
THE MESSENGER

Monthly Publication, Swedenborgian Church of North America

May 1997

**...Rufus Jones
came to the same
conclusion as
Swedenborg that
God is not a static,
finished reality, but
a living love—"that
God is always
revealing himself,
and that truth is
not something
finished, but
something
unfolding as life
goes forward."**

IN THIS ISSUE:

- "Responding to a New Generation of Christian Seeker"
- Meet Our 1997 Nominees
- Parish News
- Mini-Course Descriptions
- Open Letter From Cambridge

Swedenborg Meets Rufus Jones

Dorothea Harvey

Quaker spirituality had its beginnings with George Fox in the 1650s. My own encounter with it began in 1928 in Friends schools in Philadelphia, where I learned, by exposure to weekly silent meeting, the mystical side of human life. And so, as a lifelong Swedenborgian and product of Quaker education from kindergarten through high school, I want to write about a recent American Quaker, Rufus Jones (1863–1948).

Rufus Jones describes the beginnings of his religious life as closely related to the use of silence.

We never ate a meal which did not begin with a hush of thanksgiving; we never began a day without "a family gathering" at which mother read a chapter of the Bible, after which there would follow a weighty silence. These silences, during which all the children of our family were hushed with a kind of awe, were very important features of my spiritual development. There was work inside and outside the house waiting to be done, and yet we sat there hushed and quiet, doing nothing. I very quickly discovered that something *real* was taking place. We were feeling our way down to the place from which living words come and very often they did come . . . Almost nothing was *said* in the way of instructing me. We all joined together to listen for God and then one of us talked to him for the others. (p. 263-264 *Quaker Spirituality: Selected Writings*)

As Rufus Jones says of his childhood,

I gradually came to feel that whatever might be there in the dark of my bedroom, God anyhow was certainly there, stronger than anything else combined. I learned to whisper to him as soon as I got into bed. . . . I "committed" everything to him. I told him that I couldn't take care of myself and asked him to guard and keep the little boy who needed him. And then, I believed that he would do it. (p.265)

Growing up with people who took the Bible very seriously, and also expected to hear God speak to them, Rufus Jones came to the same conclusion as Swedenborg that God is not a static, finished reality, but a living love—"that God is always revealing himself and that truth is not something finished, but something unfolding as life goes forward." (p. 266) The Bible was God's Word for him, but not in a way that kept him "from making use of all that science and history have revealed or can reveal of God's creative work and of his dealings with men." (p. 267) My Swedenborgian faith and my Quaker education both strongly emphasized respect for truth wherever it be found. With this, for both Quakers and Swedenborg, was the conviction "that the autonomy of the soul should be protected and safeguarded," that there should be no "compulsion in religious matters." (p. 277)

For Rufus Jones as for Swedenborg this meant a change from the orthodox view of original sin, from total depravity to the image of a bud in the spring ready for "the push and power of a deeper, larger life working within and preparing for vast future possibilities." (p. 277) The emphasis for both is on continuing

(Continued on page 76)

My editorial in the March *Messenger* expressed concern about the sloppy editing and proofing found in so many published books these days. When I received my final printed copies of the March issue, I discovered that Jim Lawrence's byline had somehow been left off "Relax, He is Risen." Jim is identified in the usual bio line at the end, so readers are not completely in the dark as to who wrote it.

Then I received the following letter from the Rev. Robert McCluskey regarding his National Council of Churches report. He states: "In the March [*Messenger*] article on the NCC, a reference to the stereotyping of those in need included the following phrase: . . . *the illogics of immigrant motives: 'they're all on welfare.'*"

It should have read: . . . *the illogics of immigrant motives: 'They're coming to take our jobs,' and 'they're all on welfare.'*"

It is this double, cognitively dissonant view that is illogical, not the accusation of being on welfare."

Robert penned a humorous reference to my editorial at the end of his note.

Then SSR President Mary Kay Klein called to ask about the Nominating Committee Report in the April *Messenger*: Under *Swedenborg School of Religion Board* is written: (1 lay, 1 minister). This is wrong; there are no stipulations. She was puzzled as to where that information came from. It was, dread word, a misprint. It should say: (elect 2 for 3-year terms).

Then I looked across the page and saw that, in the preview list of convention mini-courses, the Rev. Sue Turley-Moore's name read, "Rev. Sue Truley-Moore."

Furthermore, in my story in the February *Messenger*, "Peace and Joy is Alive and, Well, Relative," I referred to the Holland Tunnel as the one being flooded in the film, *Daylight*. I believe it was, in fact, the Lincoln Tunnel.

Although nobody has yet called my attention to this, I was bothered by the possibility that at least New York Swedenborgians might realize I had the wrong tunnel. But it may be that they simply took my advice and never saw *Daylight*. Disturbing,

though, that with only one fact in the story (everything else was subjective), I didn't get it right.

Apologies to everyone for everything. Confession is good for the soul. I had an uneasy feeling the March editorial

would come back to haunt me.



As I opened a letter addressed to *The Messenger* recently, it was natural to wonder if yet another mistake would be pointed out. Happily that was not the case. Valerie Truax of Sunrise Chapel in Tucson, Arizona, wrote, "Several of us here at Sunrise are practicing Reiki. We understand that the December, 1996 *Messenger* featured an article relating Reiki to Swedenborg. We would be most interested in receiving a back issue of this publication." (The article she referred to was by Mona Conner of the New York church, who introduced many of us to Reiki at last year's convention in Urbana). I sent the December *Messenger* to Ms. Truax immediately. It's encouraging to note that so many people are not only interested in learning about these healing methods, but are actively engaged in practicing them and putting their own healing energy to work.

I received another letter from a Louise Lynn in Winter Park, Florida. She had stapled to her note a copy of our Worship Committee's article (January *Messenger*) in which the committee asked for readers to submit any experiences they may have had of a female Divine-Human—God in the

feminine form of a woman. Ms. Lynn's comment on this was, simply, "*Swedenborg must be turning over in his grave!*" I pondered her sentiment for a few moments, relieved that she found nothing wrong with the article other than its content, which I had nothing to do with except to publish it. Then it occurred to me that if, in fact, Swedenborg is still in his grave, we're probably in a lot more trouble than any notion of a female Godhead might visit upon us. But perhaps it was only a figure of speech.

As I write this, the lilacs are sparkling in the afternoon sun and the poppies are bursting forth. Happy spring, everyone, and Happy Mother's Day! Don't forget to smell the flowers and laugh often. ❖

Patte LeVan



THE MESSENGER

Publisher: The Communications Support Unit
Published monthly, except July and August, by the Swedenborgian Church of North America (founded 1817, incorporated 1861 as the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America).

May 1997
Volume 218 No. 5
Whole Number 5220

Typesetting & Layout
Town & Country Press,
Plymouth, IN

Patte LeVan, Editor

Editorial Address:

The Messenger
P.O. Box 985
Julian, CA 92036

TEL: (619) 765-2915
FAX: (619) 765-0218

Business & Subscription Address:

Central Office
48 Sargent Street
Newton, MA 02158

The opinions of the contributors do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or the Communications Support Unit, or represent the position of the church. Subscription free to members of the Swedenborgian Church; non-members, \$12.00 a year; foreign \$15.00 a year; gift subscription from a member, \$5.00 a year; single copies \$1.00.

Deadline for material: Six weeks before the first day of the month of issue.

Responding to a New Generation of Christian Seeker

James R. Newby

In my view, the small group movement is now at a critical juncture . . . It can continue on its present course, or it can attempt to move to a higher level of interpersonal spiritual quality.

—Robert Wuthnow
Sharing the Journey

The drive from Richmond, Indiana to suburban Chicago is a familiar one for me. I had made it many times before, primarily for the purpose of visiting the Acorn Yokefellow Center near Naperville. On this particular trip, I was quickly tiring of the miles of interstate highway that stretch north of Lafayette through some of the flattest farmland this side of the Mississippi River. For diversion, I exited Interstate 65 and traveled west on Route 24 into Illinois. It was a decision calculated not only to change the pace of my travel, but to provide a welcome change of scenery.

