

THE MESSENGER

Official Organ of the Swedenborgian Church

JULY-AUGUST 1974



NEWLY-ELECTED OFFICERS AND
BOARD & COMMITTEE MEMBERS
(Election Results p. 114)

ELECTION RESULTS

Number preceding name indicates votes received (out of possible 129).

* following name indicates re-election to office.

† following name indicates nomination from the floor (others were nominated by the Nominating Committee).

‡ following name indicates that election occurred on second-round voting, and a number before name indicates votes received on that round only.

Names in *italic type* were not elected.

CONVENTION OFFICERS, AND BOARD & COMMITTEE MEMBERS

BALLOT No. 1 — Uncontested Offices

VICE-PRESIDENT:

(126) Mr. Adolph T. Liebert*

BOARD OF EDUCATION:

(107) Mrs. Richard H. (Ginger) Tafel, Jr.

RECORDING SECRETARY:

(123) Mrs. Wilfred (Ethel) Rice*

BOARD OF HOME AND FOREIGN MISSIONS:

(123) Dr. Horand Gutfeldt (4-yr. term)*

(120) Mr. Tomas Spiers (4-yr. term)*

TREASURER:

(126) Capt. August Ebel

(115) The Rev. Paul Zacharias (3-yr. term)*

(116) Mrs. Alan (Dorothy) Farnham (3-yr. term)*

GENERAL COUNCIL:

(122) The Rev. Jaikoo Lee

(113) Miss Chris Laitner

(111) Mr. Keith Mull

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ADMISSION TO THE MINISTRY:

(112) The Rev. Ernest Frederick*

(121) Mrs. Horace (Margaret) Briggs*

BALLOT No. 2 — Contested Offices

PRESIDENT:

(97) The Rev. Eric Zacharias

(30) *The Rev. Clayton Priestnal†*

BOARD OF MANAGERS OF S.S.R.

(107) Dr. Horand Gutfeldt*

(93) The Rev. Eric Zacharias*

(73) *The Rev. Erwin Reddekopp†*

BOARD OF PUBLICATION:

(74) Mrs. E. Ellsworth (Jan) Seibert)

(50) *Mr. Philip Macdonald†*

(58) *Mrs. John (Martha) King (Incumbent)*

(81) Mr. H. Page Conant*

(78) Mrs. Horace (Margaret) Briggs†

AUGMENTATION FUND COMMITTEE:

(66) The Rev. George McCurdy† ‡

(57) *The Rev. Edwin G. Capon‡ (Incumbent)*

Mr. Robert Jerome† (Withdrew after 1st ballot)

NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

(68) Mr. H. Page Conant†

(50) *The Rev. Clayton Priestnal‡*

Mr. Rafael Guiu† (Withdrew after 1st ballot)

BACK-AND-FRONT COVER (l.-r.): Tomas Spiers, Jan Seibert, Barbara Casper, Gus Ebel, Margaret Briggs, Diane Winter, Julie Rankin, Ernest Frederick, Lynn Zimmerman, Eric Zacharias, Walter Orthwein, Dorothy Farnham, Paul Zacharias, Jay Lee, George McCurdy, Horand Gutfeldt.

THE MESSENGER — JULY-AUGUST 1974

Vol. 194, No. 7

Whole Number 4974

Published monthly, except for the double issue in July-August, by the Swedenborgian Church (founded 1817, incorporated 1861 as the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America).

ROBERT H. KIRVEN

Editor

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.

EDITORIAL, BUSINESS, & SUBSCRIPTION ADDRESS: THE MESSENGER, 48 Sargent St., Newton, MA, 02158

Subscription free to members of the Swedenborgian Church; non-members, \$3.00 a year, foreign postage .25 extra; gift subscriptions from a member, \$1.50; single copies, .25.

COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

CHAIRMAN: The Rev. Randall Laakko

SECRETARY: The Rev. Harvey Tafel

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Dr. George Dole (3-yr. term)

The Rev. Jaikoo Lee (2-yr. term)

The Rev. George McCurdy (1-yr. term)



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLICATION

CHAIRMAN: Dr. Edward Bohlander

SECRETARY: Dr. William Woofenden

EDITOR, *The Messenger*: Dr. Robert Kirven

AMERICAN NEW CHURCH LEAGUE

PRESIDENT: Julie Rankin

VICE-PRESIDENT: Lynn Zimmerman

SECRETARY: Diane Winter

TREASURER: Barbara Casper

NEW EXEC. COMM. MEMBER: David Fekete

CHAPLAIN: The Rev. Walter Orthwein III



ALLIANCE OF NEW CHURCH WOMEN



PRESIDENT: Dorothy Tuck

1st VICE-PRESIDENT: Lisa Reddekopp

2nd VICE-PRESIDENT: Dorothy Farnham

RECORDING SEC.: Betty Guiu

CORRESPONDING SEC.: Louise Woofenden

TREASURER: Doris Tafel

RELIGION CHAIRMAN: Alice Van Boven

ROUND ROBIN Chmn.: Jean Hoyt

MITE BOX Chmn.: Corinne Tafel

PUBLICATIONS Chmn.: Marion Priestnal

NEW MEMBERS NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

(for 5-yr. term) Betty Zacharias

BOARD OF MANAGERS OF S.S.R.

CHAIRMAN: The Rev. Ernest Frederick

SECRETARY: The Rev. George McCurdy

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

The Rev. Eric Zacharias

The Rev. Andre Diaconoff

Mr. Roger Paulson

BOARD OF MISSIONS

PRESIDENT: Dr. Horand Gutfeldt

SECRETARY: Mrs. Alan W. Farnham

TREASURER: Capt. August Ebel

For Japanese field, Dr. George Dole; for Spanish-speaking work, Mr. Tomas Spiers; for projects, Mr. Robert Tafel and Miss Margaret Sampson.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

CHAIRMAN: Dr. Dorothea Harvey

SECRETARY: Mrs. Robert (Betsy) Young

SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

PRESIDENT: The Rev. Walter Orthwein III

VICE-PRESIDENT: Dr. Horand Gutfeldt

SECRETARY: Mrs. William (Louise) Woofenden

TREASURER: Mr. Daniel Nielsen

Chmn., NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

Mrs. Alice Van Boven

Chmn., LESSON COMMITTEE:

The Rev. Franklin Blackmer

CONVENTION HEADLINES

ERIC ZACHARIAS ELECTED PRESIDENT

The Rev. Eric John Zacharias, Pastor of the New Jerusalem Church of Pretty Prairie, Kansas, was elected to be the next President of the General Convention. His first three-year term of office will begin immediately following the close of the 1975 Convention. He will be eligible for re-election to one additional three-year term.

(More election results on page 114)

CONSTITUTION AMENDED

The number of delegates authorized to vote at future conventions has been almost doubled as the result of a constitutional amendment giving each association a minimum of two delegates, plus one delegate for every fifteen members (instead of one delegate over the minimum being allowed for every thirty members, as previously).

(More details on page 118)

The office of General Pastor was eliminated as an office of Convention, in a package of seven amendments to the Constitution and the By-Laws which reassigned the duties of the office (except in foreign fields). Association structures are not affected.

(More details on page 118)

Eliminated one board, and one ex-officio membership—the Board of Trustees of the Pension Fund being no longer needed; and Board of Publication's ex-officio member, the President of the New Church Board of Publication, Inc., no longer existing since that body has disbanded.

(More details on page 118)

THREE MEN, ONE WOMAN AUTHORIZED FOR MINISTRY

The Rev. Goodmund Boolsen was recognized as having been ordained into the First Degree of the Ministry of the General Church, and having served in addition as an Authorized Candidate for Convention's ministry, was authorized for Ordination to the full ministry of the General Convention.

(More details in next issue)

Dr. Dorothea Harvey, Professor of Philosophy and Religion at Urbana College, was made an Authorized Candidate for Ordination to Convention's ministry, looking toward ordination at the 1975 Convention.

