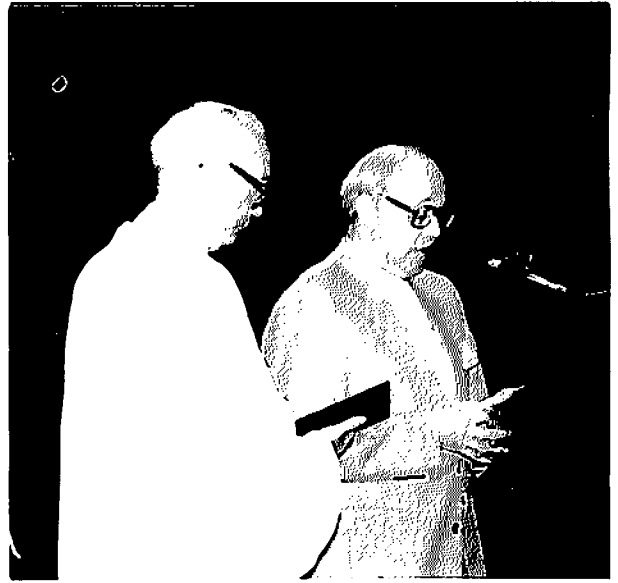


The Messenger

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH
JULY - AUGUST 1981



**CALVIN TURLEY
CONSECRATED
AS
CONVENTION
PRESIDENT
June 26, 1981
Urbana, Ohio**



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Our thanks to Robert Kirven and William Woolfenden who provided most of the photographs for this special issue of the Messenger.

CONTENTS

Election Results	150
Convention Sermon Eric Allison	151
Report of General Council	155
Ethel Rice	
Council of Ministers Report	157

Some Aspects of the Nature of Convention George Dole	159
Dynamics of Coping with Change	161
Report from Korea	162
Convention Impressions	163
Paul Zacharias	
Views of Convention '81	164
P.C.C. Report Dorothy Travers	166
Minister's Spouses Conference	167
Carole Rienstra	
Women's Alliance Report	168
Pat Zacharias	
Shattering Old Myths	168
The Sunday School Association	169
Nancy Perry	
McCormick College Fund	169
The Friendship Quilt	170
Human Sexuality Panel	171
Paul Giunta: A Tribute	172
Robert and Marion Kirven	
National Council of Churches Update	173
Holistic Living Symposium	174
Gardiner Perry	
Letters to the Editor	175
From Church Records	178
Johnny Appleseed Film Gary Crist	179

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Paul B. Zacharias, Editor

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CONVENTION SERMON

A NEW CHURCH FOR THE NEW AGE

Rev. Eric Allison
Kitchener, Ont.

I thought for a long time about what I could say to all of you today. I have had two years to think about it and have had many ideas but I kept coming back to the same doctrine which has come to color my thinking, and bursts into my conscious thoughts almost every day. The doctrine of the Lord in his second coming, or the New Age, is something which I have spent a lot of time thinking, writing, and talking about during this past year and I have come to believe that we have somehow failed to realize the importance of this central doctrine which makes us unique in all of christianity.

Because we have failed to realize the importance of this doctrine, we have done little to creatively respond to the New Age which is unfolding before us. So, today, I will repeat some of what I have said and written in the *Messenger* and the *Daily Bread* about the New Age. I will repeat it because I believe that it is very important.

The Lord has entrusted us with the knowledge that his second coming foretold in the Bible is not to be a physical return, but is instead a spiritual second coming, which is happening *this* very moment. It was revealed to Swedenborg in the 18th century, that a new and deeper love and new and greater wisdom had begun to flow from God into the hearts and minds of all the people of the earth and that this spiritual presence of God on earth will continue to increase until humanity has fulfilled God's plan for a new earth. Because we believe that the spiritual second coming of the Lord is ever increasing its intensity, we really have no choice but to believe that the world is getting better. One cannot possibly believe that the Lord's presence on earth is getting greater and at the same time believe that the world is getting worse. It is true that things really do, in many ways, look pretty grim. The reason for this is that the presence of evil has increased along with the good. Here, it is critical to remember that the stages of development which the earth is going through are comparable to the stages that each of us as individuals go through. That is, before we can confront or deal with an evil within us we must know that it exists within us.



The Sunday morning service.

We must see it. When we overcome evil, we are all the better for it being exposed, so that we could push it to the side and move on to greater things. With the world it is the same. We are not being overcome by the evils of violence and other forms of immorality, but are instead, setting out to overcome them now that they are out in the open. If the world were really so bad, so many people would not be complaining about it, but would instead be actively living out the evils of today. The Lord is ridding us of evils by this process of purification. The old earth is passing away, the scripture is being fulfilled before the eyes of all people, if we have eyes to see it.

Almost everyone feels that something very big is in the air. There is not agreement on what it is, but something is obviously happening. To see the second coming in operation, one must look at the events of today and of recent history, as symbols of an inner transformation. As Swedenborgians, we know that one cannot understand the Bible if we limit ourselves to the literal words; so it is with examining the state of our culture today. We must learn to see the evil in the world as part of a purification process and we must learn to see anything new that is good as the building of the Holy City. Everything that is good comes from God, so everything new that is good is part of the brick or mortar of the Holy City.

So, Swedenborg has told us in his writings that all of this began a little more than two hundred years ago. Because this is true, there should be some visible symbols of this spiritual evolution.

The American Revolution is like a foundation for the Holy City for all the world. It brought the world something it had never had before — Religious Freedom — guaranteed in a Constitution. Now, for the first time in the World's history, people were free to explore their relationship with God, without fear or persecution. We have come a long way in the last two hundred years and religious freedom exists in most of the countries of the world and is now, in fact, something we take for granted.

Despite the fact that many governments still oppress and abuse their own people there is a mood that is sweeping across the globe. Even the most corrupt regimes feel the need to justify their actions as if they were moral. There is suddenly a world conscience, an ethic has somehow emerged and we have the new term "Human Rights". For all its imperfections the United Nations is devoted to peace and freedom. Slavery no longer exists and the average citizen of the world has more individual rights and wealth than ever before.

The technological advancements of the last twenty years are certainly symbols of how the Lord has opened wide the flood gates of *New Knowledge*. I could speak all day and wouldn't even cover the advancements in computer technology during the last five years. I can say the same about advancements in medicine, psychology, diet, understanding of the environment, telecommunications and the list goes on and on. All things are being made new.

Another dramatic symbol of the New Age is that the very definition of religion is changing. While the main line Christian Churches have been steadily decreasing, other new forms of religion are on the rise. We see the rise of fundamentalism in Christianity and the increase of groups such as the Moonies, the Hare Krishna and others. This does not mean that we are spiritually regressing. This simply means that more people than ever before are seeking something new and meaningful. Even though the theology of these groups is simplistic and often naive, they offer a sense of community, of mission, of belonging, and often offer a supportive and warm atmosphere of acceptance which other churches have not

provided. But, the rise of these groups is only a part of the picture. We also see many new religions such as Unity and Ba'hai, and others, which have a great depth to their beliefs as well as providing a loving and supportive atmosphere. We also have watched the development of new psychologies, the best of which have integrated with religion and have helped thousands to move along the path of spiritual growth. We have witnessed the Holistic Health concept blossom into an international movement, and there are so many new things of a religious nature, that it is difficult to keep track of them. Some large Corporations are giving employees an hour and a half paid lunch time, so that they can meditate. It doesn't matter if it is only a hundred thousand people, or a thousand, or even ten people — if people are doing something new that is good. It is a spiritual change for the entire world.

While talking with young people, I often hear Swedenborg's words ringing in my ears, words that we all know very well: "All religion relates to life and the life of religion is to do good." Hundreds of times I have heard young people say "I believe in God and I pray. I don't understand the Bible, but I try to live my religion by the way I act, but I just can't see the value of going to church." Swedenborg said that going to Church had value, but only in relation to true worship. True worship is performing uses. How you live is your worship. We need not think that the number of people who believe in God has decreased. It is only the number who believe in the Church which has decreased, and this may be part of our spiritual evolution, for the scripture tells us that in the Holy City there is no temple, for God will dwell with them and be their God. The old forms are passing away and the Lord is making all things new.

What stands out in my mind as the most dramatic symbol of how the second coming is leading us to even higher levels of consciousness, is the fact that human beings have actually left this planet and landed on another world — the moon. Millions of people today are reaching out to new worlds, to new life, to new love, and are living new ideas by methods which ten years ago were not even thought of. Millions who have never even heard of Swedenborg or his Doctrine of the Second Coming, know that something grand and beautiful is happening, and believe that this is indeed the New Age.

So, the New Age is upon us, the issue is how have we, as an organization and as individuals responded to this spiritual second coming of the Lord? First, I would say that I do not blame anyone or the church as a whole, for our failures, or for the lack of responsiveness. I believe that through the mysterious workings of Divine Providence, we are at this moment, right where we need to be, and now are ready to move ahead to do the greater work and let our light shine like that of a city upon a hill. But first, it is necessary to look at some of our failings, which are things which must be discarded.

The first and most obvious shortcoming of Convention has been a pervasive feeling of "not O.K'ness". After learning and becoming excited about the Doctrines of Swedenborg, the next thing I learned was that it was not o.k. to be excited about it, and in a very subtle fashion, I was taught to be apologetic about being a Swedenborgian. After all, we are so small and unknown. Shortly after this, I allowed myself to fall victim to what some have come to call the "blue-funk" — that is to be depressed about how the Churches have declined in membership, about the political back stabbing, and about the fact that we have failed to bring Swedenborg's revelation to the world. It is true that in these respects we have failed, and I thank God that we have failed to perpetuate the same structure and style of Church that we came into. We have not succeeded in carrying forth the torch of 18th century christendom and I thank God we have failed. Our laments need not be about how we have failed to increase attendance at the Sunday service, but our laments need to be that we have not been bold, brave, free thinking and committed enough to offer something new and different. The writings brought something new and fresh to the world. The Church in the writings is described as a level of knowledge and of love in action, which exists among a community of believers. The New Church was meant to be a laboratory for regeneration.

So, this has been a failing of ours in the past, but we are changing and moving on to do the greater work. I cannot blame anyone for being born into western civilization and being seduced by values of this culture. All the Christian Churches are more a reflection of the culture than the culture is of the Church. Like everyone else, I have been willing to let the Church be so much less than what it was meant to be. In Brian Kingslake's

article *"The Church Is People"* he says that *"The primary purpose of the Church is to help its members in the regenerating life."* In his article he quotes another pastor, who stated that in his sixteen years as a pastor, he had not witnessed a single case of character transformation. In my four years of preaching, I would have to say that the same is true. It is a well established fact that a person who memorizes a lecture on a certain topic will forget 75% of it within two weeks. Can we really be so naive as to believe that sermons and doctrinal classes and repeating the Lord's Prayer every week regenerates us? I'm not saying that we should throw the baby out with the bath and give up the present Sunday worship as a meaningless ritual. I'm saying that the old forms must be in conjunction with the new, with real sharing, and caring, praying, healing and experimenting. I think we have been afraid of each other. Afraid to be real and honest, afraid to be confrontive and supportive. In my ministry so far, I have had about ten people from the Church come to me with problems. It was strange, because I was aware that I was afraid to ask them hard questions and to really go into the depth necessary to help them. It was o.k. for me to really get at the heart of the problem when I was running a counselling group, but the Church just did not seem like the right place.

