
THE MESSENGER

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Swedenborg Meets Nicholas Black Elk¹

Adam Seward

I have a built-in interest as an American Indian in similarities between Swedenborg's teachings and American Indian religions. It is my duty, both as an American Indian and as a Swedenborgian, to find any harmony that the two worlds share. There are broad similarities between Black Elk's interpretation of the Oglala Lakota religion and Swedenborg's teachings. Those similarities led me to become a Swedenborgian. I'd like to tell you about those commonalities within the context of my life.

In 1990, I was speaking to public groups about American Indian religious issues. I found that it helped to find similarities between Indian religions and Christianity. These could act as bridges to understanding. However, as Ben Franklin once said, all cats look alike in the dark. It was unhelpful to speak about generic "American Indians"; I needed to find examples from a specific religion. I was fortunate since I practice the Lakota traditional religion. Most American Indian traditional religions forbid speaking publicly about certain religious matters, but there are exceptions. Around the turn of the century, several Oglala leaders released their knowledge to James Walker, a doctor on the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota. Lakota ceremonial etiquette suggests that since this knowledge has been "released," it is public knowledge that we can safely discuss.

In addition, I needed an understanding of a Christian religion that would be compatible with the Oglala religion. This was more difficult than one might think. Besides common problems of stereotypes and misconceptions, Indian religions teach many ideas which cause some Christians doctrinal difficulties.

However, it was not my search for ideas but a newspaper ad that introduced me to the works of Emanuel Swedenborg. Swedenborg said that the Lord is "heaven's

sun," the source of all life. This life "inflows" into all things. The spiritual and the natural world live side by side, but the spiritual world is complete. The natural world is a reflection of the spiritual world. For example, one could contrast the Lord as "heaven's sun" with the world's natural sun. Both worlds are in harmony as far as the natural world reflects (corresponds or responds to) the spiritual world. The Word, as an expression of God, contains a deeper or spiritual

meaning if we look for it. We look for that meaning when an inner process called regeneration begins to happen within us. We should try to live a life of usefulness to ourselves and to others. Yet, we should realize that the power to do this comes from God.

I found that the statements of both Black Elk and Swedenborg could have been made by either, if we just change the wording. For example, this is how John Neihardt expressed Black Elk's attitude toward the sacred: "And while I stood there I saw more than I can tell and I understood more than I saw, for I was seeing in a sacred manner the shapes of all things in the spirit, and the shape of all shapes as they must live together like one being."² If one allows for cultural differences, this quotation sounds a lot like a description of Swedenborg's "Universal Human."

Over one hundred years after Swedenborg's death, Black Elk spoke of the *inipi* (sweat lodge) ceremony. The lodge has heated rocks in a center hole. The ceremony's leader pours water over the rocks to provide steam for this purification ceremony. Here is Black Elk's

Oglala interpretation of the sweat lodge. He said, "the fire which is used to heat the rocks represents the great power of Wakan-tanka in a certain aspect."³ Black Elk urged that "when we use water in the sweat lodge, we should think of



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Embracing the Shadow

The envelope had no return address. One of those chain letters, I assumed, or some miracle product that would make me unbelievably wealthy within six weeks. But it was addressed to *The Messenger*, so I didn't pitch it in one of the huge wastebaskets the Julian post office provides. I took it home and opened it.

In my nearly nine years as editor of *The Messenger*, I've never before received any anonymous white-supremacist "hate" tracts or letters. This was a first. The thing was titled, "Anti-Semitism—Found." Dated October 1995, it was eight single-spaced pages of rhetoric that sought to convince the reader how the "Jewish conspiracy" planned to take over the U.S. and the world, with the Aryan heterosexual male as its main target of destruction. The article also, along the way, condemned Latin-Americans, African-Americans and Native Americans as being inferior. Feminism, homosexuality and race-mixing were labeled as abominations encouraged by Jews in order to achieve their subversive ends. Of course there was no signature on this absurdity, no author, no accountability, no name, no return address. The postmark on the envelope was some town in Illinois. Unfortunately, I can't find the envelope, and I didn't write down the name of the town stamped on the postmark, but it rang a bell as some place that has a reputation for Neo-Nazi activity. Why, I wondered, was it sent to *The Messenger*? As I read further, it was explained that this essay was sent out to many hundreds of publications at random, with readers encouraged to place it at popular sites on the Internet.

My first thought was to throw the article in the trash without reading it through, get this obscenity out of the house, forget I ever laid eyes on it. Condemnation. The cowards, if they are so convinced they're spreading truth, why don't they ever put their names to it? Why isn't there a person or persons we can write to and talk with openly about what they're saying and advocating? Right. I might as well question why

the Ku Klux Klan wore sheets.

But . . . if I shake off their dirt without looking at it, am I not lending credence to the culturally pervasive "Us and Them" mentality that keeps us separated from ourselves and each other, sick and secret? ("I don't think this way, I'm not one of those bigoted monsters.") Remember the cries of denial when it came to light that family violence was such a serious problem in this country that it amounted to an epidemic? How often we heard "oh, yes, I'm aware there's a lot of child abuse out there, but we don't have it in our town, on our block."

If we truly are wanting to evolve, we must embrace our shadow where it presents itself for our examination. There's a little bit of Hitler in all of us, isn't there? Of course, that little essay appeals to the fear and temptation that is always waiting in the wings, that results in our making scapegoats of persons and groups in our families, in our nation, in our world, instead of looking within for the causes of our misery. And what's scary, it's not crudely written, it's well calculated to promote and inflame this understanding of ourselves as victims of a conspiracy, with an enemy "out there" that must be revealed and vanquished.

There's always a lure to this scenario—the latest version is the paparazzi and the media that employed them blamed for hounding the late Princess Diana to her death. But the paparazzi aren't operating in a vacuum; a culture of voyeuristic readers supports their activity, as a few insightful writers have observed.

I'm reminded of Shirley Jackson's famous short story written some years ago called "The Lottery," a chilling tale wherein a once-a-year town ritual, participation mandatory, dictated that someone be chosen—whoever had the short straw, so to speak—to be stoned to death in the public square, presumably to atone for everyone's sins.

In the early '80s, I had a dream, which I wrote about in my journal at the time. Its details and significance have stayed with me all these years. In this dream, I was awakened in the

middle of the night and invited to accompany the person who woke me, out into a moonlit courtyard. The building and surroundings were unfamiliar to me; I had no idea what I was doing there, and I felt tired and reluctant to leave my bed. Once outside, I was shown a white stucco wall that extended into the distance on either side, and so high that I could see no end to it. On the wall there seemed to be growing a rosy green vine, which was of such an intricate design that the thick stems of the vine formed perfect pockets all along the wall where one might step and climb. And step and climb they had—the wall was full of people of all shapes, sizes, ages and colors. They formed a pattern, each person a vital piece, in perfect balance, like a gorgeous quilt or mosaic. It was such a stunning sight I simply stood and looked at it. But then I was silently invited to take my place on the wall. It seemed obvious that there was no room for me to begin the climb. I was told that room would

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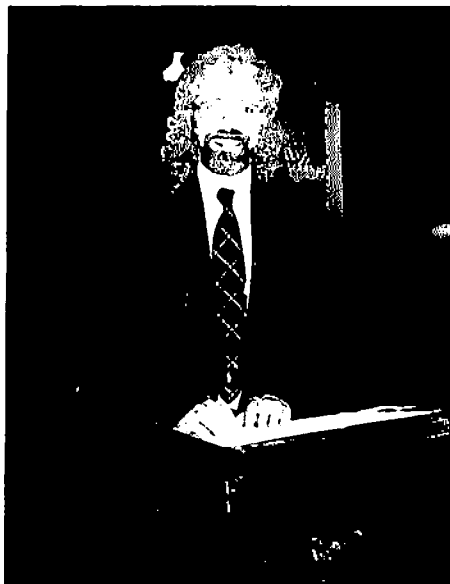
The Portion of the Mountain Yet Unclimbed: My vision for a new library edition of Swedenborg.