As I moved west from the interstate through such communities as Remington, Crescent City, Gilman, and Forrest, I began to be intrigued with a common pattern in the towns and small cities through which I was traveling. On street corner after street corner, through town after town, there were the familiar 19th century buildings with the familiar "mainline" names—Methodist, Baptist, Disciples, and Presbyterian. All of them displayed on their front signboards (most of which were in need of repair) the same dull-sounding sermon titles and the same true although trite "God loves you" type sayings. All "welcomed" passersby to worship on Sunday morning, and all looked as if they had not had a visitor walk up the intimidating front steps in a long time. You could almost smell the "musti-

ness" emanating from the basements as you drove by.

On the other side of the street, often on the opposite corner, were the video stores, filled with people. And just down the street from the video stores one could usually find the local high school, a large brick structure built within the past twenty years and filled with activity from morning until night. Reflecting on this drive through America's heartland, I began to consider some unpleasant questions. "Has the church become an anachronism in the culture of modern-day America?" "Are we trapped in a 1950s mentality, when all the church needed to do was to open its doors, make an announcement in the bulletin, and people would flock to whatever it sponsored?" "What does it mean to relate to a 21st century society from behind the stained-glass windows of 19th century structures?" "Is the church prepared to respond to the new realities in a different world?" In a word has the institutional church become—"quaint"?

Today, many Christians are awakening to the fearful prospect that their churches are weakening. Much of the attention that the institutional church is giving to its search for survival has been sparked by some shocking statistics concerning the decline of the mainline denominations. I am also aware that the reality of becoming "quaint," which struck me so forcefully on my drive to Chicago, has not been missed by others.

William Temple has written, "The supreme wonder of the history of the Christian church is that always in the moments when it has seemed most dead, out of its own body there has sprung up new life." This statement from one of the most distinguished Christian scholars of this century gives me hope. Yet the "new life" to which William Temple refers does not "just happen" without thought given

to the issues associated with decline as well as the antidotes necessary for revitalization.

Church growth experts such as Lyle Schaller, Peter Wagner, and Herb Miller have helped us to identify the many causes for the decline, i.e., the loss of a sense of denominational loyalty, the instability of the family and job mobility, the wide diversity of backgrounds and belief systems, the unfavorable comparison of the local church with the slick professionalism of the TV evangelists, the competition for attention in a world of increasing activity, etc. All have contributed to numerical lows and spiritual inertia. New life, however, is occurring in certain places and we need to study these places of vitality and ask the question of why? What is the combination of factors that is responsible for numerical increase and spiritual vitality? I would like to suggest five essential qualities of spiritually alive and growing congregations:

1. An openness to an experiential relationship with the living Christ, and a worship setting that provides opportunities for such a relationship to develop. Experience as opposed to a spiritually stifling tradition, and "acquaintance with" as opposed to mere "knowledge about" Jesus Christ is the most basic factor necessary for an attentive and spiritually alive congregation. Good leadership, of course, can be the key to setting the tone for this important experiential dimension of the faith.

2. A strong sense of community, where the members and attenders truly love one another. We know from recent studies that the one word we respond to most favorably—next to our own name—is "care." The tremendous success of The Stephen Series and its emphasis on "Caregiving as a Way of Life" is largely due to this hunger for a sense of community in

(Continued on page 68)

(Continued from page 67)

the local congregation. First-time visitors to your church can quickly sense whether or not this concern for one another is present. In today's competitive and individualistic secular world, people are hungering for a place where they can be accepted and loved.

3. A clearly articulated belief system where the members and attenders can coherently explain what they believe and why they believe it. This does not mean a fundamentalism that provides no room for the questioning process so essential to spiritual maturity. It does mean, however, that spiritually alive congregations have members who are studying and struggling with the tough issues of the faith, and who are finding their own "place to stand" amidst all the remaining questions. Churches experiencing a new life that will be sustaining have not opted for a "cheap leap of faith," but have faced the hard questions of life and Christianity and are dealing with them. They know that it is only through the maze of complex thought that one can truly experience the release found in a profound simplicity, where one can say, "This is what I believe."

4. An understanding that Christian and minister are synonymous terms, and that if you claim the name Christian, you have a responsibility in the ministry. Spiritually vibrant and growing churches have moved from an understanding of the ministry in terms of the few to an encouragement of the ministry of all. In these congregations the pastors are not threatened by the ministry of the laity, but rejoice in equipping them for their Christian service in the world. They have moved from operation addition to operation multiplication where, whatever the occupation, it is seen as a ministry and an opportunity to witness in the name of Jesus Christ.

5. Finally, spiritually alive congregations do not focus on their own survival but instead look outward from their institutions to the needs in the world. They know that when their

attention is focused outward in ministry instead of inward on survival, concern for their future is where it should be, in the hands of Almighty God.

"Change," said Alvin Toffler, "is the process by which the future invades our life." Within the Christian movement we are, indeed, in a period of change. The title of a book by Lyle Schaller makes the point: *It's a Different World!* Beyond the focus on numerical decline and spiritual inertia, we have an opportunity to change—by becoming open to an experiential relationship with Jesus Christ; by building a strong sense of loving community; by developing a clearly articulated belief system; by enlarging our understanding of ministry; and by focusing our attention outward, from institutional survival to the needs of the world. Wherever these things are happening, hope is renewed and spiritual vitality is present.

The NET (Nurturing Experience Theologically) Groups program, described in *Gathering the Seekers*, is designed to respond to the new realities in a rapidly changing world and to provide a portion of the meaning and purpose needed if the institutional church is not to become quaint. Combining everyday life experience with theological reflection and the fellowship intensity of the small group, spiritual empowerment is the result. Such empowerment is personal as well as corporate. I believe it is one option for congregations who would like to breathe new life into their communities of faith, renewing hope and spiritual vitality. Through the vehicle the NET Groups program, such hope and vitality can find concrete expression. These groups are making a positive response to a new generation of Christian seeker.

James Newby, church consultant and workshop leader, is director of the Trueblood Academy of the Earlham School of Religion and former executive director of the Yokefellow Institute. Newby's work with small groups is the culmination of a major Lilly Endowment grant on congregational renewal.

His book Gathering the Seekers is available from Alban. To order call 1-800-486-1318 ext. 244.

Reprinted by permission from *Congregations*, published by the Alban Institute, Inc., Suite 433 North, 4550 Montgomery Avenue, Bethesda, MD 20814. Copyright 1996. All rights reserved.

Editor's Note: Thanks to President Edwin Capon for sending the above article and suggesting we reprint it in *The Messenger*. ❖

● ● ● ● ●

FIVE QUALITIES OF SPIRITUALLY ALIVE AND GROWING CONGREGATIONS:

1. An openness to an experiential relationship with the living Christ, and a worship setting that provides opportunities for such a relationship to develop.
2. A strong sense of community, where the members and attenders truly love one another.
3. A clearly articulated belief system—members can explain what they believe and why they believe it.
4. An understanding that Christian and minister are synonymous terms, and that if you claim the name Christian, you have a responsibility in the ministry.
5. Finally, spiritually alive congregations do not focus on their own survival but instead look outward from their institutions to the needs in the world.



TO THE EDITOR

OPINION

Returning to the Source

To the Editor,

I noted the review of my book *Returning To The Source* (March 1997 *Messenger* p. 38) with interest. There is one aspect that bears clarifying since both the reviewer and you, in an editorial, took it up. You editorial implies you agree with the reviewer tho I doubt you read the book. "This publication is rife with grammatical rockslides" etc. "I was left wondering what the editor does for a living." The person in question is a fabulously successful editor/publisher. He discovered 30 years ago he can make a six figure income by working part time, choosing the right book, editing and marketing it. I believe the reviewer mistakes the rules of grammar learned in school for good writing. Let me illustrate.

Years ago a book of mine was edited by a woman who came to see me, to

get approval on changes. She made a living doing books for major publishers. I asked her what are the rules for commas. She had only one rule. If a pause clarified, put in a comma. So much for following complex rules of grammar. I have never known an editor who didn't go by the sound of a passage. Later I was captivated by the distinguished semanticist Rudolf Flesch and his *The Art of Readable Writing*. This book is a total eye opener as to what really communicates from one person to another. Fortunately nine major authors and church leaders found the book clear.

