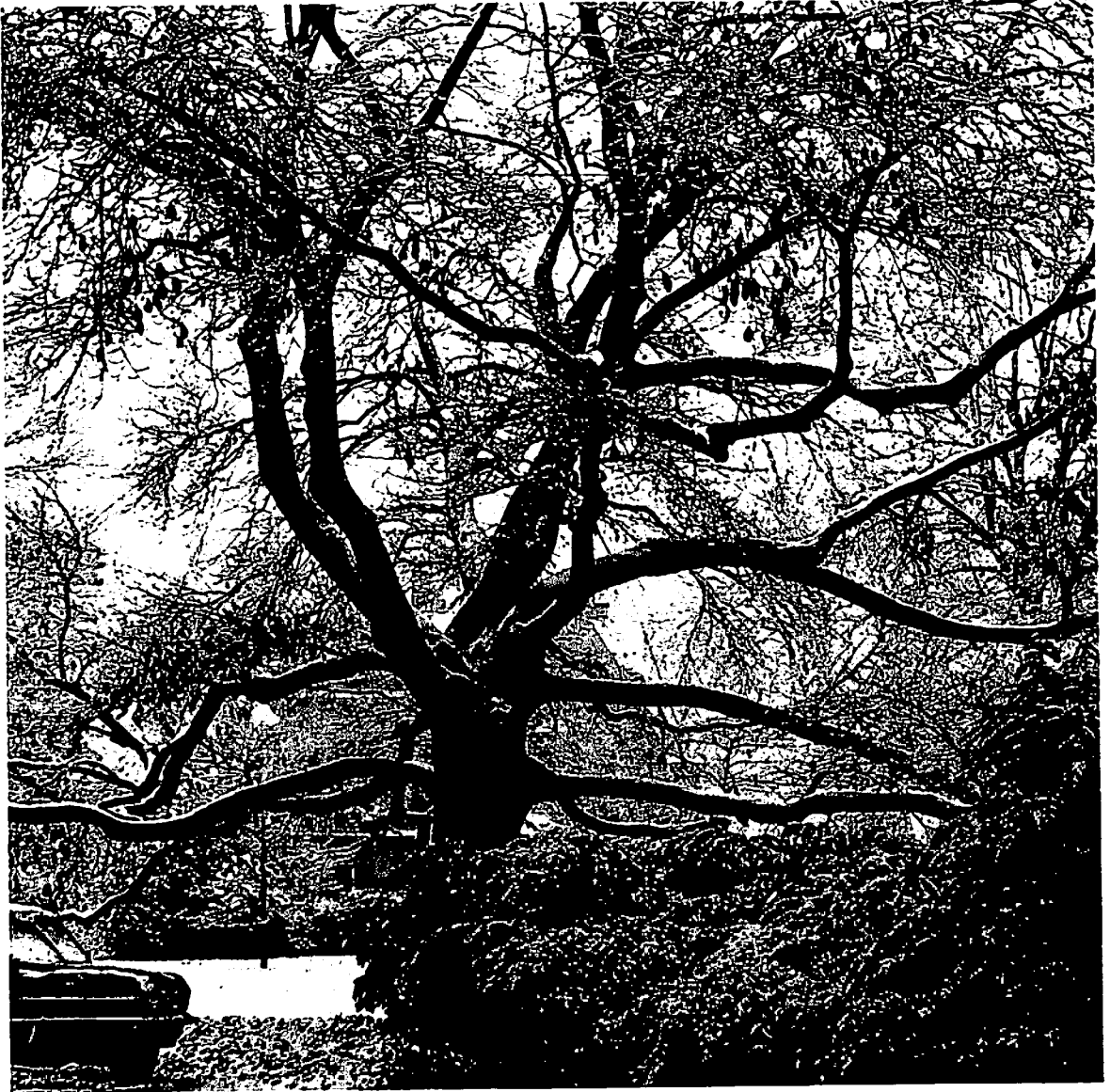


THE MESSENGER

December 1967



Messenger Photo

FIRST SNOW

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Appearances

I want to explain that this Christmas issue of *The Messenger* is an experiment with a slightly different process using special equipment. A number of differences from the usual format, and the variety of type styles in use are part of the experiment. The next issue will be "back to normal," and there is no assurance that any of the appearances of this issue will recur at a later date. The special equipment can be acquired for *The Messenger* only if it should prove practical and desirable for several of the church's publishing operations to share in its use.

The appearance of this experimental issue will be one of the factors considered in discussing the possibilities of some such cooperative effort; but any prediction at this time as to what will be done, would be to prejudge some facts that are not yet known, and to out-guess the Department of Publication, General Council, and other boards with publishing responsibility – all of whom will be considering the

total picture this winter.

What is under consideration is some means of coordinating (for the purpose of improving) the mechanical aspects of a variety of publishing jobs now being done separately by various boards of the church and church-related bodies. Outcome of the studies will be reported after the necessary decisions have been made: probably sometime in the spring.

Milestones

The Rev. Everett King Bray passed the sixtieth anniversary of his ordination on October 20, 1967. Retired from parish ministry, but still active as General Pastor of the Massachusetts Association, Mr. Bray continues the longest ministry of any man now serving the Swedenborgian Church – and one of the longest (if not the longest) on record. Parishes in Humboldt Park in Chicago, St. Paul and Cambridge, as well as presidency of Convention and the New Church Theological School (now Swedenborg School of Reli-

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gion) would begin but by no means complete a list of offices he has held and services he has rendered to the church he loves so well and with such good effect.