(More details on page 120)

Mr. Robert Murray, currently a Special Student at the Swedenborg School of Religion, was authorized for Ordination as a Missionary Minister to Guyana, the service to take place in Georgetown, Guyana, early in 1975 after Mr. Murray has completed further studies at S.S.R.

(More details on page 119)

Mr. Milton Honemann, long-time lay leader of the Baltimore Church, was authorized to serve that church as a Lay Minister, his Consecration to that office to take place in Baltimore this fall.

(More details in next issue)

In historic First, two members of General Church Council of Clergy attended all meetings of Convention's Council of Ministers, and many sessions of Convention as well.

(Photo on page 123; Story in next issue)



CONVENTION VIEWS



CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS AMENDED

With few questions and no debate, eleven amendments to the Constitution, By-Laws, and Standing Resolutions of Convention were passed by unanimous voice votes of the 150th General Convention. The speed and ease with which the formal actions passed seemed to surprise those who had allotted time for extended debate, and to appear as an anti-climax to those who had worked for several years on the development of some of them.

GENERAL PASTORS

Eight of the eleven amendments had the single effect of eliminating the office of General Pastor of Convention. They were passed in three votes—one covering changes in five Sections of Article V of the Constitution, another making the consistent changes in Articles IX and XXIV of the By-Laws, and a third eliminating the Standing Resolution from Minute 66 of the 1875 Convention.

The decision which was implemented by this extensive package of amendments has a variety of origins dating back over a number of years. The specific parliamentary route by which it came to this convention is interesting: it began with a recommendation by the Committee on Worship, from its meeting on Nov. 14, 1968. The CoW's parent body, the Council of Ministers, had directed a study of a long-recognized liturgical problem: namely, that in the first place, the "Laying-on of Hands" in the service of Investiture of a General Pastor was counter-symbolic to the symbolism of the same action in the individual's earlier service of Ordination; and further, that this liturgical anomaly was compounded each time a minister was invested with the office for a second, third, or even more times. In attempting to devise a new service of Investiture which would correspond to the use of the office as well as conform to good liturgies, the Committee on Worship discussed at length the functions of the General Pastor.

Although at its inception, the office had been a theologically sound solution to an administrative

problem caused transportation and communication difficulties of the nineteenth century, it no longer served a necessary role in the life of the church. Its authority to ordain had become subject to votes of the Council of Ministers and the General Convention, and in practice was exercised almost exclusively by only one General Pastor—the President of Convention. Its advisory functions to the Council of Ministers had the effect of depriving the smaller Associations permanently from representation in the formulation of that advice (only Associations with three or more ordained ministers were entitled to have a General Pastor of their own on the Committee of GPs). For these and other reasons, an appropriate liturgical form seemed more difficult to create, than would be the constitutional changes necessary to re-assign the General Pastor's duties.

In subsequent considerations by the Council of Ministers, its Executive Committee, the General Council, its Research Committee and Committee on Amendments, Convention's Legal Counsel and an *ad hoc* committee appointed by the CoM's Executive Committee (under the chairmanship of President Martin), and individuals with various responsibilities in Convention, the Committee on Worship's original suggestion was affirmed, defined, and formulated into the specific constitutional changes necessary for its implementation.

Without repeating the details and wording that appeared in *The Messenger* last February, the net effect of the eleven changes can be summarized:

- 1) The General Pastors' authority to ordain is given to the [one] Ordaining Minister of Convention. The President shall be named to that office, except in two very different kinds of situations: a) the election of a layman as President: or b) the Ordaining Minister's resignation, incapacity, or death. In either case, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers shall be named Ordaining Minister. Further "line of succession" is unnecessary, since the Council of Ministers could elect a succeeding Chairman in any unforeseen emergency.
- 2) The Committee of General Pastors' advisory and mediating responsibilities are assigned to the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers.
- 3) General Pastors serving outside North America (and their successors named by the Board of

Missions) retain their supervisory and ordaining authority.

4) These amendments have no effect on the right of Associations to name a Presiding Minister or spiritual leader and no direct effect on the title they may give that leader.

REPRESENTATION

Another amendment allows one voting delegate for each 15 members in an Association, plus the two delegates that each Association is allowed, regardless of size. This change from 30 members required for one delegate over the basic 2, to only 15 members per delegate over the basic 2, almost doubles the size of the potential total authorized voting delegation at convention, beginning in 1975.

Out of 13 associations and other bodies entitled to send delegates to Convention, over half had full representation this year, under the old system of delegate apportionment. These included groups as distant as the Pacific Coast Association, and the Massachusetts Association—as well as such near-by associations as Michigan, Illinois, Middle Atlantic and Ohio. Most of the under-represented bodies still had 50-75% representation; so the actual number of votes cast next year may be considerably larger than this year's 129.

TECHNICAL ADJUSTMENTS

Other amendments eliminated the Board of Trustees of the Pension Fund, a body whose obligations have been assumed by Convention's retirement insurance policy; and eliminated the constitutional requirement that the President of the "New Church Board of Publication" be a member of Convention's present Board of Publication. The former body was a corporation separate from Convention, which was dissolved a few years ago, turning its assets and responsibilities over to Convention's Board of Publication. Dr. Robert Kirven, who had been president of the NCBP, Inc. when it dissolved moved adoption of the amendment.



V. P. Adolph Liebert chairs the voting on the amendments.

To Be Ordained in Guyana

ROBERT MURRAY TO BE MISSIONARY MINISTER

Beginning early in 1975, the New Church in Georgetown, Guyana, will have a new Missionary Minister—Mr. Robert Murray, presently a special student at the Swedenborg School of Religion. The Guyanese New Church is one of the oldest in the Americas, having been founded by the same Mr. James Glen who sowed the seeds of the early east coast U.S. Swedenborgian churches. However, the church there has been without ordained leadership since the death in 1970 of the Rev. Walter Frazer. Organizational leadership has been provided since then by the tireless efforts of Mrs. Walter (Rita) Frazer, with preaching by laymen and sacraments by local ministers of other denominations.

Mr. Murray and his wife, Rose, spent a month visiting the Georgetown church, getting acquainted with the members, immediately before Convention. During that visit, the Rev. Ernest Frederick represented the Board of Missions on a supervisory-evaluative trip to Georgetown. On the basis of all available data, the various boards and committees involved agreed that Mr. Murray could complete his necessary preparation by the end of this year, and be ordained as Missionary Minister for service under Board of Missions supervision, soon after that. This was implemented by Convention.

To answer frequent questions, Guyana is on the north coast of South America, just east of Venezuela. As Mr. Murray's plans develop, more information on Guyana will appear in *The Messenger*.



Rose and Robert Murray at Convention

Ordination Expected in 1975

DOROTHEA HARVEY AUTHORIZED CANDIDATE FOR ORDINATION

Climaxing four years of discussion in the Council of Ministers, three on the floor of Convention, actions by General Council, and a formal opinion by Convention's Legal Counsel, the General Convention voted favorably this year on a recommendation by the Council of Ministers *"that Dorothea Harvey be recognized as an Authorized Candidate for the Ministry for the coming year, looking forward to ordination at the 1975 Convention."*

BACKGROUND

Although the ordination of women had been discussed in local congregations, and by the Council of Ministers, before, the issue had lain dormant for several years. In 1971, however, a woman interested in ordination had inquired about admission to S.S.R., and the school asked the Council for advice on how to respond. The question was referred to the CoM's Executive Committee, which recommended that *"women should be given equal consideration as candidates for the ministry."*

At its 1972 session, the Council devoted a lengthy discussion to that recommendation—mostly on the theological issues affecting the matter—and voted 16 to 7 in favor of accepting qualified women as candidates for Convention's ministry. The essential grounds of the arguments, both pro and con, were summarized in *The Messenger* (July-Aug., 1972, p. 145), with an offer to publish "detailed theological and practical analyses of the advocacy and opposition to women in the ministry . . . prepared for *The Messenger* by qualified spokesmen (and/or spokeswomen) for both sides if sufficient interest is expressed to the Editor." No such interest was expressed.