The reviewer asks indirectly if there aren't ways to the experience of God in stress. The general answer is no, in all traditions. There are practices that can be established in leisure that help over stress, i.e. the mantra, mindfulness, etc. but there are no generally accepted ways to God in stress. Stress above all brings ego, proprium into play. In leisure spiritual practice proprium easily dissolves.

One point no one saw yet. This book puts Swedenborg in the context of the world's saints and mystics, a most distinguished company. ❖

Wilson Van Dusen
Ukiah, California

BEING WITH YOU



Oh, Lord,
I so enjoy being with you
That it seems all times away
Were wasted time—
Times that hardly were.

How to describe Being With You!
It is like standing in the presence
Of a Great Wonder
It is like creativity itself—
Being at the beginning
Of everything.

It is the Peace of Heaven—
Very awake stillness—
At the summit
Of all there is.

Are we two—or one?
It matters not.
Such an intense,
Alive,
Encompassing,
Peace/Presence.

No hurry here.
Let me linger,
Like this,
Forever—
Savoring forever—
Time enough,
To begin to understand,
all that is present.

Wilson Van Dusen
1/19/97

Religion in '99

In 1893, representatives of 41 denominations and 4,000 other participants met in Chicago for the World's Parliament of Religions, the first interfaith dialogue of its kind. In 1993, a commemorative parliament drew more than 7,000. But you needn't wait a century for the next one: Now called the Parliament of the World's Religions, the third gathering is tentatively scheduled for the first week of December 1999 in Capetown, South Africa.

Among other events, an interfaith ceremony is planned to mark the close of the 20th century and to open the year 2000 as one of reflection on and preparation for the 21st.

—William O'Sullivan

Reprinted from *Common Boundary*, March/April, 1977

The Swedenborgian Church's Nominating Committee has selected the following nominees as candidates for national offices in 1997.

PRESIDENT

3-year term
(beginning in 1998)

Rev. Ronald Brugler
Kitchener, Ontario, Canada Association

I have always felt a call to ministry on both a denominational and local level. I have responded by serving the Pastoral Ministries Support Unit, SSR Board of Managers, Council of Ministers, Urbana University Trustees, Committee on Admission to the Ministry, and in many other ways. I have served the Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Urbana and Kitchener churches and the Almont New Church Assembly. These opportunities have given me a broad understanding of our church and ministries. Now I have been asked to stand in nomination as our president.

I accept this nomination with mixed feelings. I so much want our church to be all that God intends. I want us to nurture our spiritual lives while reaching out to others in new ways. I want us to value, respect and care for each other in the process. I want us to use our resources wisely. Yet I also know how difficult it is to do these things. And I wonder, what can I really do to help us fulfill these aspirations?

As I've prayed about this, two things have become clear to me. First, I can encourage us to talk and listen to each other, honoring our diverse ideas, dreams and concerns. Secondly, I can seek to involve more of us in the decision-making process, sharing our unique talents and gifts in the life of this church. If given the opportunity, I will keep these goals continually before us as, together, we seek to respond to God's call.

VICE-PRESIDENT

1-year term

Phyllis Bosley
California, Pacific Coast Association

Serving the Church has been my joy and privilege since 1957, the year I joined the San Francisco parish.

Over the years, I have served in various local, Association, and denomination activities: choir member, Sunday school teacher, director of summer camp, chaired: Parish Committee, Pacific Coast Association, Wayfarer's Chapel Board of Managers. I currently serve as secretary to that

board. Also, I have been on the Executive Committee of National alliance of New Church Woman and the General Council.

My business experience as office manager and production manager for a lithographic company, free-lance copywriter, and junior account executive for an advertising agency have aided me in my administrative work with the Church. I would consider it a privilege to be reelected for this one-year term.

RECORDING SECRETARY

1-year term

Betty Yenetchi
California, Pacific Coast Association

Betty Yenetchi has served as Convention Secretary since 1994, and has been a member of the Swedenborgian Church since 1976. She has been a legal secretary, and is a certified paralegal in both Ohio and California. She is presently the Office Manager of the Wayfarers Chapel. She has a background in both IBM and Macintosh computers.

TREASURER

1-year term

Polly Baxter
Maryland, Mid-Atlantic Association

I have been deeply involved in the finances and accounting for the Church for the last eight years and have served as assistant to the treasurer for the last five. In 1992, I received the President's Award to the Lay Person of the Year for the work performed in redesigning the chart of accounts and bringing the church book-keeping into line with the most recent generally accepted accounting practices. I am currently on the Investment Committee, the Financial and Physical Resources Support Unit, and serve as Chair of the Augmentation Fund Committee. My professional background is in accounting, computer application design, strategic planning and general management practices. I view my work with the finances of the Church as my personal ministry and would like to continue to serve the Church in the new capacity.

GENERAL COUNCIL

3-year term ~ (1 minister, 2 laypersons)

Rev. Skuli Thorhallsson
Florida, Southeast Association

Since my ordination in 1988 I have served the church in DeLand, Florida. For the denomination I have served on the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers and the Nominating Committee. I am currently serving on the Committee for Admission to the Ministry and am now in the last year of my first term on General Council. All this has been a great learning experience. It is important to me that I bring this experience to General Council for a second term and engage in the workings of our church in a loving and caring way. As always there is much to be done and I want very much to continue to serve.

Margaret Kraus
Kansas, Kansas Association

I am a member of the Pretty Prairie New Jerusalem Church where I teach a weekly teenage Sunday school class and take my turn teaching the adult class.

I served on the Swedenborg School of Religion Board of Directors for twelve years and am now a member emeritus. I am currently treasurer of the National Alliance of New Church Women.

Local community duties include chair of the board of the Hutchinson Reno County Culture Commission. My term as president of the Pretty Prairie Lions Club ends in May 1997.

Church will always take priority. If elected to General Council I will work toward growth and understanding from a core of great love for this Church.

Christine Laitner
Michigan, Michigan Association

For the past twenty-plus years of my adult life I have been active in the Swedenborgian Church both at the national and Association levels. I have served as trustee, secretary, vice-president and president of both the Michigan Association and of the Almont New Church Assembly and Retreat Center. For six years, I served as the chair of the Growth and Outreach Support Unit (now part of MINSU). Since the summer of 1994, I have served as a member of the General Council and am currently

(Continued on page 71)

(Continued from page 70)

involved with a committee whose function is to ascertain the "functionality" of the working structure of General Convention.

Secondary education, English and choral music are my professional fields. My teaching career covers twenty-seven years. Since 1993, I have served as the English Department chair and I am also a nationally certified music educator. In Midland, Michigan, my home, I am employed by a Methodist church as director of an adult handbell choir, and I occasionally serve as a choral director and pianist as well.

I am an "isolated" Swedenborgian, living a significant distance from the Royal Oak Swedenborgian Church. When they are scheduled, I try to attend satellite meetings. Currently, I am serving as secretary of the Michigan Association. This first term as a member of the General Council has been a great experience. It takes a little while to "learn the ropes", but I feel that I have been able to bring a useful and necessary perspective to the deliberative process of the Council based on my involvement with many of the church organizations over the years. It would be an honor and a privilege to serve another term.

COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT UNIT (COMSU)

3-year term

Steve Koke

California, Pacific Coast Association

I have produced a very long list of articles on Swedenborgian thought over the last forty years, including one of the Swedenborg Foundation's *Emanuel Swedenborg, A Continuing Vision*, and several papers including a two-part analysis of Swedenborg's theological career, for *Studia Swedenborgiana*. I put together the book *Sorting Things Out*, containing commentaries by the Rev. Dr. George Dole, for J. Appleseed & Co., and was invited to participate in the Tricentennial presentation of papers in Bryn Athyn (but couldn't make it).

I am currently under contract with the Swedenborg Foundation for a book to be published in 1998 contrasting older theological ideas with ours on Judgment and Millennium expectations.