The Rev. Kenneth W. Knox, and his wife Marge, celebrate their twenty fifth wedding anniversary on December 12, 1967.

Miss Dorothy T. Pearse, of Chicago and Washington D.C., is retiring from a career of government and social work, and was honored by a circle of her friends from the church and professional circles by a party on Nov. 19, 1967 at the home of former Senator Paul H. Douglas of Illinois.

Beginnings

For many reasons – reasons that can be described as basic universal hopes and motivations, and can be traced deep into the very essence of humanity and its roots in psychic reality – everyone loves rituals that celebrate new beginnings. Our culture and our faith include many throughout the year, but the most prominent and significant is the joint ritual of **MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR.**

You thought the coincidence of Christmas and New Year's was an accident? Look again at history. You thought that the historical explanation of the date of the Nativity celebration had nothing to do with the realities of Christmas? Look yet again. Whatever the east-west ecclesiastical machinations of the historical moment, whatever the needs of a minority church in aggressively secular Rome, why did these two holidays come together and remain together? Because celebrating them together reflects life.

Christmas is the great symbol of spiritual new beginnings – the annual ritual that celebrates the birth in our consciousness of the highest and the best of our realities and potentials, the advent of the Lord in our lives. New Year is the symbol of tem-

poral new beginnings – the annual ritual that celebrates the passing of time and the dawn of new situations and opportunities. It is a sign of deeply unconscious understanding of life that we celebrate them together: a sign of the Christian Era that we celebrate Christmas first and most prominently.

Of course it would be wrong to say that Christmas is "nothing but" a ritual of new beginnings. It is equally wrong to say that Christmas is "nothing but" a propositional statement of theological doctrine – whether those doctrines are unveiled by historio-critical demythologizing, or correspondential spiritualizing. In fact, any statement about Christmas (or almost any other religious subject) that begins, "What it really means ..." or "That's nothing but ..." are almost certain to be inadequate, and most likely wrong as well. One of the happy, glistening wonders of Christmas is the way all its aspects and meanings reinforce and give depth to each other, in what Paul Tillich refers to as "multi-dimensional unity."

Celebrating the smallest beginning of direct divine influence in our lives, Christmas stands as a symbol of the deepest, most internal level of the beginning of regeneration. The continuing recurrence of this beginning at different stages of life and growth is one of the fundamental facts of religious life. But there is, in a sense, a kind of "so what?" quality about it. The Lord enters our lives; we are reborn, or re-reborn; what do we do about it? Sing a Christmas carol? Not exactly. Christmas is a celebration of the Lord's birth in us, in the sense of a ritual of preparation. The carols, nativity scenes and retelling of the Christmas story are attempts to use the spiritual power of correspondential symbols to bring the incipient beginnings of divine influence in our lives into conscious realization so that influence can affect our conscious perceptions and decisions.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

It was good to read Mr. Tafel's remarks about the meetings held in San Diego this past September. However, as I read his report, I found that my impression was quite a bit different. Not that I too didn't feel that this was a very positive meeting, but rather because of a different set of reasons.

Mainly, I felt that I was among a group of church members that were honestly trying to face the reality of the situation of the Swedenborgian church as it now exists. There was no escape into a discourse of the great value and beauty of the writings (both of which I believe to be true), nor was there any attempt to refer to those of us still in the church as "the cream of the milk." While I dearly love the members of our church, I find they are much like other people in other churches. Nor, did I find a great deal of hostility because the life, or should I say death, of the church was honestly being appraised.

It is true that we did not find any one answer for our church: nor did we answer the "why" of the present situation. But, the first step in seriously coming to grips with any situation is to face it realistically and to become aware of the facts as they exist now; and then, of utmost importance to accept that reality. This does not mean to like it, but to say to ourselves and others, this is the way it is. Only after this is done, can we take on the next step and ask, "Now what shall we do?"

As this step is taken, we can work together to find a way for our church to move. This will be, I believe, finding a unique and focused ministry for each individual church within our national body. For when we honestly face what the situation is, and start the task of looking for answers I think we will find these answers in our teachings. Swedenborg is a practical man, as well as a mystic and he has much to say about man, life, love and charity.

As we enter into the hard work of searching for our way, I think we will wonder what delayed us so long, for all we had to do was to face reality in order to know what to look for.

*Marilyn A. Turley
Bellevue, Washington*

Dear Editor:

Responsive to the opinions expressed by others in letters to the editor appearing in the October and earlier issues of *The Messenger*, I wish to express my views regarding the role of the church in today's living.

Years ago I tired of napping during sermons, grew skeptical of piously pronounced truths, gave up going to church. I was not then, nor am I now, an atheist. I did lean strongly toward agnosticism. Today I think I am a believer. I think I am a Christian. I want to be a Swedenborgian but do not think membership in the church automatically qualifies me to say that I am. I need more study, more understanding of Swedenborg's teachings -- more than I may have time to acquire in the years yet allotted to me here.

My husband was brought up in the New Church. One day he suggested we attend service at the 16th street church (Washington, D.C.) which had not too long previously acquired a new minister. Dutifully but dubiously I accompanied him.

Today my husband is serving his second term as president of that society and both of us have served it in varying capacities. Obviously we liked the new minister. I have never once gone to sleep during his sermons. As a visitor said one day, "I felt he was talking right straight at me."

I admit my approach to religion may be less emotional than intellectual, if I may usurp the use of that word by applying it to myself.