The ministers' action, however, also included a communication to General Council, regarding the possible constitutional issues involved. That body agreed that *"sex should not be a bar to the ministry,"* and ordered further investigation as to whether constitutional changes would be required *"to clarify our desire that qualified women be eligible for ordination."* An Oct. 30 letter from Convention's Legal Counsel, Mr. Forster Freeman, Jr., summarized his research into the matter, and

delivered the formal opinion that no constitutional barriers existed. At its meeting the following January, General Council voted to *"recommend to Convention, with the approval of the Council of Ministers, that it adopt a motion allowing women to be ordained into the ministry of the General Convention. (In favor—10; Opposed—1)"*

The Council of Ministers responded in 1973 with a lengthy and serious discussion of the matter. By a vote of 15 to 3 (with 3 abstentions), the following action was taken:

RESOLVED: that this Council, while recognizing the distinctive natures and functions of male and female, believes that individual differences prevent us from any rigid application of this generalization in church affairs, and that one's gender alone ought not to debar a person from ordination. We, therefore, are prepared to welcome both qualified men and qualified women into our ministry.

The 1972 CoM action had been endorsed by the convention by an un-counted "straw" vote (estimated in the Convention Minutes as "two or three times as many people favoring the ordination of women as those opposed"). The 1973 resolution, however, came to the floor of that year's convention for formal action: 91 in favor, 13 opposed, and 12 abstaining.

THIS YEAR'S DECISION

When the candidacy of Dr. Harvey, supported by a request from the Urbana Society, came before the Council of Ministers, a member distributed copies of a doctrinal paper opposing the ordination of women. This provided the stimulus for a fourth round of discussion of the issue. Another member had a paper to the same point, prepared too late for duplication and distribution, but was given an opportunity to summarize his doctrinal objections. After a little more discussion, attention was turned to procedural details (resulting in the decision to recommend Authorized Candidate status rather than recommend a constitutional waiver and ordination in 1974). The final vote was 21 in favor, 4 opposed, and one abstention.

The development of opinion in the Council of Ministers through the four years of doctrinal discussions can be seen in the percentages by which actions were voted:

1971, on referral for study, 69% in favor, 31% opposed to any further consideration;
 1972, on accepting women *as candidates* for ordination: 70% yes, 30% no;
 1973, on accepting women *for ordination*: 71% yes, 14% no, 14% abstaining;
 1974, on *actual authorization of candidacy*: 81% yes, 15% no, 4% abstaining.



George McCurdy addressing the convention

When the recommendation from the Council of Ministers came before the Convention, the Rev. George McCurdy and the Rev. Walter Orthwein spoke against the ordination of women on doctrinal grounds, and Mr. Orthwein requested a delay in voting until more doctrinal material could be presented. Capt. August Ebel asked if the discussion was in order, since it seemed more related to a reconsideration of last year's vote on the general issue of ordination of women, than to the motion

presently on the floor. President Martin ruled the discussion to be in order, but the Rev. Randall Laakko also challenged the orderliness, as did the Rev. Richard Tafel, who also pointed out some of the history of the ministers' consideration of the matter. Miss Susan Turley spoke briefly in favor of ordaining women, Mr. Brian Reddekopp spoke briefly against it. At this point the Rev. William Woofenden called a point of order, on the grounds that discussion was indeed to the issue of reconsideration rather than to the motion before the convention, and the Council of Ministers had ruled by a decisive margin on the theological matter that speakers were addressing. His call for the question was seconded and voted. The voice vote on the actual motion was split, so President Martin asked if any of the delegates voting in the negative wished to call for a count to challenge the apparent affir-

mative decision, but the majority was clear. The Rev. Irwin Reddekopp asked to be recorded by name as abstaining.

The action officially made Dr. Harvey an Authorized Candidate for the Ministry, and included the specific wording, "looking forward to ordination at the 1975 Convention.

THE CANDIDATE

Dr. Dorothea Harvey received her Bachelor of Divinity Degree from Union Theological Seminary, and her Ph.D. in Old Testament studies from Columbia University. She is presently Professor of Philosophy and Religion at Urbana College, Chairman of the college's Division of Humanities, and a leading member of the Urbana Society. Her work appears in the prestigious *Interpreter's Bible Dictionary*. The respect she holds in the college, the community, and the church is witnessed by the fact that she once was asked by a majority of the church and community trustees of the college to accept the post of President.

A past-Chairman of the Board of Managers of the Swedenborg School of Religion, Dr. Harvey presently serves on its Board of Directors, and is the Chairman of Convention's Board of Education.





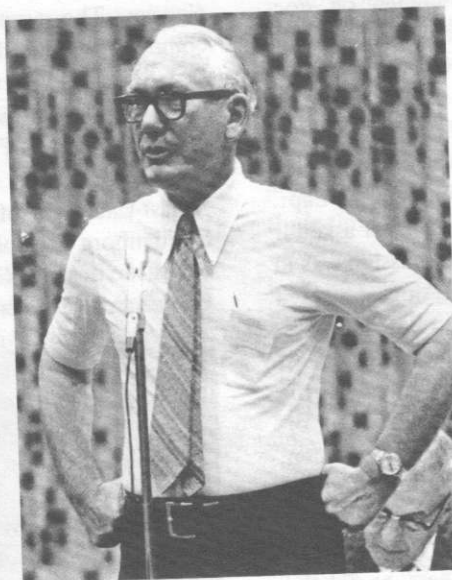
Harold and Mabel Larson toast their 50th Anniversary



Lewis Moore of Urbana, with his wife Jean, an Urbana College trustee



President Ernest Martin



President-elect Eric Zacharias

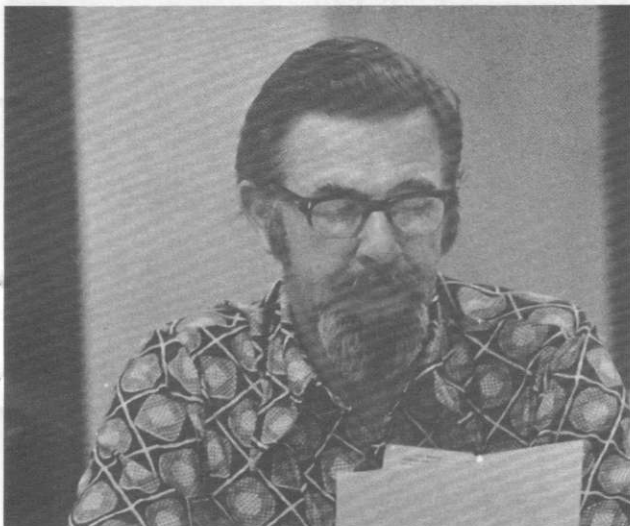


The Rev. Clayton Priestnal, presidential nominee

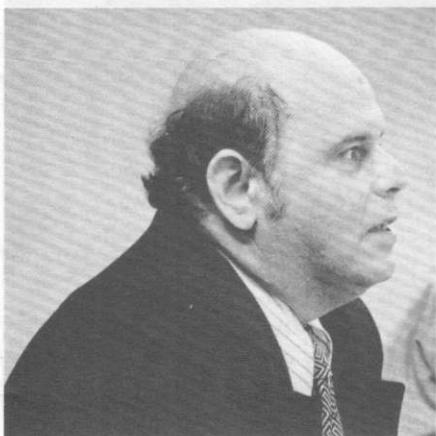
"Small Conference..."—President Martin and Testimonials chairman, Dorothea Harvey

Judy (left) and Becky Barry, from Georgia, helping out at their first convention





The Rev. Owen T. Turley (left) and the Rev. Walter E. Orthwein III, in Council of Ministers Meeting



Urbana College President Roland Patzer spoke to ministers & the convention, was honored at a reception, and sang at the Sunday morning worship service

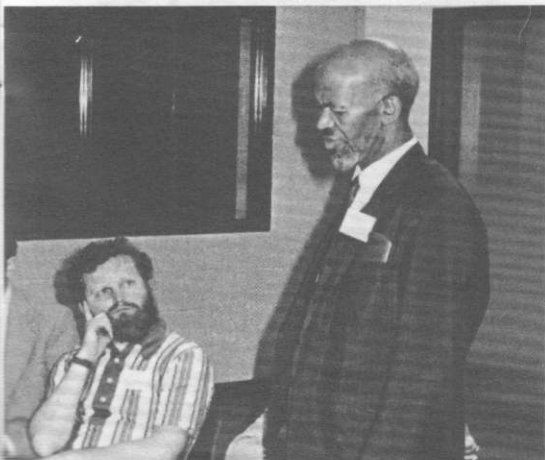


The Rev. Paul Zacharias, past-chmn. of the Council of Ministers, had reports for the ministers and for the Board of Missions from his European trip last spring (report in next issue)



The Rev. David Johnson, waiting in the circle of chairs in which the convention met this year, to begin the devotional service which opened the Urbana Convention

The Rev. Randall Laakko, chmn.-elect of the Council of Ministers, listens to the Rev. Obed Mooki's address to the Council.



