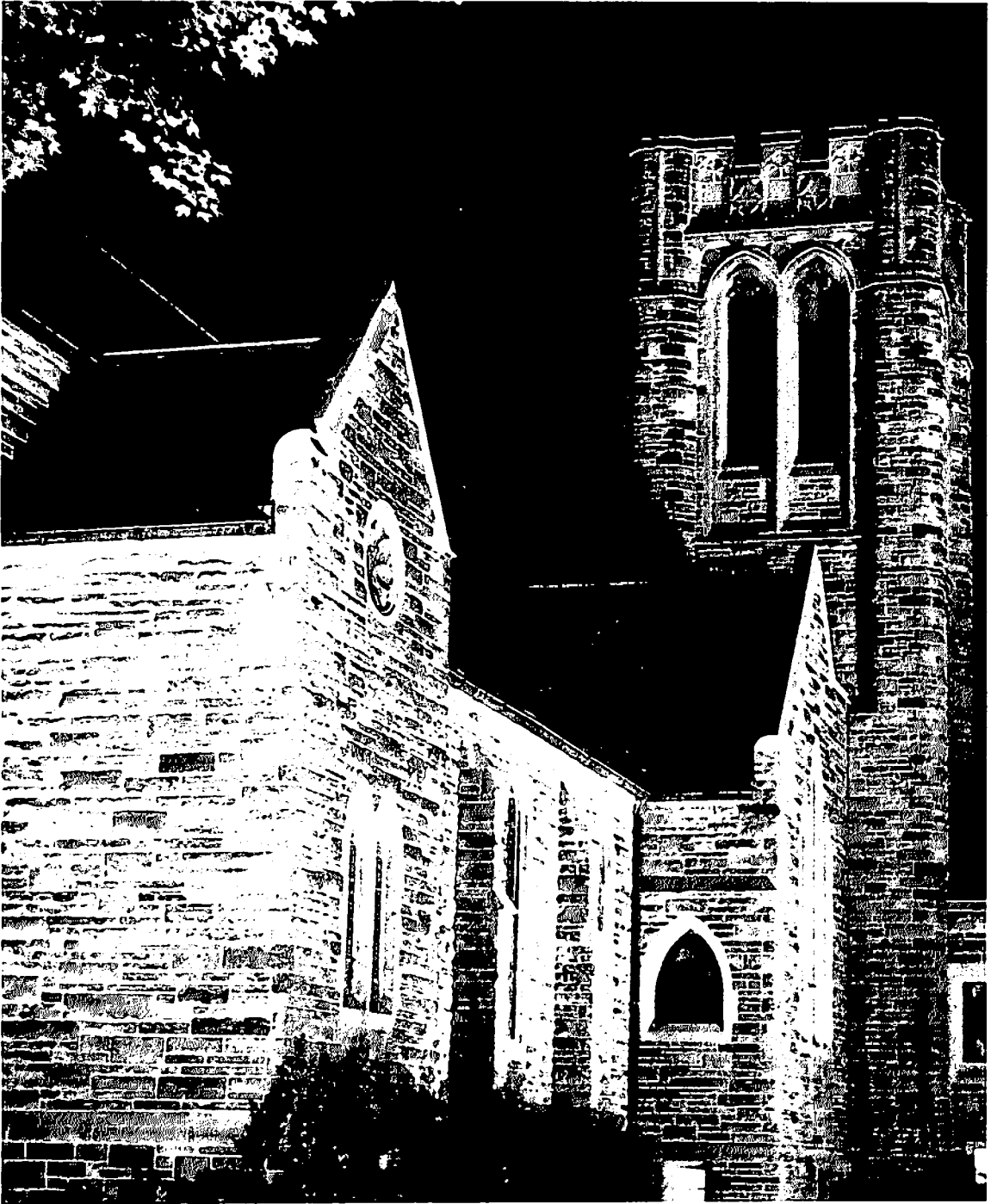


# ***THE MESSENGER***

***July - August 1967***



## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

My second year of writing editorial letters to readers of THE MESSENGER begins most auspiciously, since the number of receivers of THE MESSENGER (many of whom, I hope, are readers) doubles with this issue (*see story p. 99*)

The occasion seems to call for an introduction of myself. I teach at the Swedenborg School of Religion in Newton, Mass.; live in a house on the edge of the Atlantic Ocean; my wife, Marian is SSR Librarian, and my daughters, Diana and Margaret, are in the senior and sophomore years at Hull (Mass.) High School. I was baptized, confirmed and married in the St. Louis, Mo. Swedenborgian church, and chaired the committee that relocated and rebuilt it. Before entering the theological school, I wrote radio and TV advertising, and religious and public relations films for about twelve years.

At lunch one day at Convention, I looked like this.

To those to whom any of this is news, it's a pleasure to say, "I'm glad to meet you."



Vol. 187 No. 7

July-August, 1967

I hope we can get better acquainted through these letters, which are conceived as less formal, more personal, than conventional, third-person editorials.

### SWEDENBORGIAN PERSPECTIVES IN A AGE OF REVOLUTION

This issue and the next one will carry several interesting and important insights into the importance and the meaning of a Swedenborgian approach to the tensions, joys and frustrations of living in a time of such sudden and radical change that it can only be called one of revolution. Most of them are theoretical, written or conceived in advance for presentation at Convention.

I would like to add a word of my own on the subject, a word distinctive primarily for being personal, and having been conceived in the experience of Convention.

I had the joy of watching misunderstanding bordering on a deep distrust that had separated two friends of mine, change into respect that could lead to an even deeper friendship between them. I had a wonderful confirmation of one of my deepest feelings about our church, as I saw a "first-timer" at Convention meet such genuine acceptance and open-hearted affection that it changed her concept of the meaning and purpose of a church. In general, too, wherever I looked, I saw acquaintances deepening into friendships, and friendships ripening to the point where it could be said of us -- as the

*continued p. 127*

Whole No. 4900

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The opinions of contributors do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or the Department of Publication, or represent the position of the church.

# CONVENTION HEADLINES

## THE MESSENGER GOES TO EVERY MEMBER

Beginning with this issue, *The Messenger* is being sent to every family on the best existing list of members of the Swedenborgian churches in the United States and Canada. If you have a friend in the church who does not receive this and subsequent issues, or if you are getting more than one, please notify the new "keeper of the roll,"

Mr. Roger D. Paulson  
Urbana College  
College Way  
Urbana, Ohio

Under this "every member" policy, *The Messenger* is distributed without charge for subscriptions, as a service of the General Convention. The adoption of this policy was based primarily on the functional advantages of getting Convention's official organ to every member, but also included the assumption that many who receive it will contribute regularly to its support. Those who have recently paid their annual subscription receive herewith *The Messenger's* thanks. Those who have not, receive our assurance that all contributions will be gratefully accepted. A dollar a year would help; five from everyone who receives it would produce either a surplus or an enlargement of *The Messenger*.

## THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH

### CONVENTION ADOPTS NEW DENOMINATIONAL REFERENCE

By a two-to-one majority, the 144th General Convention adopted "The Swedenborgian Church" as our denominational reference. This action has no effect on the legal, corporate name, "The General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America," but provides a short and easily-recognizable name by which individuals and official representatives can refer to our church. The choice is the result of many years' discussion, which has been

organized and intensified since 1961, and came to the Convention with endorsement in principle by the recently-dissolved Public Relations Bureau, the Council of Ministers and the General Council.

Convention's action included a recommendation to all local churches that they add the word, "Swedenborgian," in parentheses or as an integral part of the name, to whatever local identification they have traditionally held or may adopt.

The decision reflected the fact that a survey revealed "Swedenborgian" to be our most widely recognized identification, and the experience of many that it makes identification of our church and witness to our beliefs and traditions easier than is the case with alternative names. The image of the New Jerusalem is richly symbolic to us, embodying our deepest and most characteristic ideals and perspectives. For purposes of communication outside our common heritage, however, the majority opinion was that *The Swedenborgian Church* is the most useful name by which to refer to our denomination.

## TAFEL AND MCCURDY

### GRADUATED AND ORDAINED

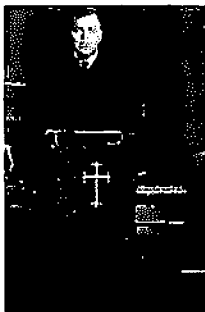
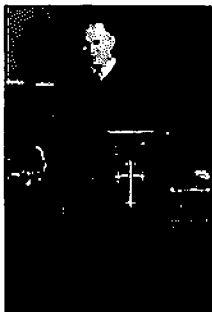


George McCurdy and Harvey Tafel were graduated from the Swedenborg School of Religion in a service held in the Church of the Good Shepherd, Kitchener, in connection

with the Opening of the 144th General Convention on Thursday, June 22. Authorized and sanctioned by the Committee of General Pastors, the Council of Ministers and the General Convention, they were ordained into the Christian Ministry in the Convention Service, Sunday, June 25, also in the Kitchener Church.

The Rev. Mr. Tafel has accepted a call to the Edmonton, Alberta, church. With his wife, Judy, and son, David, he is moving to Canada this summer after visits to her parents in Nashua, N.H., and his in Philadelphia, Pa. (he is the son of President Tafel, and the newest of five Tafels presently active in the ministry of the Swedenborgian Church).

The Rev. Mr. McCurdy has accepted a call to the Boston, Mass., church, assuming his new post on July 1. A native of the Philadelphia area, he is married to the former Lois Walton, whose family has long been active in the Philadelphia church, the Fryeburg Assembly and in Convention. Mr. McCurdy assumes the leadership of the Boston church at the end of its first season of occupancy of its new home in the "Bostonview" church-and-apartment-house building, succeeding an interim ministry arrangement provided through the Swedenborg School of Religion since the retirement of the Rev. Antony Regamey from Boston.