Today the Christian church is in upheaval. Even the Roman Catholic branch of it, which once exercised the strongest discipline over its communicants, now finds them rebellious. I believe the day of the ritual-ridden, dogma-dominated church is past. Not God, but the church is dead.

I would like religion to be a part of daily living, not a worship service from 11 to 12 on Sundays. I could give up the ritual and substitute for it a sermon, a lecture, call it what you will, followed by a discussion led by a well-informed minister. I don't expect many people to go along with me on this idea. I only mention it in passing, hoping someday I may find sufficient like-thinkers to bring it about.

I happen not to feel the need for prayer therapy groups. Maybe I do need such help but do not

recognize it. But I am not about to assign such work a third-class priority. Many people have benefited from such groups. I say, let the people decide.

Reading, studying, personal prayer -- these are things each individual must do for himself. Granted, the minister can, and should, encourage stimulate, and give guidance to such study.

I want my church to move out into the world with secular acts of good will. What good is religion which preaches but does not practice? I'm pleased that our church does 'practice' to some extent. We've lent our facilities to a Head Start group and one evening a week the minister, his wife, and several other volunteers conduct a tutoring program for neighborhood children. Also, we contribute modest financial support to a neighborhood Uplift House.

Because the church building is situated on the edge of a Negro area the children we serve are Negroes. Occasionally one or two Negroes attend Sunday service. Here in Washington they may be from the community. Invariably someone invites them to remain for the coffee hour. And sometimes they do stay.

We have no Negro members. To my knowledge, none has applied, none has been invited. But we do appear to be making progress toward racial acceptance.

To be sure, the society has had its problems. Some people have quit attending, have quit supporting the church, because they haven't liked the minister's sermon's current, and often controversial, topics. They feel that his business is religion and that he should stick to it. But I am unable to separate religion from daily life.

Jesus was a revolutionary. He stirred up trouble all over the place. Some people didn't like that either. They crucified him.

Study the Bible? To be sure, yes. In our church, the Bible together with Swedenborg's interpretations because we are a Swedenborgian church. (As an historical document, I'd prefer to study the Bible in a non-sectarian atmosphere.)

But can a minister teach Swedenborgianism from the pulpit Sunday after Sunday to a mixed bag of freshmen and graduate students some of whom have taken the course, as it were, since

childhood? Do we want him to conduct a Sunday school class from the pulpit? Or do we want him to apply Swedenborg's teachings to everyday problems?

I'm aware of the fact that opinion within the church will run the gamut on this question.

Perhaps what we need is a fresh look at our manner of disseminating the teachings. This would involve all Swedenborgian churches, the Swedenborg Foundation and the publishing organizations. Perhaps it might be possible -- I said might -- to endow chairs at schools which would be receptive to the idea of teaching Swedenborg's writings. Or, perhaps we should rent store rooms or offices in which to conduct classes (for a fee because humans seem to appreciate more those things for which they pay.)

Certainly our present methods of spreading the word aren't working. We're dwindling in numbers rather than growing.

To sum up, I want the church to be part of today's life, actively helping those who need help whether it be the underprivileged of any race, creed or color, or people seeking their way to self-adjustment. There has been a marriage of religion and psychiatry to help people find their way. Let's not put that marriage asunder.

I want Swedenborg's teachings to be made more widely available.

I want less time and effort spent on material things such as maintenance of structures people can't afford. Temples to the Glory of God? Nonsense! They are monuments to man's vanity! Jesus preached out-of-doors, where ever a group gathered.

I want a practical-down-to-earth church, doing, not just preaching, the Lord's work.

I want to see all churches, ours in particular, come into the twentieth century -- before that century becomes history.

*Doris Bowers
Washington, D.C.*

We cannot "do anything" to make Christmas happen, or make it more real: the Lord comes to us. What we can do about it – and must do if Christmas is to be real and significant – is to live out some specific positive effects in our eternal lives of the Lord's spiritual presence within. Such outward, visible consequences of regeneration are related to their inward cause, but are radically different from it – just as New Year's is close to Christmas and yet far from it in orientation and in style.

It is true, of course, that we pervert many of our most powerful symbols into silliness that mocks the spiritual realities to which they correspond. All the commerciality and breathless busy-work of Christmas tends to obscure its fundamental force. The noise and the "no-tomorrow" immoderation of New Year's Eve, and the superciliousness of New Year's Resolutions similarly tends to obscure the sub-conscious seriousness with which we hope for a chance to begin again in our material affairs.

We hope for a chance to begin again, but we don't quite believe it. That the hope is real and enduring is evidenced by the faithfulness with which we keep and perpetuate the ritual. That we don't believe it is equally evident: doubting that we could keep a serious resolution, we make silly ones to observe the ritual, knowing that they will be broken without pangs of guilt. Indeed, the New Year's Eve "blast," as much fun as it is or can be, strangely resembles an unconscious attempt to block out the new beginning, or at any rate to ensure that we won't be able to remember our best resolutions!

Specific relations between Christmas and New Year's in individual lives are infinitely diverse. Even the relationship that exists or might develop in our group relationships and endeavors born of common concerns, are too subtle and many-sided to pinpoint easily. Thinking of the

church, however, one suggestion comes strongly to mind.