Many of us have been seduced by our culture's idea that we must go it alone. This is a stupid and destructive type of pride which we can no longer participate in. No man is an



"We need to be more daring . . ."

island — we need each other. We must put our guards down and start healing and praying and sharing and doing the greater work. Charity unites — doctrine divides. We must love each other and have unity in diversity for there are many gates to the Holy City.

So, it is necessary that we make some dramatic changes in our attitude. Change is not easy for anyone. There is an old story, supposedly a true one, which I like to tell, because it illustrates the point so well. A young couple got into an argument because the husband demanded to know why she always cut off both ends of the ham before placing it in the oven. She angrily responded by saying it should be done that way because that is the way her mother always did it. So, they called mom, who said, she always did it that way because her mother always did it that way. So, they called grandma, who said she always cut off both ends of the ham because her pan was too small.

When I was in theological school Ruth Martin Crowell and I gave a retreat at the Brigg's Home in Intervale, New Hampshire. I told the young people they could do any kind of service they wanted to close the retreat. But when I found out they were going to open the service with a stereo going full-blast, playing something which sounded like a rocket taking off — I said "no." They said, "You told us that we could do whatever we wanted." They had me — so I agreed and after opening myself up and realizing that for them it was worshipful, it became so to me as well.

Change is not easy, but the Lord is making all things new and he is depending on us to help him. It is time for us to do the greater work.

So, what is the direction that we need to go? The direction we need to go is the direction that we are headed. We must accept that if Urbana College closes or if some or all of our Churches close down — it really doesn't matter, for the Lord's Second Coming will continue with us or without us. We cannot be devoted to the organization; we must be devoted to the Lord. The purpose of our Church is to serve the Lord, and we serve him by aiding each other and the world in its regeneration. We serve the Lord by investing ourselves in that which moths cannot eat, or rust cannot corrode. We serve the Lord by doing the greater work we are called to do. Our very purpose in life is to serve the Lord in his Second Coming. Our commitment is to build the Lord's Church, not only in quantity,

but in quality. As the quality of our programs improve, as the quality of our commitment improves, and the quality and depth of our relationships with each other improves, the growth in quantity will certainly follow.

There are many exciting things happening in Convention right now. Some things are just getting off the ground and others have been working well for quite some time. There are exciting things happening at Kemper Road, in Urbana, in Kitchener, at S.S.R., here at Convention, in the *Messenger*, in the SNAP program, and in other places. We are starting to do the greater work. We are starting to pray together, to have healing, and meditation, and new styles of worship, we are starting to use tools from the secular world to extend the work of regeneration.

While these things are happening, and new avenues are opening up, I believe we are going too slow and we need a greater commitment from all of us. While the new things are happening, there are some people who do not believe that holistic health has any place in the Church, nor does prayer or healing, or counseling. Some believe that doctrinal discussion and Sunday worship are all that we need. My response is that it is o.k. for you to believe that, and if that's how you feel then you don't have to participate in new things. But, you have absolutely no right to tell others what is right for them. Those who want all things new have to remember what is sacred to those who do not want to change. Jesus told the disciples that there were things which they could not bear to hear. Swedenborg told us the same thing. Nobody knows what those things were, but the point is that we have to be able to accept what is important to others within the church. We must have unity in diversity.

To quote our out-going President, who has led us during the past six years, and knows the Church better than any of us, "We need to become more daring in our search for our faith and what it can become to us. The quality of life in the 80's demands this."

So, Eric's challenge is now before us. When we leave here, we will go back to our homes and our Churches with a stronger commitment. This sermon cannot be one which we forget in two weeks. We must very specifically start making plans for ourselves and our Churches. We must increase our commitment to unity in diversity, making all things new and devoting our entire lives to the Lord in his Second Coming.

REPORT OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL

General Council met for its pre-convention session in the College Community Center, Urbana College, on Wednesday, June 24th.

The treasurer noted that General Funds showed a surplus of income over expenditures during the last fiscal year of \$26,000, which by previous vote of Council had been transferred to the Pension Fund. The Treasurer also reported that the Auditor's statement had been received, showing that the Convention's financial accounts were in good order.

Dr. Robert Kirven, President of the Swedenborg School of Religion, gave a short informal report, noting in particular that for next year there were four definite and five probable applicants for study at the School.

The Rev. Richard Tafel, Jr., Secretary of the Council of Ministers, presented a statement from the Council of Ministers, as follows:

"Although there is no intention on the part of the Council of Ministers to back away from or weaken the thrust of the statement adopted last year regarding the present state of relations with the General Church, it has come to our attention that in some of our churches, long-standing relationships that happen to involve people of diverse backgrounds might be harmed if the letter rather than the spirit of our statement were rigidly enforced. As an effort to respond positively to any distress our statement may have inadvertently caused, the following clarifying statement was adopted at this year's session:

"WHERE it is the considered judgment of persons concerned that local cooperation with General Church individuals will foster their respect for and appreciation of, Convention's positions and practices, the Council of Ministers supports such cooperation."

The Council of Ministers also expressed its thanks to General Council's Pension Review Committee for its study and report on retirement benefits, and expresses deep concern to the Council that retirement benefits as projected are woefully low.

A lengthy written report was received from the Ad Hoc Committee to Set Goals and Priorities for the Church in the Eighties, and Dr. Dole gave further elucidation. The

Committee's statement of purpose is worth quoting:

"We see the primary purpose of Convention as being the support of ministries, both clerical and lay, which will facilitate the spiritual well-being of people. While such ministries may exist in many outward forms, they will have in common a working for the Lord in bringing in the New Age.

"This 'working for the Lord' is spiritual well-being. It involves an understanding of the Lord in his Second Coming, and a vision of the New Age symbolized by the New Jerusalem. Above all, it involves a joyful recognition that the Lord is everywhere at work in our world, 'making all things new'."

The President asked for a motion to give the Committee direction, and Mr. Ebel moved that we accept the report, noting that it contains a very promising and exciting approach to the task before us; and direct that this Committee be continued, to refine their recommendations for presentation and action at the mid-winter meeting of General Council. Seconded and voted.

The Rev. Ernest Martin stated that a suggestion had been made that the Wayfarer's Chapel and the other churches in Southern California host the 1982 convention. Inquiries had been made, and three responses from the nearby colleges showed possibilities. It was moved that General Council recommend to the Convention that we accept an invitation to hold convention in California in 1982, at the invitation of the Wayfarer's Chapel and the churches in Southern California. Seconded and voted.

The President read a letter of application from the President of the Swedenborgian New Age Pioneers for membership in the General Convention as a duly constituted Society. A copy of the Group's Constitution and Bylaws accompanied the application, as requested by General Council. Motion was therefore made and seconded that General Council recommend to the Convention the admission of the Group known as the Swedenborgian New Age Pioneers as a Society of Convention. So voted.

Motion was made by Mrs. Kraus that the President and the retiring members of General Council be thanked and commended for their services to the Convention and

Council through their terms of office.
Seconded and voted.

.....

At its post-convention meeting General Council voted the following:

That an appropriation be made for twenty volumes of the Arcana to be sent to Korea for the use of the Rev. En Bo Chung, the cost of these volumes, plus F.O.B. charges, to be borne by the lungerich Fund, if feasible.

That Council looks with favor on an invitation from the Kemper Road Center to hold Convention's 1983 session in that area. Council has requested that more definite information be available at its mid-winter meeting.

To recommend to the Planning Committee for next year's convention that Friday, July 2nd, 1982, afternoon and evening, be set aside for a trip to the Wayfarer's Chapel.

To refer a presentation by New Jerusalem Productions, Inc., to the Board of Education, with the suggestion that efforts be made to coordinate such a showing with the Ad Hoc Committee on Goals and Priorities, possibly at the Board's meeting in Fryeburg in early August.

That the request for representation at conventions by overseas visitors be referred to the Ad Hoc Committee on Goals and Priorities.

That the following letter from the Secretary of the Mid-Atlantic Association be included in General Council's report to the Convention because lack of time had prevented its being read to the Saturday morning business session, as planned. The letter follows:

Mrs. Wilfred G. Rice, Secretary,

In reply to your letter re the resignation of the Baltimore Society, the enclosed copy of letter to Mr. Horace Rich, President, will inform you of the action taken by the Middle Atlantic Association on October 25, 1980.

Our letter ends with a note of regret that the Baltimore Society took this action because over many years the Association had made many offers of help to Baltimore with no response on their part.

Specifically, the ministers of the Association offered to fill the Baltimore pulpit three Sundays each month, but they saw fit to reject this offer, preferring to fill their pulpit with ministerial supply from the General Church.

Another offer by one of our ministers to spend one day each week in Baltimore for pastoral work and classes, as well as for holding Worship Services on Sunday afternoon was likewise declined. Our ministers have also offered to officiate at Communion and other occasions.

We cite this to offset the claim of the Baltimore Society, repeated in some quarters of Convention, that the Convention has done nothing to help Baltimore, nor has it been responsive to its needs.

In light of this it might be well to inform Convention at large, through the ministers and Presidents of Societies, what the actual situation has been.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Robert W. Tafel,
Secretary

In response to the convictions expressed by certain Council members that certain votes taken during Convention's business sessions had been passed without allowance for sufficient discussion, that the Committee on Amendments be asked to draft a Standing Resolution outlining a procedure for control of the introduction of resolutions on the floor of Convention.

To refer to the Research Committee the referral made to General Council from the Convention that funds be made available for paying children's expenses to and at convention sessions.

After long discussion on the legality of using church funds to make charitable donations, the following motion: In view of the uncertainties surrounding this matter of the UNICEF donation, that General Council *not* make a contribution in the name of the General Convention, *nor* establish a fund for collection of contributions in the name of the General Convention to be forwarded to UNICEF, but through the pages of *The Messenger* to make this a matter for individual contributions.

Also, that a referral be made to the Research Committee to devise a Standing Resolution dealing with the orderly implementation of Section 4 (a) 2 of Convention's Act of Incorporation. It was suggested that the Research Committee get legal advice on this matter.

To approve an expenditure of up to \$2,000 for repairs and maintenance of the Santa Cruz property donated to the Convention. Further that the matter of Council's

responsibility for maintenance of that property, and the question of an appropriate agent for meeting such responsibility be referred to the executive Committee.

In response to the suggestion that complete Convention Journals be printed only every fifth year, and smaller editions in the

intervening years, that this suggestion be referred to the Executive Committee, with power to act.