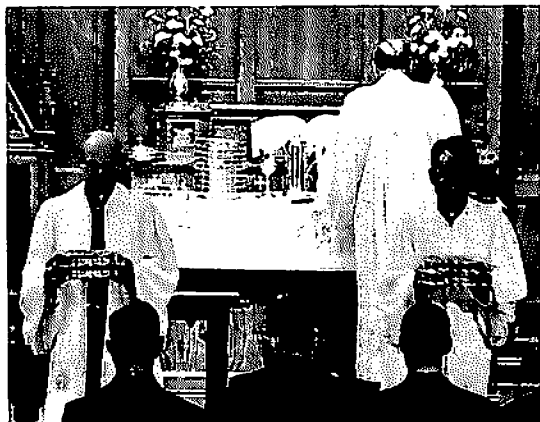


*ABOVE: the Rev. George McCurdy (l), and the Rev. Harvey Tafel*

*RIGHT: the Revs. Richard Jr., Leonard, Harvey, Richard Sr., and F. Robert Tafel.*

REVS. LEE AND TURLEY

INVESTED



The Rev. Calvin Turley, newly-elected of the California Association, was invested as General Pastor of that association during the Convention Service, Sunday, June 25, in the Church of the Good Shepherd, Kitchener, Ontario. Mr. Turley is one of the ministers of Program Link in Bellevue, Washington, and a member of the faculty of the Swedenborg School of Religion.

At the same service, the Rev. Chungsun Lee of Seoul, Korea, was invested as General Pastor for Korea. Mr. Lee has opened a training school of ministerial workers in the Korean field, and in his office of General Pastor will be able to ordain his graduates for such work.

FIVE MINISTERS

FROM ONE FAMILY

AT CONVENTION



## CALL TO CREATIVITY



*Calvin Turley*

It has almost become a little bit trite to our ears to say or to hear the phrase that the church is in trouble. And I would guess that maybe with a degree of fear and perhaps even panic, growing out of a sense that the past that brought us security and comfort somehow or other is crumbling, there are some who would still insist, "I don't see any problem, let's get on with it," (it, I suppose, referring to the attempted perpetuation of a past that is increasingly irrelevant to our times if not indeed dead itself). We in our smallness cannot afford this stance of religious piety if we hope to minister to a world in revolution all about us.

Now I make the assumption that you and I think religion is relevant to life in the 20th century. I make the assumption that it is more than the slogan of Swedenborgians for us when we utter the quote "all religion has relation to life and the life of religion is to do good." I make the assumption that you and I are concerned about the future of our church in this age of revolution. I make the assumption that all of us with our multiple differences and even with our mutual criticism and what sometimes seems to be our suspicion of one another, I still make the assumption that all of us share the common conviction that the church and religion are important and needed factors for good in our times. But granted this assumption about ourselves, if we ever tire of wrestling

with reality and allow ourselves to become seduced by the comfortable nocturnal pastime of pretending that no revolution exists in our time, then we shall indeed fail to see the crisis in which we live. Further, I believe that to the very degree that we fail to acknowledge the growing indifference to the church in our day, to the very degree that we persist in the anesthetizing assumption that the future of the church lies in more and more of what has been, to that degree we will have contributed to the death of the church. We will stand guilty of having contributed to a perpetuation of a divorce between religion and life and will have done our bit toward reducing organized religion to a grandiose irrelevancy.

Clyde Reid, in his book entitled *The God Evaders*, has, I believe, identified and described the sickness, has further traced its malignancy through much of the life of the church in our day. Now it's not my purpose to give you a book review. But this is such a penetrating insight into the trouble which we are in that I'm going to take a chance with you that you will stay with me while I share the reading of a couple of passages from *The God Evaders*.

In his preface Dr. Reid writes: "Like so many others of my generation, I have been deeply troubled by what I have experienced in the typical American church. Successful though the churches may be by such surface evidences as attendance, finance, and program, there is a terrible drought of spiritual vitality and religious life. This long puzzled me. Then one day it occurred to me that there is a law or principle of human nature that helps to explain this puzzling contradiction, to explain why many organizations which claim to represent God do everything in their power to avoid him. I have called this principle The Law of Religious Evasion, (using law in somewhat the same sense as Parkinson in his famous Parkinson's Law)."

Dr. Reid's thesis is that we unconsciously structure our churches and maintain them so as to shield us from God and to protect us from genuine religious experience. Dr. Reid sees the sickness of evasion acted out in the church with such things as the gross

contradiction between words and deeds. The very institution which professes to follow a master who said, "I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you clothed me. I was sick and you visited me. I was in prison and you came to me." This very same institution has very frequently shunned the stranger, ignored the naked, avoided the sick, castigated those in prison. In contrast to the spoken gospel of accepted and redeeming love the church's action has only too often been the communication of rejection, judgment, indifference and sanctimonious pride in an assumed air of spiritual superiority. Dr. Reid sees the church evading any genuine involvement with the spirit of God even to the point of designing the services of worship so as to prevent genuine encounter, genuine worship. "Basically," he writes, "we do not want anything to happen on Sunday morning that will upset our daily routine. We want to be inspired, to come away with a warm feeling, but we do not want to be disturbed."

The malignancy of evasion is seen to be furthering itself in such sickly spread as the numbers game and the "Edifice Complex." Let me read two passages. I think it will help to explain Dr. Reid's thesis.

On September 6, 1965, thieves broke into a New York City church. They gained entrance by breaking a stained-glass window, one of forty-six stained-glass windows in the church. The window was valued at \$950, according to the newspaper. The thieves proceeded to the altar where they pried some gems from a marble cross valued at \$2,500. They then took the poor box and fled.

Here was a case of the world breaking into the Church to secure its treasure, rather than the Church breaking into the world to share that treasure. And sadly, the treasure they found was that which the Church had laid up for itself. The parable is complete when we face the hard fact that too often, where the Church's treasures are its heart is also, in its buildings, its windows, and its marble crosses! In fact, one of the obvious forms of our religious evasion is the extent to which we invest our energy and treasure in lavish religious buildings, used

primarily for an hour a week on Sunday morning.

Still another church, historic Trinity Church in New York City, announced plans to build, at a cost of \$500,000, a two-story addition to contain "a sacristy, choir rooms, dressing rooms for assistants at services and a meeting hall where historical material from the church's past can be displayed." In the same newspaper edition announcing the \$500,000 Trinity Church addition, the state of New York reported that it will spend \$60,000 to open a clinic for alcoholics in nearby Westchester County -- on a one-year experimental basis. We might well ask in which of the two projects the spirit of God is most surely at work!

It would be tempting, of course, to nurture a feeling of self-satisfaction and perhaps pride with ourselves in reading about the "syndroms of sickness" that exist in others. It won't work. For, we are all too riddled with sickness ourselves to find much comfort in the diagnosis of sickness in others.

If I might be personal for a moment, speaking of my own life and ministry, I hear only too clearly the relevancy of the truism -- "People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones!" More specifically, from out of the history of my own ministry, there exists in Portland, Oregon and in Bellevue, Washington, two monuments to my own evasion of God through succumbing to the enchanting lyrics of the "Edifice Complex." I recall the days of my own theological education and my field-work training which included preaching assignments at a church of ours in Roxbury, Mass. The recollection is vivid. The worship center was set up in a camp and dark basement, gloomy and musty, I remember the image of a single worshiper: a faithful, somewhat pathetic figure, performing his weekly ritual of winding the clock on the side wall. I remember venturing once, just once, up to the darkened sanctuary where there was a multitude of beautifully stained glass windows given to mothers and fathers and children who had died and a half a dozen or more pots and pans sitting around to catch

the leaks from the decaying roof. I remember making my way to the organ and there on the music rack was the last order of service for the last service held there years before. I remember the neighborhood around -- old and somewhat dirty: the splendor of the past passing beneath the onrush of a coming slum area. And I remember a classmate of mine, a negro by chance, who requested use of the building to begin a ministry to the people in the neighborhood. I remember that his request was refused and that I was told in private: "We don't want negroes in our beautiful church."

And in the memory, I am ashamed, for I remained silent.

I remember my field training found me "student minister" in charge of our church in Newtonville. At the time there was a new sub-division by an unused church of ours in Waltham. A classmate of mine, a fellow visionary, I suppose, proposed recessing services from Newtonville and developing a ministry to the people of the new community. It fell to me to propose the move. To say the least, it didn't receive a very warm reception. One of the most persuasive speeches opposing the new ministry hinged on the appeal that "hundreds of people pass by our church door every day."

The proposal was defeated with only one positive vote. But the words were prophetic. Hundreds of people still passed by the church door every day!

It seems to me that some recent experiences such as last winter's Program Planning Conference may become remembered as a turning point in the life of our church. I believe this might become so in view of Swedenborgian insistence that in the spiritual growth and development of the individual this is a necessary state that one must go through in order that a new birth might take place. He calls it a state of vastation. Maybe this is where we are.

Now, if this be true, that we are experiencing a "state of vastation," then I think a real challenge arises. For, in the Swedenborgian perspective, man still has his freedom even in the state of vastation. This

is a premise that Swedenborg drove at over and over again: man is free! It seems to me that God's questioning, God's presenting us with opportunity for use is here before us. In the midst of depression, in the midst of discouragement, in the midst of confusion, to what are you going to respond? To the call of the past or to the call of God?

One of the things I like about Swedenborg is his optimism. When Swedenborg talks about vastation he is not talking about walking down a dead end street. He talks about it as a necessary hell that individuals go through in the quest for new birth. And, I think, he says this is a necessary hell that churches go through -- church used here in the sense of a dispensation, of times, of era; not in terms of organization. But, it seems to me that the dynamics of vastation are as applicable to an organization as they are to individuals.

We have a heritage. There is no sense of kidding ourselves into believing that we are the only ones who have it, that God is wholly dependent on us. But we do have a heritage. He can say to us: "Alright, in the midst of your discouragement and confusion, you don't have to lie down helplessly and cry out to be rescued. There is help available, we can know that. The question is, will we respond to it?"