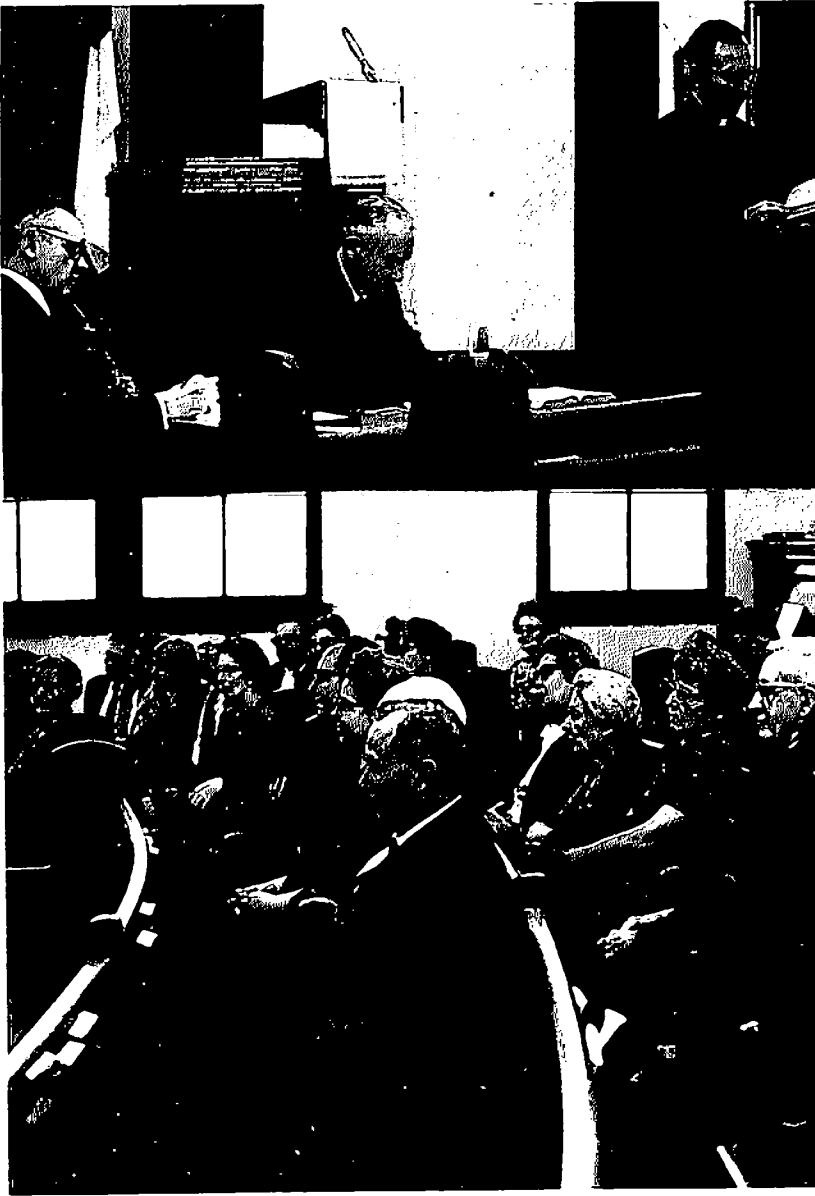
If we were to find the neglected, inauspicious corner of our church life where a new birth of divine power might be found, it is almost certain that the "happiness" of the New Year would bear little resemblance to the goals and aspirations that we presently seek and cherish. That is why the stable is neglected: who would think of looking for the Lord in there? If you remember my comments in October, you won't expect me to tell you where the manger is, or what New Year's Resolutions the Lord would urge on our church. After all, I'm lost, too. However, as I read the available charts, a number of paths and approaches seem to converge on one place where it seems worth coming together – worth making at least a temporary camp as a base for further explorations.

Behind that wild mixture of metaphors, my Christmas and New Year's hope and prophecy for the church is something like this. We will find more life in **being** together than in **doing things** together. This will result in less emphasis on **things**—hard things like architecture and furniture; busy things like committee meetings and fairs; familiar things like liturgies and traditions. It will result in more emphasis on **becoming** more fully ourselves – which is that same as becoming more completely the Lord's – so that our **being** together can be more genuine and satisfying. It will result in greater emphasis on the real closeness of being together than on the numbers that approach one another. It might even result in being together with such reality that it could be called communion, making the very life of our church a sacrament.

The elevation of life together in the church into the sacramental realm will free **sacrament** from the narrow confines of liturgic ritual. This will be good, because so long as sacrament is conceived

KANSAS ASSOCIATION MEETS

Wm. R. Woofenden Photo



The Kansas Association of the New Church met in Pawnee Rock, on Oct. 29th. Members of the Association are shown in the Pawnee Rock Church. In the insert above, (left to right) are the Secretary, Mr. Roger Unruh; Vice President, the Rev. Eric Zacharias, the President, Galen Unruh. Making reports to the meeting (lower left) are Vernon Kraus, Treasurer and Mrs. Keith Mull, President of the Women's Alliance. The Association preacher, the Rev. Wm. Woofenden of St. Louis, does not appear in the pictures that he took.