That Council's mid-winter sessions be held in the Boston area, January 28, 29 and 30.

Ethel V. Rice,
Recording Secretary

COUNCIL OF MINISTERS REPORT

The following ministers attended the 1981 Council of Ministers meetings in Urbana: The Revs. Eric Allison, Richard Baxter, Gudmund Boolsen, Ron Brugler, En Bo Chung, George Dole, Horand Gutfeldt, Dorothea Harvey, David Johnson, Robert Kirven, Randall Laakko, Jaikoo Lee, Ernest Martin, Gardiner Perry, Erwin Reddekopp, David Rienstra, F. Robert Tafel, Harvey Tafel, Richard Tafel Jr., Richard Tafel, Sr., Gertrude Tremblay, Susan Turley-Moore, Calvin Turley, Galen Unruh, Gladys Wheaton, Bill Woofenden, Eric Zacharias and Paul Zacharias. Lay Minister John Bennett and seven S.S.R. students were also in attendance.

Council elections produced the following results: Chairman, Randall Laakko; Secretary, Dick Tafel Jr.; Exec. Com. member, Susan Turley-Moore; 1983 Convention Preacher, F. Robert Tafel; CAM member, Dick Tafel Jr. Dorothea Harvey was appointed to serve on CAM as a replacement for Calvin Turley, who is ineligible to serve on CAM because of his position on the SSR faculty.

.....

The entire Council was shocked and saddened on the afternoon of Tuesday, June 23 when word was received of the tragic and brutal death of senior SSR student Paul Giunta in Boston. The Council recessed for the afternoon, with many members spending a quiet time in the Urbana Chapel. A message of condolence and support was sent to the Giunta family. A tribute by Robert Kirven, reflecting the high esteem we all felt for Paul, is found on page 172.

.....

Bill Woofenden delivered an address on "Swedenborg, Baconian Scientist and Seer", an abridged version of a lecture given earlier

in Australia. He brought out a number of Swedenborg's scientific discoveries that are still valid today, the most striking being the concept that "Nature is similar in greatest and least." This is the basis for the present-day exciting breakthroughs in the field of holographics, and we enjoyed a demonstration of this at the Council meetings. George Dole and Bob Kirven explained, in reasonably simple terms, what holography is all about. In essence, it means — theologically speaking — that all LIFE is present everywhere . . . there is no time or space where God is not fully present. Divine Love and Wisdom is the energy that sustains each atom; similarly it upholds the total sum of Creation. It's like shattering a large diamond into a million pieces, and each tiny sliver reflects the radiance and the completeness of the whole. This means also that all knowledge, all wisdom and goodness, exists everywhere, if we can but perceive it. This suggests that we already know — at least potentially — the answers to our own questions. It's a matter of discovering what is already there. Swedenborg reminds us that in heaven all of the angels share in something of the total joy



(l.-r.) Dorothea Harvey, Ron Brugler, Llewellyn Fraser, Randall Laakko, Dick Tafel Jr.

of heaven; at the same time the joy of each individual angel is heightened and perfected.

All of this is not mere speculation or theory. Holography is now being extensively used in science, manufacturing, medicine, and education. In coming years we will hear a great deal more about this amazing breakthrough that will build a strong bridge between science and religion.

* * * * *

Dick Baxter reported on the status of the new Book of Worship, which is now nearing completion. A copy of the proposed loose-leaf binder was demonstrated, which is lighter and more manageable than the previous model. This is a flexible Book of Worship; hymns, orders of service, prayers and psalm readings can be added very easily. It is hoped the new Book of Worship will be available by late fall; full ordering instructions will be found in the *Messenger* in the next month or two.

* * * * *

We spent one morning exploring the implications and applications of our Peer Supervision Program. Most Convention ministers are involved in the P.S.P., in which we have a ministerial colleague with whom we make a covenant for personal and professional growth. We plan a year's program, then, through monthly phone calls and regional meetings during the year, we supervise one another's plan of ministry. This provides a built-in network of support and camaraderie for our ministers, widely scattered throughout North America.

* * * * *

Incoming President Cal Turley shared with the Council his plans and dreams for the next three years. During the coming year he anticipates visiting all Convention ministers, and meeting with groups of concerned members in every Society. In his statement Turley said he hoped to delegate many of the Presidential preaching and official meeting responsibilities, instead focusing his energy on building a strong network of functioning regional groups throughout Convention, enabling local leadership to assume more of the direction and forward thrust of Convention.

* * * * *

In keeping with the above item, Council was informed of the establishment of a new working Committee to formulate Convention's aims and goals for the 80's. This Committee's initial recommendations will be discussed at General Council's mid-winter meeting. If and when adopted, Convention's entire structure will be radically changed; streamlined to serve more effectively and creatively in the rapidly changing world around us. This is a long range plan, probably requiring about five years to put into effect. Undoubtedly you will hear a great deal more about this proposal in the coming years.

* * * * *

The motion was made and adopted that henceforth all votes to ordain or induct candidates for our ministry, and all votes for contested offices, be by secret ballot.

* * * * *

Eric Allison announced that the next mid-winter Ministers and Spouses session will be held in the Los Angeles area from Feb. 12-18, 1982, with 26 registered so far.

* * * * *

And there was so much more. We heard about the state of the New Church in Australia, Guyana and Korea And an encouraging report from two College administrators And took another hard look at the Minister's Pension Plan Learned about ongoing educational opportunities for ministers Voted to clarify and sharpen the categories in our Roll of Ministers And enjoyed immensely the good fellowship.



Gard Perry, Sue Turley-Moore, George Dole and Harvey Tafel.

Some Aspects of the Nature of Convention

by George Dole

What follows is not a research paper. I have not consulted previous efforts to define Convention's position. My major sources are two — my sense of our own past and my vision for our future. The basic premise is that a sound theological rationale underlies Convention's behavior, and that the articulation of this rationale may contribute to more coherent behavior during our own stewardship of Convention's talents.

The first observation I would make about our behavior is that it has usually proceeded inductively rather than deductively. That is, there has been a strong pragmatic tendency. We began as a loose association of groups of "receivers," and evolved into an organization in response to events. We did not start by identifying a revealed pattern and designing an organization to reflect it.

This pragmatism has been coupled with a high regard for the revelation of the Second Coming. Reading circles, study groups, lecture programs, and theological writings have been major themes of our behavior. In worship, the liturgy has tended to subserve the sermon rather than the reverse.

The third recurrent motif that catches my attention is individualism. Perhaps because the separate groups took form and developed character before they came together into the larger body, our churches have differed from each other in polity and in style. There was resistance even to such minimal conformity as requiring each constituent group to have a presiding officer and a secretary. There has been consistent opposition to the notion of clerical or ecclesiastical authority, and insistence on congregational polity.

Closely akin to this is an insistence on open debate and on decision by majority vote. Differences of opinion have been strong and open. Decisions have been made and implemented which did not have the unanimous consent of the church, which in fact were directly and vociferously opposed by some.

The last theme I would, at this point, select from our past is hard to label — let me call it "universalism." We have tried not to separate ourselves from the "non-New-Church" world. We have been eager to see signs of the Lord's Second Coming in non-Swedenborgian contexts. We have been in direct contact with other churches, whether as adversaries or as partners.

In summary, I see five "ism's" recurring in our history — pragmatism, revelationism, individualism, pluralism, and universalism. They are, if you will, essential features of our heritage, and therefore, hallmarks of any genuine Convention conservatism.

I would not, though, suggest that we ought now to behave in certain ways simply because we have so behaved in the past. The purpose of identifying the five "ism's" is rather to see how we relate to our past, leaving us free to continue in the same direction or to change.

For we are free to decide what "Convention" will do with its resources — free and therefore accountable. Within the limits of our character, constitution, and by-laws we do in fact, by action or inaction, set the church's course in our own time.

To me, our charter purpose and our characteristic style come together most clearly in the description of the World of Spirits in *Heaven and Hell*. This World of Spirits is our present spiritual environment, and a life of genuine spiritual growth moves us through its processes — from a "state of externals" to a "state of internals" to a "state of instruction".

The means to this progression is quite simple, in a way. It is the relaxation of external restraints. Only as we are freed from fear of losing status, say, or comfort, do we discover the actual quality of our intent. As long as that fear is present, there is a measure of incongruity between the inner person and the outer behavior. There is a measure, that is, of unwilling conformity. To deal with such behavior is to deal with shadows. Sooner or later, the inner person must stand forth — better here than hereafter.

But if the relaxation of outward restraints is simple in outline, it is not so simple in practice. When we ask which restraints to relax, and when, and how much, we enter an area of disconcerting relativity. Too much freedom too soon can be destructive, and our fears are easily triggered. It is far tidier to have a set of behavioral rules to enforce.

In order to live with the notion of the progressive and wise relaxation of restraints, we must have a genuine confidence in an underlying order, and we must have special skills in handling freedom. We must be able to distinguish false fears from genuine danger, willing to make and admit mistakes, and above all practice on being morally responsible.

I want to dwell on this last point for a moment, for it seems often to be overlooked. It was crystallized for me some years ago when one of our then most vociferous advocates of "law and order" came to me to ask how to fix a parking ticket. A person in that state cannot afford to advocate the relaxation of restraints.

But with the growth of a love of a law-abiding life there also grows a mistrust of compulsion as a means to spiritual growth. It is seen more and more as a makeshift — as a crutch, if you will, which is helpful if it is used to prevent damage while building strength, but is harmful if it is used as a substitute for the work of organic healing. It is made to be outgrown.

Thus far, I have been patting us on the back, but now I would like to apply the same motion a bit more vigorously and distinctly farther down on the anatomy. The process outlined in *Heaven and Hell* is a demanding one. It calls us to a strenuous life.



"Sooner or later the inner person must stand forth."

Each of us has particular gifts, unique talents, so the call takes a different form for each of us. For me, the current call is to rethink everything as radically as I can, to see the writings less as giving answers to questions I haven't asked than as asking questions I can't answer. The call is to a constant dialogue between theology and experience, in which both theology and experience are forms of revelation. Learning to read one is learning to read the other.

But I enjoy this, and I am convinced that the strenuous life to which each of us is called is essentially joyful, not burdensome. We have been too long resigned to the dullness of mediocrity — upper-mediocrity, perhaps, but still mediocrity. Perhaps the reason for some of our family quarrels of the recent past was that they were the only way we could generate some facsimile of excitement. Let's face it — there's an awfully fine line between saying, "People aren't interested in what we have to say," and saying, "We're boring". The situation is the same — it just depends on where we place the responsibility.

But things are changing. There are the first faint stirrings of a new liveliness among us. And here, if we will, we can come full circle — or rather full spiral. For to the five "ism's" of our history, we need to add an "asm" — enthusiasm. Our forbears set out to change the world — not because they were some different breed of humanity from us, but because they were caught up in the beauty of discovery.

Their strength and vitality is available to us, in our time. "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, neither is his ear heavy, that it cannot hear."