Positions served: Seven years with IMSU (Information Management Support Unit), including two years as chair, three years on the former Board of Managers of SSR; appointed to *The Messenger's* editorial advisory board by COMSU; many years on church committees and boards of trustees.

I am a book editor for Blue Dolphin Publishing, working directly with authors to organize and clarify their work. I also do technical editing and occasional freelance editing.

It is urgent, especially these days, that we get our ideas in circulation and present them convincingly.

EDUCATION SUPPORT UNIT (EDSU)

3-year term

Bill Baxter

New York, Michigan Association

Bill Baxter had had a lifelong involvement with the Swedenborgian Church. Son of the Rev. Richard and Polly Baxter, he has had firsthand experience with Swedenborgian Sunday school, the Swedenborgian Church Youth League (SCYL), and the newly-formed Transitions group. He has been serving on staff at SCYL retreats and the Almont Summer School for the past five years. He looks forward to helping the youth of the church for many years to come.

FINANCIAL AND PHYSICAL RESOURCES Support Unit (FPRSU)

3-year term

Barbara Boxwell

Michigan, Michigan Association

I am presently employed as president/CEO of a small manufacturing business in Michigan. I am also a CPA and have run a tax and accounting business out of my home for twelve years. I have taught accounting courses at a junior college as an associate professor. I am extremely versed in all phases of accounting.

I have been involved with the Swedenborgian Church for 30 years and have been in the position of assistant to the treasurer for the past year. I have served on the Investment Committee for three years and understand and enjoy the area of finance as well as accounting.

The above qualifications, I believe, would make me a prime candidate for a position on FPRSU.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SUPPORT UNIT (IMSU)

3-year term

Lee Woofenden

Massachusetts, Massachusetts Association

The Rev. Lee Woofenden is pastor of the New Jerusalem Church in Bridgewater, Mass. and editor of *Our*

Daily Bread, a monthly magazine of readings, sermons, and devotions published by the Swedenborgian Church. During his past three years on IMSU he initiated and supervised a project to produce a cumulative computerized index to *The Messenger*, which is now nearly two-thirds finished. Lee was also instrumental in getting the Swedenborgian Church on the Worldwide Web (<http://www.swedenborg.org>). He has now added an online edition of *Our Daily Bread* to that page under the title "Sermon of the Week." Lee is informally helping to connect church members to each other via email. His email address is leewoof@tiac.net.

MINISTRIES SUPPORT UNIT (MINSU)

(elect 2 to 3-year terms)

Lon Elmer

Washington, Pacific Coast Association

As I study Swedenborg's writing, I am increasingly struck by his ability to combine biblical truths with common sense in a non-self-serving manner. One example of this is the Doctrine of Uses. I refer to it often when I find my own life becoming cluttered with things that really don't reflect my deepest interests and purpose. I also refer to it when I consider our denomination as an organization.

I see our denomination's mission as: facilitating the study of the Bible through the guidance of Swedenborg's inspired writings, providing the wherewithall to bring the Bible's truths to daily lives—no matter who we are or what our situation in our individual journeys—and accepting the loving support of our church's members and friends.

In my daily life, I take time to read, reflect and put into action. As I see it, the purpose of MINSU is to "Put into action." As past deputy director for the Delaware State Division of Drug Abuse Control, past director of the Santa Cruz County and San Francisco Methadone Programs, and, currently, owner of a small business, I know how to "put into action" in a responsive and responsible manner.

So far, in addition to tithing, I have supported our denomination as: committee chair, 1987 National Convention; president, Swedenborgian Church of Puget Sound (1986-9) board member, Pacific Coast Association (1987-93); board member, Wayfarers' Chapel 1991-93; member GOSU (1989-92); treasurer, Pacific Coast Association (1995-96); member GOSU/MINSU (1994-97). I

(Continued on page 72)

(Continued from page 71)

would like to serve again on MINSU in order to help complete the transition from GOSU and PMSU into MINSU, and because, to quote a former GOSU chairperson, I am "good at ascertaining what is useful in non-traditional ministries."

Linda Tafel
Florida, Southeast Association

Since joining the Swedenborgian Church in Cincinnati, Ohio, in the 1970s. I have served on boards and committees at the local, Association, and denominational level. I am currently a member of the New Church of Southwest Florida, our denomination's newest congregation.

I have worked in public school, university, and corporate settings as a teacher, librarian, computer system designer, writer, and editor. Since 1994 I have been reference librarian at the Fort Myers Beach Florida Public Library. I hold a B.A. in American Studies from Miami University (Ohio) and an M.S. in Library and Information Science from the University of Kentucky.

In my first term on the Pastoral Ministries Support Unit there were difficult and painful issues and decisions, and challenging but satisfying ones. During this past year we have worked to implement the consolidation of the Pastoral Ministries and the Growth and Outreach support units into the Ministries Support Unit, approved at last year's convention. The issues and challenges facing us are now greater in number, but the human resources are likewise greater because of the merger. I am optimistic for the effectiveness of this new body. I look forward to continuing to serve as we complete the transition to this new support unit.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE (elect 1 for 5-year term)

Mildred Laakko
Delaware, Mid-Atlantic Association

As a clergy spouse for over 30 years, I have been privileged to attend many annual convention sessions and have gotten to know church members throughout the US and Canada. I am well aware that we are fortunate in having a wealth of talent among our members, people with a strong commitment to spiritual growth.

I am active in my church in Wilmington, Delaware, currently serving as interim organist. I am also a full-time student in an occupational therapy program and expect to graduate in December 1998.

Marge Runka
Alberta, Western Canada Association

I have been a member of the Edmonton, Alberta New Church Society since 1980. While in Edmonton, I had the opportunity to serve as a board member and in a separate term, as the secretary of the New Church Board. I also volunteered as their organist. In July of 1995, I was transferred to Calgary, Alberta through my job with Shaw Communications Inc., one of Canada's largest telecommunications companies. I now reside in Calgary with my son Byron and still attend church in Edmonton, Alberta when I can, and occasionally in Airdrie, Alberta.

I was first introduced to the New Church thinking in the early 1970s through Swedenborg's book, *Heaven and Hell*, which I enjoyed immensely. We have such wonderful teachings in our church, but we need to get this exciting message out to others. We, in Edmonton, have tried outreaching in various forms. I feel we must all take responsibility, individually, as the occasion arises to give people a glimpse of our writings, take the time to plant a seed, and then step back and let the growth begin, knowing that it will, when divine providence allows.

I had the opportunity to attend our convention in Boston a few years ago, which I thoroughly enjoyed. It was wonderful to meet with other Swedenborgians and put faces to names. As much as I would love to, I am not able to attend this year's convention in Kansas.

I wish to let my name stand for the Nominating Committee and will serve the church to the best of my ability.

COMMITTEE ON ADMISSION TO THE MINISTRY (CAM) (elect 2 for 1-year terms)

Minister: Rev. Deborah Winter
Florida, Southeast Association

I was ordained in 1988 and also obtained a Masters of Education. I served at Swedenborg House from 1988 to 1993. In 1995, I took a full-time position as a children's therapist in a residential group home for severely emotionally disturbed

adolescent girls. I continued to run small groups at Swedenborg House. Currently I work with adolescents and their families who are suffering the effects of domestic violence. This work greatly adds meaning to my ministry as I see families learn a new way, from the point of reference based on love, honor and respect. I have been taking some of these teens on mountain expeditions to go rock climbing and rappelling—these are highly structured weekends designed to help develop their self-esteem, teamwork, self/other respect as they muster the courage to accomplish a great challenge.

I have served on CAM for two years. I enjoy it and would like to continue to support my church in this way.

Lay Person: Elizabeth Gutfeldt
California, Pacific Coast Association

I was born into a Swedenborgian family in 1928. I grew up steeped in our teachings, loving and revering them. I worked, together with my husband, for 13 years in Germany and Austria for our church in the European field. This was followed by 8 years at Urbana University where I taught courses in psychology, and also counseled students extensively.

I have also worked on the island of Mauritius, and for a short time in South Africa, which included a number of fascinating experiences connected to our overseas churches. I have visited several New Church centers in Australia and Japan as well.