THE NEW CHURCH IN THE NEW WORLD

A POSTSCRIPT by Robert H. Kirven

The basic issue behind the choice of a primary emphasis for the New Church as Dr. Block saw it, was the division (particularly within Convention) between the liberal tendency toward universality -- the church's effort to "find its life by losing it" -- and the conservative approach, "preserving distinctiveness as a sacred trust." One of the questions which grew out of that controversy was the curriculum of Convention's Theological School. The dispute over the place of biblical criticism in the curriculum did not progress significantly beyond the point it reached in 1930. Both Mr. Wunsch and Dr. Crownfield eventually left the faculty, and Dr. Crownfield resigned from the ministry, but both actions were taken in such a way that the dispute over biblical criticism and school policy was not rekindled. In the 1940's, a new approach to the question of universality vs. distinctiveness in curriculum came up in connection with inter-seminary study. Robert Young took a few courses at Andover Newton Theological School, Owen Turley registered there for courses leading toward the B.D. degree simultaneous with his New Church Theological School work. Edwin Capon registered as a degree candidate at Andover Newton and then applied for simultaneous registration at NCTS. Soon most students were taking some courses or a degree program at either Andover Newton, Boston University's School of Theology or Harvard Divinity School. The Revs. Franklin Blackmer and Everett Bray, both of whom served as President of Convention and President of the Theological School during the time of this development, worked at developing a curriculum which would take maximum advantage of the benefits of inter-seminary work while minimizing its threat to New Church distinctiveness. By the early 1960's, most of the faculty were products of the interseminary degree program, and a curriculum was developed for the Theological School which responded to their experience. Courses and classes were replaced for the most part by individual tutorials in Swedenborg, in which students were guided to cover basic preparation for New Church ministry while being encouraged to follow their individual special interests and to deal in particular depth with the differences and tensions which arise

between the traditions and theology of the New Church vis a vis their interseminary studies. A 15-months program in which field work experience is combined with continued tutorial in Swedenborg was added to this curriculum, the whole of which continues under study and possible revision as this postscript is written. Though the author, being on the faculty of the school, is too close for fully objective interpretation, it seems that interseminary study per se is no longer a live option with many. The central questions rather involved the relationship between explicit Swedenborg studies, and related disciplines associated with interseminary work and the practical aspects of the field work program. While universality is still opposed to distinctiveness, supporters of policies which favor one or the other do not coincide in even the majority of cases with those who classify themselves with the traditional liberals or conservatives.

The distinctive-universal issue was verbalized again in 1966, when the General Convention joined the National Council of Churches. The old discussions were recalled both within the Convention, and by a few in the National Council whose acquaintance with the New Church's sectarian exclusiveness had remained unchanged because of the lack of contact between the New Church and Christian community. In the Council as in Convention, however, once old questions had been raised and discussed, votes were unanimous or nearly so at every stage of the mechanics of application and acceptance to membership. Distinctiveness of tradition and theology is now encouraged, rather than blurred over, in the current mood of the conciliar movement; but the kind of absolute distinctiveness which characterized the "Conservative" position of the 30's seems to be cherished by only a small minority within the New Church, and an even smaller fragment of the church around it.

Since 1932 the General Church has increased in membership from around 2000 to over 3100. About 60% of the new members have been born in the New Church; about 40% have come in from the "outside." New societies with resident pastors have been established in Detroit and in

Washington, D.C. The "Advent Society" in Philadelphia has been dissolved, however, new "circles" -- with regular pastoral ministrations have been started in Florida, Texas, Georgia, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Ohio, Arizona, California, Colorado and British Columbia (and also in Denmark and Norway.)

Two important developments in the General Church have been the increase in the work of its "visiting pastors" and the greater emphasis on adult missionary work. The visiting pastors are usually stationed in the societies or the larger circles of the Church, and travel regularly to minister to smaller circles, groups, and even individual families. The missionary work has been through radio broadcasts, newspaper advertising, and door-to-door visiting. This has been aided by the formation of several "Epsilon Societies" (E for Evangelization) throughout the Church.

The number of ministers remains about the same as it was in 1932 -- in the mid-forties. Two men have been elected to the office of the Executive Bishop of the General Church since 1932, the Rt. Rev. George deCharms in 1937, and the Rt. Rev. Willard Pendleton in 1962. To give needed assistance in the episcopal office, the Rev. Elmo C. Acton of Bryn Athyn was ordained into the third degree of the ministry in 1967.

Dr. Block correctly refers to the General Church as having an episcopal form of government, but does not make clear that it is a limited form of episcopacy. Few important decisions are made by the Executive Bishop without the advice of "council and assembly" -- council, first by the Bishop's personally chosen consistory of ministers, and second by the council of the whole clergy, which meets annually; and, if the matter concerns the Church at large, by an assembly of all members of the Church who can attend, each having one vote.

The Academy, regarded as the educational arm of the General Church, continues its growth in its four schools, the Theological School, The College, the Boys School, and the Girls School, though the enrollment in the Theological School has varied from none, during the war years, to

eight, and now is down again to one. In 1932 the Academy's total enrollment was 142; for the year 1967-68 the projected enrollment is 354 -- 1 in the Theological School, 109 in the College, 115 in the Boys School, and the Girls School, 129. The General Church's elementary schools throughout North America will enroll over 1000 pupils this year.

Undoubtedly the most important event in the General Church since 1932 was foreshadowed in Dr. Block's text. She noted, quite correctly, that in the General Church it is believed that the writings are the Word of the Lord, and that some persons, especially in Holland, had come to conclude that they therefore must have an internal sense. Within several years this issue had turned into controversy, and in 1937 produced schism.

Proponents of this position were soon led to conclude, from teachings in the writings, that only men who were being regenerated could understand this internal sense, and next that it was necessary to acknowledge this understanding as being the Lord's in man. Most General Church ministers could not agree with this, and in 1937 the ministerial leader of "the Hague Group", the Rev. Ernest Pfeiffer, publicly accused the administration of the General Church of having "separated itself from the Lord." He was thereupon expelled from membership in the General Church and 137 of his followers joined him to form themselves into "The Lord's New Church which is Nova Hierosolyma." In 1940 a similar schism, led by the Rev. Philip Odhner, then of Durban, Natal, South Africa, took twelve more members from the General Church.

