

# The Messenger

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH  
NOVEMBER, 1978



*Humility is the essential of all adoration and of all worship, for without it the Lord cannot be worshipped and adored. The Divine of the Lord cannot flow into a proud heart, that is, into a heart full of the love of self.*

*When a person is in such humble worship, then the Lord can flow in with the life of His love, and give heaven and eternal happiness.*

*E. Swedenborg*

## EDITORIAL

### Brief Encounter at 28,000 Feet

Several weeks ago I flew to Philadelphia for a Department of Publications meeting. Almost immediately after leaving Toronto airport the young, clean - cut man in the next seat asked me what I did for a living. (Not a terribly original opening gambit, but it serves the purpose. For what is, in my opinion, the finest response ever made to this query, you really should read *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint - Exupery.) Upon hearing that I was a clergyman and the editor of our national magazine, he asked for a brief explanation of our basic teachings. He had never heard of Swedenborg or the New Church. So I told him, as briefly and clearly as I could, something of our essential teachings concerning the Lord, the Word, the centrality of Love, a few thoughts on life after death. He listened intently. Then he asked, "*Why should I join your Church?*"

This is a more difficult and in some respects more important question than the first. Why should anyone join the Swedenborgian Church? After a few moments reflection I gave what I thought was a reasonably good answer. I pointed out that the Swedenborgian faith appeals to and satisfies the needs of both the mind and heart . . . it respects the individual's freedom . . . it answers a great many questions, both in the Scriptures and in life . . . it provides a wonderful fellowship . . . it is open - ended; you can grow into it as far as you want to . . . it is hopeful and affirmative in outlook; it seeks to find and bring out the best in Everyman . . . it is a Universal Church.

Now it was his turn to pause for a moment. Then he remarked, "It sounds to me as if your church is more like a social club than a true church." The probability that he borrowed this descriptive term from C.S. Lewis aside, this is how he heard me. And it set me to thinking. To what extent is our Church, at the local, Association and national levels a social club? We certainly enjoy coming and being together, but if this is all there is to it, then his comment is painfully true. As it turned out he was a Southern Baptist missionary, on his way to Bolivia to convert the heathen. And he went on to say how Christ had changed his life — transformed is a better word. And how the time was short. Christ is coming again soon and there is so much work to be done; millions of people to be saved. He was a man on fire for the Kingdom.

And after we parted company in the Philadelphia terminal, his questions came back to haunt me.

P.Z.

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## THE MESSENGER NOVEMBER 1978

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Paul B. Zacharias, Editor

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# The Starting Line ————— by Eric Zacharias

Our Board of Missions has, in its recent meetings, given time and interest to the general topic, "Church Outreach." This area of concern has also stimulated discussion in related Boards, Departments and in Association - wide gatherings. As a Church, we feel that we have a responsibility to the larger community. As individuals, we feel that our personal life has been given direction and purpose through our involvement in the New Church and all that this implies. Somehow, there must be others who are prepared to partake of this bountiful feast. Who are they? Where are they? Will that person who is genuinely seeking a revitalization of his/her life please step forward?

What, then, is the nature of that community we face? "Chronicles", the organ of the National Council of the Churches in the U.S.A. in its 1978 Fall issue carries the following result of a recently completed Gallop poll in which the values, interests and backgrounds of the "unchurched" were probed.

It was found that:

- 53% of the total sample stated that religion is very important to them. This compares with 70% in 1965
- the majority agrees that "most churches and synagogues have lost the spiritual part of religion."

Why, then, do the unchurched stay away?

- other interests and activities (33%)
- problems with the church or its teachings (30%)
- growing up and making decisions alone (27%)
- moving to a new community (26%)

Among those who said that they had specific problems with the church, the complaints cited most frequently were:

- teaching about beliefs were too narrow (37%)
- too much concern for money (32%)
- moral teachings too narrow (28%)

This poll places the percentage of unchurched Americans at 41% or 61 million adults. "These findings," said George Gallop, Jr., president of the Gallop Poll Organization,

"represent a severe indictment of organized religion."

The Michigan Association met in Almont, September 22 — 24, under the guidance of the Rev. Edwin G. Capon. In his Sunday morning Adult Class, he opened up the interesting topic, "How Do We Read The Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg." This, it was suggested in the discussion, is very much an individual matter. There are those, for instance, who have read the Arcana from the first to the final page consecutively. Others may read topically using such tools as Pott's Concordance, the Compendium, etc. Mechanically and logistically, there may be no single right way to read the writings. The mental and affectional set, however, of the reader must be right and will be established by such characteristics as openness to discovery, curiosity, willingness to question, eagerness to grow in the spiritual life.

In this discussion, there was also raised the question, "How do we introduce the writings to others?" Is it wise, for example to offer them a copy of, *Heaven and Hell* or *Divine Providence*? Is it better to begin with some collateral work such as, *My Religion* by Helen Keller?

This kind of "Outreach" must be done with much care. It seems to this writer that it is presumptive for us to even begin an assessment of another's spiritual state or need. However, if and when we have the privilege to meet another human being at significant levels of experience and need, then, the Lord can provide an opportunity for us to serve and to be served in a process of learning and of growing.

This brings to mind that little work published some years ago entitled, "The New World Begins With You." The new world surely begins with each of us and the Lord uses us in the building of his Kingdom in the measure that this Kingdom has found its acceptance within us. It is upon this premise that the future of our Church rests, its missionary and its educational programs, its vitality and its place in the emerging new world.

I wish to express my appreciation to the people in Michigan who participated in the recent Retreat for their warm and gracious hospitality. It was indeed good to be with you.