I hold a doctorate in psychology, and have worked for a number of years as a therapist in a mental health clinic.

I have had many very meaningful, positive experiences in a wide variety of New Church worship services, including the more traditional format (especially with Othmar Tobisch in San Francisco), various types of services in the El Cerrito church (including a wide range from more traditional to liberal and experiential), and also the very innovative worship experiences of the S.N.A.P. program (Swedenborgian New Age Pioneers), to name a few.

I feel well qualified to serve our denomination on the Committee for Admission to the Ministry (CAM), and, if elected, am committed to do my best to serve in this capacity.

(Continued on page 73)

(Continued on page 72)

SWEDENBORG SCHOOL OF RELIGION (SSR) BOARD

(elect 2 for 3-year terms)

Esther Capon

Massachusetts, Massachusetts Association

I am currently a trustee of the Swedenborg School of Religion (SSR), serving on its Long Range Planning Committee, and a trustee of Urbana University where I am a member of its educational committee.

I have also been a member of the Growth Support Unit (GOSU) and was chair of the former Board of Missions.

I am a graduate of Boston University School of Education and hold a Bachelors and Masters Degree. I have a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree from The Golden Gate University School of Law in San Francisco and am an active member of the California Bar. In addition I attended SSR as a part-time student in order to become more knowledgeable in our church's theology.

I feel my educational and legal background is of value to the boards I serve.

Rev. Horand Gutfeldt

California, Pacific Coast Association

It is my privilege to offer a unique wide range of varied studies in theology and

psychology combined with experiences as a minister in Europe, the U.S. and Mauritius. I hope to be given an opportunity to serve on the SSR Board as long as I am still able to do so.

After studying at the then leading Protestant University, Marburg in Germany, later at the New Church Theological School and Harvard University, I was ordained in 1956 in Zürich, Switzerland. A call to serve brought me for three years to a deeply shaken New Church congregation in Berlin, which was still mostly in ruins, surrounded by hostile armies. It was formerly one of the largest church groups on the continent. This prepared me for 10 years serving a faithful society in Vienna, Austria. To involve our young people, I organized international religious youth camps in the Austria Alps and Switzerland. Many visits beyond the Iron Curtain brought me to East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia to individuals and groups who secretly held on to our faith. After obtaining a Ph.D. at the University of Vienna, I accepted a call as assistant professor of Behavioral Science to Urbana University, also working as the chaplain, later joined by Dorothea Harvey and Ted Klein. After eight years there, I followed a call to our community church in El Cerrito in California, where I have been active as their minister for 21 years. The Berkeley Interfaith Council that

unites all Christian and non-Christian faiths elected me for six years as their president, and the Eastern Orthodox St. Thomas Church awarded me an honorary doctorate in Divinity (D.D.). I was also elected to serve as the president of the Board of Missions, corresponding in several languages to our centers abroad, many of which I had visited personally, observing the great variety of activities of our church around the globe.

My entire life I have studied most intensively the unique personal and social implications of our teachings for my own spiritual advancement, and for our church. Continually new approaches in worship and church activities were my quest to help people to make progress in regeneration and genuine maturity to discover some bliss of heaven in this world towards greater fullness beyond.

Barbara Penabaker

Michigan, Michigan Association

I would like to continue serving on the SSR Board of Trustees because after three years I feel I am just getting started and there is still important work to be done.

Being a lifelong Swedenborgian and a member of the Detroit church, I believe I bring the parish perspective to the board. ❖

Convention Online!

Visit the Swedenborgian Church's Worldwide Web site at <http://www.swedenborg.org>. Our site features information on Swedenborg, the faith and history of our church, a directory of Convention churches, and a Sermon of the Week—the online edition of *Our Daily Bread*. Convention's web site is a project of IMSU and the Central Office. ❖

—Rev. Lee Woofenden



1997 Report of the Nominations Committee American New Church Sunday School Association

President:	<i>vacant</i>
Vice-President:	Lee Woofenden
Secretary:	<i>vacant</i>
Treasurer:	Patricia Brewer
Outreach Chair:	<i>vacant</i>
Publications Chair:	Jim Lawrence
Teacher Training Chair:	Ted Klein
Nominating Committee:	Laurie Turley

The Nominating Committee urgently requests that anyone interested in helping with the work of the S.S.A. by letting their name stand for the nomination for President, Secretary, or Outreach Chair, please contact one of the nominating committee members listed below:

Lorrie Lipski (Chair)	Marie Morey	Susannah Currie
(403) 556-6903	(508) 378-4052	(207) 839-6116
5222 Silverpark Close,	3 Helen Way, E.	387 Gorham Rd.,
Olds, AB, Canada, T4H 1B3	Bridgewater, MA, 02333	Scarborough, ME, 04074

Our Swedenborgian Heritage

Twenty-seventh in a series

T. Mower Martin, Man for All Generations

In the distance, rising majestically into the sky, are sharply pointed slaty gray barren mountains patched with snow. In the middle ground, rows of dark green firs part where a stream rushes through a stony bed into the foreground. This picture might meet your eye if you chanced to open a priceless volume, *Canada*. A description of the Canadian landscape by Wilfred Campbell (1907), this book is in the archives at the Swedenborg School of Religion. The illustrator, T. Mower Martin, provided 77 full color paintings, each view teasing the reader to linger over its beauty.

Who was T. Mower Martin? At his memorial service in 1934, though he had requested a short simple service with no flowers, by special permission wreaths were sent by the Royal Canadian Academy of the Arts, Toronto Art Gallery, Ontario Society of Artists—and the New Jerusalem Church. The *Toronto Daily Star* reported, "Rev. Immanuel Tafel, pastor of the Swedenborgian congregation with whom the late Mr. Martin was identified, referred to the intense love of nature which the artist showed throughout his life, and of his simple trust in God to care for him in the work which he felt he was divinely called to do in translating the beauties of nature to his paintings. Many times, he said, Mr. Martin went alone and unarmed into the wild places of the Dominion to seek inspiration and subjects for his work, trusting God alone for protection. His great characteristic was an extreme willingness to obey the will of God as he saw it, and a burning desire to leave something permanent for the succeeding generations to enjoy."

The newspaper article went on to say, "Mr. Martin was an authorized candidate for the ministry." Martin was also a writer, poet, gardener, and "refurbisher of fiddles." He made an impression on everyone he met, and not just for his honest look. His physique must have been striking. In a letter of May 28, 1925, he says, "I think I am getting near the end of the journey as the 20 mile walk I took every birthday for a great many years up to 82, [has] dropped to 5 miles on my 86th birthday last October." (He lived another 10 years).

Martin said he was in the Johnny Appleseed business. From his orchard, vineyard, flower gardens and vegetable patch he gave away saplings, vines, plants and

food to neighbors. He propagated and transplanted wildflowers and ferns by the roadsides where Sunday motorists" had carried off the last vestige of native plants. He often gave aid to people of slender means. His own were modest, but he was so generous that he was commonly thought to be wealthy. He said late in life that with his garden and the help of his children he managed to survive without deprivation.

Martin had a studio in downtown Toronto. He taught, and did portraits as well as landscapes (he mentions a portrait of the Rev. Chauncey Giles). More than once he sent watercolors to the Rev. John Whitehead to sell for the support of *The Swedenborg Student*.

As a writer he donated articles to the *Student*, as well as to the *Messenger*. The tenor of his writing was often moral. Concerned about honesty in business, he wondered whether there could be one set of standards for individuals and another for businesses, i.e. should we hold even a few shares in companies whose policies are not fair? He wrote religious articles on trust in the Lord, the ruling love, the Lord's prayer, the struggle for existence.

Some of his poems are rather ornate, and have spiritual themes. Some are intensely practical. In a girl's album he wrote:

Would you be kindly thought of when your span
Of life is over, and your body dust,
To all you meet give all the help you can,
And just as little trouble as you must.

TMM

The story of T. Mower Martin's missionary work in Canada, Oregon and Washington will be the focus of the "Heritage" article in June.

Many thanks to Lee Woofenden and the IMSU computerized Messenger index! In moments Lee printed out over 60 references to Martin, which would formerly have taken hours to find.