It is one thing to attempt an analysis of our situation and still another to suggest a possible creative course for the future. Thus far, I have attempted to establish that: 1) the Christian church, including ours, is in a period of serious trouble characterized by an increasing alienation from and irrelevancy toward the 20th century world. 2) The trouble is deeper than organizational structure. At the heart of the sickness lies the secularization of the church characterized by its own fear of any vital confrontation with the spirit of God in mid 20th century life. 3) This is not a sickness of "the other" but is a creeping malady with which our own Swedenborgian Church is affected like all others. 4) In our particular perspective we may understand this condition of irrelevance, confusion and depression as a "state of vastation." And though it be a "hell on earth" yet man is

still free and presented with an opportunity for new birth.

I would like now to share a few glimpses of the vision I hold of what our church may yet become. Accepting the thesis that the era of parish ministry -- that you and I have known, grown up in and been nourished by -- is increasingly irrelevant to the revolution of the emerging world around us. It seems to me that there lies before us the challenging and exciting era of the "focused ministry." This is an era to be enlightened and guided by the "Doctrine of Life and Charity" as taught by Swedenborg.

In the process of discovering the essence of the focused ministry we need to begin with an honest recognition that we can't be a small imitation of our larger brothers, we can't be all things to all people. We will need to make an identification of what we can do and eliminate what we cannot do. We will need a sensitivity to the call of God to minister to specific needs in our time, in our city with our individual focused talents and skills. As pre-requisites for the adoption of the focused ministry as an identifiable and distinctive characteristic of the Swedenborgian church, we will have to give up much that has been meaningful to us in the past that we might be free to respond to the revolution of the present. It means giving up or postponing much that needs to be done so that we might focus on that which we can do.

A "focused ministry" means acceptance of differences, the development of individual uniqueness, talents and interests, the accepting, on the feeling level, of the "alrightness" of being different. It means to grow free from the fear of variety in "the body of Christ." It is to abandon the spirit of suspicious criticism of those who would minister differently than I and to live comfortably with the probability that no two centers of our ministry would be identical. To adopt the concept of focused ministries as the identifiable and distinctive characteristics of our Swedenborgian ministry seems to call for something dramatic to happen to us. There seems to be a call for a confrontation with God, a hearing of God calling us to ministry in the given situation

-- not to perpetuate what has been -- but a call to ministry in the right here; in the right now; in the specific job. It may well be that in twenty five years from now a focused ministry which had been meaningful might be abandoned for it had fulfilled its need. Nothing is holy because it has been done -- a ministry takes on holiness because it has within it a responding to the spirit of God in the here and now.

As I observe the various ministries I have become aware that we are in fact in the process of developing along the lines of focused ministries. But, there has been no recognition of this fact, thus no acceptance of the "alrightness" of it, and no mutual support and help. Were we to adopt the focused ministry as an adequate and possible mission for us as a denomination, I think it would open exciting possibilities for the development of our Swedenborgian School of Religion not only as a center of education of students but also as a unique center for the "extended learning" of clergy and laity alike -- a center of help in the process of discovery and development of focused ministries in the local situation.

Were we to adopt the focused ministry as an adequate and possible mission for our church, it would free us to a spirit of mutual support and concrete help from all. We would, with enthusiasm and with no reservations, support and help San Francisco explore and develop the possibilities of a focused ministry of pastoral counseling to the many couples married in their chapel. We would support and help George Dole and the congregation in Cambridge in a focused ministry to the university population surrounding them. We would without reservation support our fellow churchmen in Detroit as they explore the possibilities of a focused ministry through the establishment and operation of a home for senior citizens. We would support and help the Wayfarers' Chapel and the church in Los Angeles as they might consider a combined ministry. We would support El Cerrito and Bellevue as they further develop the focused ministries begun as "Therapeutic Center of Healing". We would support Boston as the congregation and their new minister study the Stotts Report in search of a ministry to





## ERNEST MARTIN NEXT PRESIDENT

Rev. Ernest O. Martin of the Washington, D.C. Church was elected president of Convention on June 24, 1967 at its 144th gathering. Rev. Martin served as minister of the Wilmington Church for seven years and for the last eight years has been minister of the Washington Church.

Many are familiar with President-elect Martin's background, but a few notes may be helpful. Ernest Martin, 43, grew up in Mansfield, Mass., Church and is married to Perry Skinner Martin. The Martins have three boys and three girls. Rev. Martin served in the army for three years during World War II. He then attended and graduated from Boston University and Harvard Divinity School. Rev. Martin also graduated from the New Church Theological School and later served as chairman of the Board of Managers during the time of the move to Newton.

Rev. Martin has served on various boards of Convention. He served on the Board of Education and the Board of Publication and along with John King planned and wrote a Sunday School curriculum for senior high youth on themes of the Lord, the Word, and the Church. Rev. Martin served as chairman of the committee on the National Council of Churches and is now representing our church in the General Assembly and the

General Board of the National Council of Churches. For the last seven years he has served as chairman of the Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship in Washington and has presented a number of lectures on mysticism and related subjects.

## CONVENTION '67

by Nancy Booth

*(Mrs. Booth, Production Mgr. for The Messenger, reacts to a first experience of Convention)*

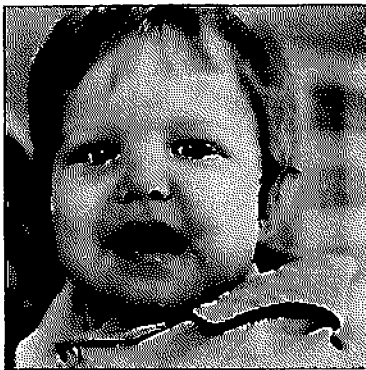
Everything seems to fit into place. All the old questions and realizations about the Christianity in which I was involved have been answered by the love of a people and their recognition of the necessity to put people first. I went through the alienating experience of throwing out Christianity and having nothing. This was no answer. Now I know that even I need to be loved and need to love and that is Christianity and that is all. I can accept the need within myself without being ashamed and I can love others without being ashamed. And God is nearest when this double action takes place.

My old questions were -- can man possibly be as evil as traditional Christianity makes him out to be -- that is, if a loving God creates and sustains him? Basically, man must be good because his greatest need is love and love is good. Now that question is taken care of.

You drop out of Christian circles because traditional Christianity seems to be a fraud -- it fails people and even ironically hurts people and doesn't meet their needs but causes deeper needs which cannot be filled by a Christianity such as that. Then you are without a religious life, and suddenly you meet a group of people who are living what you have always hoped to live and talk about the things you have always thought about and put into words things that you wanted for your ideals all this time, and it makes you feel better than you have felt in a long time. You realize that in these people you have found yourself and you like yourself and respect yourself and your own ideas because you see them in these other people and you love these people. And these people are Swedenborgians.



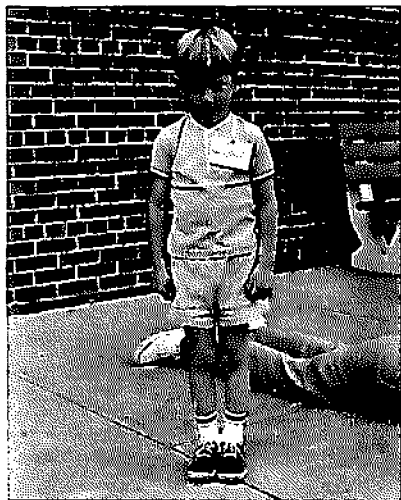
BRENT McCURDY, 2 WEEKS



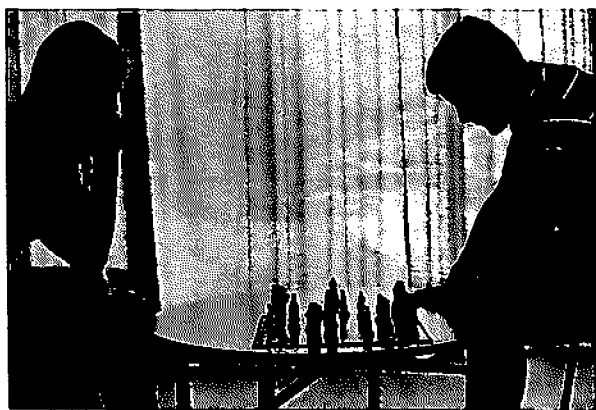
DAVID TAFEL, 2 MONTHS



JOHNSONS' GRANDDAUGHTER  
A REAL SWINGER



SCOTT McCURDY, THE WINNAH!



A STUDY IN CONCENTRATION



GEORGE PAUSCH & REV. LEONARD TAFEL



A STUDY OF  
HOLLY GEISS



OLD CLASSMATES,  
REVS. FOSTER & LEE



H. REDDEKOPP



R. BECHEREL



REVS. LARSON  
& BLACKMER



PEG SHAW, BETSY YOUNG, DORIS UNRUH,  
3 OF MINISTERS' WIVES GROUP LED  
BY MR. DON BOYCE (r).



REV. RANDALL LAAKKO, KEEPER OF  
CONVENTION ROLL, SIGNS UP NEWLY  
QUALIFIED DELEGATE FROM COLO-  
RADO IN TIME FOR ELECTION.



MARETA TAFEL, DOLLY FREDERICK AND  
PERRY MARTIN, IN MINISTERS' WIVES  
GROUP LED BY DR. MARRIE CREELMAN



REVS. HAROLD TAYLOR  
AND THOMAS REED



"TALK-BACK" SESSIONS RESPONDED TO  
SPEAKERS IN STUDY OF CONVENTION  
THEME



MORE CONCENTRATION



CECILE WERBEN: BUSINESS AS USUAL



DR. COULTER,  
THEME SPEAKER



"WELL, BOYS, BACK TO WORK!"

A FEW OF MANY

# KITCHENER FRIENDS



*Host Minister, Rev. Paul Zacharias (l), and his brother, Rev. Eric Zacharias, Pretty Prairie, Kansas. Eric was 1967 Convention Preacher.*

They were everywhere: meeting planes on schedule, 60 miles away; working alone or in teams to make us comfortable, answer questions, solve problems. We owe them all a debt of gratitude.