Jonathan Rose

The Swedenborg Foundation has come a long way. We have already climbed a great deal of mountain. A hundred years ago we produced the standard edition of the writings, which remains without parallel. Swedenborg's posthumous works have been edited and translated into English and other languages. Other Neo-Latin authors languish in rare book libraries or have been destroyed by world wars. The philosopher Christain Wolff, for example, was a major philosophical force in Swedenborg's time, yet to my knowledge only a single volume of his has been translated into English, and then only once. In contrast, *all* of Swedenborg's works have been translated into English, not to mention many other languages, and have appeared in multiple editions and translations. We have climbed much of the mountain. It may be tempting to rest here, satisfied with our efforts in the past, and simply enjoy the view. But what of the portion of the mountain yet unclimbed? What remains to be done, and is it worth doing?

Before I go on, allow me to present my background and credentials. I am a minister in the General Church, serving as chaplain of Bryn Athyn College and assistant professor of Greek and Religion. I have been trained as a classicist and hold a Ph.D. in Latin from Bryn Mawr College. I am a contributing member of the International Association for Neo-Latin Studies. I was curator of Swedenborgian library for 13 years at Bryn Athyn's Swedenborg Library. I am a consultant and translator for the General Church; I worked for years with John Chadwick on his *Lexicon* to Swedenborg's theological Latin, I consulted for Durban Odhner on several volumes of his new Latin edition and English translation of Swedenborg's *Spiritual Experiences*, and I recently translated memorable relations for the Foundation's publication entitled *Conversations with Angels*.

The portion of the mountain yet unclimbed to which I would like to



Jonathan Rose in chancel at San Francisco church, Swedenborg Foundation Annual Meeting, May 18, 1997.

bring your attention is the possibility of an annotated, thorough, scholarly library edition of the writings featuring fresh English translations throughout. I was not the first to glimpse these slopes. For decades now, first the Rev. Dr. Bill Woofenden and then the Rev. Dr. Dave Eller have dreamed of a library edition of Swedenborg's works—a set that would look good beside the *Opera Omnia* of Luther, Aquinas, Erasmus, and so on. (Having looked at other such library editions I now believe that we can not only parallel but in fact exceed the standard that is out there. Many library editions lack indexes, scholarly prefaces and annotations, and biographical information.)

I believe that there would be latitude in a library edition of Swedenborg for variety in translation and approach; but three features would supply an essential coherence throughout:

1) **Faithful Translation of Style.** Swedenborg's works have a variety of Latin styles, and these change from one work, from one paragraph, sometimes even from one sentence to the next. Our English translations should reflect the original's styles and shifts in style. For one small example, at one point in *True Christian Religion*

Swedenborg lays out a list of Christian dogmas that were prevalent but false and harmful, relating to God the Father being angry with the Son. The list is long, didactic, abstract and doctrinal. At the end, though, Swedenborg says "*Haec et similia hodie in Templis sonant, et reverberantur e parietibus, sicut echo e silvis, et implent omnium aures ibi.*" "These things and the like resound in temples these days and reverberate off the walls like an echo in the forests and fill the ears of all who are there." (TCR 132.2) Not only does the language become suddenly concrete with physical sounds bouncing off walls of a building, but we detour briefly even further, out into the woods.

(2) **Gender-Inclusive Language.** A new English translation should use gender-inclusive language, not just because it has recently become good English but also because it is more faithful to Swedenborg's Latin. Earlier translators cast many things as male such as the Grand Man, God-Man, and God appearing as a Man, but these are all *homo* in the Latin, a gender-free word denoting a human being. The Latin often makes general statements using *homo* as the subject followed by third personal singular verbs. The English has rendered this by the formula "man ... he ... he ... he." But Latin lacks third-person pronouns—it has to go somewhat out of its way to express "he" "him" and "his" or ("she" and "her" for that matter) by borrowing demonstrative adjectives. Most of the time the subject is merely implied in the verb without specifying gender; the English "he" is an interpolation. In a new translation, we should use "he" "him" or "his" only if we can demonstrate Latin support for the masculine; otherwise we should use inclusive language.

(3) **True English.** Although each translator for a new library edition will inevitably use English in slightly different ways, all the translations should be in what I might call "certifiable English."

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The Portion of the Mountain Yet Unclimbed: My vision for a new library edition of Swedenborg.

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And in a library edition, there would be a biography of Swedenborg, and each work would have a learned preface that would set it in the context of Swedenborg's other works and in the history of thought. Annotations to the texts would give clarification and supply the studious reader with a bibliographical paper trail to follow. For instance, Swedenborg alludes to a tale of an ancient philosopher who became so exasperated thinking about the eternity of the world that he threw himself into the sea (*True Christian Religion* 28). I would love a footnote giving a little more information about that.

Now such a project to scale the next portion of the mountain will be costly. Translation is expensive in time and talent, and good scholarship is not cheap either. Years of time and millions of dollars may be required. Why should we bother?

I can think of only four reasons:

1) The world has never had a Swedenborgian *Opera Omnia* including all theological and moral works, scientific and philosophical works, political tracts, his letters and poetry.

2) Swedenborg's theological writings have never before been translated into English. If this sounds like an exaggerated claim, take a page or two of the existing translation to an English professor to "red ink." Wouldn't you get comments like the following?

- *overuse of the passive voice*
- *"of" used in a somewhat strange way—the this of that, the that of this*
- *the antecedent of many demonstratives is unclear, 'and this because'—and what because?*
- *paragraphing would help etc., etc.*

The translators of the past created a sub-dialect of English, referred to by some as "Swedenborgianese," into which to translate. In an admirable effort to be faithful, they drew on English's vast vocabulary of Latin loan words. But despite English's bad habit

of eating other language's whole vocabularies from time to time, it remains at heart an Anglo-Saxon language. Latinate vocabulary and word order make for relatively soulless English.

Not translating into true English has given previous translations of Swedenborg a relatively short shelf life. The King James version of the Bible used the Anglo-Saxon heart of the language, and was crafted well and poetically; as a result it has been read and loved for almost five hundred years now. The standard edition's English from the turn of the century was already feeling objectionably out of date to some people by the 1960s.

3) The Latin in which Swedenborg wrote has not been properly known. Although Swedenborg and countless other authors produced a vast body of literature in Neo-Latin, the Neo-Latin language only began to be systematically studied in 1971. There are still no grammars or dictionaries at all. John Chadwick, a Swedenborgian classicist at Cambridge, recently spent twelve years producing a *Lexicon to the Latin Theological Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772)*, listing 12,000 words Swedenborg uses. This is a first of a kind, yet it covers only one portion of the writing of a single author—a very specific Lexicon. And although Potts (who made the *Concordance*) and Elliott (who is translating the *Arcana*) and many others have contributed a tremendous number of words to the Lexicon, with Swedenborg's Latin now in the computer I am finding and adding another 2000 words to Chadwick's *Lexicon*. I have even discovered a new Latin ending set in Swedenborg that has apparently never before been documented. Without any Neo-Latin dictionary, without any Neo-Latin grammar, without Chadwick's 12,000 words, without my 2000 additions, without knowledge of this new ending set, how good could previous translators' knowledge of Swedenborg's Neo-Latin have been?

4) And finally, Swedenborg's works have never received much in the way of scholarly commentary. The normal procedure with any classical Greek or Latin author is to produce a text in the original language with a critical

apparatus, then a commentary on that text, and finally a translation. Text, commentary, translation. Text, commentary, translation. In Swedenborg's case, though, we have always skipped the middle step. We have many translations, no commentaries.

Translations depreciate in value over time but commentaries appreciate. Servius' 4th Century commentary on Vergil, for instance, is enormously valuable and heavily used now because it gives vital background and clarification of meaning, and documents allusions to other works that have long since disappeared.