"Nova Hierosolyma" was finally organized under an episcopal form of government in 1967, with the Rev. Philip Odhner being elected its executive bishop.

Relations between the General Church and the General Convention have developed almost imperceptibly since 1932, but most observable data implies a steady improvement. Individual members of the two bodies have developed friendships and mutual trust in the activities of such co-operative bodies as the Swedenborg

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Swedenborgian Church participates
**ECUMENICAL METROPOLITAN
MINISTRY IN SEATTLE**

Upon recommendation of the Council of Ministers, and approval by the General Council, Convention has taken a small part in the sponsorship of a new, ecumenical approach by churches to some of the most pressing problems of modern cities. The program has now been inaugurated in Seattle, Washington. The Episcopal Church, the Presbyterian Church, the United Church of Christ, the Methodist Church and the American Baptist Church are other sponsors.

Because of the proximity of the program to the Swedenborg School of Religion's Field Education Center in Bellevue, Washington, SSR student Jay Lee has the opportunity to participate in the early stages of the work as part of his field education experience.

The following description of the Ecumenical Metropolitan Ministry is excerpted from an article by Lane Smith, Religion Editor for the *Seattle Times*.

The ministry is a whole new approach of the churches. It is a response to the theological currents of the post-Second World War era stressing servanthood and to the fact that urbanization has become the dominant factor in 20th Century man's life.

Those who see the church as a stern "thou shalt not do" institution may be surprised by this ministry.

The Rev. Mineo Katagiri, one of the two ministers staffing the ministry, and the Rev. Donald D.M. Jones, chairman of the executive committee, see the ministry as one of affirmation of God's creation.

Mr. Katagiri often uses the phrase "life should be a celebration." And if it isn't the church should do its best to help make it so.

As minister of metropolitan mission for the United Church here for about three years, Mr. Katagiri has been somewhat of a prototype.

He has helped churches spot and work to relieve weaknesses in areas of social welfare. He has become the chairman of the Seattle-King County antipoverty board. He has become associated with Forward Thrust and other citizens groups working to make this a more livable city.

The Rev. James Stewart, a Baptist, who is Mr. Katagiri's co-worker, is attending the Urban Training Center in Chicago, a nondenominational center that is training a new breed of ministers to the cities.

One of the problems of such new experimental ministries is to get support from the local churches, for there is no denominational or "brick-and-mortar" loyalty to tie to.

The metropolitan ministry is not an institution-building enterprise. There will be no membership roll, no pew, no pulpit and no money coming in on the collection plate.

What it will attempt to be is a neighbor, according to Mr. Katagiri. But being "an involved, faithful, sharing, concerned neighbor" in such a world as this isn't going to be easy.

There will be controversy, no doubt, as the churches follow through on their asserted intention of helping "the powerless" get power -- political, social and economic.

Mr. Jones, executive of the Seattle Presbytery, says "research" will be a basic function in the beginning of the ministry.

Why research?

The problems of urbanization -- depersonalized life, masses of people concentrated together, the influx of the "have nots" to the city cores -- "have put all our old institutions under real judgement," Mr. Katagiri said.

The church, welfare agencies and government are all in trouble because they are no longer adequate for the developing metropolis.

Mr. Katagiri said the institution doing the best job of adjusting is business. "The computer

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Philadelphia Meeting

THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

How can we co-operate with...? How can we help to involve...? How can we co-ordinate educational efforts and needs? These were the questions that I heard raised and discussed at the Board of Education meeting in Philadelphia on November 18-19.

The Board members, as they were struggling with these questions were not only talking among themselves. ANCL chaplains were present to discuss ways in which the Leadership Education Institute could be more effective and concerns of the Leaguers met. Hoping that the American New-Church League could become more involved in the Convention program, an ANCL representative will be invited to take part in planning this year's Board of Education program at Convention in Detroit.

The Board met with the Executive Committee of the Sunday School Association to discuss joint concerns. This proved to be a useful way of improving our communication and working relationship. Sunday School lesson notes, a proposed teachers' manual, teachers' training, and a catalog of all our educational materials are in various stages of progress.

Co-ordination... communication... co-operation. An overall look at the results of the meeting indicates that the Board is seeking new ways of communicating with other parts of the church for more effective development of our educational goals.

Members of the Board present were: Mrs. Franklin Blackmer; Mrs. Ernest O. Martin; Rev. Richard H. Tafel, Sr; and Rev. Edwin G. Capon, Chairman.

Perry S. Martin

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Foundation and the Swedenborg Scientific Association and other contacts. An increasing number of children from Convention families has attended the Academy at Bryn Athyn for all or part of their education. In 1966, Bishop W.D. Pendleton met with Convention's Council of Ministers, and President Richard Tafel met subsequently with the General Church's Council of

Clergy. Areas of future co-operation have been tentatively explored.

Two items of information may clarify future research in this area. In 1967, at its centennial celebration, the New Church Theological School changed its operating name to Swedenborg School of Religion; and in 1967, the General Convention of the New Jerusalem changed its denominational reference to Swedenborgian Church. In both cases, the legal, corporate name remained unchanged.

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companies, Boeing and Pacific Northwest Bell always are undergoing constant change because they see that they cannot stand still."

The minister sees the church taking a lead in developing a "kind of center for the study of institutional development." He also sees the church as the institution pulling together "the institutions that serve our society."

The church, because it has some understanding of the nature of man, can help in determining "what are the institutions contributing to humanity and what are the ones that are fostering alienation." Mr. Katagiri said.