The Rev. Dan Heinrich (left) and the Rev. David Holm, attended all sessions of the Council of Ministers—the first event of its kind in the history of relations between the General Convention and the General Church—as well as social functions and some convention business sessions.



Convention Mini-Courses 1974

Over the past several years various types of educational experiences have been provided for the people attending Convention. These are planned by the Convention Planning Committee in conjunction with Convention's Board of Education to contribute to the growth and development of the participant as well as offering ideas for him to take home. These experiences have been very popular. The chief criticism has been that they were too short. So this year Convention opened one day earlier than past years, thus making it possible to give more time to education.

This year the educational experiences were called Mini-courses. They were planned as courses with continuity from one session to the next and time for study or reflection between sessions. The courses were scheduled to meet for three two-hour sessions which were held on Thursday afternoon, Friday morning and Friday afternoon. People wanting to participate were expected to sign up for only one course and attend that course for all three sessions. The Planning Committee strove to provide as wide a variety of course offerings as it could find leadership for, and the variety is apparent just in the listing of them: **WORSHIP THROUGH MUSIC** led by Muff Worden and Jim Trabert, **SWEDENBORG'S THEOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY** led by Calvin Turley and George Dole, **UNDERSTANDINGS AND APPLICATIONS OF THE IDEA OF CORRESPONDENCES** led by Robert Kirven and William Woofenden, **"WHEN TWO OR MORE ARE GATHERED TOGETHER"** (Rel. Ed.) led by Betsy Young and Marge Ball, **PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION** led by Ted Klein, **PRAYER AND THE HEALING PROCESS** led by Andre Diaconoff and Thornton Smallwood, **CHURCH AS COMMUNITY** led by Dorothea Harvey, Cindy Gutfeldt, Sherry Smith and Betsy Bishop, **WOMEN TODAY** led by Mary Kay Klein and Ginger Tafel, **SOCIAL ISSUES** led by Jaikoo Lee and Charles Flynn, **DEATH AND DYING** led by Paul Zacharias and Ernest Martin, **DRUGS** led by Horand Gutfeldt. This page and the next three offer pictures, reports, and participants' comments from two-thirds of them. Comments from other participants, perhaps from other groups, may appear in later issues of *The Messenger*.

Women Today



Our group, which consisted of eleven women, had a very good experience of sharing personal thoughts and feelings on a wide variety of topics such as guilt, children, money, time, sex, identity, independence, and marriage. We feel that we are very happy to be women and at the same time we wish to be recognized as persons. We realize that women's greater realization of self can also free men from some of the burdens of their roles. The group supports the freedom of women to choose who they want to be, and applauds the growing openness of Convention in accepting women for the ministry.

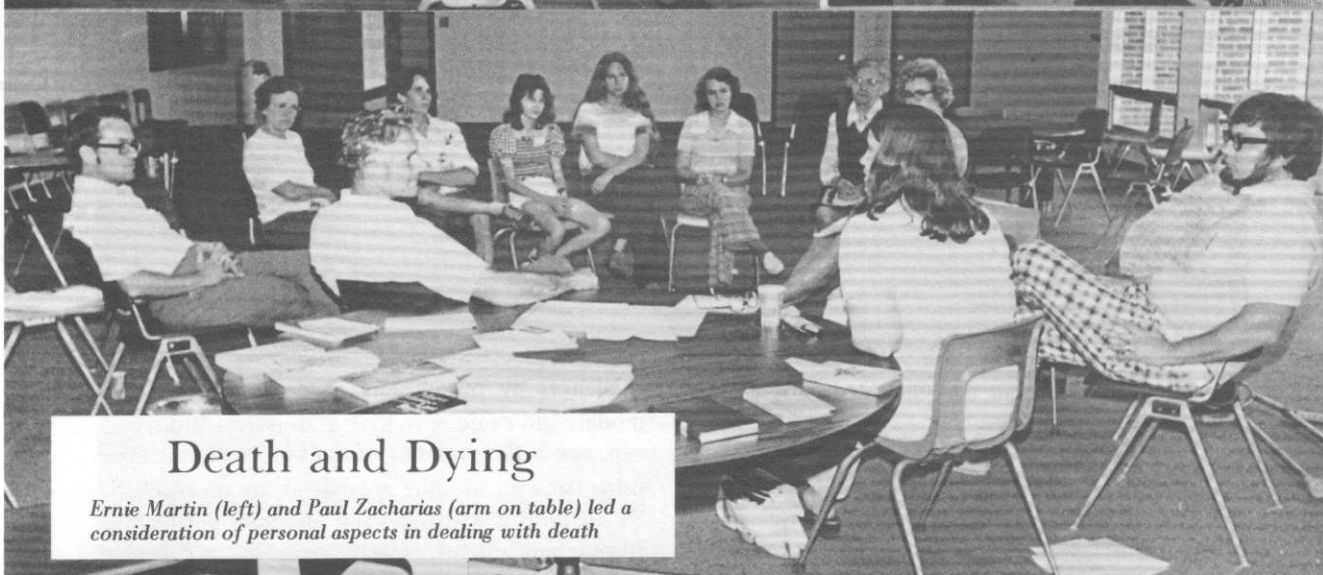


Jan Seibert (back to window, above) pinch-hit for Ginger Tafel in leading the WOMEN TODAY group with Mary Kay Klein (on floor, below)



The Idea of Correspondences

Bill Woofenden and Bob Kirven (l. & r., inset) adapted an S.S.R. course to meet the interests of a large group.



Death and Dying

Ernie Martin (left) and Paul Zacharias (arm on table) led a consideration of personal aspects in dealing with death



Worship through Music

Jim Trabert and 'Muff' Worder (center, profile) led theory and practice sessions in WORSHIP THROUGH MUSIC

Swedenborg's Theological Psychology

This mini-course, led by Cal Turley and George Dole, was an introduction to the integration of Swedenborgian theology and psychology. In its three two-hour sessions we had input material presented to us, an experiential exercise, debriefing after the exercise, and considerable discussion throughout.

The first session of the mini-course was a two-part presentation. Cal opened the session with a brief dissertation on Swedenborg's pre-theological conception of the psychic structure of persons. This provided an historical perspective of Swedenborg's development of this conception in later years, and also gave us a basis for seeing ourselves modeled in dimensions outside of space and time. The values and limitations of such models were discussed, and there was some debate on similarities between Swedenborg's and Freud's models of man (generally not to Dr. Freud's favor). George then took us to the theological period of Swedenborg's life where we looked at some diagrams derived from descriptions of heaven in the writings. Based on the parallel structures of heaven and persons, George presented these diagrams as models of the psychic structure of man. While each of the models taken alone is unsatisfactory, and taken together they contradict each other, an examination of several of them demonstrated various aspects of the nature of man.

In the second session, Cal presented a model which he has found useful in his theo-therapy work, in which one of the central ingredients is the concept

of "core-being." This core-being, among other things, is a part of our psychic make-up which senses the presence of the Lord, acknowledges being acceptable to the Lord, and maintains a sense of our identity as individuals. The presentation led to discussion of remains. Following this we were introduced to our experiential meditative exercise.