We are now at the intersection of two curves on a graph giving us an unprecedented ability to do a library edition. We have more scholars, more resources, better understanding of Neo-Latin than ever before. That is a curve going up. Against it is a curve going down—the life expectancy of the books from Swedenborg's day. Right now in Bryn Athyn we have a reconstruction of 92% of Swedenborg's personal library. In a few hundred years those books will be illegible and crumbling to dust. It is only through us that generations in the far distant future will have access to the background and clarification those books can give. If we do nothing the books, and the information that could be gleaned from them, will irretrievably perish.

High quality translations into the largest language on earth will give benefit for hundreds of years. And even when they outlive their usefulness, the scholarship embedded in their prefaces and footnotes will only continue to increase in value. Three thousand years from now, when the English translations of the library edition will mean little or nothing, people studying Swedenborg's unique and remarkable works will still be indebted to us for the priceless information we have passed on. Future generations will thank us for deciding not to sit but to climb.

[Editor's Note: The foregoing is a condensed version of a presentation given by the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Rose at the Swedenborg Foundation's annual meeting in San Francisco on May 18, 1997.] ♦

THE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COVENANT CONGREGATION PROGRAM

Healing and Defending God's Creation

This new Christianity of ours offers an abundance of reasons for ecological sensitivity. We are assured of the presence of the Divine in the least of things as well as in the greatest. We are urged to see in the intricacy of nature evidence of the Creator's exquisite wisdom. We are advised that we are sustained in life not only from within but also from without, reminded that we need constant nourishment from the world that surrounds us.

In a subtler way, the Lord's parables often reflect on our kinship with our world. We are the ground that receives the seed, the leaven in the dough, the salt of the earth—or perhaps the barren fig tree. Our teachings dwell again and again on the ways in which the physical world reflects the spiritual, the world outside us, the world within. It is truly a world to be loved.

All too often, though, we regard it simply as a world to be used even to be exploited. We want our summertime pavement in midwinter, our springtime temperatures in midsummer, fresh strawberries in January and fresh cider in July. We shrink from the disciplines of conserving water and energy, content to let our children pay the bills we are running up. We seem to feel no responsibility for the waste and the toxins we generate, dismissing them from our minds even before they are out of sight. While millions of people live in the shadow of starvation, we feel entitled to our comfort.

If we hear the voice of the church clearly, we are alerted to the futility of our materialism. The privileges of possession are inseparably tied to responsibilities, all bound in an intricate fabric of interdependent uses. As individuals and as a church, we must accept the call to faithful stewardship of our environment. Therefore the congregation affirms the importance of healing and defending creation as our mission. We promise to become engaged in or continue to be engaged in this ministry in the following ways:

Worship—In worship, we will celebrate God's grace and glory in creation and will declare that God calls us to participate in the redemption of the world by cherishing, protecting and restoring creation.

Learning and Teaching—We will seek opportunities for ourselves and our children to learn more about the wonders of creation, the threats posed by human beings to the survival of creation and the possibilities of our participating in God's redemption and justice.

Lifestyle—Our individual and congregation's lifestyles will respect and cherish creation. We will form habits of consuming, conserving and sharing that serve to protect and restore the environment. In particular, we will reuse and recycle as many materials as we can and seek ways of limiting our consumption of fossil fuels.

Community, National and Global Involvement—In our community, the nation and the world, our congregation will witness to and participate in God's redemption of creation by supporting public efforts and policies which support vulnerable people and protect and restore the degraded earth.

Each year we will review our previous year's work on environmental justice and consider other ways we can participate in God's redemption of creation.

Signed,

Pastor _____ Date _____

Officer _____ Date _____

(Editor's Note: The Environmental Justice Covenant Congregation Program was instigated by NCC's Richard Kilmer, keynote theme speaker at convention this past July. Following up on the discussions which took place on the floor of convention and in Kilmer's mini-course, the above covenant is being mailed out to our membership by the Social Concerns Committee. The first half of the covenant has been rewritten by the Rev. Dr. George Dole to align with our Swedenborgian perspective). ♦

TO THE EDITOR

Illustrated Calendar Proposed

Dear Editor:

In 1979 I was initiated into the Swedenborgian path through a remarkable exchange. I showed up at Dorothea's* house in Urbana with a tray of slides depicting the beauty of seasonal changes. Participants oohed and ahhed, and Dorothea told me that with the beauty of the pictures, she knew that I belonged to the group. The following Sunday I went to my first healing circle there. Now it was my turn to ooh and ahh, and within the month I underwent a radical rebirth. I heard things spoken that I realized I had ached to hear my entire life, yet never knew until then that these concepts existed.

Since then, I have upon several occasions made the suggestion that the church come out with a Swedenborgian calendar to be sold at bookstores, "new age" shops and other establishments. The calendar would have an intro describing the life and philosophical highlights of Swedenborg followed by one of my nature pictures for each month along with a special quote by Swedenborg at the bottom of each page. The back cover would include info on how to become involved with the Church; contact information, etc. Everytime I made this suggestion I ran into the wall of "we don't have enough money for this." To this end, I would like to make some counter suggestions and renew the possibility of the manifestation of this calendar.

The things that Swedenborg did back then are extremely relevant to today's spiritual scene, and need to have a voice in the symphony of current public spiritual discussion. His daily talks and writings with and about the angelic realms are today called "channeling." Through Swedenborg, the ancient truths of correspondence and alchemy were brought to main-

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Anger — How do you Handle It?

Lorraine Sando

Anger is energy. When it is harnessed and used appropriately, it can be a powerful vehicle of self discovery, empowerment, esteem and growth. When it is reactive, unconscious and out of control, it is an extremely destructive force. It is akin to nuclear power—it can be harnessed to serve us or destroy us. The energy of anger lets us know we're alive, passionate, and responsive rather than lifeless, lethargic and indifferent.

When we are ill and stressed, our self esteem is low. We feel helpless. When we feel helpless, we can become children and resort to old survival copings to get our needs met. Many of us are unaware that we are using coping styles and that we feel that our survival is threatened. Seemingly our only option is to react with anger. We're out of touch with our rational problem-solving skills. We have expectations and yearnings for attention that don't get met.

As individuals, we need to be aware of our own anger and our expression of it, so that we can be in charge and selectively respond to situations rather than react. To be in charge of our anger, we must understand its origins. Through the Virginia Satir model, "The Personal Iceberg," we can begin to identify our survival stances (blamer, placator, irrelevant, super-reasonable), our feelings and our feelings about those feelings, our perceptions, our expectations, our yearnings, and our universality. We can see the person in front of us as another human being with qualities similar to ours. We can learn to see that person from a clear space. Satir believed in the inherent goodness, equality, and uniqueness of each person regardless of their outward behavior, culture, color, creed, gender, or sexual orientation. She often said, "The one way we are all alike is that we all have navels." Each of us started from a sperm and an egg, from a father and a mother. All of us have a yearning to be loved and accepted just because we are. In growing up, we had many experiences, some positive and some negative. Because our parents were imperfect with varying skills in parenting, we developed a variety of coping styles to survive. As adults, when we are under stress, we are likely to use our familiar coping styles in our relationships with others. We may blame and try to control others. We may placate others and be a martyr and feel resentful. We may handle all situations logically and reasonably, with no emotion, believing that our way is the one right way. We

can become irrelevant and distracted, unfocused and irrational and out of control. All of these demonstrate an unwillingness to take responsibility for ourselves. There is a fifth response to stress, its congruence. When we are congruent, we are centered. Our inside feelings match our outside expression. We respond with what is fitting for each situation. Our ability to be congruent most often diffuses the anger that is being directed at us. We can express our anger and concern honestly. We can be very clear about what we'll do and not do. We can set clear boundaries. In so doing, we free the other person to make his or her own choices, while providing a definitive, safe container for interaction.