Mr. Katagiri has pointed out that in this world of rapid social change, the men and women in whose hands lie the responsibility for managing change are not masters of the situation and need help.

"They recognize their vulnerability and seek aid," he says. "We can support these men and agencies in their decision-making and development of programs."

Modern man, says Mr. Katagiri, often is beset by "so much bad news -- violence and war -- but he is on a quest for humanness. "The church can help him develop a sense of Christian hope for the future," Mr. Katagiri says. "We can join in helping develop structures and institutions based on values which can help man celebrate life as God intended."

In connection with his SSR Field Education, Jay Lee will be working under Mr. Katagiri's immediate supervision.

REPORT FROM ALMONT '67

In keeping with the changing times, this year's session of the Almont Summer School proved to be one of the most rewarding on record. As one of the adults expressed it, "The Seminar conducted by Rev. and Mrs. Franklin Blackmer did not simply meet our changing times, it leaped into the future!"

We have known, of course, that the vitality of the church depends on the degree of spiritual growth of the individuals within the church, but how, we have often asked ourselves, does one go about acquiring this growth? What are our needs? What training and direction are required to obtain this goal? What should we study, and where would we find leadership?

The basic studies outlined by Franklin and Carolyn Blackmer opened a new pathway into the future, presenting an entirely new idea of the kind of role the individual can play in the growth of the church. The church will grow if individuals grow and become capable of working with each other in new ways, ways filled with vitality and alive with imagination. This new role is what we need to learn, and basically this is what the seminar was about.

Two inter-related lines of study were followed: Growth of the Living Church, involving the training of laymen similar to that received through L.E.L. and Basic Needs of Man in Successive Stages of Development. We understand this was a pilot project of the Ohio Association. If so, it was a well thought out plan that rated the enthusiastic approval of nearly all the participants. Some felt the need for more lectures, but this could easily be worked out another year to the satisfaction of all.

But let us listen in on a few of the comments from members of the Seminar:

I always thought Swedenborg's writings were too deep for the ordinary individual to understand-Why didn't someone show us before how to read the Arcana?

I've been struggling with learning correspondences, and missing the 'meat' of what Swedenborg is saying.

This new way of studying is delightful.

I would not always want only this type of class, as I do enjoy the lectures, but I thoroughly enjoyed the discussion groups. Having an opportunity to participate really helped me to learn more.

I have never enjoyed the talks and discussions at Almont as much as this last summer.

I believe that in our search for growth we have been putting too much emphasis on the organization, and not enough on the individual. This is where it should begin.

We became aware of how complex the growth process is, and how personal relationships are involved in it. We saw more clearly the need for understanding, tolerance, and true charity in our dealings with others.

Our case studies were very informative. At first glance one could be very critical, but studying them with the help of Basic Needs of Man, thinking through doctrine in terms of human situations, changed the picture, and taught us to think with charity rather than to sit in judgment.

Case studies were certainly self-revealing! By seeking to know others we learned a great deal about ourselves, and our attitudes.

It was most interesting to see the comparison between outstanding modern psychologists' listing of "The Ages of Man" and Swedenborg's "Stages of Development".

The type of searching we have experienced this summer can well be a giant step forward for Our Living Church, if each one of us takes stock of his own abilities and learns more about other people by becoming involved and truly listening.

The most important point of what we studied and assimilated is this: The Living Church in each person individually, or in the organization collectively, is achieved only when good and truth -- or faith and chari-

ty -- are united in our hearts and lived.

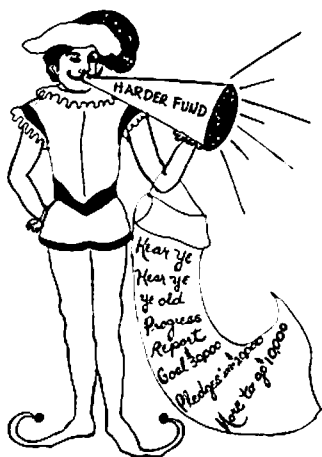
Let's have more in 1968!

These are only a few of the comments expressed by those who were active in the programs at

These are only a few of the comments expressed by those who were active in the programs at Almont last summer, but a sense of personal responsibility has been awakened in many who were fortunate enough to participate. New interest has been aroused in our search for growth inside our church, as well as in reaching out to others who are also seeking a better life for all.

And, we have our dreams -- dreams of making Almont Summer School a year-around Retreat Center, with new modern buildings adequate for this purpose, perhaps even developing it into a Retirement Center where old friendships can be renewed and new friendships established! It's a dream, but, you know, dreams do come true!

CHURCH OF THE HOLY CITY
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in such restricting framework, its guiding and energizing power is denied when encountered in other circumstances; and the familiar circumstances of time, place, trappings and ritual form are expected to accomplish too much--namely, to "make" us sacramental, regardless of our preparation or psychic state. Freed to larger operation, sacramental power will affect

all the facets of our total life; and our life together as a church will affect most if not all of the concerns and activities that are important to us. This will make the church stronger, even though it will leave the church far less identifiable than it is in its present isolated and ineffectual splendor.

What encourages me most in the Swedenborgian Church today, is the drive toward exploration, experimentation. The interest in "giving it a try" is a positive aspect of the attitude, "I'm lost too; can't we go on together." It implies that we haven't "got there" -- which I heartily endorse. It implies that we are not certain of the way -- which I am sure is true. But it also implies that one way looks good, as if it might lead closer, and that we have the courage and strength to move on.

