necessities of life, such as adequate nutrition, health services and basic education."

THE ABORTION QUESTION

On November 11, 1977 the NCC's Governing Board resolved that "... even though (the NCC) has no policy on abortion as such: (it) reaffirms its support "of the principle that a right guaranteed to all by law must not be denied to any because of economic status; — urges the President Congress and state legislators to guarantee equal access to legal rights, including legal abortions, by ensuring adequate public funding; and — requests the National Council of Churches member communions to communicate to legislators their own convictions on this issue."

WANT TO SPEAK OUT ABOUT TV?

Then write broadcasters and sponsors:

- Clarify your values
- Make your point briefly
- Refer to a specific TV situation
- State response to that TV image
- Write as an individual
- Type your letter if possible
- Send carbon copies
- Address the chief of organization
- Sign your name

NETWORK ADDRESSES

James E. Duffy, ABC, 1330 Sixth Ave., New York, NY 10019

Fred E. Silverman, NBC, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10020

Gene Jankowski, CBS, 51 West 52nd St., New York, NY 10019

Robben W. Flemming, PBS, 475 L'Enfant Plaza, West SW, Washington, D.C. 20024

CBC Building, 1500 Bronson Ave., Ottawa, Ont. K1G 3J5

CTV Ltd., 42 Charles St. E., Toronto, Ont. M4Y 1T5

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ASSISTANCE ACT

The problem of abused parents and children is greatly evident. One way of helping is to encourage passage of the Domestic Violence Assistance Act of 1978 by writing Representatives of the House. The act will, in all probability, come to vote in the House before adjournment of this session.

The Act provides limited federal assistance matched with local funds to organizations which provide direct assistance to violence victims.

LIFT UP YOUR BANNERS

at Convention in Urbana

Nearly everyone who attended the 1978 Convention in Kitchener, Canada thought the procession of banners up the aisle of the beautiful Kitchener Church was a highlight of Convention Sunday! What a beautiful and colorful sight it was!

Again the Board of Education is encouraging **each church** in Convention to create an original banner tied into the 1979 Convention theme

"Moving Ahead Together." We are asked to make it a congregation - wide project that includes our men, women, and children.

The banners will go on display at the opening of the Convention as they did last year. How **attractive** they were behind the speaker's platform at Conrad Grebel College last summer!

Suggested dimensions for your church's banner are two feet by three feet in size. The design of your banner is only limited to the creativity of your congregation! You'll be surprised how easily ideas will come when they are asked for! The banner project could be laid out **now** on a table easily available to all at the church. Each Sunday everyone could be encouraged to have a look at the progress of the banner and to have input into its design and creation.

The joy of the community effort that goes into the creation of the banner which represents your church comes into focus on Convention Sunday when the banners are carried proudly down the aisle and positioned in the chancel by a representative of your congregation that you chose to carry your colors.

Join the fun! Be creative! Express your feelings in design about the glory of the Lord and your devotion to His Church and teachings.

When Convention is over and fades into memory the banner can be hung in your church or Parish House as a decorative and highly meaningful symbol of your Church's sense of community and meaning.

Last year there were seventeen banners displayed. In spite of efforts to let each church know of the plan some didn't get the information. By using the pages of *The Messenger* this year everyone will know in ample time. Organizations such as the Sunday School Association, Swedenborg School of Religion, the American New Church League and Board of Missions, Almont Assembly, Fryeburg Assembly, Paulhaven, Blairhaven, Kemper Road Camp, Split Mountain Camp and the Kansas Campers are encouraged to make banners as well. The more the merrier!

CONVENTION '79
URBANA, OHIO
June 27 — July 1

NOW HEAR THIS, MARTIN — THE WINNER

As Martin gazed upon his fatso wife
Proud and happy with his peaceful life,
He failed to notice
That some gals are slim
For they all looked much the same to him.
But, little wonder!
As buttressed they were —
In feathered bonnets and heavy fur,
The chances are he never perceived
Nor, if told, would have believed
That some ladies' busts and hips are teeny
He never saw "woman" in a bikini.