How do we get to congruence:

1. By understanding and being aware of ourselves and the origins of our behavior and by being willing to take responsibility for our behavior.
2. By purposefully and regularly centering ourselves to remind ourselves of our own strengths and humanness and our connections to the universal. [Virginia called this the "Life Force."] Each of us has a different name for this resource. My name is my God or Lord. There are many ways to center ourselves, such as:

- Meditation • Running • Walking • Gardening
- Writing • Music • Singing • Dancing

Keep in mind that centering can range from a few seconds to an hour or more. We do what is fitting for us at any given time. **The key to centering and congruence is conscious awareness.**

In conclusion, to effectively manage our anger, we must become aware of our own anger styles, and understand the origins of our own anger. We must choose to act from a centered, congruent space. As we are able to do this, we can be in charge of ourselves and our responses and "move toward a more human and joyful way of being and functioning." (Virginia Satir, 1978).

Lorraine Sando is a member of the Swedenborgian Church of Puget Sound. Her ministry is about healing. She is a psychotherapist, spiritual counselor, workshop leader, trainer, educator and an artist.



★ ★ ★ Freedom ★ ★ ★

Mr. Webster is always a good place to begin. He defines freedom as "enjoying civil, political and personal liberty . . . not subject to the control or domination of another . . . choosing or capable of choosing for oneself . . . behavior voluntarily determined by one's choices or wishes."

Freedom is an essential element in the Swedenborgian scheme of things. We are told, and everyday observation confirms this, that freedom and rationality distinguish human beings from animals.

Our freedom is based on the spiritual fact that God keeps us, constantly, in an equilibrium, a balance, between heaven and hell, good and evil, light and darkness. And there are thousands of subtle shadings of gray between that light and darkness. Every moment of each waking day we are called upon to make choices from this incredible selective banquet spread out before us. Look back over the past 24 hours: we chose this instead of that; we did one thing instead of another; we said "yes" and we said "no." Every day we freely make hundreds of choices. Most are minor, some are major, but they are all important because, as Swedenborg reminds us, "all actions have consequences to eternity."

Some would say that we act prima-

rily out of habit, but what are habits except freely chosen repeated behaviors? Or others suggest that much of our behavior is determined by extenuating circumstances: perhaps we are blinded by passion; or we have been abused in childhood; or a series of misfortunes has befallen us and we say in effect, "I couldn't help myself." As Flip Wilson used to say, "The devil made me do it." Admittedly sometimes the window of free choice is very small and limited, but there is always some glimmer of light, some room to maneuver. It's also true that we are greatly influenced by countless outside agencies, both physical and spiritual. But ultimately, we do make choices, all of which grow out of our ruling love.

Yes, we have been given the awesome gift of freedom, and that freedom is real though in an absolute sense it is the Lord's freedom operating in us). When our choices are primarily self-centered and self-serving, then very gradually our spirit is being shackled hand and foot by hellish threads. When our choices are primarily altruistic and helpful, then we draw nearer to the Lord and enjoy the gifts of the spirit. In brief, the more we love and follow Divine Good and Truth, the more free we are . . .

"for the Truth shall make you free."

Have you ever wondered about the quality of your freedom? In *The New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrine* #147 Swedenborg says: "You may know what kind of freedom you possess, from the delight you have while you are thinking, speaking, acting, hearing and seeing; for all delight is of love." In other words, what do you really enjoy thinking about, talking about, doing, hearing and seeing? This tells you everything you need to know about the nature of your freedom, and your ruling love.

Reflect on these lines from *The Cicadas* by Aldous Huxley, and let them lead you where they will:

The choice is always ours.
Then let me choose
The longest art,
the hard Promethean way
Cherishingly to tend and feed and fan
That inward fire,
whose small precarious flame,
Kindled or quenched creates
The noble or the ignoble men we are,
The worlds we live in
and the very fates,
Our bright or muddy star.

Paul Zacharias

MOVING TOWARD THE LIGHT – Editorial

(Continued from page 122)

be made and I would be helped, but first I had to begin the climb. As I took hold of the vine, everything, including me, moved fluidly. I was gently guided into the pattern, there was room for me, and I was advised to continue climbing until I found a place on the wall that I felt was mine. I could feel myself becoming a part of the vine, the wall, and everyone on the wall, and I was being lovingly welcomed as a vital part of it. It felt like a joyous celebration, and nobody was left out.

The dream came into my mind again as I finished reading the "hate" article. There continues to be so much

evidence that we are moving toward a vision of splendid diversity within a perfect pattern of unity. But we've also been told that polarities will become more visible and violent during this transition, as fear surfaces, and attacks, and asks to be healed.

So I guess I won't throw this tract away. I think I will put it in a folder, staple it to my dream, and let them nestle together in a dark drawer. Every once in a while I'll check in with them to see how we're doing.

Patte LeVan



Passing on Peace

Apparently angry that a truck was moving too slowly in traffic for her taste, a young woman pulled up alongside it in her car, held an aluminum baseball bat out the window, and took several futile swipes at the truck as both were moving down the highway. Police arrested her and noticed her personalized license plate, "PEACE 97." Said an officer, "She told me she got it because she thought there was so much violence going on in today's society." ❖

New Building Opens at Temenos

At last, our new retreat center building has been added to the Temenos complex. A Certificate of Occupancy was received from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on the evening of August 22nd, and a group of 20 men and women from a Quaker Meeting arrived on Saturday morning, August 23. Other groups have reserved space in the new building for September, October, and November.

The new building (still without a name) has eight bedrooms, with two beds to a room; each room has private bath. Two of the bedrooms are

outfitted for the handicapped. The heart of the building is a large 29' x 29' meeting room/chapel with a ceiling 13' high. A wall of glass on the south draws your attention to the wooded valley below and invites the sunshine throughout the day. It is our hope and intention to add a 12' wide deck along the south and west sides of the building when funds permit. A beautiful stone fireplace is centered on the west end of the meeting room. Opposite the fireplace is a meeting room that can be furnished as a chancel for worship celebrations. Plans are being drawn up for the installation of two Tiffany stained-glass angel windows, eight feet high, preserved from the old Swedenborgian church at Oak and Winslow Streets in Cincinnati.

Entrance to the building is through a hand-carved door sculpted by Jacquin Smolens, including three small stained-glass windows. The entryway and cloak room are paved with local fieldstone. A glass door leads to the foyer and office. From the foyer one can enter the commercially-equipped kitchen. Dave Anderson, a member of our church family, and a semi-retired food service manager, has been a great help in designing the kitchen and recommending equipment and supplies. We have every confidence that Temenos will become known far and wide for its culinary delights.

We're much indebted to Ross Fish, interior designer and member of the San Francisco church who has lent his expertise in guiding our choice of interior furnishings, and to John Smailer, chair of the Temenos board and president of the Philadelphia church, who has been deeply involved in all phases of the building process.

Temenos, in its five buildings, will be able to accommodate 30 people overnight. There is space for five different groups to meet at the same time in four of the buildings. This gives us remarkable flexibility in meeting a variety of needs. Recently a group of 21 Episcopal clergy met all day Saturday at the director's home, Sky Meadow. The Bishop

of Massachusetts celebrated the eucharist with the coffee table in front of the fireplace serving as the altar. At the same time, another group practiced Yoga at the Gate House. Others wound their way in silence along the meditation trails.

As the new building is completed, and plans are made for the dedication/blessing, attorneys are drawing up final papers for the transfer of title of the 56-acre property from the General Convention to the Philadelphia church,

now known as the Swedenborgian Church at Temenos. The Temenos Retreat Center will become a ministry of the Philadelphia church, and to that end the church has committed all its financial resources from the sale of its church building in downtown Philadelphia. Everyone associated with the retreat ministry at Temenos is most grateful to our denomination for the establishment of this ministry and for its faith in this mission.