*Don Lasso*



*Don Brenneman*



*Mrs. Paul (Pat) Zacharias*



# P R E S I D E N T ' S A D D R E S S



*President Richard Tafel, Sr.*

Fellow members of the General Convention and friends:

I fervently believe that it is of the Lord's Divine Providence that we have chosen as the theme of our Convention Session, "Swedenborgian Perspectives in an Age of Revolution," and that we have adopted the text, "Do not let the world around you squeeze you into its mold, but let God remold your minds from within."

Both are saying the same thing, I think, in different words: God is pressing to speak to the minds of men today, as always. And over against that divine pressure there is, as always, the counter pressure of the world seeking to squeeze men's minds into its mold.

The statement of our theme, "Swedenborgian Perspectives in an Age of Revolution," is our conviction that there are perspectives which can bring our times into focus. It is our faith that in the Teachings for a New Church, so largely and so strangely put into our care and keeping, God is speaking relevantly to our world.

I trust that many things will be said in the coming days about these "Swedenborgian perspectives," the enlightened teachings which our Lord has released into the world.

I should therefore like to look for a few minutes this evening at this "Age of Revolution" and to set the stage, so to speak, for weighty things which shall be said here. I do so, with the hope and expectation that, as we see something of the mind and temper of today, we may also see the challenge as

well as the opportunity which it presents to a church that makes bold to call itself "new."

Note, first, that our theme does not talk about "an age of change." "Change" has become such an accepted characteristic of our day that it is no longer news-worthy. We take it in stride, and ask nonchalantly, "So what's new?" An age that has become sophisticated with its satellites and rockets and space travel, with its computers and atom-smashers and automation, is complacently at home with the phenomenon of "change."

So nothing less than "revolution" can describe our new world and the kind of individual who is living in it and reacting to it. In many very significant ways a new creature, a different type of human being, has come into existence. I think it would pay us to take a good look at him.

First of all, he is in a general revolution against authoritarian and institutional influence, a struggle that is to be seen in the rebellion against parental restraint, in the revolt against campus regulations, in the radical overriding of traditional mores and moral codes, and even in "trips" away from reality through the use of drugs. In this contemporary war of independence, modern man is not disposed to accept patterns handed down by authorities. In particular, he has a built-in resistance to prescribed authority as represented by the Church, as he has known it. As an institution, he finds it unappealing and unchallenging; as for its theology, he calls it "irrelevant" to human needs today; and as for the God which it presents, he declares dispassionately, "He is dead."

Now in the face of this revolution, as a Church and as churchmen we tend to feel threatened, not to say disheartened and dismayed. But let us look at it rather as a challenge and as an opportunity! Let us ever remember that it is the Second Coming. It is the Lord who is renewing and rebuilding his Church. Just as it is he who has given the heavenly message for a new spiritual age, just so it is he who is at work within the human mind and heart to turn these again unto himself. It is the Lord

himself who is at the center of this modern revolution of man.

In the challenging of traditions and beliefs, is his hand not discernible, directing man against the out-worn? In the questioning of the Church as an institution, of the validity of formal worship, of the place and value of the Bible, is his Spirit not at the heart of the searching? In the very proclaiming that "God is dead" -- is he not urging man to see as "dead" the presentations of him, and the ideas about him, which should have long ago been laid aside? Is not all this -- and much beside that is taking place in our times -- evidence of the moving of his Spirit?

If our answer is "Yes," then these times of ours can be a challenge to us as a Church, and a tremendous opportunity to serve our Lord. There is just one prerequisite, or so it seems to me. And that is, that we partake of and share in this revolution that has come upon modern man! It was to just this frame and temper of spirit of inquiry, the daring to challenge the status quo and the traditional, and the unwillingness to accept any other authority than that of truth alone. Can we, as a Church, share in this modern revolution? Can we meet the requirements of spirit, attitude, and approach that are basic in presenting Swedenborgian perspectives in an age of revolution?

In this critical time in the history of the world and of our Church, I think we must put several hard questions to ourselves. Can we, and will we, respect the freedom and the spirit of the inquiring mind of today? Can we free our teachings from our feeling of proprietorship, so that they can make their appeal "In freedom according to reason"? In short, are we willing to let truth be its own authority, to be accepted or rejected on its own merit, or will we fall back on the authoritarian attitude -- quoting by name and number, as though that, in itself, gives the sanction of validity to our Heavenly Message?

Again, will we be satisfied with presenting our teachings in the same old words? "Religion is relevant to every phase of life." I read that in the magazine "Pulpit Digest."

The best we have made of Swedenborg -- from whence this quotation undoubtedly came -- is: "All religion is of life." Will we put our spiritual heritage into the language of today, and bring it out in to the current of the world's thinking?

The finest article on Swedenborg that I have read in a long time appeared in the Yearbook for 1966 of the American Swedish Historical Foundation. It is entitled, "Swedenborg as a Modern Thinker: His Influence upon American Thought." It was not written by a member of our church, but by Dr. William A. Johnson Research Professor in Religion and Education at New York University. Does this say something to us?

Our answers to these and to similar questions will decide whether or not we as a Church can meet the requirements for presenting the Swedenborgian Perspectives to an age in revolution, and whether we can find in the revolutionary changes of our times a challenge and an opportunity.

The most significant thing that has happened to our Church in a long time was our entering the National Council of Churches as a constituent member this past year. Those of us who have been closely associated with this event are convinced that it has come about by the leading of our Lord's Divine Providence. Yet, judging by the Letters to the Editor in the June issue of THE MESSENGER, there are some who seem to think that the Church has betrayed her mission and forfeited her heritage. (As I remarked to the Council of the Clergy in Bryn Athyn, "If joining the National Council of Churches meant surrendering our freedom of action, or if it meant compromising our beliefs, or if it meant giving up even one of our ideals, we would have none of it!")

I see it as a most thrilling challenge for us to be the New Church which we talk about so much! Provided we do not regard membership as a kind of status symbol, or as a badge of acceptance, it can well serve to rouse us out of our lethargy. It can, and should, break us out of our mental ghetto of thinking of ourselves as a peculiar, exclusive people, and of being preoccupied with

## PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS (cont. from p. 110)

the smallness of our Church -- thinking that because our members are small its influence is small, its value is small, its voice is small.

If we rise to the challenge of membership in the National Council, it will make us stop talking to ourselves in a private language, somewhere off in a corner. If we rise to the challenge, we shall say loudly and clearly the things expected of us -- and which only we as a Church, by the grace of God, can say -- and we shall have the God-sent opportunity of proclaiming the "Swedenborgian Perspectives in an Age of Revolution!"

### CONVENTION WELCOMES

#### COLORADO SPRINGS

#### CHURCH INTO MEMBERSHIP

The Garden of the Gods Memorial Church, of Colorado Springs, Colorado, was admitted into membership as an independent society of the General Convention of the New Jerusalem by a unanimous rising vote of Ministers, Delegates and Visitors to the 144th General Convention.

The Rev. Rollo Billings, minister, and Mr. Egmont Vrooman, president, represented the church as its first official delegation, and expressed their happiness and thanksgiving at this landmark in the progress of their new congregation.

Both men are sons of prominent Swedenborgian ministers, the Revs. Percy Billings and Hiram Vrooman. The new group has built and occupied a new and attractive chapel, and envisions a beautiful and strikingly situated church to be built in the future overlooking Colorado Springs' famous Garden of the Gods park.

*Convention President Richard H. Tafel welcomes Mr. Egmont Vrooman, president, and Rev. Rollo K. Billings, minister, of Garden of the Gods Memorial Church.*

## GRADUATION ADDRESS (cont. from p. 104)

them. If we were to adopt the focused ministry we would help Washington, D.C. as it seeks its way of response and ministry to the negro community knocking at its doors. We could help Cleveland as it looks to a focused ministry of spiritual healing.

There is, I believe, strength, encouragement and help to be found in commitment to a concept of service. It is tragic to travel around the country and see faces that are long, listen to gripping and criticism, find no excitement, no feelings of effervescence but only hear complaints, criticisms and dejection. But why not? There is no joy in death.

I am convinced that what puts life in any work, what puts joy in the face of people anywhere, what puts sparkle in the eyes of any people, recognized or not, is response to the spirit of God. In this state of vastation and our own feelings of frustration and discouragement, we need to refrain from attacking and hurting one another. We are all in this together. We are all hurting enough because of the situation in the church. If we are to make a creative response, we shall have to find a way of being united, and I believe the concept of the focused ministry provides such a vehicle of unity. However, let us never confuse ourselves with the notion that to be united means we have unanimity of thought and action. To see ourselves as a denomination of focused ministries could mean, however, that we have an identity, a feeling of belonging together, an awareness that we are united together -- not in unanimity of thought but in the spirit of being part of a Servant Church.



# A VISIT TO CARMEL CHURCH

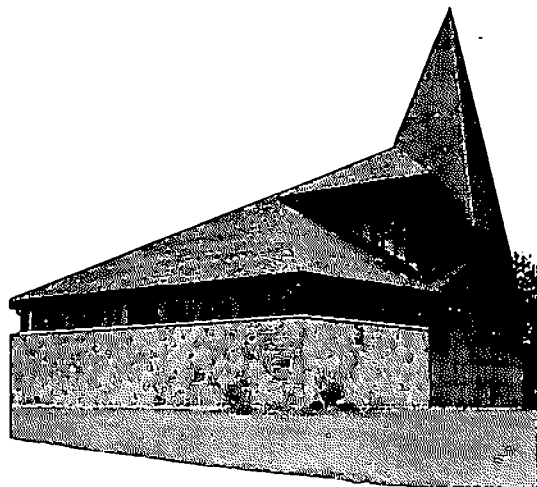
*Jerome A. Poole*

Something good happened last year at the Council of Ministers meetings when Bishop Pendleton of the General Church addressed our ministers in Urbana, Ohio. In ground that had so long remained barren a seed was planted. This past January another seed was sown when our President spoke to those ministers of the General Church assembled for their annual conference. The land between us and our sister church is no longer without life as these seeds have taken root and given hope for increased understanding and communication between our two denominations.