CONVENTION CALENDAR

Sept. 24-26	Dept. of Publications, Philadelphia
Oct. 9-11	Pac. Coast Ass'n S.F. Bay area
Nov. 2-3	C.O.M. Exec. Com., Newton
Nov. 3-5	Com. on Adm. to Ministry, Newton, MA
Nov. 5-7	S.S.R. Bd. of Managers, Newton, MA
Jan. 28-30	General Council, Newton

DYNAMICS OF COPING WITH CHANGE

One of the highlights of Convention week was the challenge given us by Ruben Nelson of Ottawa, Ontario. Nelson is a philosopher, theologian, social analyst, and futurist. Since 1970 he has worked as a management consultant, assisting firms and governments with social, economic and technical changes, helping them to shape the future rather than be shaped by the future.

He spent about two and a half hours talking, answering questions, probing, wondering. He touched upon so many exciting, challenging ideas and possibilities concerning the evolution of religion and society in the next few decades. He had few firm answers, but a lot of provocative questions, and along the way some signposts emerged. For example:

We need to ask ourselves — What is really happening to us, as individuals and as a church? Are we really aware of the psychic states we are passing through right now? We may as well get used to a world of increasing flux and change — which contains both positive and negative features. And this should not surprise us; there is going to be pain and upheaval and sacrifice. This is the way life is today, and more so tomorrow.

It is necessary to see, to be aware of the pattern of life as it unfolds around us. There is purpose, there is a recognizable plan, if we can but see it. Some of the threads of the pattern are: Context, Subtle, Systematic, Open-ended.

Context: Look at the total context of any given problem or situation, not just at isolated segments. Everything in life is inter-related, connected, and affects everything else. What are the *real* problems, questions facing us? Sometimes we expend a lot of time, energy and money in tackling the wrong questions! And it's important to take time to relax and reflect on the situation facing us, perhaps unlearning ineffective or inappropriate methods. Joshua went around the city seven times before attacking it.

Subtle: Usually we focus our attention on measureable, obvious things in life; but more often than not our answers slip in quietly from the sidelines — then they become "blindingly obvious." "It's so plain; the answer was right there all the time and I just didn't see it." Our solutions may come to us in a disguised form,



What do we do with our wilderness experience?

and we, because we tend to think in linear, logical systems, fail to see the gifts being offered us. When we "try harder" we very often defeat our own purposes.

Systematic: There is a system, a pattern to life, but it operates on a higher level than we are accustomed to seeing. From this higher perspective, nothing is random or chaotic in life; so what we are called upon to do is make connections with what is real. Again, what is real to us, as individuals and as a church?

Open-ended: There are few final, absolute answers. Only God is perfect Truth and Wisdom. We live in a world of appearances, thus the truth we have in coping with any given situation is our best judgment, our most accurate perception, at that particular time. But that may change in five or ten years. The underlying principles do not change — their application in any given time and place may vary. Be open, vulnerable to what is going on within and around you now.

"Blessed are the meek" . . . blessed are the streetwise, those who know what's going on.

"Evil may be not seeing well enough."
Corita Kent.

"If you want to see a different kind of future, you must become a different kind of person."

"What sorts of images are choosing us right now, individually and as a church."

At the present time the church, and society in general, is passing through the wilderness state as pictured in the Old Testament. What do we do with this wilderness experience? What do we teach our young in this dramatic period in world history? Do we sense that God is with us, leading us with a pillar of smoke by day and fire to guide us by night? The old images were external, objective, quantifiable. The new images are experiential, sensitive, integrating all of life, deepening quality of relationships. This is our future, if we will lay hold of it.

P. Z.

REPORT FROM KOREA



Rev. En Bo Chung, right, with son, Dr. Hong Y Chung, North Carolina.

Once I dreamed a dream. I was just a small bird. I was surprised that I was a thinking bird. I wanted to cross the great ocean but noticed immediately that I was too small to cross it. In addition, one of my wings was hurting badly and I faced a heavy storm. In the ocean there was no island to put my toenails down, nor a board to drift with, and it was so dark I expected to drown. I perceived that sooner or later I should die. I was sorry and wept and shut my eyes. At that very moment there appeared a boat, Immediately I perceived I could be saved and put my toenails on the mast. To me the boat was and still is the Lord's aid through your care. My deep appreciation to you and to the Lord for your help.

We have two New Church societies in Korea in which thirty families are active;

three groups are studying Swedenborg's writings; and one New Church Theological School. We also have a publishing unit which has issued several pamphlets and Korean editions of *Heaven and Hell*, *Swedenborg's Life and Teaching*, *My Religion*, *Apocalypse Revealed* and so on. All these units function to save human souls in Korea. We also have thousands of readers and non-active members in Korea. Sooner or later you will hear more about our activities and their results from Korea.

Lastly I hope that our church will serve the One and Only Lord Jesus Christ in His Divine Human . . . and that we, our nation and people will stand and function under the auspices of the Lord in His Divine Human. And I firmly believe that we can do these things with the Lord through our good of life. Many thanks to you all for your support and we hope you will continue to do so.

En Bo Chung
(adapted by P.Z.)

PASTORAL CHANGES

The Rev. RICHARD H. TAFEL has retired after serving 47 years as pastor of the Philadelphia New Church. He will continue as editor of the *Daily Bread* . . . The Rev. GALEN UNRUH has resigned from the Pawnee Rock, KS. pastorate, with plans to live in Arkansas . . . The Rev. WILFRED RICE has announced his retirement, though will continue to serve the Cambridge, Mass. Society on a part-time basis until a new pastor has been selected . . . The Rev. JAIKOO LEE has been called to serve the New Church in Philadelphia, PA. . . The Rev. GLADYS WHEATON, at last word, was in the process of being called to the Cleveland Society . . . The Rev. SUSAN TURLEY-MOORE will be going to the Portland, Maine church this fall . . . The Rev. LEON LEVAN has announced his retirement but will continue his work in the St. Petersburg, Florida Society at a reduced level until a replacement is found.

CONVENTION IMPRESSIONS

Some Conventions we have suffered from the humid, hot weather in Urbana. This summer it was perfect — bright, warm days, with cool nights . . . A retirement party was held for Richard and Corinne Tafel one evening, and everyone came with expressions of appreciation and affection for Convention's "Godparents." Next month we hope to print an account of the Tafel retirement festivities in Philadelphia held on June 19th . . . Several delegates suggested on the floor of Convention that we boycott Nestle's products. Nestle's, among other companies, continues to push the sale of commercial baby food in Third World countries, where often the facilities are unsanitary and the people are poor and frequently illiterate, consequently thousands of babies are malnourished. Many churches have taken a firm stand on this issue, and we hope Convention members will follow suit . . . This Convention was larger than usual, with over 240 people in attendance. And at least 15 of these were attending their very first Convention — all of which is a positive trend . . . There were several peak experiences. One of these, for me, was when Dorothy Travers sang the descant in the second verse of "Glorious things of thee are spoken" during the Convention Sunday service. Then, for a few moments, everything suddenly came together and fell into place. A second similar experience occurred when the "Last Chants" sang "Alleluia" during the Communion service . . . The music this year



Chris Laitner (l) leads the "Last Chants" from Michigan.

was singularly beautiful, with the "Last Chants" from Michigan singing during worship and serenading us during the

Saturday evening banquet; and Muff Worden's moving solo during the Wednesday opening service; and the choir of twenty or more voices on Sunday morning; and the innovative Regeneration rock concert, written and conducted by Steve Ledingham . . . Our theme was "Make a Joyful Noise unto the Lord" and this motif surfaced in so many ways throughout the entire week . . . The Swedenborg Foundation distributed free copies of its newest publication, a re-issue of *True Christian Religion*, and Cele Werben, attending her 50th plus Convention, sold about \$800 worth of New Church literature . . . Perry Whitmore, acting President of Urbana College, gave us an honest picture of conditions facing the College at the present time. The situation is critical but by no means hopeless. The graduation class in June was the largest in the College's history, 194 graduates. Enrollment is holding up well for the fall semester. Necessary cutbacks have been made in administration and maintenance sectors of the College. Scholarship funding is still available for the majority of students. Whitmore praised and thanked the Church for its generous support over the past years, and following his remarks Convention President Eric Zacharias presented Whitmore with a check for \$15,000 . . . In some ways, quite a different Convention. Not much business to attend to; more time for socializing; trying to absorb and accept the violent death of Paul Giunta; beginning to face the whole matter of human sexuality; sensing a renewed feeling of hope and commitment in our discussions, both private and corporate. There was an upbeat flavor everywhere, which we trust will carry on til we meet again in Southern California next summer.

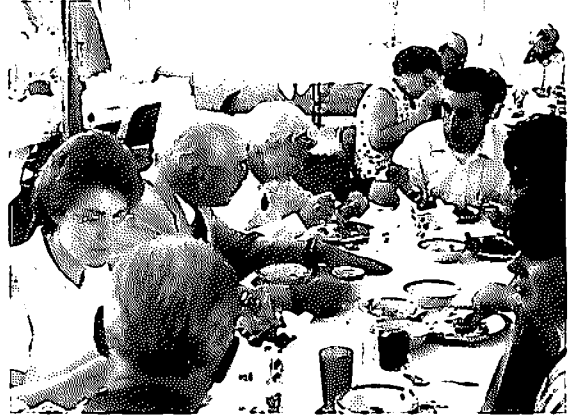


Muff Worden directed the choir on Sunday morning.

VIEWS OF CONVENTION '81



John Keller, foreground, was our genial hospitality chairman.



The meals were most enjoyable under the great tent.



Muff Worden at the keyboard has an admiring audience.



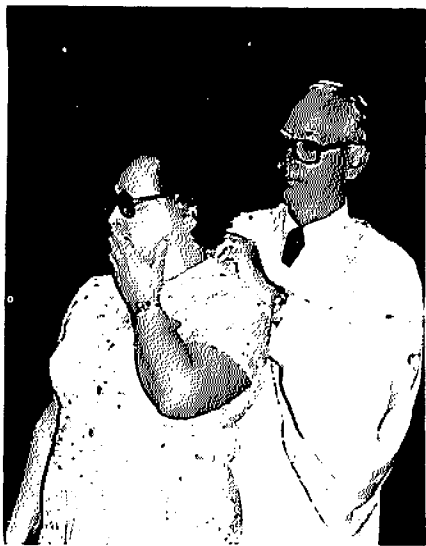
Lorraine Sando putting up the P.C.C. display.



Newly elected officers consecrated by incoming President Cal Turley.



The Saturday banquet was super.



Betty Zacharias presented with a string of pearls after six years as President's wife.



Barbara Mackay sold Swedenborgian T-shirts, Stickers and Thermometers.



The Massachusetts delegation.



Harvey Johnson, Cele Werben, Ray Guiu and Virginia Branston at the Book Center.



Patti Holt, KS, at her first Convention, jokes with old-timers Cele Werben and Eric Zacharias.