R.H. Abaecherli
Cincinnati, Ohio

HONOURABLE MENTION

Man was created with broad shoulders and narrow hips, and woman with narrow shoulders and broad hips in order that — should the mutual need arise — he might become a little boy upon her lap, and she, while holding him, might rest her head upon the comfort of his shoulder.

Joanne Odgaard
Inuvik, N.W.T.

(I should think people would require broad shoulders and broad hips in Inuvik, North West Territory, where, from December 6 to January 6 each year there is total, complete darkness. Ed.)

COPY OF REGULATIONS FOR A BURNLEY (ENGLAND) COTTON MILL OFFICE IN 1852

- 1 Godliness, cleanliness and punctuality are the necessities of a good business.
- 2 This firm has reduced the hours of work and the clerical staff will now only have to be present between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on weekdays.
- 3 Daily prayers will be held each morning in the main office. The clerical staff will be present.

- 4 Clothing must be of a sober nature. The clerical staff will not disport themselves in raiment of bright colours, nor will they wear hose, unless in good repair.
- 5 Overshoes and top - coats may not be worn in the office, but neck scarves and head - wear may be worn in inclement weather.
- 6 A stove is provided for the benefit of clerical staff. Coal and wood must be kept in the locker. It is recommended that each member of staff bring 4 pounds of coal each day during cold weather.
- 7 No members of clerical staff may leave the room without permission from Mr. Rogers. The calls of nature are permitted and clerical staff may use the garden below the second gate. This area must be kept in good order.
- 8 No talking is allowed during business hours.
- 9 The craving for tobacco, wines and spirits is a human weakness and, as such, is forbidden to all members of the clerical staff.
- 10 Now that the hours of business have been drastically reduced, the partaking of food is allowed between the hours of 11:30 and noon, but work will not on any account cease.
- 11 Members of clerical staff will provide their own pens. A new sharpener is available, on application to Mr. Rogers.
- 12 Mr. Rogers will nominate a senior clerk to be responsible for the cleaning of the main office, and all boys and juniors will report 40 minutes before prayers, and will remain after closing hours for similar work. Brushes, brooms, scrubbers and soap are provided by the owners.
- 13 The new increased weekly wages are as hereunder detailed. Junior boys (up to 11 years) 1s.4d. Boys (to 14 years) 2s.1d. Juniors 4s.8d. Junior clerks 8s. 7d. Clerks 10s. 9 d. Senior clerks (after 15 years with the owners) 21 s. 0d.

Note: The owners recognize the generosity of the new Labour Laws, but will expect a great rise in output of work to compensate for these near Utopian conditions.

Conference "Lifeline"

(Those were the good old days! One wonders if people living in 2100 will view 1979 in the same light — not so much in reference to working conditions — but life in general. Ed.)

CONVENTION PEOPLE AND PLACES

Cora Scarborough was recently honoured by the Mental Health Association of Indiana for having given more than 10,000 hours of volunteer service to institutions in the area. She is a life - long member of the Indianapolis Society.

Mrs. Florence Dutnell of the Cleveland Society has also been recognized for her service to the Lakewood Meals - on - Wheels program.

Jim Zehner of Yellow Springs, Ohio, was re-elected in November to his second term in the Ohio State Legislature. Congratulations!

Mr. and Mrs. Tom Zehner of Pittsburgh recently returned from Hawaii in celebration of their 35th wedding anniversary.

A book review written by **Dr. Ted Klein**, Associate Professor of Philosophy at Urbana College, has recently been published in "Educational Studies." Dr. Klein's review was of "The Battle of Boston: Busing and the Struggle for School Desegregation."

In late October the Riverside, California New Church was formally dedicated as a city Cultural Heritage Landmark. The congregation was organized in 1885 under the **Rev. Berry Edmiston**, and the edifice, Grecian in style, was built in 1904. The **Rev. John Spiers**, semi-retired, still preaches here twice monthly.

A number of interesting and informative groups are being formed at the **Kemper Road Center** in Ohio. An Awareness Growth Group for Divorced - Single - Widowed will begin on January 7 and run for ten weeks. A one day Art Therapy Workshop was held on December 4. And a women's group, self - led, is exploring dreams and their interpretations. A recent Saturday Children's Workshop on thanksgiving attracted 41 children.