Even as we celebrate the completion of the construction of the new retreat center building, we are aware that a church or retreat center is so much more than a building. A building has meaning and value as it helps us to fulfill our purpose. The purpose of Temenos, as set forth in the bylaws is "to create and sustain a center where people can come for spiritual growth,

education for personal and social transformation, and mutual support in the quest for effective and sustaining community. The purpose of Temenos is consistent with that of the Swedenborgian Church denomination to help people be open to the Lord's presence and leading, especially by fostering personal and ordained ministries which facilitate the spiritual well-being of people, and which have in common a working for the Lord in bringing in the New Age—the descent of the Holy City New Jerusalem."

Acknowledging that Temenos is a ministry initiated by the denomination, we wish to share its services and facilities with people throughout our church. Boards, committees, and support units are invited to meet here. As our programs expand, we urge you to participate in our seminars and workshops. Come for a private retreat and recharge your spiritual batteries. Drop by for a personally conducted tour and spend a free night at the new retreat center building. For further information or to make a reservation, call Temenos at (610) 696-8145.

Earnest O. Martin, Director



New Retreat Center building at Temenos.



TEMENOS Program Calendar Fall-Winter 1997



A Gathering of Men
John Scardina
September 8 - November 24

Improving Your Eyesight and Your Vision: An introduction to Vision Improvement
Dorothy H. L. Carroll
September 13

61 Points - Shavayatra
Gayatri
September 14

Yoga Series
Bob Butera, Ph.D.
September 16th - November 18th

**Coming Home to Yourself
—Body, Mind, Spirit:**
Women's Support Groups
Perry Martin
September 17 — December 10
(omitting November 26)

Introduction to Yoga
Bob Butera
September 21

T.L.C. - Temenos Learning Center
Open House
September 24

Trails Weekend
September 26 - 28

Exploring Deep Stillness
A Day of Mindfulness Meditation
Nancy Mattila
September 27

Taking Care of Yourself, Naturally
Lisa A. Schad
September 28

Writing from Within:
The Metcalf - Simon Practice of Proprioceptive Writing
Mary Rock
October 3, 4, and 5

First Sundays In Central America
Richard MacIntyre, Coordinator
October 5, November 2,
December 7

The Sanctuary:
A Coffee House at Temenos
October 9, November 13,
December 11, January 8,
and February 12

Our Bodies - Our Souls:
A Women's Day of Play and Exploration
Laurie Weaver
October 10

Soul's Journey - Fire's Breath
Laurie Weaver
October 11, 12

Mindfulness - Based Stress Reduction Series
Nancy Mattlin
October 14 - December 2

Knowing Spirit in the Here and Now
Dorothea Harvey
October 18

REIKI Level I Training
Nancy Mattlin
October 25, 26

Valuing Our Differences and Enhancing Our Communication
An Event for Couples
Howard and Betsy Friend
October 26

Sacred Space Retreat:
For clergy and professionals who work with people
Howard and Betsy Friend
October 27, 28

Animals of the Four Windows
Jeannette Samanen
November 1

Dream Space
Dream Sharing and Collage
Alice Adelman
November 8

Day with Polly Young - Eisendrath
The Resilient Spirit:
Transforming Suffering into Meaning and Purpose
November 15

Letting Go of an Old Self:
The Psychology of Karmis Rebirth
November 15

"An Afternoon of Creative ARTPlay"™
Deborah Ballachey Hodies
November 16

Men in Elementary Schools
John Scardina
November 20, 1997, January 23,
March 20, 1998

Yogo Meditation Retreat
Bob Butera
November 21, 23

The Authentic Voice
Susan Herrick
December 6

Dances of Universal Peace
Jeanne Ayesha Lauenborg
December 7

Grief as a Threshold to New Life
Kayta Gajdos, Ph.D.
January 10

Angels About Us: A Workshop in Accessing Your Heavenly Host
Doug Rosentrater and Erni Martin
January 11 and 18

Creating the Wise Woman Doll
Nan Elias
January 24

Communication and Connection
Lisa Schad and Susan Goresko
January 25

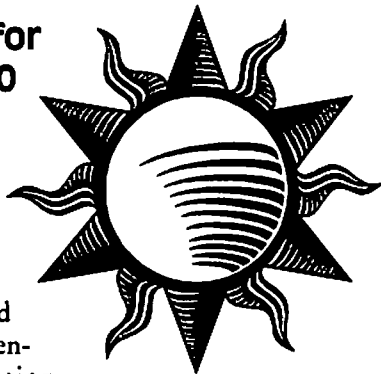
World Rhythm Orchestra
Tony Vacca
January 31

**For further
information,
call
(610) 696-8145**

KEEPERS OF THE EARTH

A Summer Camp for Children ages 5-10

If three annual events make a tradition, the Summer Camp for Children at Temenos is now a tradition. The camp sessions have been created and led by Ruth Tafel, elementary and special education teacher in Delaware, and supervisor of children's programs at Temenos. She has been ably assisted by fellow members of the Philadelphia church.



Twenty-two children attended the 1997 session along the Broad Run stream. The camp met Monday through Friday, June 23-27, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Ruth described the goal of the camp as "opening children to the wonders of nature and our environment, showing them how to give to nature and receive from it, and treating it with respect. We do this through activities that include games, hikes, sensory awareness, nature journaling, songs, and good children's literature.

"Each day has a special theme. Generally there are 4-6 activities every day which take place in the woods, meadow, and stream.

"Day 1 and parents' night: Orienteering. Map skills, finding your way around. Example activity: String-O, which is a predetermined small course, designed to teach basic orienteering skills (outlined in a brightly colored string.)

"Day 2—habitats are everywhere: From ants to foxes, looking for habitats; helping to create one.

"Day 3—the color of green: (Stewardship of urban and suburban plant communities). Example activity: Seed need—wearing an old, fuzzy sock over a shoe and walking through a meadow to see what seeds we gather on it.

"Day 4—animal search: (Stewardship of urban and suburban animal life). Searching for animal tracks, plaster casting of animal tracks.

"Day 5—circles of giving and receiving: Using Native American traditions of the circles of giving and receiving, we will use some activities that will show us how to continue our stewardship after camp."

Some children from our community have come all three years, or brothers and sister have grown old enough to take part. On parents' night, whole families come to get a feeling of what is taking place, to experience the sacred space that is Temenos, to meet church leaders, and to share in a potluck supper.

Like the Temenos Retreat Center, the Summer Camp for Children is a ministry of the Philadelphia church. Through this ministry we seek to meet the needs of a special part of our community and to help them experience the divine in nature. ♦

PARISH NEWS FROM ALL OVER

Going Up!

A letter recently went out to members and friends of the Fryeburg New Church in Fryeburg, Maine, from the Members of the Elevator Fund Committee, regarding the church's decision to install an elevator. The following text is edited from *The Messenger*.

At this writing an access into our church for the physically impaired is not required by law. However, those who are familiar with our church building realize there are steps encountered regardless of which door is used. We presently have one Sunday school pupil whom the teachers have to carry up and down the stairs, wheelchair and all. Not an easy task. That fact, plus knowing some others of our membership and in our community do not attend church and other functions because they find the stairs difficult or impossible to manage, has prompted us to act before we are told by law to do so, and before the cost is prohibitive. The convenience of such a facility will be appreciated by those who have to carry groceries, tables, etc. up and down the present stairs.

Over a year ago, the board of trustees appointed an elevator committee. Members of the committee have checked many aspects of how to accomplish easier access. A ramp is not feasible due to the height of the front church entrance and lack of land for the necessary incline. It is also important to the majority to maintain the esthetic beauty of the exterior of the church. Stair lifts would not accommodate one confined to a wheelchair. An elevator, itself, offers a more convenient and safer access. Because it will not be used on a daily basis and a commercial type is not now required by the State, the cost of the elevator was much less than anticipated. The firm figure for the elevator is \$16,000, leaving an estimate of \$22,500 for reconstruction. The actual main building will not be affected except for making the present doorway wider from the library area into the church.