Heidi Neuenfeldt, 3 -months, youngest convention goer.

PRE-CONVENTION CONFERENCE REPORT

"Man is a unit of energy; he needs to be juiced up," said Effie Chow, at the start of her four workshops on "EXPLORING SPIRITUAL ENERGY", during the Pre-Convention Conference at Urbana. Dr. Chow's prescription? Four hugs a day for survival, eight for good measure to maintain the status quo and twelve for the building of reserves.

Dr. Chow, president of the East-West Academy of the Healing Arts in San Francisco, was sponsored by the Board of Education. She was assisted by Lorraine Sando, Rachel Martin, and Ted Klein, during the P.C.C. period from Sunday, June 21, until Wednesday, June 24.

Explaining energy systems at the initial Monday morning session, Effie commented, "You are a force that can influence others and their forces. We are what we think we are; others are what you think they are". In the Tao concept, each one of us represents the universe. We operate at only ten percent of our brain, lung and other capacities, but if we use the laws of the five elements, relate to cycles and rhythms, and increase awareness of colors and harmonies, we are fostering the other ninety percent.

The woods, winds, and waterfalls, give us negative air ions, with an excessive oxygen charge, which our bodies need. Rains and storms disperse the buildup of the positive ions as the universal elements seek equilibrium. Positive ions drain us and are cancer producing agents, so we need to develop extra sensitivity to boost our energy levels.

We choose, subliminally most of the time, our clothing colors and decorating colors by our energy needs. The color red boosts heart energy, while white reinforces the lung and colon. Yellow works on the spleen, pancreas and stomach, blues and black influence kidney energy, while green affects liver and gall bladder efficiency. Fluorescent lights are called "killer lights". They and full spectrum lights give off positive ions into the atmosphere and are de-energizing. Partial spectrum lights give negative ions.

"How you tone your energy level is you coming into your essence," Dr. Chow continued, as she introduced the concept of brain wave activity on the Beta, Alpha, and Theta levels. The Theta stage, four to eight



Effie Chow demonstrates energy points.

cycles per second, is the highest high of prayer and meditation. We have to work on it. Positive thoughts and words zap our energy level, while negatives sap and are energy suckers.

Using kinesiology or muscle testing techniques, Effie demonstrated how the mind affects body efficiency and muscle tone. The "Chi" energy pathways or meridian systems of the body, known and used for thousands of years in acupuncture and acupressure by the Chinese, flow in patterns inside the body, but also create a bio-energetic field outside the body. As Kirlian photography has recently illustrated, we have a living aura of energy.

Biorhythms are being widely used in Japan by industry, to increase productivity and reduce accidents. Charts are given employees and they merit special consideration on days when their patterns are low or cross over. "Our culture isolates the individual. The Japanese consideration shows cohesiveness," Effie stated.

Astrology is known in the East, as a true science. Newspapers use only part of the total system for fortune telling. In China healers are considered on five levels. The lowest, number five, is the physical or animal doctor; fourth is the acupuncturist, who deals with energies; third is the surgeon; second is the nutrition doctor; and first is the philosopher-sage, who works with mind and spirit, from whence all disease comes.

Dr. Chow taught her eager class of almost fifty P.C.C. students and ministers' wives meditation techniques which included centering and feeling the silver thread of

spinal energy pulling out of the crown chakra. She introduced the group to a two-hour session of Tai Ch'i Chuan exercises outdoors and she allowed each of us time to work with partners on healing using pressure points on the body.

Many people had written to Dr. Chow, requesting specific healing information for specific ailments and problems. Dr. Chow's prescription, purely holistic, was "Use the mind to control the body and restore health."

In evaluating the sessions by written report, many attendees praised the Board of Education for the decision to have a pre-convention, rather than a post-convention conference. The leaders, Lorraine, Rachel, and Ted, led the group into other meditative, healing, music and art experiences that built a community co-hesiveness and closeness.

It was considered an experience to be treasured. The insights gained and the interactions experienced increased the spiritual energy of all who participated.

Dorothy Clayton Travers.

Ministers' Spouses Pre- Convention Conference Workshop with Effie Poy Chow

How appropriate that in this energy conscious time, over forty ministers' spouses and pre-conventioners met to learn the art of disciplining one's own energy to deal with the stress in life. This group met with Effie Poy Yew Chow, President of the East-West Academy of Healing Arts.

Miss Chow, a registered nurse, behavioral scientist and a California State certified acupuncturist has developed and incorporated many ways to cope in today's world. Some of her ways, which seem to make her radiate are: four hugs a day (or more!), meditation, exercise and touch healing in self and others. Effie emphasized that many of our problems and illnesses are a result of poor breathing and posture. She introduced a meditation process which involved diaphragmatic breathing and visualizing a silver thread drawn up through us to the heavens to help us. We also practiced a system of exercises to help develop strong nerves and produce mental energy. They were totally non-competative and are classified as

internal system exercises. They are practiced slowly and consciously with particular attention to incoming and outgoing breaths. Effie also spent some time on demonstrating touch healing and we practiced this on others by brushing off energy and massaging. Like everything else in life, the degree of effectiveness of any of these methods depends on daily practice and use.

Miss Chow also emphasized the importance of using the positive rather than the negative approach to everything and to utilize all these methods rather than expecting one simple remedy to work wonders. This demands that the individual take the responsibility of his/her life, which of course sounds very familiar to us in the New Church.

There is no doubt that most involved in this dynamic workshop would agree it was an exciting and constructive experience. Most of all it helped us to learn that, "the greatest power we have is to give power to others . . . with love and care."

Carole Rienstra

*Happiness cannot
come from without.
It must come
from within.
It is not what we
see and touch or
that which others
do for us
which makes us happy;
it is that which we
think and feel and do,
first for the other fellow
and then for ourselves.*

—Helen Keller

WOMEN'S ALLIANCE REPORT



Women's Alliance Luncheon.

Under the colorful tent at Urbana College Convention '81-83 members of the Women's Alliance enjoyed a delightful luncheon arranged by Sharon Slough. Church pins were presented to our guest, Mrs. En Bo Chung, and to the wife of Llewellyn Fraser who was unable to accompany her husband to Convention.

Carole Reinstra, our devotional leader, led us in a beautiful worship experience assisted by Cindy Gutfeldt on the flute.

Appropriations for the coming year included:

\$100 each for our seven church camps.

\$200 for Church Women United.

\$250 for the *Messenger*.

\$100 for Urbana College Library.

Pictures were passed around from Joseph Agbaje in Nigeria showing the audio visual equipment paid for by the Alliance being used in the local churches. A rising vote of thanks was given Marion Priestnal for her work as editor of the *Alliance Bulletin*.

The Mite Box for S.N.A.P. amounted to \$1500.46. On behalf of S.N.A.P. Rachel Martin thanked the Alliance and explained the use of the money for a water system which will be much appreciated by all. It was announced that next year's Mite Box will be given to Paulhaven in Alberta, Canada.

The report of the Nominating Committee was given by Margaret Kraus. Elections were held and the following officers elected for 1981-82: President: Mareta Saul, Newport Beach, CA; 1st Vice-Pres.: Jean Gilchrist, Edmonton, Alta.; 2nd Vice-Pres.: Mary McCormick, Riverside, CA; Secretary:

Elinor Johnson, Mich.; Treasurer: Doris Tafel, Drexel Hill, PA; Mite Box Chmn.: Marge Ball, Ventura, CA; Religious Chmn.: Carole Rienstra, Fryeburg, ME; Round Robin Chmn.: Katherine Swiger, West Alexandria, PA; Publications Chmn.: Perry Martin, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA; Nom. Comm. Members: Martha Mason, St. Louis, MO. and Polly Baxter, St. Paul, Minn.

Pat Z.

SHATTERING OLD MYTHS

Emily Taylor, Washington D.C., delivered the Women's Alliance address on Friday evening. She graduated from Urbana Junior College, and received degrees from Ohio State University and Indiana University. In her witty and perceptive style, Taylor demolished a number of old, familiar myths. She said, "We protect old beliefs, old ideas that are no longer valid." For example:

We still think in terms of the stable, nuclear family unit. For increasing numbers of people — because of the divorce rate, later marriages, single parents, both partners working, declining birth rate, longer life expectancy — this concept is no longer valid. We must look at the situation the way it is.

We feel that women have made significant advances in the past decade — in employment opportunities, in social status, in equal pay and working benefits. Taylor claimed that discrimination still exists in virtually every sector of society and in business practices, saying that women earn 59¢ for every \$1.00 earned by males. By the year 2000, if present trends continue, the vast majority of poor people will be females, minority groups and children . . . the present situation greatly exacerbated.



"There is still discrimination against women."

THE NEW CHURCH SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

The American New Church Sunday School Association held its annual meeting at the Convention held at Urbana College, during which those present discussed some potential projects for the coming year. A question began to take shape out of that discussion: "How do parents help create a spiritual environment in their home?" Our purpose is to encourage parents to ask this question for themselves, so that they might come up with their unique and appropriate answers, using materials available in their home.

To support this process, Muff Worden will produce a tape this year that will teach children songs from the *Hosanna*. It will be useful in homes and Sunday Schools with limited musical resources. Also, Louise Woofenden and Gertrude Tremblay will explore some new learning theories appropriate for infants through pre-school age. There may be some guidelines suggested and some learning resources made available after our work this year. They will be especially useful to those parents who really ask questions like: "How do I create a spiritual environment in the home? How does my child really learn? What's happening when my child is taking in the impressions from the home environment?" There will be a newsletter describing this more fully.

Officers elected are President, Rev. Gard Perry; Vice President, Rev. Gertrude Tremblay; Secretary, Nancy Perry and Treasurer, Tom Zehner.

Nancy Perry.



S.S.A. President Gard Perry and retiring Sec. Francis Boyle.

McCORMICK URBANA COLLEGE FUND

After learning about Urbana College's financial plight, "Mac" McCormick, of Riverside, California, walked up to the microphone and said he was giving \$1,000 to Urbana College, challenging other individuals and groups in Convention to support the College at this critical time. Then a representative from the Illinois Association said that body would increase its annual contribution to \$1200. Fred Burdett from Boston pledged \$500 from the Massachusetts New Church Union. This was followed by a gift of \$1000 from Julia Anger of Florida. And so it continued. By the end of the day over \$6500 had been pledged to Urbana College.

The next year will be crucial for Urbana College. Financial support is needed NOW. Contributions may be sent directly to Urbana College, Urbana, Ohio 43078.



Acting Pres. Perry Whitmore about to receive a check for \$15,000 from Convention.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

As of mid-July the Canadian postal system is completely shut down by a national strike. First class *Messengers* will be mailed from Almont, Michigan on July 27th.