# Survival In The New Age

*At this summer's Pacific Coast Alliance meeting in San Diego, three women presented their views on the topic, "Survival In The New Age." We are pleased to share these thoughtful messages with Messenger readers.*

*The first, "Alive in the New Age" is by Karen Conger, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Dan Nielsen, and presently a member of the Los Angeles New Church.*

*This is followed by "The Three R's" from Evelyn Clinkingbeard, of the Riverside New Church.*

*Finally, "Alive in the New Age" comes from Alice Spear, Los Angeles, past president of the Pacific Coast Women's Alliance, and one of the editors of the "Harbinger."*

## ALIVE IN THE NEW AGE

(the younger years)

by Karen Conger

The New Age — The Second Coming of the Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ . . . Wow . . . To say that it's a blessing to be alive at such a time as this is putting it mildly, of course. Now, all people can see the Lord at any time and any place. So far, I have only touched the hem of His robe, but I know that boundless joy awaits all of us as we draw closer and closer to him. To quote from the beautiful lyric, *Saul*, by Robert Browning:

"He who did most, shall bear most;  
The strongest shall stand the most weak.  
'Tis the weakness in strength that I cry for  
My flesh that I seek in the Godhead.  
I see it and I find it.  
Oh Saul, it shall be a Face like my face  
That receives thee; a Man like to me  
Thou shalt love and be loved by forever;  
A Hand like this hand shall throw open  
The gates of New Life to thee.  
See the Christ stand!"

Perhaps you have seen the "advertisements" that various fundamentalist groups are distributing concerning the relationship between the terrible events in the world, and the prophecies found in the book of Revelation. They believe this indicates the imminent arrival of the physical Christ. I have been taught all my life, and I firmly believe, that it would be wrong for us to ridicule those who fervently believe in the literal sense of the Word. It was the late, beloved Rev. William F. Wunch who said that those who have such a faith are blessed and in fact better off than a New Churchman who has little knowledge of the Bible, but only of the Church teachings.

We do have these wonderful doctrines. And in them is contained the Good News. Jesus has come again. And yet, we, as an organization are small. I have sometimes asked myself what could be wrong. But as my faith has grown, and with it the realization of what the Second Coming means to me personally, I ask myself that question less and less.

Of course, there are obvious advantages to being small in numbers. It's so much easier to get to know everyone when there are few of us. And have you ever had the happy experience of showing up at one of the New Churches to which you have never been, and having a wonderful welcome extended to you when they find out you are also a New Churchperson?

Swedenborg believed that all he had to do to circulate the joyful news of the coming of the New Age was to send copies of manuscripts to the leaders of churches and universities in Europe. He expected these men to immediately grasp the significance of the writings and to pass the word along. As we all know, it didn't *quite* work out that way. Swedenborg was branded a lunatic and worse for his beliefs. But there is no evidence that he was discouraged by such a reception, or even mildly disturbed. He knew that the Lord's purpose would not — could not — be thwarted by mere men.

The Rev. Dr. Friedemann Horn spoke at the Los Angeles church on the occasion of Swedenborg's birthday this year. He stated his personal belief that the New Church will begin to grow in numbers when it realizes its use in the world, and that until it *does* realize its use, it will not grow.

There are those who believe that the New Church as an organization is destined to failure, and still others who believe that though it is destined to failure, the writings will continue to circulate and that the Church will grow in the world in this way.

I'm not sure what is in store for the Church as an earthly organization, or what is the best course of action for the Church to take, but I do believe that the Church will grow in the world.

The knowledge of the existence of the writings was a gift to me. My father received the gift through the instrumentality of his father, and I through my parents. This is something for which I will be eternally grateful. Words sound so feeble, don't they? Because, for me, the writings have been, in a sense, the pathway to the Word, and therefore, to the Lord. The knowledge that I live in the New Age, and that the Second Coming of the Lord is a reality, fills me with awe.

I do not believe that we need fear for the future of the Church. Our Lord didn't make it so difficult! Though the Lord will not place any obstacles in our way, neither is He going to hurry the process. I know that if we work faithfully, we will discover the Lord's Will and He will move us to see that His Will is *done*!

### **“THE THREE R’S” (the middle years)**

*by Evelyn Clinkingbeard*

The theme of this Association meeting is “Survival of the New Church in a New Age.” How can we survive? What can we do to attract others into the church? Please consider the following:

The New Church teaches the 3 R's; repentance, reformation and regeneration. Repentance and reformation affect the understanding and regeneration affects the will.

We cannot repent until we see the truth about the selfishness and lusts we harbor in our hearts. We cannot reform unless we see what we are doing wrong and desire to change. We cannot change ourselves, only the Lord can change our affections to love the truth and do good and this is called regeneration.

The Lord patiently waits and woos us from the natural to the spiritual to the celestial by degrees day after day, and year after year.

The disciples had fished all night and caught nothing, when Jesus told them to launch out into the deep. They replied, “Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing, nevertheless, at Thy word, we will.” When they followed His words, the net became so full of fish that it broke.

Night corresponds to ignorance and like the disciples we have been toiling in ignorance; from the intellect in selfishness, and will not survive as a church until we realize our state of mind and repent of self love.

If we will launch out into the deep by desiring to change and ask the Lord to lead us we will be revived and the Lord will add to the church.

He will do the work if we will just obey His words, “Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a draught.”

### **SURVIVAL IN THE NEW AGE (the retirement years)**

*by Alice Spear*

We grow old so quick and smart so slow. Suddenly our days of usefulness seem to be over. We feel we are no longer needed or wanted. Maybe we feel unloved, even if we are the cause of it. And it's awfully hard to find ourselves on the receiving end, after having tried to be of service most of our lives. The grace of receiving . . . to realize that it enhances another's sense of THEIR worth, to do for us, is a lesson we have to learn. Yet I'm told that unless we learn to receive gracefully, we cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven where we shall have to accept from our heavenly Father every thing we possess and are.