During this exercise we were read a memorable Relation and tried to let our consciousness follow the image brought up by the reading. We attempted to allow our consciousness to spontaneously find our core-being, bringing awareness of the presence of and acceptance by our Lord within ourselves.

Various degrees of success were reported back during debriefing, followed by some debate over the potential value of the exercise as a tool for regeneration. This spilled over into the third session, during which there was also discussion of the appropriateness of different approaches to self-examination for different individuals and further discussion on the various models and the impact of recent psychological data on them (and vice-versa).

At the close of the last session we were given two challenges by our leaders. One was to use the models and exercise to look at ourselves and try to experience the presence of the Lord within us; the other was to use the models as an approach to Swedenborg's writings, using the next perspective to gain new insights from the writings.

Cal Turley and George Dole (1st & 2nd from left, inset) used exercises, diagrams, meditation, and lots of talk, in conveying the psychological theory that Swedenborg formulated as he developed his theological system





Where Two or More Are Gathered Together

PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The discussions in our group were honest and energetic, and it is impossible to adequately summarize them in a few words. We considered what religious education and New Church education are, their goals, and resources and methods for seeking these

Betsy Young and Marge Ball (left and right, standing at the blackboard) led discussion of goals and methods in religious education in the context of the church and the world today

goals. We plan to gather our impressions of what happened in our discussions, and reconstruct these discussions on a tape. In seeking to develop an open philosophy we had some open discussions, and we would like to make the sort of thing we did available to others.



Drugs

Horand Gutfeldt (far left) conducted the 'mini-est' of the courses—one that dealt with drugs, and the role they have played in religious cultures

Church as Community

Several members of the Urbana Church community shared the leadership of a course dealing with the experience of the Urbana experiment



Women's New



The annual meeting of the Women's New Church Alliance took place after the Alliance luncheon, at "The Hub" on the Urbana College campus. It was opened by a devotional service based on the first chapter of Genesis, prepared by the Chaplain, Alice Van Boven. A luncheon and short business meeting followed.

It was voted to give \$50 to each of the six camps, \$500 to Urbana College, and to give all of the 1974 Mite Box contributions, which amounted to over \$1100, to the College for foreign New Church scholarships. It was also decided to send the Vice-President, Lisa Reddekopp, to the annual meeting of Church Women United. It was voted to give the 1975 Mite Box to the Wayfarers' Chapel, which is our best missionary outlet.

Mrs. Mooki, the guest speaker, opened her talk with a song, "To love someone more every day." She then spoke of the women's groups, called Leagues, in South Africa. They too have an annual meeting in October when the schools are closed. It is a day of rejoicing, when a representative from each local League dances up the aisle of the church with a bag of "rands" or smaller coins. These offerings had not been changed into larger notes, the feeling being that the women had worked hard to raise the money so others should work hard at counting it! Men are allowed as visitors, but while they can keep their eyes open, they must keep

Church Alliance

their mouths shut until asked to come forward. Then Mrs. Mooki and the men stand before the League officers as Mrs. Mooki humbly states the needs of the Church, one at a time. Each need is met with a cash donation from the amount collected.

When a women wishes to join a local League, she has to be confirmed in the Church and promise to take a serious responsibility for the Church. Then she has to wait three months, in which time she shows how serious she is and how much the Church means to her. Then she is allowed to buy the material for her uniform at a particular shop which sells the New Church material. (All black Church Women's groups in South Africa wear uniforms. Each denomination has a special one and is identified by it.) Then she makes her uniform, which is a blue jacket and white hat. She, with others, comes forward in the church, wearing a black skirt and white blouse, carrying the blue jacket. She gives the jacket to the minister, who blesses it and gives it back. She reads the League promise and the declaration of faith, and from then on is known as a member of the Women's League. There are similar junior leagues known as the "Swedenborg Stars."

Mrs. Mooki held the Alliance enthralled with her sense of humor and love which she so openly and generously bestowed on all. It was indeed a day of rejoicing for the Alliance too. *Corinne B. Tafel*



THE CONVENTION SERMON

PEOPLE OF THE WAY

by the Reverend
ANDRE DIACONOFF

And you know the way where I am going. (John 14:4)

It was the Reverend Lewis Pyle Mercer who said that his best sermons came to him as he walked in the crowd along the sidewalks of Chicago. There he found the occasions and the relevant words to speak what he had found/learned to say in the Word.

That expression of Mr. Mercer's—I liked it when I heard it, and I like it now. I believe it says something we need to know to be people of the way, and to be a Church of the way, the way that the Lord Jesus Christ is going.

Jesus listened to men talking together as they walked. "What were you discussing on the way?", he asked the disciples. They must have been taken aback; "... they were silent; for on the way they had discussed with one another who was the greatest ..."

On the day of resurrection two of the disciples were walking home to Emmaus. "Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, 'What is the

conversation which you are holding with each other as you walk?' ... And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself."

Each time the conversing on the way was occasion for His sharing with men. Even so today, he hears and responds on the way. What better occasion is there to learn, to share, to worship and to serve than "as you walk?"



There are however these two attitudes and ideas in man towards religion. There is that in us which wants the presence of the Divine to stand still, immovable. It is the faith that holds God is like an eternal rock. It is the religion that sings in the words of the hymn

"O Those that changest not, abide with me."

It is the religion that relies on the words of Malachi, "For I the Lord do not change, therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not concerned." The commandments are graven on stone. They stand.

In that perspective, the word for man is to measure up to Divine standards. Religion is living so as to measure up.

The other view of spiritual life is to find the Lord walking before us, to read His direction aright, that we may follow where he is going.

Religion then is to make sure of the Divine aim and purpose. Religion is to walk with the Lord.

From the beginning of the story in the Word of the Lord, man is called "to go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you . . ."

"By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called . . . and he went out, not knowing where he was to go. . . . For he looked forward to the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

In the divine epic of regeneration we have in the Book of Exodus, "The Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night."

The first message to people at the dawn of the Christian day was, "He is not here . . . he is going before you into Galilee; there you will see him."

We are people who have been brought together, and are held together by a divine Way-shower, a leader on the move. We are people held together by a divine purpose.

The truth of life is sure, you say. Better to say the truth grows sure in the measure it makes clear his purpose for man everywhere and the direction for the continuing working-out of that purpose is the "Way."

In the words with which we began—from His conversation with his disciples—the Divine Master and Friend is saying, "I am going on . . . and you know the way where I am going."



Could we put ourselves in the place of those men at table with Him? They were in a sense where we are, we who hold the assurance that he is with us, and that his presence is and always will be unchanged; and here he is speaking of leaving!

What is more—and with marvelous confidence—he is saying: “You know the way where I am going . . .”

One good familiar literalist, Thomas, protests, “Lord, we do not know where you are going, how can we know the way?”

But there is just the test, and the discovery, for the “where,” where he is going, is not a new address to which we can now forward our prayer-mail, but a way. It is the direction of his purpose working in and among men.

**SURELY WE HAVE A
BEGINNING OF KNOWLEDGE
WHERE HE IS GOING,
AND WE ARE ON THE WAY.**

The purpose is in Him, and from him, in every man. In the measure the disciple knows him, as a working Lord, the direction becomes clear, and there is the way. Once the Church knows him and his aim, the way is open.

You and I have known him as a living Lord, indeed the living Lord. We have listened to his words. We have eaten and drunk at his table. We have watched him move amid the people, heard their talk and his response.

We have seen the difference He made in their lives and in the life of the world.

Have we known, and are we ready to witness in the sincerity of our inner being, the difference he has made in our life?

Then surely we have a beginning of knowledge where he is going on, and we are on the way.

First then, the way begins with His life now in the world. There is today the dynamic of thought and of work; empowering idealism and study and coop-

erative effort to restore what has been called the central reality of religion, reverence for life.

To come to a working agreement on priorities in faith and purpose, and so bring new order to our still very immature heavens; to restrain, subdue and redeem the hells in us, and in our world—to begin to upbuild the new church—this is the beginning of the Way.