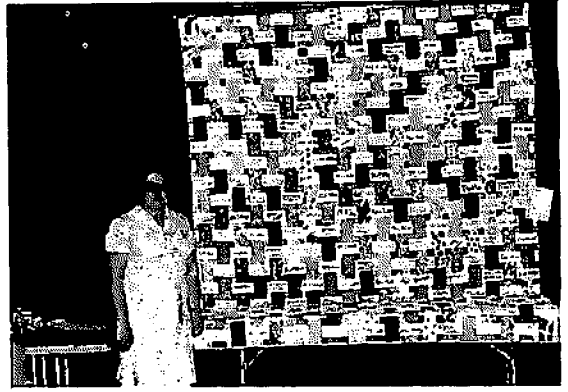
If the strike continues into August, the September issue will be enclosed in the envelope with this July-August issue.

We deeply regret this inconvenience. It is a very difficult time for all concerned, especially editors.

THE FRIENDSHIP QUILT

Quite a human interest story here. Most members of Convention are aware that for the past couple of years Betty Zacharias of Pretty Prairie, Kansas has been putting together a beautiful Friendship Quilt for the Alliance. About 200 Swedenborgians from all parts of North America have sent in signature patches and the end result is a very lovely handmade work of art — something to be treasured for years to come.

On Saturday evening, June 27th, Kathy Tafel reached into the container holding about 700 tickets — representing \$700 for the Board of Missions — and drew out the name of Virginia Branston. Virginia said she only had single beds in her New York apartment, and felt the quilt really should be used, so she graciously decided to give the quilt to Betty Zacharias. After a few moments Betty said she really did not feel right about taking the quilt back to Kansas, so she would give it to some-



Roger Paulson finally won the quilt made by Betty Zacharias.

one who would truly appreciate it, someone who had been instrumental in making this a very successful Convention and who had been of such great help to Eric the past six years — Roger Paulson. And that is where the quilt stopped. Sleep well, Roger.

LETTER OF APPRECIATION

(The following letter of appreciation was sent to retiring President Eric Zacharias by incoming President Calvin Turley.)

Rev. Eric J. Zacharias
Pretty Prairie, Kansas 67570

Dear Eric:

This note is written on behalf of the members of your beloved Church to note the occasion of your retirement as President of Convention. You have been for us a gentle and steady guide, a pastor and a model. For these gifts we thank you and express in this inadequate way our enduring gratitude and love for you.

Over the past thirty years, your path and mine have crisscrossed so often that a model of our contrails would look like a three dimensional spider web. Thus, this note cannot be only "official," it is also most personal. To me you have been friend, confident, spiritual guide and professional consultant. Over the years, the steadiness of your being has been both a challenge and a strength to me. Best of all, you are for me a model of deepening spirituality. I am thankful that you are you and grateful for the privilege of having you as friend and colleague.

I have been remembering, Eric. It was my joy to have followed in your footsteps through theological school; now it is my privilege to assume the office of President following you; and you are now "His Honor, the Mayor of Pretty Prairie, Kansas." Do you suppose that I No, it couldn't be.

God bless you, Eric. And thank you for being friend and pastor to us all.

With love,

Calvin E. Turley
President Elect

Attention Ministers A Working Holiday in Australia?

The Melbourne Society pastorate will be vacant from January, 1982. Perhaps there is a Minister about to move or to retire who would like to serve here for some months. Travel costs to and from would be at his own expense, but a Manse (or board and lodging), a car, and stipend, would be provided.

Please apply to the Secretary:

I. A. ROBINSON,
82 Middlesex Rd.,
Surrey Hills,
Victoria,
AUSTRALIA, 3127.

HUMAN SEXUALITY PANEL

On Friday afternoon Betsy Young moderated a panel discussion on human sexuality. Panel members included Dick Tafel Jr., Dorothea Harvey, George Dole, Randall Laakko and Calvin Turley.

George Dole established the mood for the hour long session with his opening comment that when Moses gave the Ten Commandments — the second time — the writing was of God but the tablets were of men. The essence, the spirit, of the Word and our church teachings comes to us from the Lord, but the literal words were written by mortal human beings. Thus some behavioral and cultural models in the Bible and in our church writings are dated. This is very obviously true. No one condones the killing of homosexuals, as prescribed in the Old Testament, and dozens of similar examples can be found in the Bible. We are called upon to live by the inner spirit and intent within the literal words.

What is true intimacy beyond physical sexual behavior? Our primary model is the perfect marriage of Divine Love and Wisdom in the Lord. Since God is perfection itself, with a complete union of male and female qualities . . . and since we are created in God's image and likeness . . . then we too are called upon to recognize and harmonize the male and female elements within us.

Physical sex can be sublime or bestial, depending on the loves and the purposes in both partners. The essential quality is: *conscious intentionality*. Are we fully and consciously present in the sexual relationship? (Animals are unable to experience this

level of intimacy. Sadly, the same can be said for some men and women who have blocked off the spiritual dimensions of life.)

Intentional love and trust and caring makes marriage love genuine, and this is a growing, evolving process in the lives of both partners. This kind of sexual and emotional intimacy results in warmth, trust, inner peace and deeper love. Always we are free to reach this fulfillment of our potential on all levels of life.

Where do we find our authority in sexual matters? In many sources. Primarily in the Lord, then in revealed truth, in personal reflection, in tradition and social mores. Ultimately we decide for ourselves what is right and wrong in all areas of life.

Someone asked, "Is it essential that husband and wife share the same religious beliefs?" One response: "We have two belief systems. 1) What we believe. 2) What we live by." We have a great many intellectual ideas and rational thoughts about almost everything including religion and sexual behavior. We talk glibly about our belief systems. But more importantly, what are the values and the ideas that we really live by? What is truly important to us? What is it that motivates us and gives us authentic reasons for our actions? When a husband and wife share life on this profoundly deeper level, then the more external intellectual belief system takes a secondary place.

"When two people are truly in touch with themselves and with the Lord, then they will enjoy genuine intimacy and love."



The panel on Human Sexuality: Dick Tafel Jr., George Dole, Cal Turley, Randy Laakko and Dorothea Harvey.

Paul David Giunta: A Tribute

May 1, 1939 — June 21, 1981

He was getting ready to drive from Boston to Urbana to attend Convention. He expected to leave on Sunday, because on Monday evening he was scheduled to lead the Council of Ministers' discussion of a video-tape of an educational TV program that he was bringing with him. Also, he was bringing copies of his plan of ministry, which CAM had approved last April, to discuss with Council of Ministers. It was time for such discussion, because Paul hoped that next year, the Council would recommend him for ordination into the Ministry of his church.

Ordination was a deeply passionate dream of Paul's, for he was a true son of our church. He was a nephew of a General Pastor of Convention, the Rev. Henry Giunta; but more importantly, he and Loretta and John Jr. were raised in the devotedly New Church home of John and Ida Giunta. In their home, and in the Sunday School and worship and social life of the Cambridge church, he developed a love for the church and its teachings that grew into a fundamental part of his character long before he entered SSR to prepare for Convention's ordained Ministry.

He started professional life in banking (as his father once had), then served in the U.S. Army Counter Intelligence Corps in America, France and Vietnam. Home again, he became a social worker, then a student, practitioner, and teacher (on the faculty of Boston's prestigious Forsythe School) of Dental Hygiene. He was an active leader in Demolay, Boston's Back Bay Civic Association, and the Massachusetts Horticultural Society; but most of his energy, talents, devotion and skills were reserved for his church.

At first, that meant Cambridge. He was Gardener, Sexton, Council member, Altar committee (of one - creating richly imaginative floral chancels). But gradually his devotion broadened to the wider church, to which he gave the museum quality needlepoint (an altar cloth and 8 banners that decorate the Cambridge Church); he served on General Council and entered SSR. An especially reverent lover of sacraments, he joyfully received special permission to administer Baptism to his niece in the Cambridge church.

But Paul Giunta's expectations, schedules, plans, hopes, and dreams were aborted suddenly and violently. He was murdered in his apartment as he was getting ready to drive from Boston to Urbana to attend Convention. At Council of Minister's meetings we waited, wondered, then worried, then gasped, then grieved. But even before we heard the tragic news, one of the ministers who knew Paul well was granted a vision of him in a garden with a golden door, filled with plants for him to nurture into bloom: he was happy.

That leavened our grief — as it may yours. But a void remains where there had been vitality, gentleness, courage, and humor — plus a unique and powerful gift to the church. The history of the New Church in this world has been changed by a stranger who poked his weapon into our friend. Convention's theme was, "Make a Joyful noise unto the Lord." We'll never know how joyful we might have been had Paul been among us as a living joy instead of a wounding memory.

Robert and Marion Kirven
(We hope to print Paul Giunta's Plan of Ministry in the next Messenger.)

National Council of Churches Update

At its biannual meeting, the Governing Board of the National Council of Churches issued a sweeping message to the churches expressing its "fundamental disagreement" with the Reagan administration's "vision of who we are and where we are going." Expressing opposition to the administration's social spending cutbacks, energy policy, military spending hikes, environmental stance and foreign policy, the board warned that such moves "threaten the vision of America and the model and embodiment of a just and humane society." The message on the direction of national policy, which passed by a wide margin, marked the first time since the NCC's founding in 1950 that the council has issued such a broad evaluation of a new administration's policies.

"In the new administration's philosophy," the board said, "the nation confronts a cross-roads choice between alternative visions of the meaning and purpose of America. In (the Reagan) vision of America the fittest survive and prosper, and there is little room for public purpose since it interferes with private gain. Compassion is a weakness in the competitive struggle of each against all."

In contrast, the message continued, the NCC identifies with an "alternative vision" that "has deep roots in religious faith and biblical images of divine intent and human possibility."

In a new policy statement on immigration, refugees and migrants, the church council urged a number of changes in American immigration law, including permanent-residence status for undocumented people who have been in the U.S. for a "reasonable period of time," the precise number of years to be set by Congress. The board also backed legislation to extend full human and labor rights to foreign migrants and temporary workers.

In a resolution passed unanimously, the board reiterated its stand—first taken last year—against U.S. military aid to El Salvador. Such aid, the board charged, "has served to increase the level of violence and the violation of human rights." The resolution urged President Reagan "to promote early negotiations between the contending parties in El Salvador, in a secure and peaceful manner, with full respect for the views and participation of all concerned."

The board's resolution on nuclear weapons urged both the U.S. and the Soviet Union to adopt an immediate "mutual freeze on all further testing, production and deployment of weapons and aircraft designed primarily to deliver nuclear weapons."

In other actions the board:

- criticized the government's deportation and exclusion of Salvadoran and Haitian refugees;
- supported the idea of a worldwide ecumenical gathering to celebrate the year 2000 of our Lord Jesus Christ;
- urged the U.S. government to pursue diplomatic solutions to the conflict in Lebanon.

—Christian Century

URBANA COLLEGE INFORMATION

In June, Urbana College graduated 194 students, the largest graduating class in the 131-year history of the private, liberal arts college.

During the 81st commencement ceremony, four seniors were recognized for their perfect 4.0 scholastic achievement during their academic career at U.C.