There's a story about this given of all gifts. In a small town there was a terrible thunderstorm that shook up the community in more ways than one. A particularly loud rumble apparently activated the chimes in a church steeple, and for the next several minutes while the lightening flashed and the thunder boomed, a famous hymn rang through the town. Its title: **HOW GREAT THOU ART.**

I am heartened by what Rev. Antony Regamey said in one of his great sermons. “We are all created with a purpose to fill both in this

world and beyond it. Every human life has a meaning. Each one of us is endowed with the necessary aptitudes to perform a unique use related to the Lord's intention. If we consider our talents as a sacred trust and seek to make them serve His purpose, we then become co-workers with Him. Within our limitations we collaborate with Him in making our human relationships more what they should be."

Or, to put it more succinctly: Here is a test to find whether your mission on earth is finished: *If you're alive it isn't.*

Brian Kingslake tells us the primary requirement for old age is love. "Great-grandmama sits in her rocking chair," he relates, "beaming around on everybody. No one expects her to jump up and wash the dishes or vacuum the floor, or fill in the income tax returns. But they all look to her for sympathy, love and compassion. She provides a celestial sphere in which they can live their lives more effectively. And who can say she is not performing a far greater use than any of them? She prays for the family and is a channel from God to them."

If Grandmama should pray for HERSELF, I think this is what she might say: "Dear God, when I am lonely and . . . Perhaps I feel despair . . . Let not my ailing heart forget . . . That You hear every prayer . . . Remind me that no matter what . . . I do or fail to do . . . There still is hope for me as long . . . As I have faith in You . . . Let not my eyes be blinded by . . . Some folly I commit . . . But help me to regret my wrong . . . And to make up for it . . . Inspire me to put my fears . . . Upon a hidden shelf . . . And in the future never to . . . Be sorry for myself . . . Give me the restful sleep I need . . . Before another dawn . . . And bless me in the morning with . . . The courage to go on."

I like to think of my Grandmother sitting in her rocking chair in the bay window with the Bible on her lap. To her, the way to our Lord was charted in the Old Testament, sign - posted in the New and illumined by her faith. I had a good example set for me!

Now we in the New Church have a good example set for us in the writings. The values they offer all of us apply particularly, it seems to me, to the elderly. Our beliefs strengthen a waning self - esteem. Our anxiety is dissipated by our trust in Divine Providence. New thoughts and ideas from the writings offer us a refreshing interest, joining us to all who seek to explore the edge of knowledge. And

Swedenborg assures us: "Old age in the internal sense does not signify old age, because the internal man or man's spirit, does not know what old age is; but as the body, or external man grows old, the internal passes into newness of life, man's spirit being perfected by age as his bodily powers diminish."

One benefit of the retirement years is to give us a better perspective between the natural and the spiritual. Another is the orderly preparation for heaven, that inevitable transition into the true world of spirit. Surely the truest end of life is to know the life that never ends, and in Swedenborg we have the most comprehensive and concrete description of life hereafter ever given to mankind.

It is said that there are three steps in our life toward growth — or maturity. The first is dependence, the second independence and the third interdependence. To be aware of the presence of the Divine in each growth process and to experience integrity and meaning as unique individuals is our potential as angels. To me, this is Survival in the New Age.

AND SO —

Grow old along with me!  
The best is yet to be,  
The last of life for which the first was  
made.  
Our times are in His hand Who saith,  
"a whole I planned,"  
Youth shows but half; trust God:  
see all  
nor be afraid.

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## CONVENTION CALENDAR

Nov. 15 — 16	C.O.M. Exec. Comm. Newton, Mass.
Nov. 16 — 18	Board of Missions Newton, Mass.
Nov. 30	B.O.M. Exec. Comm.
Dec. 1 — 2	Board of Managers Newton, Mass.
Jan. 18 — 20	General Council
Feb. 5 — 7	Committee on Worship Philadelphia
Feb. 23 — 24	Dept. of Publications
Feb. 21 — 25	Florida Conference, DeLand, Florida

# PRAYER FOR THE HEALING OF MEMORIES

by *Horand Gutfeldt*  
*Berkeley, California*

A new form of prayer is gaining acceptance in many Christian communities. Its use has resulted in significant change in many people — and for members of our church it can also be a source of strength and inspiration.

What is the need for such prayer and what is its essence?

The greatest obstacle in the growth of the soul, its progress in Love and Truth, is our past. Often dating back to childhood, deep impressions exert a power in present behavior which seems very difficult, if not impossible to overcome. Among the more common instances are deep anxieties, mistrust, depression — all going back to early frustrations and disappointments. Many people have trouble in picturing a loving God because subconsciously they project the picture of their parents to their relation with the Lord.

Psychologically such past experiences are called traumas, implying instances of lack of love and understanding. These are also impressions of hate, of error and falsity, sometimes stemming from deep resentments, suppressed anger, which cling to the soul and form the basis of many later reactions to other persons and life in general. Often the foundations of later psychosomatic reactions are laid in early childhood (allergies, asthma, etc.).

It has been the attempt of insight - therapies to reach these emotional memories or imprints upon our capacity to love, which is the substance of our soul. (Examples are psychoanalysis, reality therapy, gestalt, the latter trying to change present reactions.) Could it be that the reason for the mixed results has been the fact that they ignore the full redeeming power of the Lord? Also the much - heralded approach through willpower has its limits. This can open doors but can never be a substitute for the living experience of Guidance from God. In dealing with the powers of the depth, *a prayer for the healing of the memories* offers an entirely new avenue to anyone who believes in the Lord.