During the Council of Ministers meetings this year sharing was further experienced when the Carmel New Church Community warmly received our ministers and showed them their new church and school building. Following a tour of the sanctuary and classrooms, Rev. Jeffrey Childs told those present why he and others had isolated themselves from the mainstream of society and chosen to build a community of their own. "We are attempting to create an environment in which conjugal love can become a reality."

During and following the visit, there was a great deal of verbal reaction to the Carmel Community in regards to the Chapel: "Impressive, designed with great dignity," "I like the architecture, but it lacks a warmth necessary for worship." In regards to the parochial education and isolated community living most of the ministers felt it wasn't for them, while some responded positively to both.

The visit was the planting of another seed as the two churches met again, the ministers talked and shared, recognized their differences and reaffirmed their desire not to remain separated as in the past.



*Carmel Church, new home of the General Church congregation outside Kitchener, Ontario, Canada.*



*The Rev. Geoffrey Childs, pastor of Carmel Church, explains details of the church program to the Council of Ministers.*



*Ministers listen closely to the Rev. M. Childs during the trip to Carmel church which was a scheduled item on the business agenda of the Council of Ministers.*



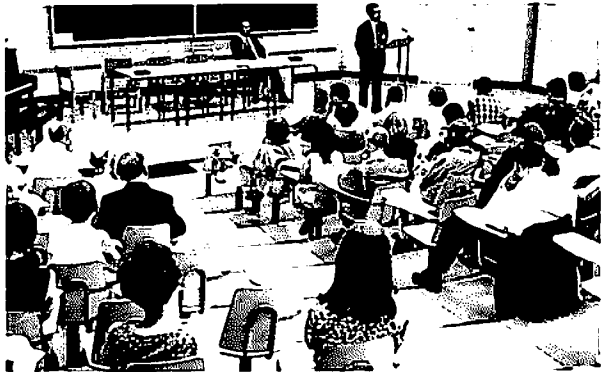
# CONVENTION SESSION



AT WORSHIP

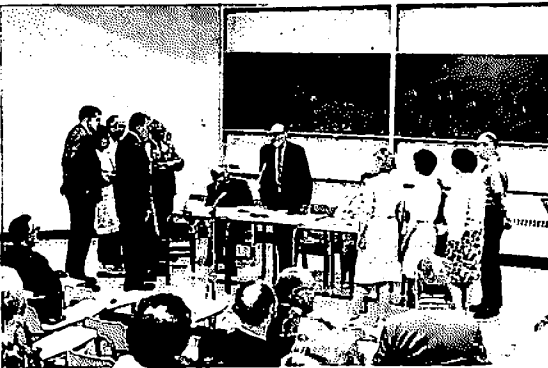


AT WORK



CONVENTION THEME STUDY

## ELECTIONS: INSTRUCTING THE TELLERS & DISTRIBUTING BALLOTS

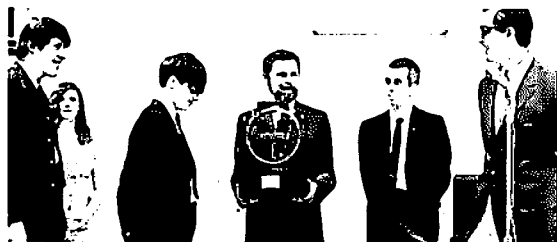




SOME OF THE 53 LEAGUERS AT CONVENTION



RETIRED EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETS



ELMWOOD LEAGUE RETAINS POOLE TROPHY



SWEDENBORG SWINGERS SWEAT IT OUT

DETROIT LEAGUE'S FIRST-PRIZE SKIT



NEW A.N.C.L. OFFICERS (l-r) DAN REED, *Treas.*, MARJORIE HILL, *Sec.*, BETTY JEAN JOHNSON, *Exec. Comm.*, LINDA CLARK, *V.P.*, and AIRMAN <sup>3</sup>/<sub>0</sub> ERNEST EKBERG, *President*.

As a special service, *The Messenger* reprints the full text of the President's Address:

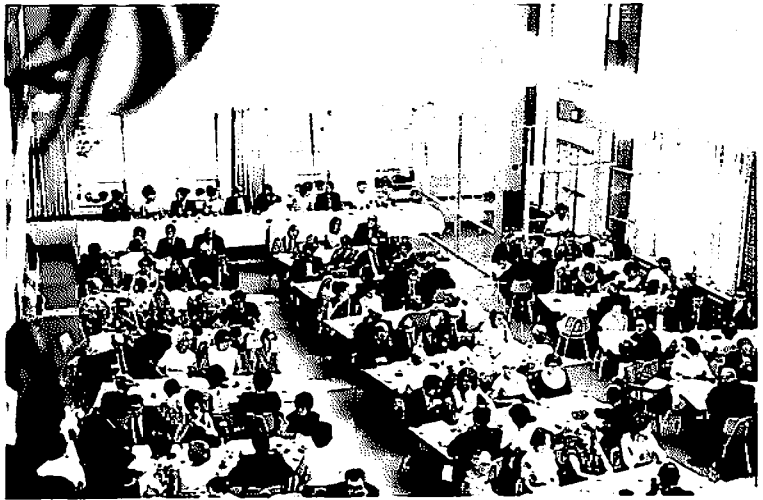
A3C ERNEST A. EKBERG 11619814  
130X, 9304  
Reese AFB, Texas, 79401

# A N C L

DR. PHIL SCHLECHTY TALKS WITH LEAGUERS



# SATURDAY NIGHT BANQUET



*The Saturday Night Banquet served in style in the Dining Room, featured a roast-beef dinner and charming table-side entertainment by a 15 year old bag piper, the only girl in the local Canadian Legion Bag-pipe Band. The evening's entertainment, "emceed" by Don Brenneman (Below), included a Hungarian dance group and a memorable concert by the Schneider Male Chorus.*





*Ernest O. Martin*

## MORALITY IN REVOLUTION

What's the world coming to? Life today is certainly a far cry from what it was when we were young. Those were the good old days, when children respected their parents and dressed properly and cut their hair, when law and order prevailed, when the Negro knew his place, and when people were willing to work for a living, and not depend on a government dole or social security or medicare.

The director of a stage production of "Look Back in Anger" characterizes 1967 in this way: civil rights, mini skirts, open housing, jazz in the church, Vee-yet-nam, LSD, pot and the pill, poverty, teen age sex, crime in the streets, topless breasts, long-haired beats.

Our time is marked by wars and insurrections, riots and rebellions, strikes and demonstrations, teach-ins and protest marches, crime and delinquency, corruption in government, pop art and rock and roll music. Everything seems to have come loose, and the church isn't able to put things back together and restore the status quo.

In trying to understand our present age, the

average Christian finds himself in a dilemma. How can he say that Christ came into the world to redeem mankind, to usher in the Kingdom of God, and make salvation possible; and at the same time blurt out that the world is going to the dogs? We can't have it both ways. If the world is getting worse, then the incarnation was a mistake, or was of none effect.

The Swedenborgian is in an even greater predicament, for he declares that the Lord is even now making his second coming, ushering in a new age, and that the new Jerusalem is descending from God out of heaven. The Swedenborgian should be among the most optimistic and hopeful of people, as he heralds the birth of a new era. It would seem incongruous for him to be a prophet of doom.

The fact is that few of us live lives that are consistent with our religious profession. Our attitudes, conduct, and speech are often at variance with our religious faith and tenets. We are ruled primarily by our emotions, are creatures of habit, glorifying the past and resisting change. Churchmen have the reputation of being the most conservative of people, and paradoxically are the least likely to take the leadership in such a revolutionary movement as the kingdom of God. The theme of our convention is "Swedenborgian Perspectives in an Age of Revolution", but how many of us think of ourselves as participating revolutionaries?

The whole theme of the Bible is change, growth, and regeneration, but we tend to be satisfied with the health of our souls and are resistant to the need for repentance. We would prefer to continue in the same old paths, holding on to the familiar institutions of old, and telling ourselves that God's in his heaven and all's right with the world.

Jesus said, "I am come that ye might have life, and have it more abundantly." But the abundant life cannot be wrapped up in a tidy package, or contained in a Pharisaic code. It can't be passed on to our children as a provision in our will. It comes through growth and maturity as we move through the different stages as described in the book of

Genesis and interpreted by Swedenborg.

Swedenborg points out that even for those who reach the 6th or 7th stage of regeneration, the progress is not continuous or automatic. The Bible concludes each stage of growth with the words, "And the evening and the morning were the first day. . . second day. . . the third day. . . etc. The evening represents a period of transition, often of confusion and despair and fear. We do not know when the night will end and whether a new and brighter day will dawn. Calvin Turley last night reminded us that this state is what Swedenborg speaks of as "vastation."

As we come to understand something of the different stages of growth and recognize the inevitability of stormy transitions from one stage to another, we will be better prepared to cope with life. Instead of throwing up our hands in despair at evidences of teen-age rebellion, or college demonstrations, or ban-the-bomb protests, we will see them as healthy signs of ferment. We are entering upon a new era in civilization, and the changes that are required to usher in this new age will not always be peaceful and harmonious. Oftentimes we need to be jolted and jarred and shaken before we are willing to move out of our lethargy, to leave the established patterns of the past. The past may not have been happy, but we've grown used to it and the pattern has become tolerable for us.

The early books of the Bible record long lists of commandments and directives, governing all kinds of behavior including worship, diet, and Sabbath observances. There is a certain comfort and security in being told exactly what to do. We know just where we stand -- what is right and what is wrong. Most of us were brought up strictly. We were taught how to behave toward our elders, what activities we could or could not engage in on Sundays, what books we could read, movies we could see, etc.