In May and, again, in July, the membership voted, after discussion, to support the board of trustees and the elevator committee in their decision regarding an elevator. The church treasury is financially able to support the project, but it would mean selling investments that now yield 14% to 20% interest. Rather than sell our stocks which we might never be able to replace for the same cost, it was advised by the investment broker that funds be borrowed at a low interest and repaid on an annual basis over a given period. That will hold in reserve for a possible great emergency our excellent investments. The interest from those investments now support much of the church's regular expenses and will serve as a backup to cover elevator expenses if the fund drive is not adequate.

Those in the Fryeburg New Church have seldom if ever been asked to make actual large cash donations to fund a project until now. Such donations, spread over a ten-year period,

(Continued on page 131)

Carole Rienstra Memorial Gazebo Dedicated



The gazebo at the Church of the Open Word, St. Louis, was dedicated to the Glory of God in memory of Carole Rienstra June 15, 1997, with family, friends and members of the congregation participating.

The gazebo, designed by David Rienstra, Jr., was completed by fall of 1996, just eight months after Carole's death. Its dimensions not only fit with the design of the church, but David incorporated the height (twelve feet) and the hexagonal shape with aspects of Carole's birthday, which was 6/12.

Interesting side note—the contractor who actually constructed the building had a personal interest. His birthday was 6/12, and he also had a son who died of cancer. He put extra care and effort into building it. ❖

GOING UP!

(Continued from page 130)

should allow everyone who wishes to participate. Besides actual cash donations, fund-raising events are being planned.

Already, we have been promised \$1,000 if four other \$1,000 in matching funds are pledged and received by January 1, 2000. Any individual making a donation of 50% of the total cost will have the privilege, if they so desire, of having the elevator named for them, or of choosing a name of their choice, subject to board approval. All donations, large and small, over the next ten years are greatly appreciated and will help us to achieve the goal of \$40,000. At the close of the campaign, unless a request is made for anonymity, all donors will be acknowledged on a plaque to be placed in a prominent location. For further information or to send a donation, please address correspondence to: ATTN: Elevator Fund Committee, Fryeburg New Church, 4 Oxford St., Fryeburg, ME 04037. ❖

With thanks and blessings,

The Elevator Fund Committee Members
Ola-Mae Wheaton Louis Wheaton
Jean Cameron Warren Jean Cressy

Participants Praise Spirituality Workshop

The Kemper Road Swedenborgian Church (Cincinnati) hosted a retreat on June 29, 1997, for friends and members to explore and share personal experiences of spirituality. It was led by the Rev. John Billings and his wife Sharon. Participant and member Pete Toot reports:

The session began with participants writing and sharing their pre-retreat concepts of what spirituality means, and it was very refreshing to have so much insight and self-examination evident, and to start off an event such as this with so much willingness to share ideas. We prepared sheets of posterboard with Polaroid pictures of ourselves and our statements on spirituality, hung them on the wall, and throughout the day visited each others' "wall-sites" and added positive words and feelings about each other that came to mind. This not only provided some encouragement, but also helped those of us who did not know each other very well to get to know each other better.

Perhaps the central activity of the retreat came right after lunch, when we broke up into triads and took turns putting into words our own personal stories of developing spirituality. It was an enlightening exercise to string together those events and periods in our lives which we thought contributed to our growth, to see that indeed there was a process of unfolding going on, and to see the same thing with those others in our triads. For me it was helpful to hear how others struggled with changing self-images and evolving relationship with the divine. One of the things I got from the retreat was reinforcement of the sense of a community of people all on individual journeys, at different points depending on how long we'd been at it, how different trials has been dealt with, and how our upbringing had prepared us.

In the final activity we explored how we responded to language, events, and sensations; looking at how we experience and what triggers the awareness of the spirit. We each tried to identify physical, emotional, situational, and intellectual stimuli to which we respond. Again it was interesting to see what this showed us.

The entire retreat was useful in building a renewed sense of extended family, in essence creating a spontaneous congregation of the participants. Much thanks to John and Sharon for organizing this event, and much thanks to all the participants, who helped it work.

Victoria Hackett, another member who attended, comments:

As I considered attending this workshop, many thoughts went through my mind. "What if they try to tell me about my own spirituality—it's not strong enough or deep enough?"

(Continued on page 134)

Letter from Kei Torita

TO THE
EDITOR



*Kei Torita visited
Patte and Ted
LeVan in Julian
following
convention.*

Dear Convention People,

Thank you very much for inviting me to this year's convention in Kansas. I am safely home, and back to my daily life situations.

I can hardly find the words to express how grateful I am. I enjoyed every activity at the convention and your friendship. I learned, and I was inspired and encouraged very much, too. I especially appreciate Kansas people's hospitality.

Among many thoughts and feelings that I have carried to Tokyo, one thing that is particularly relevant and important for the New Church in Japan is a sense of flexibility. I attended the mini-course, "Millennium II." We know that fundamentalistic people take the Bible literally. But if Swedenborgians take Swedenborg's writings too literally, that is also fundamentalistic. I have been aware of general conservatism tendencies of Japanese Swedenborgians. In my ministry, I have been emphasizing the importance of more lively, less rigid ideas of the New Church. During the convention, I felt encouraged to continue this approach.

I gave three speeches during the convention—at Council of Ministers meeting, Women's Alliance luncheon, and the floor of convention, with some differences in details. I would like to outline my activities here:

I have my group which meets at my apartment for Sunday worship service. They are eight to ten at the most, but quite sincere and I am very happy with them.

Because of my writing and translating, I sometimes receive letters and phone calls to inquire more about Swedenborg and the New Church. If they are near enough, I sometimes visit them, but more often I write long letters to them and send them materials. With some people, I write back and forth, and I can see these persons finding Swedenborg and New Church in their own way, but from some other people I get no response after my first correspondence. This aspect of ministry has to be seen from a long viewpoint.

Since last year, the Rev. Kinichi Kuniyeda (who is known to most of you), and Dr. Kazuo Takahishi (who does a lot of writing on Swedenborg and translations), and I have been preparing for starting an organization which is called Japan Swedenborg Association (JSA) for progress and liveliness of the New Church and Swedenborgianism in Japan. I will write to you more about this next time.

Thank you very much again, and I hope everything is going well with each of you.

Sincerely,
Rev. Kei Torita

Illustrated Calendar Proposed

(Continued from page 125)

stream western religion. The notion that there is ultimately no external heaven and hell; we are creators of our own world and need to heal the inner hells and open to divine influx is in deep alignment with present day awareness that we are the creators of our reality, and if you don't like what you see, change your thinking. The idea that both men and women are combinations of love and wisdom, and in order to become whole we need to master both aspects is absolutely profound, and totally dovetails with the current explorations of integrating our masculine and feminine aspects. When I tell people that both Carl Jung and Helen Keller were Swedenborgians, eyebrows go up. Most people never heard of Swedenborg.

I have read of the concern in past newsletters about the steady or even dwindling membership of the Swedenborgian Church. An educational wall calendar such as what I suggest could be a potent way of exposing progressive thinking persons to what Swedenborg has to offer.

I have hundreds of stunning nature shots that can be utilized for this calendar. Most of the pictures come from Ohio, home of Urbana College.

Lastly, I give thanks to Dorothea for the inspiration and influence that she had on my life. My experience with that group and the miracles that unfolded within helped to shift my life close to 180 degrees.