It consists first in an attempt to picture as clearly as possible the events that led to a blocking of free development. Often a prayer

for insight and recall of emotional experiences of the past has to be added. This can be done alone in meditation, but it is more effective if done with another person who listens in an understanding way and also prays for healing, and who may ask appropriate questions. There is a greater power if two people can join in prayer than if one is praying alone — there is a mutual reinforcement of the sphere or “tremulation” (as Swedenborgian translators call what we term vibrations today.)

I have personally experienced this powerful impact for change. It was done in such a way as to picture the Lord Jesus stretching out His Hand of Love and bringing healing to long - forgotten incidents, extending forgiveness and relief into past and present.

In theological terms, this means an experience of the power of the Divine Human Nature of the Lord, as manifest in the Living Jesus Christ, penetrating as a powerful impact into the memory and creating a new conjunction with Him — a new association that supercedes the images of the past.

The clearer the picture of the traumatic experience in the past which caused a mental scar, the greater the hope of healing. The impact is strengthened by the laying on of hands by the person assisting, and especially by the partaking of the Holy Supper with a prayer to obtain help from the Power and Presence of the Lord in His Sacrament. Often a deep and strong emotional involvement during these experiences is an indication of the action of the Divine inflowing Power which is His Love. During His stay on earth a great many events of His Life were connected with healing and this is not only a matter of the past but of the present and of the future. It is up to us to make the opening move, but it is His Power, not ours, which effects a change.

This is not a substitute for psychotherapy, which calls for an expert in the field — but it can be a powerful supplement to any therapy and can contribute to a powerful and more permanent breakthrough in the course of a treatment. Also for “normal” individuals, it can mean a great step toward a greater capacity for loving.

Since all love and all life come from the Lord, we believe that He can heal not only the present but also the wounds of the past. This is often helpful in connection with a practice of self-examination as preparation for Communion, and is recommended with a survey of the Ten Commandments, as in *True Christian Religion*. Beyond the limits of conscious limitations, it seeks to invite the Lord into our sub-conscious, transforming the present and the past. This means freedom from guilt, freedom from weakness and finding the guidance to tune in to His Will with joy and strength.

In this way the Lord can be found in our

heart and seen, not as an abstract concept, but a living certainty as the God of the Past, the Present and the Future: as He is called in the Bible, "He Who Was, Who Is and Who is to come" (Rev. 1:8) — the Eternal Being beyond time and space. God with us — His Eternal Power for life beyond the grave — He must enter our life in this world. Blessed is he who finds cleansing in prayer, experiencing Him as close to us, as Human and Divine, as our Healer for this world and by the healing of our soul, for the World beyond.

*from The New Church  
Prayer Fellowship bulletin.*

## THE CONNECTING POINT

*by Gwynne Dresser Mack  
Pittsfield, N.H.*

Often prayer appears to bring direct results; but often nothing seems to happen. This is a mystery for which there is no demonstrable solution. Those who have received sudden help in critical situations feel deeply that they have been given a miracle; others insist upon calling it coincidence. Yet we must realize that no one can fully understand what he himself has not experienced.

Prayer is not just speaking words, nor is it only forming thoughts. It is first of all expressing love. Swedenborg wrote that "to feel another's joy as one's own, this is love." Therefore to feel another's suffering as one's own, also is love. To *want* to talk with the Lord is a kind of love; to want to help people is another kind of love, an emotional reaction which if intense enough is called compassion. Compassion is the connecting point at which someone's prayer for another person meets the Lord's yearning to respond.

A significant observation has been made concerning "answer to prayer". Someone urgently writes to a prayer-group for help, and soon reports with great gratitude that the help came immediately. But it turns out that it was received *before* the request for prayer had reached its destination, and in advance of any possibility for circulating the petition among the group! This can mean only one thing: that the prayer actually began in the person's asking for help, which must have been so charged with emotional intensity that it needed no further reinforcement. It seems probable that help from prayer is activated by the first step in that direction *if* the step is an urgent one. Thus the

emotional force of initial action may be the element which brings quick results.

So we come to the question: why, then, ask other people to pray for us? In the Old Testament the Lord says: "I, the Lord thy God, am with thee whithersoever thou goest;" and in the New Testament Christ says: "I am with you always." Then what more do we need than to speak directly to Him? Learning to do this, as individuals, was the basis upon which the New-Church Prayer Fellowship was established.

There is another consideration, however. One man standing in the street and shouting does not arouse us as would a mob all yelling together; and a roomful of people pledging allegiance to the flag does not affect us as the same people would if they were singing beautifully in chorus. The impact of a number of people expressing the same emotion with the same focus is an outward-moving psychic force as definite as air-waves that carry television programs across the land. Intensity of emotion travels and can affect atmospheres, and connects with (or repels) response. This is how demonstrations and riots have influence.

Thought is said to be a force but it really is just the preparation which affection makes for going into action. Thus in prayer it is not words or thoughts as much as emotional energy which reaches the Lord and connects with His responding Power. One person's intensity may be sufficient for this; but the strength of group-compassion is especially so because it adds the dimension of people's love in unison reaching to the Lord. □



# REACHING OUT

In varying degrees all New Church organizations in the world are concerned with outreach. (See other outreach articles in this *Messenger* by Karen Conger, Evelyn Clinkingbeard, Alice Spear, Marion Priestnal, Eric Zacharias and Joseph Agbaje.) Our friends in the British Conference are presently holding a series of planning meetings, which, it is hoped, will shortly lead into a concerted program for church expansion.

In a recent Conference *Lifeline* Gordon Jacobs reported on an Outreach Weekend held at Purley Chase last April. Our Central Office Director, Roger Paulson, suggested that excerpts from this article be re - printed in the *Messenger*. We are pleased to do so, and hope that Convention readers will feel free to respond to the ideas and implications arising out of this provocative article.