Teenagers are caught up in the dilemma of wanting and needing guidelines and boundaries, and yet they cry out for freedom and individuality. They seek independence, but at the same time need the security of rules and conditions. As adults most of us share

the same needs. But most of us put the highest premium on freedom and independence. We don't want to be told what to do every time we turn around. The reason that many young people leave home or marry early is to achieve independence from parental authority. They want to live their own lives, to make their own decisions, to make their own mistakes. As people become better educated, they feel better prepared for this independence. In some of our high schools, 90% and more of graduating students go on to college. They are becoming more sophisticated than the youngsters of a generation ago, and are not content to accept the platitudes of their elders as to what is right and what is wrong. They want to think for themselves and decide their own destiny.

Swedenborg forecast this independence of spirit when he described the descent of the holy city new Jerusalem, and spoke of it as a new spiritual era characterized by a spirit of inquiry. "Now it is permitted to enter with understanding into the mysteries of faith," he said. The old authoritarianism is dying. It is a law of the divine providence that we are to act in freedom according to reason.

This can be a very disturbing and unsettling experience, for most people think of responsibility as a matter of conforming to established practice and conventional morality, out of respect for or fear of familiar sanctions and reinforcements. What is assumed is that moral rules and reward-punishments are all set, and that we should come to heel and play the game that way.

Leaders today in the field of ethics and morality are questioning this approach. They assert that responsibility means a free and critical "conformity" to the facts first of all -- the shifting patterns of situations -- and then to the unchanging single norm or basic principle of loving concern for persons and the social balance. As Dietrich Bonhoeffer said in his prison-written "Ethics", after conspiring to assassinate Hitler, "The conscience which has been set free is not timid like the conscience which is bound by the law, but it stands wide open."

This more flexible approach to ethics and morality was described by Pope Pius XII in an address in 1952 as "existential" or "situational". He denounced this new approach, pointing out that such a nonprescriptive ethic might be used to justify a Catholic leaving the Roman Church if it seemed to bring him closer to God, or to defend the practice of birth control just because personality could be enhanced thereby!

Four years later, Feb. 2, 1965, the Supreme Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office called it "the new morality" and banned it from all academies and seminaries, trying to counteract its influence among Roman Catholic moralists. Some of you may recall reading about a furor at Catholic University in Washington, D.C., when students and faculty were not willing to accept the authority of the church when it appeared to them to violate principles of love and justice. The university was forced to back down and reinstate a faculty member who had been discharged for his controversial views.

The Catholic Church finds itself in a particular bind on the matter of birth-control. It is generally acknowledged that the church will have to modify its stand because of the pressure within the church and scientific advance in birth-control methods, but how can these modifications or concessions be made without the church having to confess that its position over the years has been wrong?

The Protestant Churches are better able to make changes. For example, in 1920, at the Lambeth Conference, the Anglican Church held that any form of contraception was sinful. In 1958, family planning was declared a moral obligation. A Roman Catholic theologian working on their problem asked, "How can you do that as a church?" An Episcopalian replied, "That's the advantage of not being infallible."

The phrase "new morality" is becoming increasingly common today and is often thought of as signifying a relaxed or even lax ethical outlook, especially in sexual matters. Articles in popular magazines

describe the "new morality" on the college campuses and discuss dating and premarital sex. Sex is only one concern of the new morality or situation ethics. Strictly speaking, the new morality is not new, either in content or in method. Men have practiced it from the beginning of time, but now it is becoming a rational and professed method.

Jesus and his disciples were condemned because they plucked ears of corn on the Sabbath day. Jesus replied, "Have ye not read what David did, when he was hungered, and they that were with him; how he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests?"

When the Pharisees asked if it is lawful to heal on the sabbath, Jesus replied: "What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath day." The Pharisees, instead of being grateful to the Lord for this insight, went out and held a council against him, how they might destroy him. Jesus taught that the law of love supersedes the legalistic code. What is right depends on the situation.

Many young men today are opposed to going into the Army to fight in Vietnam. They can't say that they are conscientiously opposed to all wars, or that they are members of a pacifist church, but they are opposed to this particular war. Their conscience tells them that this particular war is wrong... Obviously this poses problems, for how can we know whether a particular conscientious objector is genuine or whether he is simply trying to find a way to avoid a dangerous situation? In previous wars, when the number of conscientious objectors was small, we found forms of non-combat service for them, but when the number is larger, the issues become more serious.

Proponents of the new morality declare that Christian ethics is not a scheme of codified conduct. It is a purposive effort to relate love to a world of relativities. Joseph

Fletcher, a professor at an Episcopal seminary, is a leading exponent of the new morality or what he calls situation ethics. His main thesis is that any act, even lying, premarital sex, abortion, adultery, and murder could be right -- depending on the situation. Because "whatever is the most loving thing in the situation is the right and good thing. It is not excusably evil, it is positively good." He declares that every man must decide what is right for himself, empirically, according to his own estimate of conditions and consequences.

This sounds like an invitation to anarchy, but the writer is not advocating lawlessness or urging that we disregard the law. He does point out the complexity involved in determining what is right and wrong, and sets forth a creative strategy for electing choices in which love provides the answers, defines the ends, and justifies the means.

I would not for a moment minimize the problems posed by the new morality. Situation ethics is an ethic for mature men and women, for it carries with it considerable responsibility. It is not an ethic for children who need definite guidelines, and who do not have the wisdom or background to discriminate as to what each situation requires. St. Paul said, "When I was a child, my speech, my outlook, and my thoughts were all childish. When I grew up, I had finished with childish things."

Ideally, the new morality is for the completely regenerate man, the man in whom love reigns. But we will never mature or progress in regeneration if we never let go of legal restrictions, and allow ourselves to be prompted by love. All the time we must realize that the love we are speaking of is not sentimentality. Augustine, for all his insistence on the centrality of love, was compelled to explain that love's administration needs "more than good will, and can be done only by a high degree of thoughtfulness and prudence."

In his philosophic work, "Divine Love and Wisdom", Swedenborg deals extensively with love and wisdom, showing that love demands wise choices, in order that we may act justly. Following are some paragraph headings from Swedenborg's writings:

"Love or the will is unable to effect anything by its human form without a marriage with wisdom or the understanding... Love or the will prepares a house or bridal chamber for its future wife, which is wisdom or the understanding... After the nuptials, the first conjunction is through affection for knowing, from which springs affection for truth. Love or the will introduces wisdom or the understanding into all things of its house... Love or the will does nothing except in conjunction with wisdom or the understanding... Love, when purified by wisdom in the understanding, becomes spiritual and celestial."

Paul Tillich said that "Love without justice is a body without a backbone. Justice is love working out its problems. Justice is Christian love using its head, calculating its duties, obligations, opportunities and resources. Justice is love coping with situations where distribution is called for."

To look at the new morality in the Swedenborgian perspective, we would have to include his whole theological system, and I don't propose to do that today. The work of Swedenborg that is particularly concerned with ethics and morality is "Conjugal Love" or "Marital Love." Mr. Wunsch, in the introduction to his translation of "Marital Love" writes: "Marital Love is an ethical discussion, inspired by religion, reenforced by theology, and suspended by an outlook on the world of the spirit, and at the same time a discussion steadily brought home to the reasoning mind."

In this book, Swedenborg does not attempt to legislate morality in the realm of sex and marriage. Again and again he urges us to use the best reasoning we can command, and to consider the situation. Listen to these words, written 200 years ago:

"We treat now of betrothals and weddings and the attendant ceremonies, doing so chiefly from reasoned understanding. For what we have said in this book has for its object that the reader may see truths from his own reasoning and thus may assent. For so his spirit is convinced; and the things of which the spirit is convinced are allotted a place above those which enter on authority and by faith in authority without participa-

tion by the reason.

For these things enter no more deeply than the memory, where they mix with fallacies and falsities, and thus are below the reasoned conclusions of the understanding. Every man can speak from them with seeming reason, but invertedly, thinking then as a crab walks, with the sight following the tail. It is another matter if he thinks from understanding; then the reason's vision selects from the memory suitable things by which it confirms truth as seen in itself."

It may be that we are only now ready to understand and apply the perspective of Swedenborg in the realm of ethics and morality. Men who are on the frontier of religious thought today are echoing the principles of Swedenborg. Harvey Cox, the Harvard theologian, is speaking from the Swedenborgian perspective when he writes: "Morality is always new, always changing, because there are always new situations emerging to which existing moral principles have to be applied, and this requires new thinking... Morality is a living, changing organism, because there are always unanticipated and unprecedented situations."

A rabbi speaks out with a declaration of the freedom of our new age, the age of the second coming: "People are experiencing a new sense of personal freedom. We now ask, 'Is this right for me? We no longer ask, 'How do I comply with a set of inherited commandments from my religious tradition?' We enjoy a degree of freedom today that people have never experienced before."

I will admit that the new morality is difficult for me to accept, even though I am convinced that it is firmly based on Swedenborgian thought. I recall that when I entered the theological school I felt sure that I could find the answers to any problems that presented themselves, by consulting the Swedenborg Concordance, and finding the right paragraph number. I attended with eagerness meetings of the ministers of the Mass. Assoc. to find out some of these answers. To my horror, and great disappointment, ministers of the church could not agree as to what Swedenborg's

position was on such issues as mercy killing, capital punishment, divorce, or censorship. Ministers would take violently opposed positions, and all claim to be speaking from the Swedenborgian perspective.