The **Rev. David Johnson**, in Seattle, Washington has recently been involved in two fascinating Workshops — one led by Dr. Clyde Reid, who several years ago served as resource leader for a Council of Ministers Institute; and the second an intensive training program in Life, Death and Transition led by Dr. Elizabeth Kubler - Ross. We hope to feature more on this in an upcoming *Messenger*.

A recent Detroit Society bulletin states that the **Rev. Edwin Capon** has responded to a call from the San Francisco Church of the New

Jerusalem, and will take up his duties on the west coast next September. The Capons will still be on the Almont Assembly staff next summer, about which we have received publicity early this year. All sorts of great activities are being planned, including a special Homecoming Program at Almont on July 27 - 29, 1979.

SCRIPTURE CAKE

"Make me a little cake, and bring it to me." I Kings 17:13

The following is offered as a suggestion for your enjoyment. It is an old Pennsylvania Dutch recipe.

½ cup butter	Judges 5:25
2 cups flour	I Kings 4:22
½ tsp. salt	Lev. 2:13
1 cup figs	I Sam. 30:12
1 ½ cup sugar	Jer. 6:20
2 tsp. baking powder	Luke 13:21
½ cup water	Genesis 24:11
1 cup raisins	I Sam. 30:12
3 eggs	Isaiah 10:14
Cinnamon, mace, & cloves	I Kings 10:10
1 tbsp. honey	Proverbs 24:13
½ cup almonds	Genesis 43:11

Blend butter, sugar, spices and salt. Beat egg yolks and add to the mixture. Sift in the baking powder and flour, then all the water and honey. Put the fruit and nuts thru a food chopper and flour well.

Follow Solomon's advice in first verse of Proverbs 23:14. Fold in the stiffly beaten egg whites. Bake for one hour in a 375 oven.

The Ohio Newsletter

CONVENTION CALENDAR

Jan. 18 — 20	General Council Wayfarers' Chapel, Cal.
Feb. 5 — 7	Committee on Worship Philadelphia
Feb. 23 — 24	Dept. of Publications (continued on next page)

NEWS/URBANA COLLEGE

Dr. Alice Skinner, Education Committee chairperson, recently announced that revisions in the college's core curriculum are now complete and will be fully implemented by Winter Quarter. The revised core curriculum calls for introductory psychology courses, intermediate composition classes and senior philosophy seminars to be offered.

In commenting on current student enrollment, Dr. Skinner noted that while enrollment at the college's main campus is down slightly, the number of students enrolled at UC's off-campus learning centers throughout the state is up substantially.

Dr. Skinner's report to the board also included a motion to adopt a resolution restating the college's priorities of primarily providing its students with a liberal education and emphasizing the career preparation second. The resolution was unanimously adopted.

Acting on a motion made by board member Roger Dean Paulson, the board approved a goal of \$205,000 for the college's Annual Fund campaign and applauded the efforts of Vice President John M. Harris and the Development Office staff for their efforts in helping the institution exceed its 1978 Annual Fund goal. Paulson explained that contributions totaled \$182,000 during the 1977 - 78 academic year.

Rev. Eric Zacharias invited the college president and all trustees, faculty and staff members to participate in the 1979 Convention of the New Church (Swedenborgian). The convention will be held in June on the Urbana College campus.

Urbana College is Recommended

The Ohio Department of Education has recommended that Urbana College be granted continuing approval for the preparation of teachers. The local college was among nine institutions of higher learning in the state which received the department's recommendation.

Study teams appointed and coordinated by the Department of Education conducted on-site progress verification visits on each campus during the 1977 - 78 academic year. The institutions were found to be in compliance with Ohio standards.

"These actions assure that high quality teachers will continue to be available for Ohio schools," said state Superintendent of Schools Franklin B. Walter.

FROM CHURCH RECORDS

BAPTISMS

MAIR — Richard Scot, David Jon, and Susan Webster, children of David and Sandra Mair were baptized into the Christian faith in the Fryeburg New Church on Nov. 24, 1978, the Rev. David Rienstra officiating.

CONFIRMATIONS

GLANDERS, HENTON — Virginia Kay Glanders and Cynthia Sue Henton were confirmed into the faith of the New Church in La Porte, Indiana on October 8, 1978, the Rev. Eric Allison officiating.