## P.U.R.L.E.Y. Spells Magic

Perhaps it is because the Lord seems so much nearer at Purley Chase that the magic breaks through. It happened again when I was there for the National Missionary Board's Outreach Weekend in April. It was Saturday evening, and we had been struggling since Friday evening to find the true basis for missionary work. Plenty of ideas were forthcoming, and no doubt some of these will come to fruition in due course, but we still felt that there was something lacking in our fundamental approach. Misgivings were expressed by several people who confessed that in missionary work they were very conscious of their own shortcomings in explaining New Church teaching to newcomers or those outside our Church. I think that we were a representative cross - section, as I have heard many other members of our Church say something similar.

And then something quite unexpected happened that came as a real breakthrough. In arranging the weekend, the Missionary Board had been inspired to ask along three comparative newcomers to the New Church and they were now invited to hold forth on how and why they had come into our Church. Their statements were an inspiration. All three opened up in a way perhaps only possible at Purley Chase with its close fellowship. And it seems that we had got it all wrong. For the first time that weekend, we could see what missionary work is all about; it is people and their need of the Lord. Our concern is usually to give newcomers the Lord's truths as clearly

and fully as we can, but we came to the realisation that what they need and value most when they come to us is to experience something of the love which comes from the Lord when we apply His truths to our lives. This came out forcibly in what they had to say. Of course, New Church truths also attracted them — for one of them our doctrine of the Lord supplied a real want — but this side came later. And so we learned that the important thing is not for us to show that our teachings are different but rather that our lives are somehow different — that we really are expressions of a Church made new and are manifesting the Lord's love in a distinctive way.

What else did we gain from this weekend? I should say a great deal. Everyone there was given real encouragement to bring forward ideas; to further this, at any time during the weekend all we had to do was to write any idea as it occurred to us on to a slip of paper and pin it to a board available for that purpose. In this way, the Missionary Board was able to pick up a number of outreach (even outrageous!) ideas to consider at future meetings. I will not refer to these specifically; you should be hearing of the development of some of the more worth - while in due course. But I should like to refer to one area of missionary work that was discussed: It involves the whole New Church in a very important way and will need considerable thought and planning for some time to come.

This is the celebration in 1988 of the 300th Anniversary of Swedenborg's birth and how we can use the occasion to publicise the works of Swedenborg and show his importance to the world. Yes, I did say 1988, and that is 10 years away, but we have at present a very forward - looking Missionary Board and it is realised that a lot of preparatory work is necessary. For instance, if exhibitions are envisaged in public libraries in the year 1988, now is the time to start getting works of Swedenborg into those libraries, so that encouragement from them may be forthcoming when the idea of exhibitions is raised with them in the years to come. Other ideas for 1988 were broadcast scripts, a TV feature, the possibility of a newspaper Sunday Supplement brief biography of Swedenborg, University lectures and a Post Office issue of Swedenborg stamps. However, the difficulty was voiced that in this mini - computer age of rapid progress, it is a problem to anticipate the conditions that will exist in ten years time. In any case, it was considered that professional advice would no doubt have to be taken in launching the whole project. □

# NEW CHURCH MEDIA CENTER IN NIGERIA

*by Joseph Agbaje  
Ohio / Nigeria*

The New Church in Africa wants to feel and express closer contact with other New Church bodies in the world. It decries isolation which can lead to stagnation with eventual decay.

As the New Church in Nigeria becomes more and more independent, it is also becoming clear that a medium of instructional communication which will enable the church to realize its fellowship with the New Church World is imperative. A need to communicate with its membership old and young in Africa and overseas is equally demanding.

Experience shows that people in this community (America) want to know more about the progress the church is making in Africa, particularly, Nigeria. To this end, a media center seems to suggest itself.

Both for the Bachelor and Master's degrees I studied media methods and its application in education. I have the credentials that will enable the government of Nigeria to recognize the center to serve both church and school education.

I am at present recognized by the New Church Conference in Britain as the Director of the New Church College for ministers in West Africa. In addition, I am the Senior District Superintendent of the New Church in Nigeria, and hope to become the Ordaining Minister (Bishop) in due time. I feel therefore that I stand a good chance to establish the media center, to the advantage of all concerned.

Following are my goals and objectives:  
GOALS —

1. To disseminate the teachings of the New Church in Africa.
2. To unify, conserve, enlarge and distribute the various doctrinal products printed and otherwise (such as film strips, tapes, etc.)
3. The Center will attempt to present the revealed doctrines to all men so that they can enter with reason into the understanding of the New Age message and fit it into their perception, life and environment.

4. To establish a sort of Research Center to better understand and constantly adjust the church's approaches to ecumenical and political changes until in the end the "New Church" might triumph.

Goals 1 and 2 could be set up immediately starting with goal 1 as foremost while goals 3 and 4 are long term issues. In reference to goal 1 below, the objective, Teaching strategies and means or equipment will be briefly explained.

## *Goal 1*

The New Church in Nigeria and Ghana, with about 9,000 membership requires a center from which help could flow in and out and result in giving doctrinal education to the growing congregation widely distributed East thru West in both countries. Indeed, the government of Nigeria requires every denomination to be responsible for the teaching of its doctrines to their adherents in grade schools, high schools and the universities. Our church has not had a better opportunity than now to nurture its children, and follow it up through maturity. Our members cry out that something be done to save the adolescents from the influence of strange dogmas currently inundating the university campuses in Nigeria. These fanatics teach that the young people, as a sign of accepting Jesus, weep every morning for their sins, and as well regard their parents in any church as lost sinners.