Stephen Levine
Richardson, Texas

**The Rev. Dr. Dorothea Harvey, professor emerita of Urbana University, now part-time professor of theology and worship at SSR. She lives in Gloucester, Massachusetts.*

Editor's Note:

Stephen Eric Levine, MA, published author and photographer, received his creative arts therapies degree in 1982. He taught Psychometeorology or the science of using weather correspondences to

(Continued on page 135)

Our Swedenborgian Heritage

Twenty-ninth in a Series

T. Mower Martin, a Man for All Generations, part 3

In the last article, [June 1997] we left T. Mower Martin, artist, horticulturist and missionary, as he was about to set off from Alberta to go to British Columbia. He had a list of people who were interested in the doctrines, but when he reached Vancouver he found that of the nine addresses he had for that city, only two were valid. The indefatigable man did "much searching until the majority were discovered," and finally a lecture was given at the home of a Mr. H. A. Halson.

Proceeding to Victoria he found that people on his list had moved away or were on vacation; but he managed to gather an audience of nearly fifty, most of them not church members, for a lecture on "Religion in Theory and Practice." He called on ministers of many denominations, many of whom were happy to receive a pamphlet on discrete degrees. On his missionary tour Martin also established book depots in four cities of the western provinces, and a Mr. Law volunteered to manage the distribution.

In the September, 1910, *Messenger*, he announced that he had arrived in Seattle, and asked readers to send him the names and addresses of people who might be interested in his work. Apparently he received none, and wondered how he would find New Church people. By advertising in the two major newspapers of the city, after a week he heard from a Mr. Burns, who introduced him to some of his own acquaintances who were interested in the doctrines. In Seattle, Martin stayed with a Mr. and

Mrs. J. S. Lorraine, (the latter an artist whom he had previously met on a business trip). He had given them *Heaven and Hell*, and when he contacted them on his arrival, they insisted that he stay with them. Mrs. Lorraine arranged that he lecture at the Ladies' Club, of which she was president. His talk was entitled "The Uses of Art in Forming the Human Character." Through this lecture he obtained other engagements. He also followed his usual practice of calling on ministers, most of whom were very friendly. "On the other hand, one Episcopal minister told me he had two Swedenborgian ladies in his congregation, but refused to give me their names." However, the minister promised to send for some New Church literature, as he realized that Swedenborg's works were being more widely read than formerly.

Martin had received a list of thirty-one Seattle residents who had called at the Rev. L. G. Landenberger's booth at the Alaska-Yukon Fair. He wrote a personal letter to each one, announcing a lecture in Mrs. Lorraine's studio. Only one from this list came, a Mr. Peters, who had been reading Swedenborg for a number of years. After the lecture, every one who *did* attend stayed for a meeting to consider the organization of a New Church society. At their second meeting, at the home of Mr. Burns, they decided to call their group the First Society of the New Church in Seattle. Officers were Mr. Burns, president; Mr. Peters, vice-president; Miss Eby, secretary; and Mr. Longstaff, treasurer.

The group already had a furnished cottage available to them, and thought that by raising \$300 per year and asking a like amount from the mission board, they could hire a young man just out of the theological school. Mr. Peters ventured the opinion that "considering the number of new falsities then rampant, like Christian Science, New Thought, and other subtle perversions," an older, mature man would be better. So he said that if such a person could be engaged, he would give \$100 per month for the first year.

The prospects for growth seemed promising. Mrs. Lorraine told Mr. Martin that he had already made a number of converts at the Ladies' Club lecture. "I told her we did not make converts to the New Church in one evening." However, Martin had more invitations to dinner at homes of strangers than he could accept. His opinion was that there was a "good opportunity for an energetic and efficient man who is prepared to go out into the highways and byways to fetch people in."

After a number of lectures and meetings, the society made a resolution to ask the societies in Pine City and Spokane to join with them in forming a Washington Association.

How many people, in the course of a few months could visit so many places and stir up such an interest in the New Church? T. Mower Martin was surely an amazing man.

Louise Woofenden is a writer and retired archivist of the Swedenborg School of Religion. She resides in Sharon, Massachusetts.

Swedenborg Meets Nicholas Black Elk¹

(Continued from front cover)

Wakan-tanka who is always flowing, giving his power and life to everything."⁴ There are both natural and spiritual worlds, for "men die but live again in the real world of Wakan-tanka, where there is nothing but the spirits of all things."⁵ Further, "the whole lodge is the universe in an image, and the two-legged, four-legged, and winged peoples, and all things of the world are contained within it."⁶ It is necessary to understand the spiritual meaning of things, for "the power of a thing is in the understanding of its meaning."⁷ Moreover, we should know that the power of that understanding ultimately does not come from us. Black Elk said of this to John Neihardt, "As you sit there, in your mind there is a kind of power that has been sent you by the spirits; and . . . probably there is a kind of power that did the work for you, although you think you are doing it yourself."⁸

There are other areas of resonance between Swedenborg's teaching and the Oglala religion. For instance, Swedenborg said that the world has good and evil influences that need to be kept in balance. Many Native religions realize that evil cannot be driven from a person. The person becomes whole by balancing the forces of good and evil. Also, statements made by Black Elk and other Oglala imply that the greatest spiritual truths are the most unknowable ones. This sounds akin to Swedenborg's idea of "illusions of truth."

There are further generalizations that might link Black Elk and Swedenborg to the mystical tradition. First, direct experience of the sacred transformed both men into different people. This has been spoken of by both regarding their spiritual experiences. Second, both men said that we reach a point where the sacred is no longer describable. Third, like some mystics, Swedenborg and Black Elk were atypical of their religious traditions. Swedenborg chose to

approach the sacred as a scientist and describe it through observation. Black Elk was atypical because he released his vision to a non-Indian and simultaneously to the world. Fourth, both experienced the sacred as involving danger. In the *Spiritual Diary*, Swedenborg reveals that he could only undergo his transformation through the protection of "God Messiah." Similarly, some Lakota individuals have compared a loaded ceremonial pipe with a loaded gun; we should approach both with care.

My search for public speaking examples caused a major change in my life. The Louisiana Cajuns have a word called "lagniappe" (lan-YAP). It means "a little something extra," and is what others have called "a baker's dozen." As I continued my reading of Swedenborg, and became a part of the Swedenborgian Church, I found "a little something extra." I found that I could be both Christian and an Indian traditionalist. Some American Indians have felt they were betraying their Native cultures when they became Christians. My understanding of Swedenborg's teachings is that both ways are good ways. So, I am not a Swedenborgian in spite of being an Indian traditionalist. I am a Swedenborgian because of being an Indian traditionalist. Perhaps other Christian churches can provide this kind of welcoming atmosphere, but I think that it is done very well in the Swedenborgian Church.

¹ Nicholas Black Elk (1863?-1950) was an Oglala traditional healer, holy man, and Roman Catholic catechist. He lived in a time of accelerated cultural change which included the traditional Plains buffalo culture, the Ghost Dance, and the beginning of the reservation period. He became internationally known through his collaboration with Nebraska poet John Neihardt on the book *Black Elk Speaks*. The Oglala are one of the subgroups of the Lakota.

² Black Elk as cited in *Black Elk Speaks* in Raymond J. DeMallie, ed., *The Sixth Grandfather: Black Elk's Teachings Given*

to John G. Neihardt (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 97.

³ Nicholas Black Elk in Joseph Brown, ed., *The Sacred Pipe: Black Elk's Account of the Seven Rites of the Oglala Sioux* (New York: MJF Books/Fine Communications, 1993), 32. Wakantanka is the nearest equivalent to "God" among the Lakota.

⁴ *ibid.*, 31

⁵ *ibid.*, 32.

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ *ibid.*, 123.

⁸ Black Elk in DeMallie, *The Sixth Grandfather*, 41.

Adam Seward (Cherokee/Choctaw) is a third-year student at the Swedenborg School of Religion. This essay may be used in Swedenborgian church newsletters and sermons without special permission. ©1997 ❖

Participants Praise Spirituality Workshop

(Continued from page 131)

Well, I had an answer. I would just find a reason to leave and go home. I should have known John would never force anyone to stay or ask a question and force an answer. The workshop was warm and open and a friendly time for self and a time to share with others. We expressed positive things we had found in each other but in our day-to-day relationships had never been able to say before for one reason or another.