Do we begin to think that it is of ourselves that the conscience today is stirred (where that is true) to bring truth and justice and peace to the fore?

Have we read and pondered the announced three-fold purpose of every “coming of the Lord” into human history?

The announcement is like a time table. Let us be awake to the happening.

“And you know the way where I am going. . .”

He is going where people live.

Need I say here, *we* are of the people? Yes, I believe it should be said and repeated, lest the “Sunday only” feeling we are prone to have about things of the church cause us to forget that all people are one.

*Where cross the crowded ways of life
Where sound the cries of race and clan
Above the noise of selfish strife
We hear thy voice, O Son of man.*

The church needs to be alert to the full experience of humanity. The church must tell its truth of faith in the language of the people coming and going in the street.

Indeed, where else are the spiritual processes taking place—those we know and describe by the word, “Regeneration,” where but in people with whom we come and go, and (we trust) in us. That is where our Lord is walking, is he not?

* * * * *

Here, let me pause to say something that has puzzled me through the years. I have heard so many

**DO WE WANT
TO PUT ON THE
OUTSIDE OF OUR DOOR
A "DO NOT DISTURB"
CARD?**

remarks in our churches, which seemed to show people were pursued by the desire for distinctiveness. As I say, and confess, this has puzzled me.

Is it that we want to put on the outside of our door a "Do not disturb" card?

The truth of a new day in Christianity, its teachings, and the return of the Lord in spirit and truth, is distinctive; but I do not see how we can postulate any people as distinctive. More truly we should be people *involved*.

I am reminded of what the Reverend Lawrence Gould observed one time. He said a man going out to be distinctive is like a man who goes into a company of people determined to be dignified. You are dignified from within, or you are not. And you are distinctive from within, when you don't have to try.

* * * * *

The Word of the Lord is his Way. It is involved in all human experience, and speaks to all human life.

"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us . . ."

Swedenborg says: "There is only one life, and all live from it, and everyone differently from another . . ." "There is but one life, which is the Lord's life. This one life flows in and causes us to live."

Also the purpose of the Lord is one: to bring all who will to Him. We know it must be in the freedom of every human being. And so he is moving ahead to lead and guide our freedoms to his Freedom of love.

The way begins with Him, we said. And he is going where people live. Let us say here, he is where all

are living as spiritual beings now. His way is not on the surface of living, but rather in and through the landscape of every life.

Have you noted how a path that human feet have worn by crossing and recrossing a meadow is seldom in an efficient straight line but usually winds a bit? It is something like the diary of the people who have trampled the grass. Here the man walking felt like taking a little more time. There, he had a thought on how he could do his job a little faster.

You remember the poem by Robert Frost, "The Road not Taken?"

*Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;*

*Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same.*

*I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence;
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by
And that has made all the difference.*

Yes the history of men is of all those winding roads. It is made by the choices, and so by the direction we move in today—as individuals, as citizens of our country, as members of the human race, as a church—all in the world of the spirit where we are even now.

**THE HISTORY OF MEN
IS OF ALL THOSE
WINDING ROADS . . .
THE CHOICES . . .
IN THE WORLD OF SPIRIT
WHERE WE ARE EVEN NOW.**

"O Lord thou has searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down and art acquainted with all my ways . . ."

No matter where men go they do not outrun the Lord's presence and care.

"Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in place of the dead, thou art there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there thy hand shall lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, 'Let only darkness cover me, and the light about me be night,' even the darkness is not dark to thee, the night is bright as the day; for darkness is as light with thee."

In the world of the spirit, we learn, there are actual ways. "Each sees his own way as if for himself. He does so because a way is there for every love; the love discloses the way and takes a man to his fellows. No one sees other ways than the way of his love."

But we live in the world of the spirit now along with all human beings, "and you know the way I am going." He is saying to you and me and to every man, because the very law of love, the law of spirit, is inscribed in you.

One condition essential to every man knowing his way is that the man think for himself, seek the truth for himself, and as of himself. There must be no pretense, and no tutelage.

There is great searching for sincerity of vision and purpose in our world today. There is among us.

The church that would know the direction of the Lord's advance will be alive and aware of the travail in the hearts and minds of men—the travail of new life aborning.

"'Shall I bring to the birth and not cause to bring forth?' says the Lord; 'shall I, who cause to bring forth, shut the womb?' says your God. Rejoice

HE HAS GIVEN US NOW THE ABILITY TO ENTER HIS WAY

with Jerusalem, and be glad for her, all you who mourn over her; that you may suck and be satisfied with her consoling breasts; that you may drink deeply with delight from the abundance of her glory."

What marvelous confidence in the conscience of man, the Lord is showing when he says, "And you know the way where I am going."

It is his confidence in our sincerity and mature insight, as his friends. He has given us now the ability to learn his word, and to know his purpose for us all; the ability to enter his way, that is the truth of life—not for some ultimate gain beyond itself to win status or power—but to live with him and all our brothers; for the truth is how his love looks and acts.

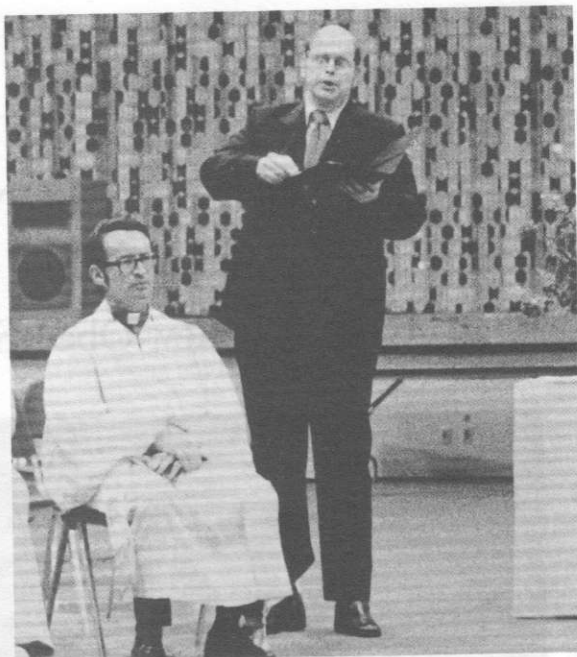
Where he is going and where the church helps man to go, is not a way to obtain something, but a way to be. That which we have revealed from him in books is also written in human life, and in the spirit of man. The books in the end reveal who He is and who we are growing to be.

"And you know the way where I am going," the Lord Jesus Christ is saying, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life."





Kingsley Ganson, Convention Organist



U.C. President Roland Patzer, soloist for the service

Convention Sunday Service



OPENING ADDRESS

to the

GENERAL CONVENTION of the NEW JERUSALEM

by the

Rev. Obed S. D. Mooki



BLOVED BRETHREN,

I bring you greetings from the New Church of Southern Africa, a body that is barely five years old, but which stems from an older organization, which, since 1917, was under the direction of the Overseas Missions Committee of the General Conference of the New Church in Great Britain.

It is now common knowledge that prior to the British Conference directing and managing the affairs of that Organisation, that Body went under the name of the New Church of Africa, founded by my father, the late Rev. David William Mooki, after he had come upon and purchased a second-hand copy of Swedenborg's True Christian Religion, during the year 1909 at Krugersdorp, in the Province of the Transvaal, South Africa.

The Body which I represent, therefore, was started in a small mud hut in a tiny African village, and in that small mud hut, nearly seventy years ago, were preached for the first time on the Continent of Africa, to a small African Congregation, the Heavenly doctrines of the New Jerusalem. And soon, thereafter, in order to reach out to more people, translations of sections of the True Christian Religion were printed and distributed by David Mooki himself, using an old Press that he purchased for the purpose. The seed had been sown.

That small organisation has had its ups and downs, its summers and its winters. And today, as I stand before you in this far-off land, I can report that from a total membership of about 250 in the early 1900's, there is altogether some 20 to 30 thousand members in the New Church of Southern Africa. I can also report that there are about 50 church buildings, some built of brick and mortar, others of mud walls thatched with grass roofs, others of corrugated iron only, a few meeting in hired school rooms or private homes, and a few under Morula trees.