## *Objective*

The objective, therefore, is to teach the members and students in New Church Colleges, schools and other educational institutions, (even in Muslim schools), as well as in 13 universities in Nigeria, the doctrines of the New Church. We want to provide such education to individuals and groups of students or adherents wherever they may be in Nigeria and Ghana.

Emphasis will be laid on the basic doctrines about the One God, the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Love, Faith, Life after Death and The New Church in other lands.

### ***Teaching Strategies:***

As a part of my studies at Wright State University, a curriculum development was included. I hope to design the teachings to fit local needs, using their local language and philosophy to portray graphically in print, films, slides and tapes.

The resources from goal number 2 will also be utilized. I already have a film strip, tape and narration from Rev. Ernest O. Martin on the Wayfarers' Chapel. Tape recordings and other Sunday School, Biblical and doctrinal illustrations from New Church Societies will be welcome to enlarge the collection. They will serve to bring the church in other lands to my people as "seeing is believing." Telling the people about the activities of the Church overseas will have greater impact especially when coordinated with audio visual aids.

It is my hope that the Center will develop a feedback to the New Church World on its evolutionary program and experience as soon as it gets going.

### ***Expectation***

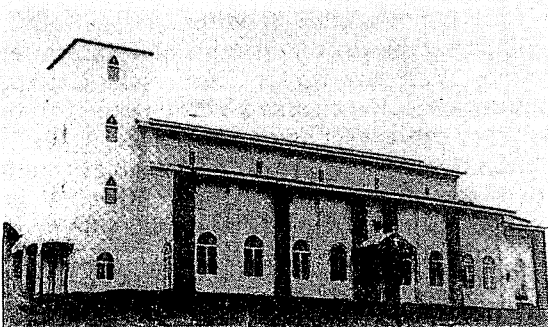
The Church in Africa hopes that as a result of my contact with the Church in overseas (America) it will be possible for us, working together, to effectuate a New Church more united in action and stronger than ever, to enable us to carry from stage to stage the priceless teachings of the Church during this ever-changing era.

*(The following article describes further New Church developments in Nigeria. Ed.)*

The reconstruction of the New - Church premises at Owo, Nigeria, the headquarters of the New Church in West Africa, began in 1970 when Rev. S. K. Asawo returned from the World Assembly in England having been appointed General Superintendent. A levy of L3 was imposed on every male member, and L2 on every female member, to which there was a good response. The corrugated iron roof was changed to adrex, and the former single reef was changed to double reef. Stone pillars replaced the former buttresses. The interior was ceiled with special planks and sprayed with light brown colour. Ten big pillars were set up in the hall to support the roof, and the old concrete floor was removed and replaced with terrazzo. The main hall was painted with light blue while the chancel was painted pink. The aisles on either side were decorated white and black to correspond with the colours of the stone pillars. The pulpit, lecturn, reading desk, pews and altar table were made of polished wood with glittering light of brown and smooth colour. Metal windows with glass panes replaced the old wooden ones. The doors were carved to illustrate Biblical figures, such as Daniel in the den of lions, the Good Shepherd, the Last Supper, and Jesus carrying the Cross. Electric lights have been installed, and electric fans and amplifiers for operation during worship services. The whole external has been painted light grey, with black and white on the stone pillars. The building is situated in Fajuyi Road, the busiest street in Owo, and is second to none in beauty and position. It is the talk of the town: a grand Cathedral for the glory and worship of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Rev. S. K. Asawo  
The Lifeline

## **The New Church Cathedral in Owo**



## **GROWN - UP**

Standing in your room  
with you now gone,  
I think of you —  
glad you are grown  
so strong, so tall,  
so full of exuberant youth,  
yet missing the little boy  
I loved.

Wondering if —  
hoping — he's still alive  
in the you I love now.

— Pollyanna Sedziol  
Quaker Life

## The Caring Meeting and Its Dying Aged

by Pearl C. Hall

*A human being would certainly not grow to be seventy, eighty, or ninety years old if this longevity had no meaning for the species. The afternoon of the human life must also have a significance of its own and cannot be merely a pitiful appendage to life's morning . . . For them a prospect and a goal are absolutely necessary. This is why all great religions hold out the promise of a life beyond . . . which makes it possible for a human being to live the second half of life with as much purpose and aim as any other part of life.*

Carl G. Jung

I am a person who expects to die, maybe tomorrow, maybe three years from now, or maybe ten, but it is a sure thing. I want to share with my meeting what is important to me and the kind of love I can give to them. The last few years I have been learning, sometimes remarkably well, and at other times in a miserable self-pity, how to cope with pain, physical limitations, and the bereavements that are a daily occurrence. I have found the natural happiness, growth in tenderness, love of God, a certain freedom and delight that I had not expected. I am afraid of two things — isolation and loneliness — because someday it might happen to me as it does to 80% of America's old people. I may die in a hospital or nursing home, institutions that attempt to cure the dying. It is care we want, not technical functioning.

If there is one thing a Friends meeting can do, it is to keep us from dying alone. Don Irish in the 1976 Rufus Jones Lecture describes how cruel systems have become:

*My mother was 80 years old when she died, and she died without any of her family near her. The rules said, "No." Nurses and large signs stated clearly that five minutes were allowed for visitors. The strange part was that we were her family . . . we were a part of her.*

Today there is a change in the air. Meetings are working with the medical profession on a hospice plan which is an effort to make the terminal period one of comfort and reassurances. A hospice is a community of people with a common goal, a homelike place

for about a dozen or so persons; it is intended to assist pilgrims on their way. In a hospice they are nourished and renewed until it is time to move on to the next station. St. Christopher's in London was born out of much prayer, much planning, and much caring. So many things were needed: beds, suitable food, peace and liveliness of cheerful rooms, ease for families to be together, a feeling of the presence of Christ, hard work, practical skills, doctors, nursing aides, ministers, and above all constant caring. Then first, last, and always prayer — prayer like Paul's:

*I thank my God for you all every time I think of you; and every time I pray for you, I pray with joy, because of the way in which you helped me in the work of the gospel from the very first day until now. You are always in my heart . . .*

*This is my prayer for you: I pray that your love will keep on growing more and more together with true knowledge and perfect judgment, so that you will be able to choose what is best.*

*To choose what is best is my prayer for you.*

May this pattern grow among our Quaker meetings as care is given to those of us preparing to die.