Charles F. Johnson, chairman of the Board of Trustees of Urbana College, on behalf of the College, greeted the graduates, their families, friends, and guests. During his remarks, Johnson challenged higher education to provide students with greater exposure to a value system which, he stressed, is necessary for our country to maintain its high standards.

Dr. Sylvia E. Bowman, Professor Emeritus of Indiana University (English), gave the Commencement Address. Emphasizing the humanistic values of our society, she told the audience: "Learning to live in this third American century presents many challenges and one of the greatest of these challenges is that learning can never stop and that we must live to learn about ourselves, about others in the world and about our country's problems and achievements until the day we die."

Dr. Bowman was awarded Urbana College's distinctive Helen Keller Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters degree for her many

accomplishments and contributions to education and literature.

Lewis B. Moore, Mayor of Urbana, received the College's Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters degree for his dedication to, and achievements in, the business, educational, and political communities.

Accepting his award, Mayor Moore stressed the importance of commitment to the American way of life and of the responsibilities each person shares in the success of our society.

At the Alumni Day Dinner, Dr. A. Perry

Whitmore, Acting President of Urbana College, offered the "State of the College" address to alumni and guests. Dr. Whitmore pointed out that the College faces many challenges in the year ahead; he expressed confidence that Urbana College will meet these challenges and advance its stated mission to all the areas which it serves.

The Rev. Dr. Dorothea Harvey, UC's College Chaplain and Professor of Religion, received the Thelma Haddix Award, the Alumni Association's highest honor, for her numerous contributions to Urbana College.

HOLISTIC LIVING SYMPOSIUM

(Symposium: A Conference at which a particular topic is discussed by various speakers." Merriam-Webster Pocket Dictionary)

The Detroit Society tried an experiment and it worked! The idea for sponsoring a symposium that would involve people from the local community began with suggestions from the Board of Education during their August, 1980 meeting in Bridgeton, Maine. The symposium concept was the theme of the joint Ohio-Michigan Association meetings in early October at Almont, Michigan. The Rev. Dick Tafel, Jr. shared with us his valuable knowledge on preparing for a symposium. Our own local people then picked up the ball and ran with it. The "symposium committee" included Bill, Jo and Bob Locke, Stephanie Wagner, Barbara Penabaker, Ella Baker, Joyce Fekete, Cynthia James, and Rev. Gard Perry, plus strong support from the Board of Trustees.

The subject we chose to explore was: "How to live a longer and more meaningful life through integrating body, mind and spirit." Our speakers included a cardiologist, a mental health counselor, a nutritionist, and our own pastor, Gard Perry. It was held at the Royal Oak Woman's Club, (where the Detroit Society holds its Sunday worship services) from 9:30 - 4:30 on Saturday, May 9. A high level of interest was maintained throughout the day. "That was a fascinating program!" sums up most of the comments. There were forty people in attendance.

Several highlights of the day: Gard Perry shared the thought that your heart, the central, yet often unnoticed organ of the body, corresponds to your central, yet often

unnoticed affections in life. He asked, "Are your life's loves healthy, being open to others and God, or are they unhealthy, being closed in upon themselves?" People had a few moments to reflect upon their answers to that question.

Dr. Pfeifer echoed his belief that a healthy spiritual life corresponds to a healthy physical life. He then pointed out that the killers in heart disease are cholesterol and tobacco. His message was: "If you smoke, stop. If you take in a lot of cholesterol, cut down and begin a sensible exercise program."

Fredelle Fealk believes that our tastes for food have been perverted by the processed food industry, leading us to consume too much sugar. "Eat as many unprocessed foods as you can, and whatever you eat, let it be in moderation." She also said that North Americans eat too much for dinner, and not enough for breakfast, when we need it. "Eat like a king (or queen) for breakfast, a prince for lunch, and a pauper for dinner," she quipped.

Mrs. Betty White, whose field is counseling older adults through major life transitions shared a valuable concept about "support systems". She asked, "From whom and from what activities do you receive your support when you need it?" She then told us how to identify our own support systems, and how to creatively add to the support we find in life.

We thank the Board of Education and the Kemper Road Center for their support. It was a good day for all who came to the symposium and people in the Detroit Society are already asking, "what topic shall we explore in the next one?"

Letters To The Editor

LIKES CHURCH HISTORY

Dear Editor:

I enjoyed the article on the "Garden Church of San Francisco" very much. It would be nice to run such an article each month to let us know the history of the New Churches in each area. They are indeed precious places.

Maxine Beckham
Wichita, Kansas

(This fall the story of the Pittsburgh New Church will appear in the Messenger. We strongly urge other New Church societies and groups to submit material — with pictures, if possible — for the Messenger.)

POTPOURRI FROM PAST MESSENGERS

Dear Mr. Zacharias:

First I must congratulate you on the production of an interesting, topical and thought provoking periodical. I enjoy it immensely. I sent a copy of "Death at a horizon" in Easter Blossoms (April 1981 issue) to two people whose wives have passed on. Their comments were overwhelmingly grateful.

I am enclosing the Xeroxed copy of a newspaper article that impressed me greatly. I felt that if ever a person needed an introduction to Swedenborg's writings this one did. I also wondered whether articles, such as this, ever prompted the Boards of the Swedenborg Foundation or Urbana College, etc., those with some authority invested in their names, to contact writers of similar, serious, questioning material, to offer the written authority of Swedenborg. (The article referred to is on John Eccles, written up in the June Messenger, p. 141. Ed.)

Perhaps an effective way we can grow, as a Church, is by influencing people with "standing", those whose opinions matter in this crass, commercial world. This sounds very elitist, I know, but what effect does the average New Church person have on the opinions of a great many people. It is true that our personal example may influence our immediate circle, and I am certainly not belittling this. I am totally in agreement with Steve Koke in "The Lonely Church". We all know the reception we receive when asked to what religion we belong. Most people asking

will say, "What sect is that?" or "I've never heard of it". It is often a lonely business being a Swedenborgian. It is much easier to belong to the old "established" churches, be one of the crowd, be accepted. Yes, the early Christians must have thought this — and what did they have to contend with?

I was intensely interested by the account of Dr. Francuch's method of healing people (see March issue). More people are accepting the view of the holistic approach to sickness, i.e. that there is a connection between the spiritual, the mental and the physical aspect of disease, and one can't be treated in isolation. If people have been healed by someone who is as obviously sincere and well motivated as Dr. Francuch, then maybe his documented cures should speak for themselves.

I can understand his concern and the necessity for him to determine the rightness of this by prayer and meditation, but I found his public account of this embarrassing. The very colloquialness of his dialogue sounded a discordant note, and the question of anyone having anything to say after the Lord had 'spoken' sounded presumptuous.

In closing, let me say, that I too agree with Lois Kerr's views in the February issue. I cannot agree with allowing homosexuals into the ministry.

Ruth Robertson
Victoria, B.C.

LET'S HEAR FROM OLD FRIENDS!

Dear Paul:

For the many of us who cannot travel to Convention, there is a great void in human relationships with those we love and miss seeing. It's been a very long time since Convention has met in the midwest, the west, or the northwest, so the preponderance of people who attend come from the north and northeast. It's an artifact of pure economics.

For those of us who care deeply about the people who are the church as well as about the doctrines of the church, it would go far to close the gap if Convention rotated around more, as it used to do, and if The Messenger carried more people news and proportionately less "issue" news. I'd really like to see a poll, a truly representative poll — which is hard to obtain — about these polarities. How many of us care as deeply as you do, and have the same point of view, on issues? This may be a function of my being an isolated member,

but I would value much more a greater emphasis on people of the church, what they're doing, how they are. We hear all too often only if they've died. Is it because they never tell you what they're doing as they live? If you don't hear, you can't report.

For live news of Ells and me, in a nutshell: we're over-busy, supremely happy, deeply into veggie and flower gardening, loving our dear little cat who keeps our garden free of rodents. I'm active in our local Methodist Church which meets once a month with a circuit-riding minister who serves the ten to fifteen of us who gather. Our life is full to bursting, and so is our health. Can't say the same for our economics, but not to complain. By next year maybe the economy will turn around a bit and make us freer.

Thanks especially for the *May Messenger*. Edwin Capon's "A Vital Church" asked good questions and stimulated much thought. Steve Koke also brought up points to consider that were well presented with much thought, and Bob Tafel's review of *Good Life/Good Death* brings out in the open the subject meriting much thoughtful consideration — euthanasia, both active and passive. To my mind the May issue was outstanding and truly meaty. Well done!

Jan Seibert
Star Route
Albion, CA 95410

A DANGEROUS BY-PASS SYSTEM

Dear Paul:

Dr. Kirven wrote of the various and conflicting emotions he experienced when he first read Dr. Peter Francuch's article, "Are Visions and Direct Communication with the Spiritual World Possible and Orderly at the Present Day?". For myself, I was both incredulous and dismayed.

The big issue is, of course, the question of open communication with the spiritual world, indeed, with the Lord Himself, which communication is, for Dr. Francuch, as I understand it, a regular experience.

In his comments on the article Dr. Kirven refers us to AE 1182 and 1183. You find something similar in H.H. 249-252.

(1) H.H. 250 begins, "However, to speak with the angels of heaven is granted *only to those who are in truths from good* . . ." Speech with angels, which, as I read Dr. Francuch in his earlier March article, he claims as possible, involves, therefore, a

colossal pre-supposition about the state we are in that I don't believe any of us are entitled to make.

(2) To be sure, the writings do allow the possibility of spirits communicating. As I read the writings, I take such communication to be an *unsought-after* experience. Whenever it is sought, mischief-making spirits respond to the overtures.

(3) Dr. Kirven dwells at length on the Latin word, *HODIE* ('today', 'at this day', etc.). But it's not just a matter of what the situation was like 200 years ago as compared with today (1981). The circumstances which caused the cessation of open communication arose *thousands* of years ago (see H.H. 252) and I cannot see that they are reversed in the short space of 200 years.

(4) Dr. Kirven rightly discusses the warnings given about spirit communication. What must also be taken into consideration is the danger to the spirits themselves. (see H.H. 249). It's not just people on earth the Lord is thinking about, but He is concerned for people in the spiritual world (spirits) for whom such communication is harmful also.

(5) AE 1183, as Dr. Kirven points out, speaks of those "whom the Lord leads". Note also, how that paragraph continues: "If these hear the speech of spirits, as is sometimes the case, they are not taught by it, but are led, so providently, *that the man is still left to himself*." I find it difficult to read Dr. Francuch's article as being that of a man "still left to himself", to reason the matter out, reach a conclusion, etc.

(6) I see in all this a by-pass system which is extremely dangerous. Dr. Francuch comments on the narrowness of — dare I call them — 'traditionally-accepted' source of spiritual knowledge (The Bible, the writings, etc.). But in terms of what they have to offer, I believe we have hardly begun to 'scratch the surface'. There will always be new insights, understanding, perception and enlightenment. The expanse, the potential, the horizon before us, is limitless. Rather than by-pass what is given, let us approach it with ever-deepening love and desire to understand. Let us ask the Lord to open our eyes to what we have not seen before and to give us the strength to cast off patterns of thought which are merely traditional and from others. *That's* what we need to get rid of and *not* the truth which is revealed and given.