WEDDING

FOGARTY — HUTCHINS — John Fogarty and Annette Hutchins were married in the Fryeburg New Church on Nov. 25, 1978, the Rev. David Rienstra officiating.

DEATH

HARNDEN — The Rev. David Rienstra officiated at the committal service of Albert Harnden in Denmark, Maine, on November 13, 1978.

STEVENS — Mrs. Lucinda Stevens, mother of Martha Richardson, died on Nov. 27, 1978 in Bridgton, Maine. The resurrection service was held on Nov. 30, the Rev. David Rienstra officiating.

BIRTH

CZUDYJOWYCZ — Jon Paul, son of Nick and Jeanmarie Czudyjowycz, Kitchener, Ontario, and first grandson for Paul and Pat Zacharias, arrived safely on Nov. 30, 1978.

Convention Calendar (con't)

Feb. 21 — 25	Florida Conference DeLand, Florida
March 1 — 3	Urbana College Board Urbana, Ohio
April 16 — 18	Committee on Worship Newton, Mass.
April 23 — 25	C.A.M. Newton, Mass.
April 25 — 27	C.O.M. Exec. Com. Newton, Mass.
June 27 — July 1	Convention '79 Urbana, Ohio

LINES OF SPLENDOR ON . . .

OUR SPACE OF TIME (see D.L.W. 74)

Each part of life has its own pleasures. Each has its own abundant harvest, to be garnered in season. We may grow old in body, but we need never grow old in mind and spirit. We must exercise the mind as we exercise the body, to keep it supple and buoyant. Life may be short, but it is long enough to live honorably and well. Old age is the consummation of life, rich in blessing.

Cicero

Sir William Mulock, Canadian statesman, at age 95 said, "I am still at work, with my hand to the plow and my face to the future. The shadows of evening lengthen about me, but morning is in my heart. After a long, rich life, the testimony I bear is this: that the castle of enchantment is not yet behind me. It is before me still, and daily I catch glimpses of its battlements and towers. The rich spoils of memory are mine. Mine, too, are the precious things of today — books, flowers, pictures, nature and sport. The first of May is still an enchanted day to me. The best thing of all is friends. The best of life is always further on. Its real lure is hidden from our eyes, somewhere behind the hills of time."

Age is a quality of mind
If you have left your dreams behind,
If hope is cold,
If you no longer look ahead,
If your ambitions fires are dead —
Then you are old.
But if from life you take the best,
And if in life you keep the jest,
If love you hold.
No matter how the years go by,
No matter how the birthdays fly,
You are not old.

Samuel Ullman wrote: "Nobody grows old by merely living a number of years; people grow old only by deserting their ideals. Years wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm

wrinkles the soul. Worry, doubt, self - distrust, fear and despair — these are the long years that bow the head and turn growing spirit back to the dust. Whether seventy or seventeen there is in every persons heart the love of wonder, the undaunted challenge of events, the unfailing child - like appetite for what next, and the joy and the game of life. You are as young as your faith, as old as your doubt; as young as your self - confidence, as old as your fear; as young as your hope, as old as your despair."

The Journey

Let me live my life from year to year
With forward face and unreluctant soul
Not hurrying to, nor turning from the goal;
Not mourning for the things that disappear
In the dim past, nor holding back to fear
From what the future veils; but with a whole
And happy heart, that pays its toll
To youth and age, and travels on with cheer.
So let the way wind up the hill or down
O'er rough or smooth, the journey will be joy
Still seeking what I sought when but a boy,
New friendship, high adventure, and a crown.
I shall grow old, but never lose life's zest,
Because the road's last turn will be the best.

Henry Van Dyke

I like to remember the distinguished Swedish oceanographer, Otto Pettersson, who died a few years ago at the age of ninety - three, in full possession of his keen mental powers. His son has related how intensely his father enjoyed every new experience, every new discovery concerning the world around him.

"He was an incurable romantic," the son wrote, "intensely in love with life and with the mysteries of the cosmos." When he realized he had not much longer to enjoy the earthly scene, Otto Pettersson said to his son: "What will sustain me in my last moments is an infinite curiosity as to what is to follow."

Rachel Carson

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