That path begins just the other side of a manger, in a stable that we have overlooked as out-of-the-way, or not-worth-our-while; and the strength to follow it is born there. In the symbolism of this essay, the path is the New Year. It is in this metaphor that I wish you, from the bottom of my heart, a blessed Christmas, and a happy New Year.

JAY LEE IN BELLEVUE



Jay Lee, Swedenborg School of Religion student from Seoul, Korea, is completing his SSR program with his field education work in Bellevue, Washington. He is seen above with the Rev. Ernest Martin (left) Chairman of the SSR Board of Managers and President Elect of Convention, when they met on Mr. Martin's recent trip to Bellevue. On the right is the Rev. Calvin Turley, SSR faculty member.

WAYFARERS' CHAPEL BOARD MEETS



Rollo Billings Photo

The Fall Meeting of the Wayfarers' Chapel Board, held in the Library Wing of the Chapel, included (left to right) Mr. Erle Lundberg; the Rev. David Johnson; the Rev. Calvin Turley, President of the California Association; Mr. Stewart E. Poole and Mrs. Poole; the Rev. Richard Tafel, President of the Swedenborgian Church; and the Rev. Robert Young, Minister at the Chapel.



Wayfarers' Chapel Photo

NEW BAPTISMAL FONT IN COLORADO SPRINGS

A gift of the Women's Alliance to the Garden of the Gods Memorial Chapel in Colorado Springs, this new baptismal font was in place in the chancel for the first time on November 5. The new chapel of the newest member-organization of the Swedenborgian Church (The Messenger, July-August 1967) is in regular use now, and the congregation is preparing for Dedication early in 1968, featuring an address by the noted theologian, Dr. Joseph Sittler.

STATISTICS

Deaths

Frederick Schneider died Nov. 9th. He was a member of the Church of the Good Shepherd, Kitchener. Resurrection service was held Nov. 13th with the Rev. Paul Zacharias officiating.

Rand Thompson of the Newtonville Church died during November.

Mrs. Raymond (Kathryn) Alden died Sept. 22. Mrs. Alden was a member of the Newtonville Church. A Memorial Service was held on Oct. 1 with the Rev. George Dole officiating.

Dr. Elsie McLaughlin died Sunday, Sept. 26th. A Memorial Service was held in the Newtonville Church on Sept. 26 with the Rev. George Dole officiating.

John Arthur Gamon of Berkeley, Calif., died on Sept. 20. The Resurrection service was conducted by the Rev. Neal K. McGowan on Sunday Sept. 24 at Berkeley Hills Chapel.

Surviving Mr. Gamon are his wife, a daughter, Mrs. J. McClintock of Sarasota, Florida; Mr. David Gamon of Washington, D.C. and Captain John Gamon of La Jolla California.

Resurrection service was held for the late Harold R. Chalmers on June 15 at Birmingham, Mich. Mr. Harold Chalmers died on June 13 at the age of 69 years.

Mrs. Helen Perry, 84, of Bath, Maine, died on Nov. 12. She was formerly of Cambridge, Mass. Mrs. Perry was the widow of F. Gardiner Perry.

Mrs. Perry leaves two sons, Frederick G. Jr. of Wayland, Mass., and John C. of Sherborn; a daughter, Mrs. Annie Haskell of Bath; two brothers, Walter L. of Cambridge and Gilbert of Prescott, Arizona; a sister, Miss Florence Whitehead of Cambridge and eleven grandchildren.

Private services were held Nov. 14 in Bath, Maine. A memorial service was held on Nov. 19 at the Church of the New Jerusalem, Cambridge with the Rev. George Dole officiating.

Mrs. Anna Vodola died on Sept. 18 at the age of 83 years. Having become acquainted with Swedenborg in her 60th year, she attended the Connecticut Association. Mrs. Vodola, a widow, is survived by her thirteen children.

Mrs. Carrie Partridge of Portland, Maine died Sept. 2 at the age of 89 years. A memorial service was held on Sept. 5 with the Rev. Michael Salvetti officiating.

Marriages

Mary Lou Locke married Ross Jerrett III on May 27 in the Detroit Church of the Holy City with the Rev. Erwin Reddekopp officiating.

Sharon Lynne Reddekopp united in marriage with Richard Arthur Slough on June 17 with the Rev. Erwin Reddekopp officiating in the Detroit Church.

On July 1 Jacquelyn Ann Hoffer married George John Miller in the Detroit Church with the Rev. Erwin Reddekopp officiating.

Janet Linda Nagle united in marriage with Kenneth Robert Mosher on Sept. 16 in the Detroit Church with the Rev. Erwin Reddekopp officiating.

Robert K. Thompson and Ida Edwina Cox were married on Oct. 21 in the Fryeburg Church.

Orman Andrew McAllister, Jr. married Sherry Lee Morey on Nov. 3 in the Fryeburg Church.

Births

Randy Scott was born on Aug. 9 to Dale and Nancy Heath of Fryeburg, Maine.

Rebecca Jean Lacy was born in October to David and Sandra of the Fryeburg Church.

Melanie Muth was born in Colorado on Sept. 13 to Jerry and Phyllis.

On Sept. 13 Susan Elbertha was born to Elmer and Eleanor Smith of Fryeburg, Maine.

Baptisms

Brent McCurdy, son of the Rev. and Mrs. George McCurdy was baptized in the Boston Church by the Rev. George Dole on Sept. 24th.

Rev. George Dole Baptized Tracy Lee, daughter of David P. and Penelope (Mack) MacDonald on Nov. 19 in the Cambridge Church.

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