Rev. Ian A. Arnold,
N.S.W. Australia.

INFORMATION RE: THE SWEDENBORG SCIENTIFIC ASSOC.

Dear Rev. Zacharias:

Following please find some information relative to the Swedenborg Scientific Association in the event that portions of it might be of interest to readers of *The Messenger*. I am forwarding this information at the direction of the Board of Directors.

The Swedenborg Scientific Association was organized on May 27, 1898 for the preservation, translation, publication, and distribution of the Scientific and Philosophical works of Emanuel Swedenborg and the promotion of the principles taught in these works, having in view likewise their relation to the science and philosophy of the present day.

Membership is open to anyone interested in the Association's purposes. The annual membership fee, including a subscription to *The New Philosophy*, is for Students U.S. \$2.50; Regular Members U.S. \$5.00; Contributing Members U.S. \$10.00. Subscription price to non-members: U.S. \$4.00 per year including postage. Back issues from 1900 to date are available. Communications regarding membership, subscriptions, or other business should be directed to: Mr. E. Boyd Asplundh, Treasurer, Box 11, Bryn Athyn, Pa. 19009.

Jerome Sellner
Bryn Athyn, PA

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE NCC TRANSLATION OF THE SCRIPTURES ALONG NON-SEXIST LINES

Dear Editor:

My love for the writings and my reverence for the Scriptures and above all love to the Lord makes it imperative that some sort of an answer to the recent article in the *Messenger* with regard to the NCC and the "non-sexist Scripture" be forthcoming.

Swedenborg took his understanding from a deep study of the original languages, under the direction, for the most part, of the Lord himself — the Holy Spirit inspiring. One feels the warmth and confirmation of the spirit in such studies. If we take away the correspondences and representatives as taught by Swedenborg as this sexist version would do, one has lost some of the tremendous foundations of his writings. He

definitely made a differentiation between male and female, man and woman, sons and daughters, husband and wife. In fact a great part of the *Arcana* is written in this fashion.

"In the internal sense man is wisdom and intelligence and so everyone who is regenerate." (*Dictionary of Bible Imagery*.) It would seem the only difference, according to Swedenborg would be between those in the process of regeneration and those still in the animal nature living for self and the world, rather than male and female, per se.

To change the Scriptures to please a small group of ignorant people would seem a tragedy. By ignorant I mean ignorant of the Scriptures themselves, ignorant of the change of life the Lord gives us, ignorant of the divine inspiration of the Bible and the supreme power of the Holy Spirit to translate and protect this 'Word' through the ages and for those of us who drink the clear sparkling waters of Swedenborg, ignorant of what this great seer really meant.

We hear much of the time of tribulation and the new dawning of the coming of the Lord. How wonderful for those who are able spiritually to realize that this great 'coming' includes the teaching of Swedenborg and the presence of our Lord with us NOW — as well as some of the coming wonders of the New Age.

Dorothy Doane
Littlerock, CALIF.

STAYING IN HEAVEN

Dear Editor:

We go to Church, we make donations and we participate in the church functions. Why? Are we trying to buy our way into Heaven? No, because we know that no one has to buy his or her way into Heaven. Everyone gets to Heaven. Right?

The problem isn't getting there. The problem is staying there. But to be able to stay there, we have to really want to stay. The trick is to acquire a taste for Heaven, so to speak. Somehow, we have to get ourselves out of the old bad habit of always looking out for number one first and learn to like living in a society where the happiness of one is dependent on the happiness of all. More than that even, we need to develop a spontaneous desire to see to the needs of our fellow man first and be unconcerned about number one. In other words, we need to change our nature, and that takes a bit of doing.

The only way we can develop a preference for Heaven over you-know-where, so that we will really want to stay, is through experience. We need to practice being in a society where all are dedicated to the Lord, and to each other. And that's where the Church comes in. The Church gives us the opportunity to practice being in Heaven. "In

other words, the life we attain and express in the church is our apprenticeship in the life of Heaven." (Quoted from "WHERE HEAVEN BEGINS", by Everett K. Bray.) Seen in this light, it would be hard to overestimate the value of attending church whenever possible.

Ralph Cramer,
Los Angeles, CA

FROM CHURCH RECORDS

BIRTHS

NEUENFELDT — Heidi Grace, a daughter born to Betty Jean and Tom Neuenfeldt, of Riverdale, Michigan on April 9, 1981. Proud grandmother is Elinor Johnson of East Tawas, Michigan.

WAGNER — Melanie Anne, a daughter born to Stephanie and Mike Wagner, Pontiac, Michigan, on April 25, 1981.

CZUDYJOWYCZ — Anne Nicole, a daughter born to Jeannie and Nick Czudyjowycz, Kitchener, Ontario, May 7, 1981; a granddaughter for Rev. and Mrs. Paul Zacharias, Kitchener.

BANUS — Todd Andrew, a son, born to Kay and Peter Banus, Staten Island, New York, April 21, 1981.

STEELE — Zachery, a son, born to Francesca (Galluccio) and Philip Steele, Washington D.C., on November 17, 1980.

BAPTISMS

MILLAR — Benjamin John Frederic, son of Fred and Catherine Millar, was baptized into the faith of the New Church at the home of his maternal grandparents in Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan, on June 7, 1981, the Rev. Gertrude Tremblay officiating.

WAGNER — Melanie Ann Wagner was baptized at the Church of the Holy City, Detroit Michigan, on June 7, 1981, Rev. Gardiner Perry officiating. Her proud parents are Mike and Stephanie Wagner.

CONFIRMATIONS

EPP — HASKAYNE — Dawna Elaine Epp, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lorne Epp of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, and Wendy Lou Haskayne, daughter of Amy Haskayne of Calgary, Alberta, were confirmed into the faith of the New Church on Sunday, June 14,

1981, at Calgary, Alberta, Rev. Erwin D. Reddekopp officiating.

TRANSFER MEMBERS

PANGARA — Edith and Lawrence Pangara were welcomed into the fellowship of the New Church in Fryeburg, Me., May 11, 1981, Rev. David L. Rienstra officiating.

JONES — OSWALD — TESTART — LUCUS — ZAHARAKIS — Elsa Jones, Patricia Oswald, Charles Oswald, Rev. Pierre Testart, Victoria Lucas, and Rev. Michael Zaharakis, were welcomed into membership in the San Francisco parish of the San Francisco Society, by the Rev. Edwin G. Capon, on Sunday, June 21, 1981.

MARRIAGE

LEACH — DEROSIER — Scott Keith Leach and Darcel Louise Derosier were married in the Fryeburg New Church on May 9, 1981, Rev. David L. Rienstra officiating.

ANNIVERSARY

LOCKE — Mr. and Mrs. John Locke celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with a wedding renewal service at Almont, Mich., on June 6, 1981, Rev. F. Gardiner Perry officiating. This was also the happy occasion of a reunion of the entire Locke family.

DEATHS

KORFF — Mrs. Laura Korff, 91, a member of the Detroit Society for many years, died in Lapear, Michigan, on May 7, 1981. She is survived by her sons, Russell, of Burton, Michigan, and Stanley, of Madison Heights, Michigan.

COLON — Mrs. Ruth Kunhardt Colon, 82, died in West Hartford, Conn., March 28, 1981.

HASKELL — Mrs. Adelaide Brownell Haskell died May 10, 1981, at Boston, Mass.

Interment was in Fall River, Mass., Rev. Harold C. Cranch officiating.

LITTLE — Michael Allen Little, 20, of St. Petersburg, Fla. The Resurrection service was held May 11, 1981, in the Swedenborg Chapel, Rev. Leon Le Van officiating.

DICK — Mrs. Mary Dick, of Calgary, Alberta, 92, a member of the Calgary Society, died on May 26, 1981. The resurrection service was held in Calgary on Saturday, May 30, Rev. Erwin D. Reddekopp officiating. Many members of Convention will fondly remember the Rev. Isaac Ens, who was Mary Dick's brother.

NICHOLS — Mr. Gilmore L. Nichols, 63, a member of the Portland, Maine, Church, died on May 30, 1981. Resurrection service was

held on June 10, 1981, Rev. Michael B. Salvetti officiating.

SANDSTEDT — Alberta Babcock Sandstedt entered into the higher life at the end of May 1981, in Los Angeles, Ca. She is survived by her husband Ernie, daughters, Karen, Pat, and Marcia, and grandchildren.

SAYLES — Joanna Sayles, 84, of LaPorte, Ind., died Sunday, June 7, 1981, at her home. Resurrection service was held at the New Church in LaPorte, Wednesday, June 10, with her son Rev. Arlen A. Sayles of West Chester, Ohio, officiating.

DOI — Word has just been received of the death of the Rev. Yonezo Doi, Tokyo, Japan. A memorial will appear in the September *Messenger*.

At Urbana College Film Reveals Appleseed's Religion

Johnny Appleseed . . . His Legend Lives, a half hour documentary film produced by the Swedenborg Foundation, premiered at the Urbana College Community Center as part of the college's celebration of Johnny Appleseed Day recently.

The film stars Joseph Davies as John Chapman, better known as Johnny Appleseed, a planter of apple orchards in western Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana. Johnny Appleseed was more than a planter. He was a deeply religious man with a profound respect for nature and religious customs.

Johnny was not only a planter of apple-seeds but also a planter of ideas. In his quest to find unity through nature, he rejected fundamentalistic religions and spread the word of Emanuel Swedenborg. As he traveled, he left chapters of Swedenborg's *Heaven and Hell* with settlers, only to exchange them on his return trips.

Johnny's love of the land and tolerance of different cultures won him the respect of the Indians. After being accepted by both the Indians and white settlers, he became an intermediary who shared Indian herbal knowledge with the early pioneers.

The film, narrated by Lillian Gish, does a fine job at distinguishing John Chapman the man from Johnny Appleseed the myth.

Through the juxtaposition of Johnny's activities and Swedenborg's sayings, the film demonstrates Johnny's profound religious conviction and insight. For example, Swedenborg writes, "Each man evokes his own demon by his deeds." To a fundamentalistic preacher, Johnny was the devil incarnate because he refused to endorse a "fire and brimstone" description of hell. However, to the Indians, Johnny was touched by the Great Spirit because he witnessed their ceremonies and did not fear their rituals.

The film begins and ends with the land. In this, one finds the fundamental message about Johnny Appleseed. One of Swedenborg's basic tenets is that "All religion has relation to life and the religious life is one of doing good." By this definition, Johnny Appleseed — planter, missionary, quester, frontiersman, teacher — lived a truly spiritual existence.

Gary Crist



The Johnny Appleseed Gang at Convention '81.

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

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