The number of men serving in the ranks of the ministry is above 80, some old and others young, some educated and others not so well educated. The British Conference started a theological College in 1929, soon after the death of my father, which they named the Mooki Memorial College, in his honour. Most of the men now serving in the ministry have been partly or wholly trained in this College, which is situated at the Church headquarters at Orlando, in Johannesburg.

But I think I should also tell you that this College is now without proper buildings and facilities, and that last year no college sessions were held owing to the dilapidated state of the present buildings. The members in South Africa, aware of the dangers of the situation, started on a fund raising campaign at the beginning of this year, and were highly delighted to receive a large contribution from your Women's Alliance from their Mite Box towards this worthy cause. They asked me to tell you how grateful they are to you for this lovely gift.

The extent of the Church in Southern Africa covers the whole of the Republic of South Africa, rural and urban, as well as the neighbouring Independent States of Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland.

It will also be of interest, I think, for you to know that in addition to the two official languages used in the Church, namely, *Afrikaans* and *English*, there are at least eight other languages in use, belonging to the aboriginal peoples of the land. These are: *Zulu* (Natal and Zululand), *Xhosa* (The Transkei and Ciskei), *Sotho* (Lesotho and the Orange Free State), *Tswana* (Bophuthatswana and

Tswaba), *Pedi* (Lebowa), *Shangaan* (Northern Transvaal), *Venda* (Gazankulu), and *Swazi* (Swaziland and parts of the Transvaal). This multiplicity of tongues creates difficulties for your Brethren in the Southern African Church, especially when it comes to the question of the translations of the Writings, and also when it comes to a common Book of Worship. Whereas you on this Continent have only one Book of Worship, which is acceptable to all your members and societies, we must try to bring out the same book eight times over!

The Church in Southern Africa operates mainly amongst the aboriginal peoples, although we have a good many Cape Coloureds, who speak English or Afrikaans. Provision is also being made for these although none of the Writings are available in the Afrikaans language.

And now, my dear Brethren, after conveying to you the greetings of my people from across the seas, I want to thank you most dearly for having made it possible for my wife and me to come here today, for without your kind invitation, your help and financial backing, it would not have been possible for us to be here. I want to thank those societies and associations that opened their pulpits and platforms and hearts to us, as well as those of your members who gave us such warm hospitality in their homes. It is something for which we shall forever be grateful.

I want to thank the Swedenborg Foundation for the warm and kind invitation extended to us to address them at their Annual Meeting, which was an eye-opener to us, and which showed us how much hard work is being done by that great and noble Organisation in spreading the wonderful teachings of the Lord's New Church in many tongues.

And I want to thank the Swedenborg School of Religion, who made our stay at Newton a very enjoyable and profitable one indeed. A great deal of work is being done here, and I wish you to know that we appreciate it greatly.

I know that you want me to say something more than these mere formalities, and that you expect me to give you some of the impressions gained as I travelled around your great country. But please

bear with me if I do not live up to your expectations in this regard, as I think, I am only now beginning to get acclimatized to this new world, and only now beginning to form impressions in my mind.

In Matthew's Gospel, chapter 11, we find our Lord asking the multitudes some pertinent questions. In fact it is one question, repeated three times. It was about John the Baptist.

"What went ye out into the wilderness to see?" He asked. "Was it, perhaps, a reed shaken with the wind?"

"But what went ye out for to see? Was it a man clothed in soft raiment?" When no answer came forth He told them that of course they could never find a man clothed in soft raiment in the wilderness. Such are only found in kings' houses.

He asked the question for the last time. "But what went ye out for to see? Was it a prophet?" And when He saw that there was general agreement among the crowds, though tacit, He assured them that they were right, they had gone out to see a prophet, though John was decidedly more than a prophet. He said: "For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee."

We all know, don't we, that John the Baptist represented the Lord as to the Word, and that the reason why he was in the wilderness tells us that the Word was, generally, rejected by men.

"Light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light" (John 3.19).

The Lord was starting a New Church, to take the place of the old. And He wanted to make sure that He was not starting it on the sand. So He asked His followers what their attitude was to the Revelation that had been given, in the form of the Jewish Scriptures. Did they regard these merely as a reed, which was so light that it could be swayed hither and thither by the wind, something to be used to confirm men's false and wicked ideas, and their evil ways? He *had* to ask that question, because it was because of that attitude, by the leaders of the dying church, that He had come into the world. "... Ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition" (Matthew 15.6).

The Scribes and the Pharisees had come to the point when the Scriptures, so sacredly guarded by their forbears, was no longer of any importance to them. And He did not want the same thing to happen with the leaders and members of the Church which He was now forming.

He then gave the multitudes some definite instructions bearing on the Word, and made it clear that in its outer or literal form the Word would not be found to be agreeable in every instance, just as John the Baptist was not agreeable in his outer appearance. He was, for instance, unshaven, wore camel's skins, and ate locusts and wild honey. In the same way the Word would appear ragged on the outside, would talk about wars and murders and rapes. That should not worry them. He assured them that within this outer cover were "Men clothed in soft raiments." That is to say, no matter what ugly stories were related in the letter, no matter what contradictory statements were made, the Spiritual Sense was very beautiful within, and was, indeed, the Word of Life, to be seen partially by men here on earth, but in its full glory in the mansions of the King of kings!



We know, my dear friends, that throughout our Lord's ministry here on earth He always foretold that He would come again.

"The Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then shall He reward everyman according to his works" (Matthew 16.27)

"When the Son of Man shall come in His glory and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory" (Matthew 25.31).

"I will come again, and receive you unto me. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. I go away, and come again unto you" (John 14:3,18, 28).

"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot hear them now. Howbeit, when he, the spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you unto all truth (John 16: 12).

"These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father" (John 16: 25).



"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Matthew 24: 29 - 31).

We believe, Mr. President, your ministers, all the delegates here gathered together, all members of the Convention and I,—we believe that this promised Second Coming of the Lord has taken place, and that it is no longer a thing of the future. We believe that as the First Coming, it has not been accomplished in the way that the Church leaders had expected. And we believe that because of this the same fate which befell the Lord in His first coming might befall Him now. We believe that the world might keep Him in the wilderness, might even crucify Him. We know, all of us, that when the Lord made His first Coming He used a Woman, and was born in a lowly stable. And we know, that because of that, "He grew up as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: He had no form, nor comeliness; and when we saw Him there was no beauty that we should desire Him. He was, and still is in many places, rejected by men." That is the reason why, even in the churches, He has been brought down low today, and has been made the subject of caricature in many places. There are men of the cloth, not only in this country but in my country also, who do not, at heart, believe in or accept the Virgin Birth at all. The most that they do is to give it lip service only.

But this does not diminish my faith in the Lord, the Saviour of the world. On the contrary, it helps me to see in the Babe of Bethlehem what Simeon saw when he said: "Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel" (Luke 2:34).

We know also, Mr. President, that in His Second Coming the Lord did not use a Woman, as at the first, but that He used a Man. And we believe that man is none other than Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772). We know how Swedenborg was pre-

pared for this great work through the sciences and philosophy, and how, at the end of it all his spiritual eyes were opened so that he could see into the Spiritual World what the prophets and apostles saw only in part. And we know that he was commissioned to "write" down what he heard and saw, for the New Jerusalem, and also for the blessing of mankind. What he wrote you commonly call the 30 green volumes in this country. We refer to them as the "Writings of the New Church," and still others prefer to call them the "Word."

But whatever you call them, we all believe that what Swedenborg wrote is a Great Revelation from God, and that it is through this Great Revelation that the Lord has accomplished His promised Second Coming into the world. We believe that the many things He wanted to say to His disciples 2,000 years ago, but which they could not bear then, have now been made manifest to humanity, and must guide us unto all truth. We believe that whereas 2,000 years ago He spoke in proverbs, the time has now come for Him to show us plainly of the Father.