—L.W.

Louise Woofenden is a writer and former archivist at the Swedenborg School of Religion. She resides in Sharon, Mass.

An Open Letter

to the Board of Trustees of the Swedenborg School of Religion

from Members & Attendees of the Cambridge Society of the New Jerusalem

Dear Members of the Board:

We the undersigned are individuals who have become involved with Swedenborg Chapel in Cambridge during the past two years. Most of us are now members of the Cambridge Society. We all share our congregation's concern for the future of the Chapel; this letter has arisen out of that concern.

We understand that the Board has recently entered into 'preliminary discussions' with Harvard University regarding the possible sale of Swedenborg Chapel to Harvard. We also understand that in the case of such a sale the Board would secure a guarantee from Harvard of the Society's continued right to the use of the Chapel. In addition, we understand that this option is one of several that the Board is considering as it charts the future of the School, and that the other options involve the School retaining ownership of the Chapel.

We wish to express our gratitude to the Board for its willingness to consider other options besides the sale of the Chapel in resolving the School's financial difficulties, and for its concern for the future of the Society in the case of a sale to Harvard.

We strongly urge the Board to retain ownership of the Chapel, and to join with us in attempting to rebuild a constructive, mutually beneficial relationship between the Society and the School. The tensions between our two bodies which have existed in recent years have prevented all of us from seeing how much both would benefit from such a relationship.

- We urge the members of the Board to regard themselves, as we regard them, as caretakers of the Chapel and of the Society, rather than narrowly interpreting their mission as concerned solely with the financial well-being of the School.

- Several of us have been, or hope to be, students at the School in various

capacities. We hope to be able to participate in the School's continued growth as we have participated in that of our congregation. Our collective spiritual life has been enriched by the interaction of our members with the School, and we hope to preserve and improve the relationship between the Society and the School to the mutual benefit of both bodies. We believe that a renewed commitment on the School's part to the future of the Chapel and the Society will do much to further this relationship; and we believe that permanently severing this relationship by selling the Chapel will be detrimental to both bodies.

- We encourage the Board to take into consideration the relationship of the School to the churches of this denomination, and to realize that its decision will have an impact upon these churches and upon this relationship. This denomination has lost too many churches during this century, following a pattern of declining membership leading to the sale of church buildings. Only a pattern of active and growing congregations will enable the denomination to survive and flourish.

The Cambridge Society is active, and it is growing. The past two years have seen the expansion of our Sunday School program and our wedding ministry, the initiation of a weekly Swedenborg study group, a Social Action Committee, and the establishment of regular reading room hours staffed by our members; in addition we now hold services throughout the summer months. Also, we continue our relationships with the Harvard-Radcliffe Chaplaincy and the Boston-area Tibetan Association; the church is regularly used by various community groups; our lecture series and summer concert series continue; and our Christmas Evening service always fills the Chapel to capacity with people from the local community. Also, this spring we will hold an AIDS healing service in conjunction with area churches, as well as our first commu-

nity breakfast.

We believe that the Swedenborgian Church can flourish again, and that we have much to offer to the religious world; but the pattern of the loss of churches must be broken if our denomination is to flourish. We believe that the Board's decision to retain ownership of the Chapel and to encourage the continued growth of the Society will represent a significant vote of confidence in the future of this denomination.

We believe that, if the School retains ownership of the Chapel, the future of both bodies is bright. Perhaps no other church in New England serves as well as Swedenborg Chapel in terms of attracting first-time and repeat visitors and in publicizing the denomination's existence within a demographically active, academically engaged community. The possibilities for continued growth in Cambridge have never been better, and in future years the Chapel will serve as a strong teaching parish, as it was originally intended to be. While a sale of the Chapel may allow us to continue to worship at this location, we realize that the Swedenborg School of Religion is in a far better position to engage in a mutually concerned and spiritually supportive relationship with our congregation than is Harvard University. We earnestly desire and are at the present time seeking such a relationship with our owners and caretakers.

We hope that your decision will take these factors into account, and that your vision of the future of Convention is as hopeful as ours.

Sincerely,

William Shakalis	John R. Harrington
Amy N. Reichardt	Andrew C. Dole
Sara Buteux	Sam M.A. Richards
Jose E. Gonzalez	Zayda Cruz-Gonzalez
Elia Gonzalez Alonso	Jose O. Gonzalez
Jaqueline B. Lageson	Karina Steiger
Zayda I. Gonzalez	Lee Dong Wook
Lee Dong Youn	Anthony Pereira
Rita G. Pereira	❖

CONVENTION 1997 MINI-COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

(Continued from Back Page)

TITLE: Noah's Ark & The Flood: Amazing Ways God Helps Us Through Tough Periods in Life

LEADER: *Rev. Kit Billings*

DESCRIPTION: Bringing out inner meaning of this awesome story, incorporating teaching, sharing and storytelling. I hope to help those present to gain insight into the challenges/drama of regeneration. I will address "remains," temptation battles, vastation, truth leading the will, and God's skillful leadership. I will connect the goodness of heavenly correspondence—the earth, people, animals, etc.—to our living experiences within ourselves and with God.

TITLE: Is there a Home for Homosexuals in the Swedenborgian Church?

LEADERS: *Rev. Dr. Dorothea Harvey, Rev. Sue Turley-Moore, Rev. Carl Yenetchi, Jonathan Mitchell*

DESCRIPTION: The first section of the mini-course will be presentations on "Scripture and Homosexuality," by the Rev. Dr. Dorothea Harvey; "Same Sex Marriage," by the Rev. Carl Yenetchi; "Can Gay and Lesbian Love be Conjugal," by Jonathan Mitchell; and "Ministry to Gays and Lesbians," by the Rev. Susan Turley-Moore. The second half of the course will be an open discussion by all participants either in small groups or one large group depending on the size of attendance. It is our intention to have an open dialogue on these very important and controversial issues to promote understanding and tolerance of differences of opinions and values.

LEADERS AND TOPICS

Sunday School Teacher Training

Rev. Eric Hoffman

How to be a New Church Person in an 'Old' Church

Rev. Edwin Capon, Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence, & others

Maintaining Healthy Relationships between People who are Changing

Perry Martin, Ph.D.

How to Read the Treasurer's New Report

Polly Baxter

The Millennium—Part II

Rev. Dr. George Dole and Rev. Paul Martin

Social Concerns Education Committee—topic to be announced

Rev. Dr. Ted Klein

(Editor's Note: EDSU informed us that the mini-courses without descriptions are still scheduled, but descriptions were not submitted in time for our May deadline. Revisions will be printed in the June Messenger) ❖

SWEDENBORG MEETS RUFUS JONES

(Continued from Cover)

regeneration, that "goodness of character is not something miraculous that drops into a soul out of the skies, but is rather something which is formed within as one faithfully does his set tasks" in the world. (p. 271)

For both, the emphasis is on a life of use. Rufus Jones describes people in his neighborhood coming together to rebuild their barn after it had fallen in a storm.

"I saw, as I had not seen before, that the religion of these men was not merely an affair of the meeting-house; not merely a way to get to heaven. It was something which made them thoughtful of others and ready to sacrifice for others. I saw how it worked itself out in practical deeds of kindness and righteousness." (p. 272)

Rufus Jones speaks of hearing God speak today and of practical deeds of goodness. It is not surprising that he was not just a philosophy professor and writer on religion. He was one of the major influences in the founding of the American Friends Service Committee, and in determining its emphasis. My work with the AFSC was in Milwaukee. While I was teaching at Milwaukee Downer College, I got high school and college students together for weekend workcamps to help families with cleaning, painting, and fixing up their housing in poor areas of the city. The work was never to clean, paint, or fix up housing for the families. It was a matter of calling on people in the area, meeting people who wanted to improve conditions, then offering to work *with* the family members to get the job done that they wanted, but could not organize or finance on their own, and then celebrating with the family after a job done together. This emphasis on the autonomy of each person and on mutual respect as students and family members came to know each other, is typical of the AFSC in its work all over the world, and to me exemplifies Swedenborg's sense of use and of respect for the neighbor.