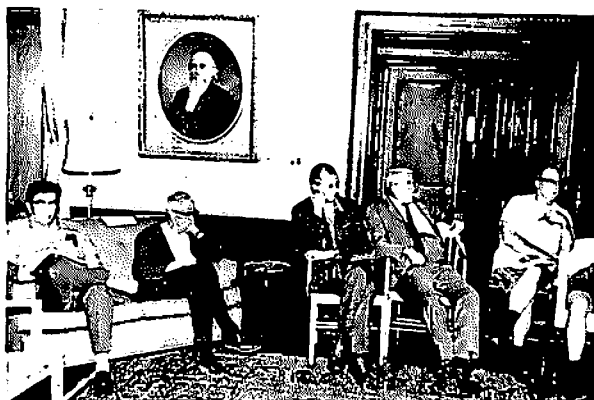
I reluctantly concluded that Swedenborg did not promise answers, but only a perspective, guidelines, principles, to aid us in our own search for the truth, or for a workable hypothesis. He said that we must live our own lives, make up our own minds. We can't accept someone else's authority, but appropriate truth into our own being and make it a part of ourselves.

As a Swedenborgian minister, I felt that I must have an answer for every religious or moral question. The morning paper gives me some comfort. Dr. S.E. Rosenberg writes: "A spiritual view of human life differs from a scientific interpretation which requires that we have the answers. It is unsatisfied and impatient with questions that seem to have no solutions.

"It is a profoundly religious attitude, however which recognizes the answers are not sufficient, for each answer creates new problems and causes new questions. Rather it is more important in the long run, to live with the unresolved. For he who can live with life's agonizing mysteries and still affirm life -- he who can say amen to life's problems -- is a truly religious person."

I believe that the role of the Swedenborgian Church is to challenge, inspire, criticize, raise questions, and be prophetic. A live and dynamic church will help men and women decide for themselves how to express their love in their homes, offices, and communities. It will help them to grow in understanding, in sensitivity, and into insight into themselves and others. Each of us is responsible to God for the ways he chooses, acts, and lives. My prayer is that we may grow increasingly responsive to God's love pouring into our being, and learn to express that love wisely and humbly in service to him and the neighbor, in this age of revolution.





JOHNSON, CROWNFIELD, DOLE, TOBISCH & TURLEY  
IN DISCUSSION FOLLOWING LECTURE

"THE DYNAMICS

OF REGENERATION"

SWEDENBORG SCHOOL OF RELIGION

SUMMER SEMINAR

JUNE 17 - JULY 7

THIRTEEN MINISTERS PARTICIPATED, WORKING WITH A FACULTY INCLUDING DRS. FRIEDEMANN HORN, FREDERIC CROWNFIELD, DOROTHEA HARVEY, ROBERT KIRVEN; REVS. EDWIN CAPON, ANTONY REGAMEY; AND CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST TOM KEISER. THE TEN DAYS WERE SCHEDULED FOURTEEN HOURS A DAY, INCLUDING LECTURES, STUDY AND CONFERENCES. NEARLY A SCORE OF IMPORTANT RESEARCH PROJECTS ARE WELL UNDER WAY.



GEORGE  
DOLE  
&  
DAVE  
JOHNSON



DOROTHEA  
HARVEY  
&  
ROBERT  
KIRVEN

ERNEST  
MARTIN



GEORGE  
DOLE

RICHARD  
TAFEL, Sr



ANDRE  
DIACONOFF



TOM  
KEISER



# NATIONAL ALLIANCE MEETING

The National Alliance of New Church Women met in University Chapel during the 1967 Convention on Thursday, June 22 for their annual meeting. Speakers during the morning sessions were: Mrs. David Johnson of Bellevue Church; Mrs. Robert Tafel of the San Diego Church; Mrs. Othmar Tobisch of the San Francisco Church.

Presided over by President Mrs. Bertha Berren, the women elected the following officers: President, Mrs. Wilfred Rice of the Boston Church; First Vice-President, Mrs. Robert Tafel from the Philadelphia Church; Second Vice-President, Mrs. Wm. Prust of the Kitchener Church; Recording Secretary, Mrs. John Keith from the Detroit Church; Treasurer, Mrs. Thornton Smallwood of the Chicago Church; Chaplain, Mrs. Alice Van Boven from Riverside, Calif. Church; Round Robin Committee, Mrs. Evelyn Woods, Conn. Assoc., Mite Box Chairman, Miss Mildred Billings of the Chicago Church; Nominating Committee Chairman, Mrs. Ernest Frederick from the Miami, Florida Church.

The meeting adjourned temporarily at 12:30 for the Women's Alliance Luncheon held in the Crystal Ballroom of the Walper Hotel, Kitchener and reconvened at 1:30. Ninety-six women were present.



*University Chapel*



*Pres. Berren  
(standing)*



*Pres.-Elect  
Rice*



*Mrs. R. Young*



*Mrs. O. Tobisch*



*LUNCHEON AT THE WALPER HOUSE*



*MEETING IN PROGRESS*

# REPORT ON THE NEW CHURCH IN KOREA



*Chungsun Lee*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord's New Church:

It gives me great joy and happiness to say a word of greeting to you face to face. Yes, it is just ten years since I last met you at the Convention in Boston. During these ten years, you cannot even imagine how much I longed to see you. I have been working in a corner of the Lord's New Church far away from you. I have kept well with your constant support and care of the Lord. I extend greetings of my people back in Korea.

Now, I will present to you a piece of my thought, which derives from my experiences in the Korean Mission Field. I have learned a lot of things with my people though I have not been able to achieve as much as I should like.

I will now share with you my recommendation for a missionary plan in my country.

As you may well know, our people and our culture have evolved under the Confucian tradition and cultures for ages. The Korean people particularly have lived for over five hundred years under the influences of a famous Confucian of the Zusa school, called Lee Toe Geh, and this influence has led Koreans to incline towards extreme formalism and controversy which we may describe in christian terms as Pharisaism and

Sadduceeism. Therefore, modern Korea can not avoid the most difficult mental struggle under this oppressive heredity. Of course, our younger generation is given to strong protest against such out-minded traditions, borne on the current of a modern rebellious spirit. This generation prefers intuitional notions and pragmatic goods of life, and seeks their solutions accordingly.

In the churches, there is strong aversion to the Old Church Doctrines. People are beginning to be aware of fallacies in the teachings of the old churches and to get tired of those which are preached from the pulpits of the old church; in which they can not find any solutions for their practical lives, nor redeem themselves. These merely theoretical reasonings of the old church, to our younger generation in Korea, are nothing but a handful of sophistries. And they are abhorred and rejected. In fact, in resistance to such adverse trends, many an innocent Christian in our churches will launch one series after another of frantic prayer movements. Of course these prayer movements in themselves may be quite welcome, but with a close analysis there are indications that they do more harm than good to the spiritual growth of church members who involve themselves in them. It is tragic indeed that Korean churches fail to understand why these people are driven into a frantic or mystical movement. Indeed they are drawn to join in these movements because they are thirsty for truth, which they need to help them solve their spiritual conflicts. They pray through long nights without sleep, fast, or retire into the mountains to meditate, but they do not find their solutions. They conclude that the old church can offer no satisfactory religious life-line to such eager seekers of the truth. This leads Koreans into mysticism, dogmatism, and sometimes even to heretical paganism, which is Shamanism. The Lord's sheep in the Korean churches begin to harbor resentment against the pulpits of the old church, and chaos prevails in their minds.

Some foreign missionaries in Korea who have little understanding of Korean culture and are weak in vocational drive, and those church politicians who have ecclesiastical authority in their hands, focus their efforts

on urban missionary work in order to take the easy way of life and produce no more than exaggerated statistical figures of the work that they have actually accomplished. This means that people in rural areas have little opportunity to hear the Word of our Lord, and that local ministers are neglected and left in a state of poverty and helpless frustration and have no constant supply of theological materials and doctrinal supervision. Ministers are seeking for some solutions to both their material problems and for a rational teaching of the Word. They are finding themselves forced into rebellion against their ecclesiastical authorities and the ideals of their denominations because they have been left quite alone and seek new ideals of the church.

In such a time of theological and psychological turmoil, a light appeared -- the weekly correspondence material which I have written and distributed in rural areas satisfied many in the doctrines and new ideals of the New Church. They send proceeds of sale of pounds of rice to cover expense of my circulations. They inquire if short-term seminar for local ministers may be available. Most cannot, however, afford to make the trip to Seoul for theological teachings, even should such a seminar be available. Indeed I have travelled widely to visit these people serving in local churches, and I have noted a majority of ministers called their congregations together in a congregation in shabby huts without stoves to heat the place in winter. The references they had, beside the Holy Bible, were the weekly circulations which I prepared for their use. One minister said to his people, "we can't have any better sermons than those sent from Rev. Chungsun Lee. They reveal the real truths that we have been looking for."

I can assure you of my strong conviction that the road for the New Church missionary is wide open to my people. I can safely say that all that is needed is a small fund to finance missionary work and the opening of a theological school in Korea.

Among Koreans, attachment to "charity", particularly emphasised by Confucius, is stronger than among other people in Asia.

Koreans simply believe that faith not accompanied by a life of good and a life of charity or affection is not a saving faith. For these reasons, the national appeal of these christian ideals is now becoming common among christian circles and suggests that the New Church ideal is finding its way into Korean minds.

Koreans find unavoidable the fallacies in the verbal inspiration theory of the Bible preached by fundamentalists. And also we, who found no light in the theories of the school of form-criticism introduced by contemporary churches, believe in spiritual interpretation of the Scriptures and expect to learn the meaning of God's Words in the New Church. I only regret that I have been unable to translate Arcana Coelestia and Apocypse Revealed completely into Korean.

Now I would like to make mention of my plan for the New Church mission in Korea. I will present seven items, which are closely related to the theological school which will be opened in September of this year.

1. Establishment of a theological school is most urgent for our mission. We need men rather than books for the Korean people.
2. Re-education in theology for those local ministers who want to be educated in New Church doctrine.
3. To help these who receive our theological re-education with a very little amount of money monthly for their parish work.
4. To promote understanding and conviction among both ministers and lay-christians in the New Church by expanding international fellowship.
5. To appoint a General Pastor in Korea, because there is needed someone to supervise the mission field, and to develop the organization of the Korea New Church Association.
6. To build a representative church in the capital city of Korea.
7. To grant some scholarship subsidy to Korean students whose capabilities offer good promise of a useful New Church career.