The church is the phylum of love, the branches of the vine, which is Christ. If this is true, it does seem we could do better than forget any old person. Our meeting could be a place of serenity, joy, friendliness. Celebrations, hymn sings, sewing days, memory occasions are cheerful events.

Care is not a cure. It keeps the soul alive. With cure the doctor and his staff are after results. With care we are after results as well, but not exactly the same kind of results. With care we can expect joy, reassurance, tenderness, a caress where there has been no affection for a long time. If we did not care, there might be nothing — perhaps sorrow and bitterness. The meeting has these blessings to share; let us do it with generosity and see what happens to our own souls.

Let members of the caring church join hands and give especially spiritual gifts that will belong to all of us: *religious faith and courage; a sureness of hope — let it be seen in all we do; companionship in joy and sorrow; silence — alone or together; touch — find ways to express compassion, kindness, and gentleness; assistance in putting things in order; reassuring words — to little children and even in business meeting; don't let me or any other die alone.*

Pearl C. Hall is a member of the West Richmond, Indiana, Meeting and FUM's Commission on Creative Aging. A professional writer, she is author of the books, *The Cloud of Unknowing*.

(The above article from *Quaker Life* speaks eloquently and with power to all people everywhere. Young or old, we are all aging, and we need to hear this word.

The term "meeting" in the article refers to local Quaker congregations.)

## Financial Support Gratefully Acknowledged

The General Convention and Urbana College are among those agencies and bodies which, over the years, have been the beneficiaries of the thoughtfulness of our people. Estates, large and small, have been bequeathed to help carry on the work considered of vital importance to the donor. While we are mindful that the present generation must shoulder its responsibility in providing the resources for the activities essential to an effective church, we are indeed grateful to those who, during their span of years, also did their part and, then, recognized the importance of a continuing support through the legacy of their estates.

We, therefore, gratefully acknowledge these recent bequests to the General Convention.

### Wills and Bequests from the late

Miss Effie Lendormi of Indianapolis, Ind.  
\$23,395.00 General Purpose.

Miss Florence Murdoch of Cincinnati, Ohio,  
\$7,500.00 Pension Fund.

Mrs. Estelle Q. Morrissey of St. Louis, Mo.,  
\$188,171.99 General Purpose.

Mrs. Celestine Baxter of Alameda, Cal.  
(approx.) \$90,000.00 Augmentation Fund.

## IDEA - LINE ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

The Board of Publications in cooperation with the National Church at Washington is beginning an experimental program called IDEA - LINE. IDEA - LINE is a service available to anyone in the church that is active in the production of newsletters, bulletins, Sunday worship folders, or other printed matter, whether it's produced by Xerox equipment, mimeo, offset printing, or some other process.

The main purpose of the program is to supply churches and associations with technical information, useful suggestions, and new ideas to make their printed matter both more interesting and more visually attractive.

Periodically an "IDEA - LETTER" will be sent by mail that will include useful information, promotional material, or graphic arts supplies. Hopefully, IDEA - LINE will also become a forum for useful ideas, submitted by people from various churches that will be able to be shared by mail with everyone.

No matter how little printing or reproduction your church does, there should be someone from your church on IDEA - LINE's mailing list. There is no charge for this service. To receive these mailings write to:

IDEA - LINE  
1611 16th St. N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20009





*Marion Priestnal, Editor*

## WE SUGGEST . . .

We read with interest in the Convention issue of the Messenger about a "Mini - Course" on the subject of communicating with fidelity the teachings of our church to the casual questioner. During the meetings of this course, those attending were given an opportunity to role - play a situation in which one person assumed the part of a newly curious visitor or acquaintance, and a second person attempted to answer the questions being asked.

It has occurred to us that here is an excellent topic of discussion for meetings of women's groups throughout the Church. Since we are all eager for new ideas and anxious to engage in activity that is even more meaningful than the routine concerns of buying a new rug, serving coffee, or planning a sale, members of local alliances could devote several meetings or a part thereof to the problems of describing and defining those cherished truths by which we live; preparing to meet the imaginary seeker for information with at least one or two clear and non - apologetic statements.

This really is not an imaginary situation at all. It happens to all of us so frequently that we cannot justify the lack of preparation with which we find ourselves struggling. Role playing is a helpful means of hearing yourself. Let one member, playing the part of a first-time visitor, ask the usual sweeping questions: "How does this church differ from all other branches of Christianity", or "Why is it called the New Church"? "Did it start in Sweden"?

The second member will then have to try to answer. Only when we hear ourselves out loud defending, or hesitating, or generalizing in the all too customarily vague way about our beliefs

will we realize (many of us, that is; not all of us) that we simply do not know how to make an effective, brief and helpful explanation about who we are, what we believe and why we believe it, in a way that will be tactful, interesting and satisfying to someone who has just encountered the New Church. In our own defense we can add that this is far from being an easy task.