Rufus Jones was different from Swedenborg in his emphasis on silence as the normal and most effective way of being open to God's presence. But the mystical reality to which each comes is strikingly consistent: taking the Bible as Word of God and being open to continuing revelation, finding truth in science and revelation, refusing any compulsion in religion, emphasizing continuing growth in goodness in a life of use. I am sure that Swedenborg is pleased to meet Rufus Jones.

Notes: Douglas Steers, ed., *Quaker Spirituality: Selected Writings*, Paulist Press, New York, 1984. All quotations from Rufus Jones, "Finding the Trail of Life," and "The Luminous Trail."

The Rev. Dr. Dorothea Harvey is part-time professor of Theology and Worship at the Swedenborg School of Religion, and former Professor Emerita of Religion at Urbana University. ❖

In-Depth Swedenborg Seminar Attracts 22 Attendees

Beginning January 21, the Rev. Rachel Rivers, co-minister of the San Francisco church, offered a twice-monthly, 14-week seminar on Swedenborg's theological system, covering some 55 topics. Put together by Dr. Robert Kirven, former professor of theology at the Swedenborg School of Religion, the seminar provides each participant with a manuscript that includes an overview reading for the several topics to be covered for each session, along with suggested readings in Swedenborg to help acquaint the participant fully with the ideas and concepts under discussion. Twenty-two people enrolled, and at least 16 people have been attending every session.

The church's popular Arts & Crafts Lecture Series continues, with proceeds going to support the church's Library and Archives Project. ❖

SSR Student to Conduct Worship Service

SSR student Nadine Cotton, who is to be ordained at the forthcoming July convention, plans a visit to Kansas in mid-May, accompanied by her 13-year-old daughter. She will be leading the Pawnee Rock congregation in a worship service May 17 and in Pretty Prairie May 18. ❖

Oral Church History to be Documented

The Archives Committee of the Church of the Good Shepherd in Kitchener, Ontario plans a series of taped interviews with longtime members of the church in order to get personal accounts of their church's history. (This seems like a great way for our churches to gather and preserve their oral histories). ❖



Capon Guest Preacher

The Rev. Edwin G. Capon was guest preacher in The First Evangelical Congregational Church of Uxbridge, Mass., on Sunday, February 9. His subject was "Swedenborg's Understanding of Christian Truth." It has been announced that his sermon will be printed in a future issue of the church's newsletter. A copy of Helen Keller's *My Religion* has been requested for the church's library. ❖

Spirituality of Children

St. Paul Church sent Kit Billings and three church members to a conference on The Spirituality of Children. This helped them to plan for creating a Sunday school by addressing the core issues of children's spirituality. Since the workshop, they have started a Sunday school, and new young couples are attending church on Sunday morning. ❖

New Church in Florida

The Revs. Eric Allison and Dick Tafel at the altar of The New Church of Southwest Florida, in the chapel of the Fort Myers Beach Funeral Home. (The story ran in April, but we didn't have the picture). ▶

Home Remedies to be Collected for a Book

The newsletter of the Royal Oak Swedenborgian Church (pastored by the Rev. Renee Billings) features a monthly column on home remedies—intended for the sharing of the "rich history of the cures, recipes, remedies, rituals and/or funny anecdotes of our elders that have been helpful and healthy practices for years." She says eventually the material will be collected into a book.

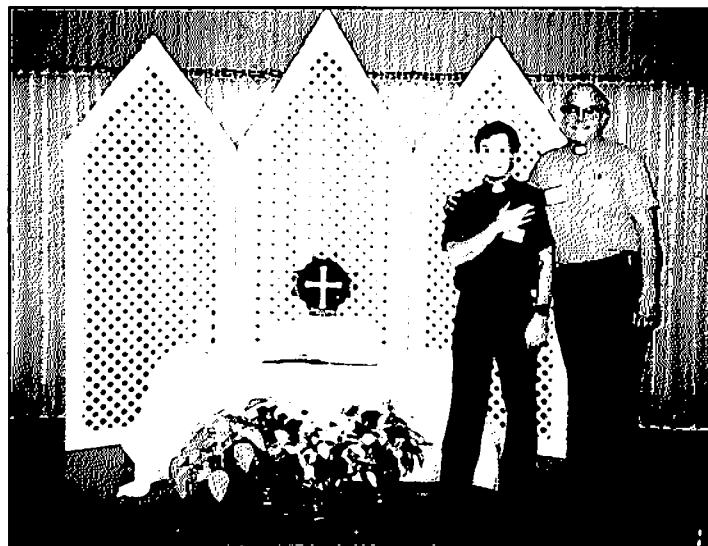
Sample home remedy submitted by member Mary Crenshaw:

Senna Leaf, Boneset and Sassafras teas are good for cleansing the body after a wintertime of colds and flus. Also, you can mix Sorghum (made from cane sugar) and Sulphur into a dose of one tablespoon of water for cleansing the body of its toxins in spring. ❖

Men are from Mars

The Cincinnati and St. Louis churches have had a great success with group meetings held to discuss insights from the popular book, *Men are from Mars Women are from Venus*. ❖

**MORE PARISH
NEWS NEXT MONTH!**



Temenos Program Calendar

Yoga Lifestyle Training Program

Robert Butera

Session 1:

February 3-March 31

Session 2: April 7 - May 26

Healing Circle

Second Thursday

Perry Martin &

Nancy Mattila

February 13, March 13,

April 10, May 8

First Sundays in Central America

Richard MacIntyre

March 2, April 6, May 4

Mindfulness - Based Stress Reduction

Nancy Mattila

Tuesdays, March 4-April 22

From the Path of Fear

to the Path of Love

Perry Martin

March 12-May 28

Spring Sabbath: An After Easter

Reflection Time

Howard and Betsy Friend

April 3, 4

Reiki Level I Training

Nancy Mattila

April 5, 6

Movement from the Inside Out

Margaret Gould Wescott

April 12

Herbal Care of Seasonal Allergies

Mark J. Dumic

April 13

Personal Totem Pole

Jeannette Samanen

April 18, 19

Our Bodies—Our Souls:

A Women's Day of Play
and Exploration

Laurie Weaver

April 18

Soul's Journey—Fire's Breath

Laurie Weaver

April 19, 20

Ritual for Healing Grief

Kayta Gajdos

April 27

May Festival

Jeanne Ayesha Lauenborg

May 4

Arthur, Camelot, and the Inner Feminine: Healing Through the Grail

Doug Rosentrater

May 10

Satir Tools for Couple Counseling

Lorraine Sando

May 16

Transforming the Family:

Seeing the Past with New Eyes

Lorraine Sando

May 16, 17

Natural Health Care for Stress, Anxiety and Insomnia

Mark J. Dumic and Lisa Schad

May 18

Creative Process as Spiritual Path- way: Using Expressive Arts to

Access the Muse and Inner Healer

Bernardine Abbott

May 31

A Day of Mindfulness Meditation Exploring Deep Stillness

Nancy Mattila

June 7

A Day of Re-Collection

Kayta Gajdos

June 22

Keepers of the Earth: Summer Camp for children ages 5-10

Ruth Tafel and other leaders

June 23-27

Our Bodies—Our Souls: A Women's Day of Play and Exploration

Laurie Weaver

July 11

Soul's Journey—Fire's Breath

Laurie Weaver

July 12, 13

Spangler and Stonehouse Co-sponsor Series

David Spangler, author of many books including *Everyday Miracles* and *A Pilgrim in Aquarius*, is currently, with his Lorian Association, co-sponsoring with the Stonehouse a series of monthly workshops with outstanding teachers from around the world who are working in the fields of co-creativity, personal empowerment and the integration of spirituality into everyday life. This series of lectures and workshops began in March and will conclude in June, with further workshops planned for fall. In addition to Spangler, Rex Knowles, Sherry Landrum and Dr. Janet Piedilato are presenting in this series.

Stonehouse weekly and ongoing groups and classes include Hatha Yoga, Kundalini Yoga; Meditation in Action, Spiritual Awakening Support Group, a Stress Relief Group, and a Women's Support Group at the Swedenborgian Church of Puget Sound.