I am now going to tell some privileges we would have when the theological school is opened in Korea.

First, privileges in management. Asian languages are not like those of Latin origin nor those of Euro-Americans. In other words, the languages of the Korean, Japanese and Mongolian people are not homogeneous with the English language. And it is hard to get the good understanding and effective ability needed to utilize them. This requires long study and patient endeavor. Of course, no one can say that the best linguist is the most able pastor or church leader. Therefore I venture to say that we should educate candidates for ministry in their mother tongue.

Secondly, economic privilege. It costs \$2,000 to send a student to the Swedenborg School of Religion in Newton, Mass. for their round trip travel alone. We also need \$2,880 each for maintenance during his three years of study in the States, at least. This means we need \$4,880 to educate one person in the U.S., but with the same amount of money we can successfully educate five students in Korea.

Finally, by the opening of our theological school we can expect more effective and able workers for our church. We can circulate teaching materials prepared for the theological school widely among those who are thirsty for the truth. In the school, long and close observation of candidates is possible, and recommendation of the promising students are fully trusted.

We have reasons for the re-education of the local ministers. Among those whom I have contacted and known through correspondence and circulation of pamphlets, there are many who are unhappy with the Old Church and seek the New Church teachings. I want to win them over to our side. We will open it in the summer and winter every year. And each term must be more than ten days and all the participants must live together in the dormitory during each term. Those who study New Church teaching through the short-term theological re-education course six terms in three years, and complete three years' study by correspondence

courses in New Church Theology may be accepted into the New Church as recognized pastors.

I am satisfied that within three years we can have thirteen churches in our Korea New Church Association if this project can be financed. I would like to have one general pastor appointed to travel around to visit their localities to promote the organization work of Korea New Church Association and supervise the mission field work.

The United States is far away from Korea. And the Board of Missions can hardly be expected to appreciate fully and grasp the problems of the Korean Church and of the ministers in Korea, whom they have already educated and sent into the mission field there. It is very hard for one missionary to report for the other fellow ministers unless he is particularly qualified to do so. We would welcome any one sent by the BOM periodically to supervise our churches. But I think it is normally impractical. I am quite skeptical of the future of the New Church Mission in Korea without such a superintendent or General Pastor.

I do not believe in authoritarianism, but I cannot understand how, if a church or denomination which wants to promote missionary activities in a country accustomed to the centralization of administrative power, like Korea, can fail to appreciate the advantage of a representative church, or mother church, in the capital city of that country. According to the administrative law, we will have to organize judicial personality to protect our rights as a recognized religious body by the government. For this we need a reasonable holding of property to acquire approval by the government. And for this need a church building that its land may meet that requirement.

For the last, can I hope that you may contribute as much as 20 dollars each to five students in the Korean New Church every month? Perhaps a single young student recommended by the church be adopted by each separate society of the New Church in the states.

## MEMORIALS

### THE REV. ALBERT DIEPHUIS

Albert Diephuis was given a longer life than is granted to most men. During his more than ninety years on earth he invested himself with a sphere which radiated exuberance and affection. He was especially responsive to the presence of children, for he was always young in mind and spirit. His voice was ever ready to expound, defend or promulgate the doctrines of the New Church which filled his life to its uttermost rim.

Our fellow-churchman's interest in the teachings of the New Jerusalem commenced soon after he and his brother, the late Dirk Diephuis, came to this country from South Africa and settled in Saint Louis. The newly awakened influence of Swedenborg brought him to the Theological School in Cambridge, where he pursued his studies from 1904-1906. At this juncture in his life he met, wooed, and married Ada Worcester. Our departed friend did not complete his work at the Theological School, but left with his bride and returned to St. Louis where he was employed in the Public Library. But the passing years did not lessen the hold the New Church had over his thought and life. In 1919 he returned to Cambridge and completed the studies he had begun fifteen years earlier.

Albert Diephuis was ordained as a minister of the New Church in 1921 by the Reverend William Worcester. At that time he was serving the Kitchener, Ontario, Society. An eight-year pastorate in Canada was followed by a six-year tenure in Lakewood, Ohio. In 1934 our late brother entered upon his longest pastorate in Orange, New Jersey, remaining there until 1952. Still vigorous in body and mind, although beginning to suffer from impaired eyesight. Mr. Diephuis returned to Lakewood and continued his ministry until his retirement in 1958. His last years were spent at the home and under the care of one of his two daughters, Mrs. John Cairns. He maintained almost to the last a lively interest in world and church affairs.

The Reverend Albert Diephuis will be remembered for his zestful approach to life and the relish with which he propounded the doctrines of the New Jerusalem. His friends and associates cherished his warm personality, and strangers left his presence with the sense of having touched a vibrant spirit. These sterling qualities are now finding a fuller and more fruitful expression in life eternal.

We rejoice that he has entered upon a higher use, but our joy is muted by an awareness that he left behind no counterpart.

*Clayton Priestnal*

### THE REV. HAROLD GUSTAFSON

In the passing of the Rev. Harold R. Gustafson into the Spiritual World, we in the Massachusetts Association feel the loss of a warm and ever-thoughtful friend. From the youngest to the oldest all loved Harold. His ready smile and cheerful voice rewarded all who were near.

If one is to gain any comfort in the death of the Rev. Mr. Gustafson, it has to stem from knowing that we will have in the spiritual world one more great soul to guide and teach us.

His was an ever-growing ministry. We of the Massachusetts Association have known Harold and his family and their devotion to the doctrines and life of the New Church. He profited much from the experience and ministry of his father, the Rev. Dr. Frank Gustafson who was a clear and powerful lecturer and preacher of the New Church.

Each Society he served knows of his attention to the minutest detail, whether it be a Children's Sunday program or the administering of the Sacraments, which allowed only reverence to shine through. He was always known for his sympathy and understanding of the short-comings of others.

In the Societies he served, Washington, D.C., Portland, Me., Providence, Elmwood, Brockton, and Bridgewater, his leadership encouraged church participation in local Councils of Churches, summer union services, and interfaith Lenten services. He was one of the pioneers of the "Christian Fellowship" for the students at the Bridgewater State College.

Because of his great ability to create a happy family atmosphere, there will always be a warm place in our hearts for the Rev. Harold Gustafson, known as Pastor and friend in the seven societies he served so well, and throughout the church.

*H. Page Conant, Everett K. Bray*

### THE REV. ROBERT STRONG

The Rev. Robert J. Strong passed into the spiritual world at the age of eighty-five years on February 26, 1967.

Mr. Strong had retired from active service in the ministry some years ago, but previous to that had worked as the pastor of the Auckland Society for forty years. During that period he also held a post in a newspaper office and used the many contacts he had in that position to make the teachings of the New Church known. He had first heard of the New Church through a colleague working in the same office and a little later made contact with the Society.

Subsequently he left New Zealand to enter the Convention Theological School and was ordained in 1917. He returned to Auckland and served as the minister of the Society until the late fifties, a record unique in its history.

#### F. GARDINER PERRY

F. Gardiner Perry passed into the spiritual world on April 23, 1967, after eighty-two years of this life. He had given freely of his time and devotion to Convention, the Theological School, the Mass. Association, the Cambridge Society, and the Fryeburg Assembly; and each of these bodies will feel his absence.

He was, as we knew him and doubtless still is, an unusual man. He combined firmness of principle with an extraordinary energy, both mental and physical. He was well-informed and purposeful, and gravitated toward the places where there were

tasks to perform and decisions to make. He knew his church teachings well, and found their relevance to his own active life. Even in his eighty-first year, he was ready and willing to put in a vigorous day's physical labor, to learn about the church, or to discover a new and better way of doing things.

In short, he was alive and he was genuine, virtually incapable of being merely an idle by-stander.

A soul so deeply and actively devoted to the church is surely dwelling spiritually with us now, working for the health and growth of the Lord's new kingdom among us.

George Dole

*continued from p. 98*

Romans said in wonder of the early Christians -- "See how they love one another!"

I see the Kitchener Convention in this way partly because after writing all year about the importance of the interpersonal aspects of our church conventions, I found the experience of deepening friendship more significant and more transforming than my previous experience and theories had prepared me for. I see it as a wonderful convention because -- over-balancing some disappointments and frustrations -- I had a wonderful time.

I cannot pretend that it was universal. Walls of coolness and misunderstanding still separate some of us from some others, limiting relationships to a much more formal friendship, and restricting dialogue to small-talk on "safe" subjects. Basically, however, the feeling in the dormitory lobby, along the walks, at tables in the dining room, and in the convention sessions themselves, was the good feeling of persons learning to live together in the loving community" that was the original essence of the Christian church.

Now, it is my conviction that this experience which I shared with many others says something important about the significance of the Swedenborgian approach to life in our age of revolution. Along with a key to understanding life and its changes, we need strong emotional roots to keep us steady and oriented in the midst of a transforming environment. Love for one another -- the ability to know it for what it is, to give it

and to receive it -- is our deepest tap-root to the essence of reality. If, as I believe, our relationships with one another in our congregations and at our conventions is leading us more significantly into loving community with one another, then whatever it is about the Swedenborgian Church that brought and holds us together in it, is vitally important to us in our time.

Swedenborg said that love is the life of man. There are many kinds of love, and many kinds of life. It seems to me that the love for one another that we develop and demonstrate at conventions like this last one, is a good kind of love that leads to a good kind of life.

#### PHOTO CREDITS

Pictures in this issue of *The Messenger* are the work of the Rev. Wm. Woofenden of St. Louis, Mo., and *The Messenger's* Production Manager, Mrs. Nancy Booth.

#### LOST AUTHOR FOUND

The author of the letter on the change in the church (*The Messenger*, June '67) whose name was lost through Editorial confusion, identified himself at Convention.

The letter was written by Mr. Edwin Hobson of Portland, Oregon.

# The Messenger

July-August

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