The workshop was not work but for me a real soulful joy. Getting to know someone from the spirit out instead of the facade our body projects is a cut-to-the-chase warm way to know someone you have known, maybe for years!

I left the workshop knowing I had, spiritually, friends on different planes and places—and that was Swedenborgian for sure—but also knowing I wasn't alone in the bright light, the dull gray, or the pitch dark.

That Sunday I made fifteen new friends on a deeper level and it keeps me smiling. ❖

BAPTISM

Lutz—Kourtney, Diane, and Jenne Lutz were baptized into the Christian faith June 15, 1997, at the Church of the Holy City in Edmonton, Alberta, the Rev. Henry Korsten officiating. Parents are Kelly and Ginene Lutz; great-grandmother is Dorothy Mowat.

Tanasichuck—Travis Daniel and Sara Jennifer Tanasichuck, son and daughter of Dan and Gillian Tanasichuck, were baptized into the Christian faith July 6, 1997, at the Church of the Holy City in Edmonton, Alberta, the Rev. Henry Korsten officiating. Their great-grandmother is Dorothy Mowat.

DEATH

Priestnal—The Rev. Clayton Priestnal entered the spiritual world August 26, 1997, at the Eagle Brook Rehabilitation Center on Cape Cod, Mass., three weeks after falling and breaking his hip. Priestnal was pastor of the New York Swedenborgian Church for 28 years, from 1958–1986; prior to that he served at the Baltimore church. He spent the last decade serving part-time at the Yarmouth Port church on Cape Cod. The Rev. F. Robert Tafel performed the committal service August 31 at Yarmouth Port Cemetery, and a memorial service was conducted September 13 at the Yarmouth Port church led by the Rev. George McCurdy.

MARRIAGE

DeLorenzo and Walker—Kimberly A. DeLorenzo and George B. Walker were united in marriage August 16, 1997, at the Fryeburg New Church in Fryeburg, Maine, the Rev. Turley officiating.

MEMBERSHIP CHANGE

Howe—Marion Howe of Oceanside, California, was welcomed into the membership of the San Diego Church August 3, 1997. Marion was a member of the Los Angeles Church for many years, then was a member-at-large of the Pacific Coast Association. The San Diego church is happy to have her join their church family.

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

The Rev. Galen Unruh reports that the Rev. Eric Zacharias had his gall bladder removed in late August after suffering a very painful attack while on vacation in Wyoming. At this writing, he is home recuperating and can be reached at:

105 S. Plum St.
Pretty Prairie, KS 67570
Phone: (316) 459-6987

The Rev. Pavel Heger, ordained a few years ago at our convention in Washington, D.C., sends greetings from the Czech republic. He says,

At this moment I would like to share with you my joy that my translation of The Shorter Heaven and Hell is being transferred into Braille . . . he is still working on regular publishing of his translations.

Unfortunately, the family did not escape the terrible floods that his country suffered in July. Many of the Hegers' household goods such as furniture, toys, clothes, and books were destroyed. Pavel is requesting any kind of financial assistance that would help them to replace some of the lost items.

His address is: Rev. Pavel Heger, duchovni Nove cirkve Swedenborgske, Rooseveltova 9, 77900 Olomouc, Ceska Republika—Czech Republic.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Illustrated Calendar Proposed

(Continued from page 132)

quantify feelings and life passages at SSR in 1982, and a workshop at the convention in Urbana in 1989. He also concluded the 1989 convention with a slide show and music meditation. Stephen currently conducts part-time businesses as intuitive counselor and weather tour director, and teaches classes on personal empowerment. He can be contacted at 800 Custer Road, #240, Richardson, TX 75080. Phone (972) 889-0196. ❖

In Memoriam Mother Teresa 1910-1997

Just six days after Princess Diana's fatal car accident, Mother Teresa died in her convent in Calcutta September 5. (The two women had met on four occasions, and shared a bond of mutual respect and affection).

Despite international acclaim that included among many other honors the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979, Mother Teresa never took her focus away from her humble work with the poor and suffering.

"Her fragile appearance belied an indefatigable spirit. The woman many in India referred to as simply "Mother" was under 5 feet tall, but soared in stature in the eyes of billions.

"The strong, gentle, compassionate nun moved with ease and grace among the poor as well as the powerful. But it was to the poor she was drawn, always emphasizing how they "give us much more than we give them . . . to me, each one is Jesus in a distressing disguise."

"All sicknesses have cures," Mother Teresa said. "The only one that cannot be cured is the sickness of feeling unloved."

Even with all her works, she found time to compose prayers, including this one:

*Make us worthy, Lord,
To serve our fellow men
Throughout the world who live and die
In poverty or hunger.
Give them, through our hands
This day their daily bread,
And by our understanding love,
Give peace and joy.*

[Excerpts courtesy of the San Diego Union-Tribune, September 7, 1997]

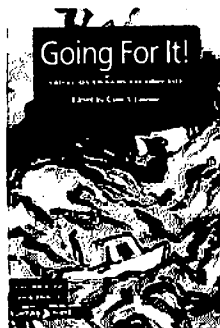
Emanuel Swedenborg was born January 29, 1688, in Stockholm, Sweden. Although he never intended a church denomination to be founded or named after him, a society was formed in London 15 years after his death. This 1787 organization eventually spawned the present General Convention of Swedenborgian Churches. 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.

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GOING FOR IT! Thirty-Six Views on the Good Life - Carol S. Lawson, Series Editor

Fourth in the series of Chrysalis Readers, *Going For It!* is a richly illustrated collection of original essays, short stories, and poems that examines the quest for "the good life." The contributors, including award-winning poet Linda Pastan, show how the inner life of spirit informs and illuminates everyday experience.



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"The voices of this Reader are fingers pointing to lived moments as Ways. Sometimes the fingers point toward suffering, sometimes toward wonderment, but as they direct our gaze to different regions of the heart, their authenticity coheres around a central mystery—unnameable, but infinitely familiar, and in the end, joyful for its goodness." —Walter R. Christie, M.D., Maine Medical Center

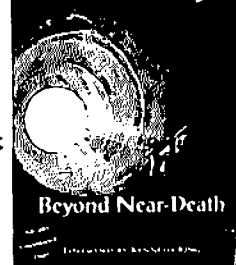
Pub date: 10/5/97, 160 pages, \$13.95

Look for reviews of these and other Foundation publications in upcoming issues of *The Messenger*. For ordering information, call 1-800-355-3222.

A Glimpse of Eternity

**TUNNEL TO ETERNITY
BEYOND NEAR-DEATH
Leon Rhodes
Foreword by Kenneth Ring**

Tunnel to Eternity



"Books on the near-death experience are plentiful, but it is the singular value of this book to provide an illuminating Swedenborgian perspective on the NDE and the entire afterlife journey that it promises. Leon Rhodes has given us a beautiful gift in showing the greater spiritual world into which the NDE itself is just the briefest glimpse."

—Kenneth Ring

From the experience of dying to awakening to tunnels, bright lights, unfamiliar realms, life reviews, and different levels of consciousness, Leon Rhodes in *Tunnel to Eternity: Beyond Near-Death* takes the reader on a great adventure into the unknown. An officer in the International Association for Near-Death Studies (IANDS), Rhodes recounts the stories of near-death experiences (NDEs) that people have shared with him over the years. Their profound discoveries are chronicled as a source of inspiration.

In addition, Rhodes draws fascinating parallels between NDEs and the spiritual world that the brilliant scientist-turned-mystic Emanuel Swedenborg described so fully and painstakingly over two hundred years ago. Such parallels provide many insights into the transition from this life to the next world. Rhodes' unique Swedenborgian view broadens the discussion over the significance of the near-death phenomenon.

A Chrysalis Book, Pub Date: 9/15/97, 114 pages, \$10.95

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