Among the regular Growth Center Services offered are: Weddings, memorial services and spiritual counseling with the Rev. Paul Martin, Stonehouse director; Core Emotional Releasework™ with Lou Orsan; Therapeutic Massage with Anji Ringzin, LMP; and Hypnotherapy Counseling with Nancy Rae Ernst, MPH, and Scott Sulak, CHT.

These are just a few of the many exciting healing and growth seminars, special events and workshops being offered, with something going on nearly every night of the week.

For updated information and schedules, contact:

Swedenborg Spiritual Growth Center
7829 Leary Way N.E.
Redmond, WA 98052
(206) 883-7825 or
Email: stonehse@psecs.org

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CALL 610-696-8145



BAPTISMS

Collanton—Ryan Peter Collanton, son of Roger and Mary Ann Collanton, was baptized into the Christian Church February 17, 1997, in Martinez, California, the Rev. Edwin G. Capon officiating. Ryan is a grandson of Esther and Edwin Capon.

Gibson—Cassandra Gibson, daughter of Curt and Patsy Gibson, was baptized into the Christian faith March 13, 1997, at the Cleveland Chapel (Swedenborgian), the Rev. Renee Billings officiating.

Hunt—Steve Hunt was baptized into the Christian faith and welcomed into membership Church of the Holy City (Swedenborgian) in Edmonton, Alberta, the Rev. Henry Korsten officiating.

Rauscher—Todd and Nicole Rauscher, children of Joe and Brenda Rauscher, were baptized into the Christian faith March 13, 1997, at the Cleveland Chapel, the Rev. Renee Billings officiating.

DEATHS

Johnson—Pauline (Paula) Loring Johnson, born May 23, 1907, entered the spiritual world February 22, 1997. she was 89. Her Home-going service was conducted February 27, at the Myrtle Baptist Church in Newton, Mass., the Rev. Howard M. Haywood, pastor, officiating. Paula was earlier affiliated with the North Cambridge Community Church (Swedenborgian), an African-American church pastored

by the late Rev. Samuel O. Weems; later the Cambridge Church of the New Jerusalem in Harvard Square under the late Rev. Wilfred Rice, currently pastored by the Rev. F. Robert Tafel. she was godmother to the Rev. Gladys A. Wheaton and family friend to Alice (Weems) Fairfax, Doris (Fairfax) Hass, Howard and the late Lloyd Wheaton, Jr., and mentor and friend to the Rev. Ted LeVan and Samuel Turner, who introduced her to Myrtle Baptist Church. (She was a member there under "watch-care", meaning that her spiritual, physical and fellowship needs were attended to without her having to relinquish her earlier affiliation).

Swartz—Mary Alice Swartz, 92, entered the spiritual world January 2, 1997. A resurrection service was conducted at the San Francisco Swedenborgian Church January 11, the Rev. Jim Lawrence officiating. A first cousin of the late Stewart Poole, Ms. Swartz, after many decades of active participation in the Wilmington, Delaware church moved to California and transferred her membership to the San Francisco Swedenborgian Church, which she faithfully supported until her death. She is survived by her sister, Florence Kearns, her niece, Virginia Kearns, and her nephews, Ralph Kearns and Tom Kearns, all longtime members of the San Francisco church.

NEW EMAIL ADDRESS

The Rev. Lee Woofenden had to change his email address. The new one is leewoof@tiac.net.

Los Angeles Hosts PCA 1997

The nine of us continue to meet at the Wayfarers Chapel for our gatherings. Half our members attend "Stitch & Study" once a month, where we study Swedenborg. Once a year we share a weekend with the San Diego church. Some of us attend convention and return with reports. This fall, over the Labor Day weekend, we are taking on the responsibility of hosting the annual meeting of the six West Coast churches. We invite everyone in the PCA to an exciting program and beautiful setting in Pasadena, California.

—Manon Washburn, Cash Ball, Pat & Merle Lundberg, Jessie and Al Rado, Mareta Saul, Marge Calby, and Marion Courtney



Pacific Coast Association Spring Retreat

The Southern California yearly "Orange" retreat met in March to find that our "word of mouth" raves had attracted many newcomers. There were 17 of us in all to work with facilitator Perry Martin.* She drew us into a close knit community as we explored our creativity with art, movement, music and sharing. We came away enriched, fulfilled, focused and purposeful for another year. It was an intense weekend of growth and new vision and understanding.

Our little "committed" community is expanding. Next year's PCA retreat will be in mid-March.

*Perry Martin, Ph.D. is a psychotherapist and certified Rubenfeld Synergist practicing at the Temenos Growth Center in West Chester, Pennsylvania.

—Manon Washburn



CONVENTION 1997 MINI-COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Hutchinson Community College ~Hutchinson, Kansas ~July 9 – 13 1997

Emanuel Swedenborg was born January 29, 1688, in Stockholm, Sweden. Although he never intended a church denomination to be founded or named after him, a society was formed in London 15 years after his death. This 1787 organization eventually spawned the present General Convention of Swedenborgian Churches. As a result of Swedenborg's own spiritual questionings and insights, we as a church today exist to encourage that same spirit of inquiry and personal growth, to respect differences in views, and to accept others who may have different traditions. Swedenborg shared in his theological writings a view of God as infinitely loving and at the very center of our beings, a view of life as a spiritual birthing as we participate in our own creation, and a view of Scripture as a story of inner-life stages as we learn and grow. Swedenborg would conclude, "All religion relates to life, and the life of religion is to do good." He also felt that the sincerest form of worship is a useful life.

TITLE: An Introduction to Spiritual Psychology: Bringing the Sacred into Everyday Living

LEADER: *Maryann Thorhallsson, Ph.d*

DESCRIPTION: Psychology, defined literally, means "the study of soul." The term "spiritual psychology" then is a redundancy, but it makes clear to the 20th century Western mind that spirituality is to be acknowledged. Spiritual Psychology is the study of the divine nature of humankind. In this experimental mini-course we will explore ways to enter the flow of our own inherent divine consciousness in order to live our lives with more joy in the spirit of loving kindness.

TITLE: All About Forgiveness

LEADER: *Rev. Paul Zacharias*

DESCRIPTION: We will explore the dynamics of forgiveness, and its role in our spiritual journey—then the last hour will be experiential in nature.

TITLE: E. Swedenborg: From Man of the World to Servant of the Lord

LEADER: *Rev. Eric Zacharias*

DESCRIPTION: We will try to get in touch with Swedenborg's growth, internally, which ultimately prepared him for his role as Revelator.

TITLE: Woman's Homing through her own Regeneration

LEADER: *Rev. Deborah Winter*

DESCRIPTION: There comes a time in a woman's journey when she hears a call from deep inside—and recognizes it as her own call. It is a call that usually takes great courage to respond and carry through whatever the endeavor. This is a mini-course for women only to reflect and share what meaning comes through for them.

TITLE: Inclusive Thinking: A Panel Discussion

LEADERS: *Margaret Kraus, Phyllis Bosley, Rev. Ken and Laurie Turley and others*

DESCRIPTION: Panel present differing opinions on the gender-inclusive language and thought behind it in our church services. Discussion to follow—open forum—let's share our thoughts. Some historical perspectives and current writings on the subject will be offered as well.

TITLE: Nuts and Bolts '97

LEADERS: *Rev. Ken Turley, Rev. Dick and Linda Tafel, Rev. Eric Allison and others*

DESCRIPTION: Following last year's format, three mini-course presentations will be offered as well as time for general sharing. "Blending Contemporary and Traditional Music in Worship"—Ken Turley; "How an Automatic Dialing Machine Can Build Your Church"—Dick and Linda Tafel; "Best Ads and Programs of '96-'97"—Eric Allison.

(Continued on Page 76)

The Swedenborgian Church
of North America
The Messenger
48 Sargent Street
Newton, MA 02158

Forwarding Address
Correction Requested

CENTRAL OFFICE
48 SARGENT ST
NEWTON MA 02158-2399

Non-profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Plymouth, IN
Permit No. 105