Now, my dear friends, why do you belong to this great Church of the Lord's Second Coming? Why have you come out to Urbana today? Did you come out here to see a reed shaken with the wind? Do you regard the Revelation given through Swedenborg as just one of those philosophical or psychological systems of thought that may be compared with those of other eminent scholars, and that may or may not be quite correct in certain respects? What is your attitude to the Writings of the New Church?

I know that the faith of very many New Church men and women has been very badly shaken over the last few years, and especially after the Moon landings and the explorations of Mars and other planets. I also know that progress in scientific knowledge and new discoveries which were not known in the days of Swedenborg has led many New Church scholars to lose heart in certain statements of facts by Swedenborg, and led them to believe that if Swedenborg was wrong in one statement of scientific or physiological fact it is possible he is wrong in the whole statement of truth as given him by the Lord! And this has led many to be luke warm, and to fear to stand up boldly for the new Revelation. Others have decided to accept

certain only of the Writings, and to reject the rest. The Writings have, indeed, become a reed shaken with the wind, and have lost the authority that they once commanded in matters of the spirit. And many are finding comfort and solace in newer systems of thought, with the hope that they may find some justification for the Revelation given through Swedenborg.

But, my dear friends, there is nothing that you and I can ever do; there is nothing that modern scholarship can ever do, to justify the truth. The truth will always be the truth, and can never be otherwise. The fact of the matter is, *we* may not be ready for it yet. *We* may need some time to develop before we get to a stage when we can fully appreciate it in its fulness. The Lord said: "There are many things that I would like to tell you, but it is useless doing so now, because you will not understand!" And, therefore, it is useless trying to prove that Swedenborg is right here, or there, because most of the things that he has written are DIVINE REVELATION, and mostly beyond our finite minds. But as time goes on, and men make more landings on the Moon and on the planets, and as their minds become more and more broadened, what seems foolish and preposterous today might be found to be shining in great splendour, because it is the truth, and the truth will remain the truth for all time.

But what, really have you come out here to see?

I believe you have come out here to see a man clothed in soft raiment. I know that because I know you have the Arcana volumes, the Apocalypse Revealed and the Apocalypse Explained, which are the most wonderful books ever written by the hand of man, and which are the "Glory" with which the Son of Man has come. They enable us to see the men who wear soft clothing in kings' houses. They let us into the presence of the King of kings!

It could not be otherwise, my dear friends, since, on this day 204 years ago, "The Lord called together His twelve disciples, who followed Him in the world; and the next day He sent them forth into the whole spiritual world to preach the Gospel that the Lord God Jesus Christ reigns, whose kingdom shall be for ever and ever, according to the prediction of Daniel, chapter 7:13, 14; and in the

Revelation 11:15; and also that "They are blessed who come unto the marriage supper of the Lamb, Revelation 19:9' ".

What, really, have you come out here for to see? I believe you have come out here to see, not only a prophet but the fulfillment of prophecy, and the Son of Man come in the clouds of heaven with POWER and GREAT GLORY!

I believe you will go away from here fully convinced, and really determined, that you are among that small but great band of messengers, sent by the Lord, with a great sound of a trumpet, and that in the Lord's strength you will, and must, gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

I believe you are aware that the task that lies before you is not an easy one. And I suspect that sometimes you get discouraged when you see your labours come to naught, or when you see some of your trusted friends deserting you and going some other way. This feeling of despondency and despair is not unnatural. The Lord Himself felt this way, when He was establishing the First Christian Church. "From that time many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, will ye also go away?" But Peter, signifying the truly faithful, in whose hearts and minds the seeds of the New Church had been truly planted, answered, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life' " (John 6: 67- 68).

The same thing happened to Swedenborg, and the angels, when they saw the kind of reception the heavenly doctrines were receiving on earth. But they were told not to be discouraged, not to lose heart, for this would only be "For a time, and times, and half a time" (Conjugal Love 533).

The Word is full of words of comfort to those servants of the Lord who, like you, have dedicated themselves to His service. And there is, indeed, no justification for fear or despondency. For example, we find Isaiah, about 500 years before the birth of the Lord, speaking to a trembling captive nation, calling upon his people in these beautiful words: "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of

my righteousness" (Isaiah 41: 10). And we know in what strange ways God brought about the liberation of the children of Judah, by overthrowing Babylon, through Cyrus, king of Persia, and helping the Israelites to return to their home town, and to rebuild the Temple.

There is no room for fear or despondency, my dear friends of Convention, in these days of chaos and confusion. But there is room for hope and trust.

"Let your hands be strong, ye that hear in these days these words by the mouth of the prophets, which were in the day that the foundation of the house of the Lord of hosts was laid, that the temple might be built" (Zechariah 8: 0).

You can't halt between two opinions, now believing, now half believing, or not believing. That is not the way to build the walls of the New Jerusalem. There is only one way. And that is to be convinced men and women,—convinced that we are sent to God, and that the message which we carry is a true message, for the salvation of the Human Race.

The message is simple and clear. And we, members of the organised Church of the New Jerusalem, be we small or great, should assume that we are also members of the Universal New Church, and take full responsibility for the propagation of that message to all mankind.

And that message is contained in the 11th chapter of the Book of the Revelation. We are commissioned to tell the world, in no vague terms, that the Lord Jesus Christ alone is the God of heaven and earth, and that His Human is Divine. He is ONE, in essence and in Person. There is no other God besides Him. We are commissioned, also, to tell the world that there is only one way of salvation, and that is that men ought to live according to the precepts of the Decalogue. There is no other way. These are the Two essentials of the New Church, my friends, or, if you like, the Two Witnesses. They are the Truth, and can never be destroyed.

But our acknowledgement of them must be from the heart, and no mere lip service.

If we truly believe from the heart that the Lord Jesus Christ is the One and Only God of heaven and earth, in His Divine Humanity, and strive, with His help, to live according to His Ten Commandments, conjunction between us on earth and the Church in the heavens will follow automatically, and there will be no end to the growth of our organisation here upon the earth.

Did the Lord Himself not say: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John 12: 32)?

Our failure to draw men to the New Church, and, therefore to the Lord, is because of our refusal to "Lift" Him up from the earth! We are cowardly, and we fear to declare Him "King of kings, and

Lord of Lords!" We are not clear in our own minds, and therefore cannot speak with any measure of conviction. And so we join in with the crowds, and spend precious moments arguing about the Virgin Birth, the historicity or otherwise of the man Jesus, and such like nonsense. Let us lift up the Lord from the earth, my dear friends, and keep Him there! So shall we hear, and perhaps join in with the four and twenty elders, who sit before God on their thrones, falling upon their faces and adoring God, saying, "We give Thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, Who is, and Who was, and Who is to come, because Thou hast taken Thy great power, and hast entered into Thy Kingdom" (Revelation 11: 16-17).

Obed S. D. Mooki



ANNOUNCEMENT EDITOR WANTED

The Department of Publication would like to bring to the attention of Convention that our search has begun for a new editor of *The Messenger*, to take over the responsibility next June upon the return to full-time teaching of the present editor, Bob Kirven.

We have already received applications from two highly qualified ministers. We invite other qualified persons, lay or clergy, to let us know of their capabilities and interest in this position. If you know of a member of Convention who has at least the following credentials, *specifically*: a background in professional editing and publishing and a broad acquaintance with Convention—its structure and people—we would welcome receiving a full resume for our consideration.

Contact Ed Bohlander, Chairman, Department of Publication, 48 Sargent Street, Newton, Mass. 02158.

THE MESSENGER

JULY-AUGUST 1974

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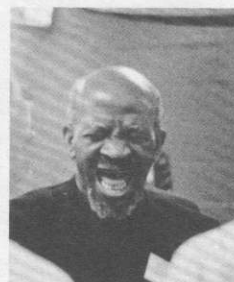
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- † AMERICAN NEW CHURCH LEAGUE
- † REPORT FROM EUROPE



PHOTO CREDITS: the Editor (left), with Bill Woofenden and Margaret Kirven.

BELOW: some little reminders that Convention is, also, lots and lots of great good fun.



THE MESSENGER
48 Sargent St., Box E
Newton, Mass. 02158

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