After you have practiced for a time within your Alliance group, you might suggest to your church council that you would like to do something of the kind when the Society is gathered together — before the business meeting, or at a "family supper". Perhaps what you have learned in your experimentation will be helpful to all the members of your Society and will encourage others to work on this problem.

One valuable suggestion which has come out of several "Workshops" held here in New York on the subject is this.

Endeavor to have your questioner, real or imagined, ask specific questions. The line of inquiry can be focused on areas of personal concern by a technique like this: "I can tell you what I believe about life after death"; or "I can explain what the church teaches about the Trinity if that would interest you"; or "I can tell you our views on marriage." Or you can say "If you will ask me a specific question on some aspect of Christian teachings I will try to tell you what we believe."

Our teachings are so vast and inclusive that one of our greatest dilemmas is to know where to begin. We do not have to try to cover thirty volumes in a ten minute conversation!

Would not this be a worth - while objective as a part of the Alliance program for the church year which is just beginning? We would welcome your comments and suggestions.

The Editor

## THE MOOKI FUND GROWS

Last June we reported that a balance of \$3034.00 in the Mooki Fund is being held in Manufacturer's Hanover Trust Company here in New York. It seems prudent to continue this plan until we have direct assurance from the Mookis that construction has been safely resumed.

There is also a growing Fund in a Bank in Johannesburg. Some of our earlier contributions are now part of that account, and donations from all over the world have come there as well.

Since last June we have received several substantial new additions to the Fund, as follows:

The Alliance of New Church Women....	\$100.00
A friend .....	\$400.00
A friend .....	\$500.00

Therefore the present balance is \$4034.00. We hope these figures are as gratifying to you as they are to us. It will be a joyous day when the sounds of men working to build sturdy, commodious and efficient housing for the work of the valuable Mooki Memorial College can again be heard in far - off Orlando, South Africa. We trust this day may be close at hand.

***David Mack was a keen observer of the human condition, a highly qualified psychologist and an ardent believer in the teachings of the New Church. His comments are as pertinent now as they were when he wrote the following remarks.***

***The title is the editor's.***

### NEW — OR OLD?

"In conversations among New Church people, and in articles in New Church periodicals, there are frequent expressions of concern that 'the New Church is not growing.' I refer specifically to citings of statistical indications that the New Church organization, as such, does not currently enjoy a thriving and vigorously increasing membership.

"However, I am among the last to be disturbed by the current trend; for I can see little or no direct relationship between the statistical membership of the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America, on the one hand, and, on the other, the growth and spread of the Lord's New

Church on earth. One, I am convinced, is not an index to the other, and it seems to me that those who interpret the membership count as an indicator of the true New Church growth are afflicted with combined myopia and tunnel-vision.

"We speak of the *New Church* as opposed to the *Old Church* viewpoint — sometimes with a smugness not entirely lacking in actual disdain. Yet how closely our New Church organization and *modus operandi*, in contrast to our theology and philosophy, are tied to Old Church habits, ways and customs! We are so satisfied with being 'New Church' in thought, that we overlook how Old Church our actions still are. Many of the routines of our organizational activities, as well as our vestments, clerical collars, degrees of the priesthood, etc., are patterned after parts in the Old Church.

"Certainly there is nothing wrong or bad about these Old Church practices, and doubtless conforming to them was at one time important in the departure from the old, and as a means of transition to the new. But should we still cling to them? Do these Old Church forms and activities serve as the best means to cultivate, nurture, and spread the principles of a New Age? By clinging to them now, are we effectively discharging our responsibility to Him?

"If it is our responsibility, as an organization, primarily to *keep pure* and make available the New Church teachings to many thousands who are ready and anxious to receive, does an Old Church form of corporate body and activity best equip us to do so? Is it not conceivable that a group of ten, fifty, or a hundred truly dedicated persons, properly trained and hewn into a dynamic organization carefully constructed as to responsibility and authority, might be more effective in carrying out our aims than is our present Old - Church - like General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America? I do not presume to imply that this is the only answer.

Perhaps my suggestion may touch off some objective questioning as to whether our Old - Church forms of organization and activity are likely to be the most fruitful in *keeping pure*, in *nurturing*, and in *spreading the New Church* in the present day."

David Mack

We want to stress again several of David Mack's most important points.

David was discussing outward forms of *organization* and of activity. It is these he considered "old - church" in the limiting sense of that term.

He is not advocating the watering - down, changing or equivocation of New Church *teachings*. He evidently feels that our purpose is "primarily to keep pure"; and later: "Keeping pure, nurturing, and spreading the New Church ..." It is that objective which concerns him.

He questions the idea that the number making up Convention's roster equals the extent of *true* New Church growth or membership.

He also questions whether we have yet found the approach, the way to spread the real New Church effectively. What do our readers feel? Do you care enough about this question to write a brief comment — which will be printed later in the Alliance pages?

***End of Alliance Bulletin***

## IN PRAISE OF GRATITUDE

### On entering the City of God

There are no barriers to prevent a grateful man from picking up the bundle of his life and going into the City of God to live. For the City of God is never closed to a grateful heart.

Some say the City of God is far off and perhaps hereafter, and not easy to find or enter; and yet all my life I have lived so near the City of God that I cannot remember a day of my life in which some one of its innumerable gates did not open to me, and the feet of my heart entered for at least a moment of refreshing radiance; and I can remember many days I have spent all day long in the City of God. It was not far off, it was not hereafter, it was not hard to find or to enter. I only need to pick up my life, and turn my face in gratitude, and enter in, for it is always there and open.

## Earth and Creatures

It is a very human frailty to gather and hang on to properties, to the arrows we make and the shelters we build and the toys of beauty and use that we play with; and it may contribute greatly to our comfort and survival, particularly now in the human world of intricate and complex artifice — the world of shoes and money, of factories, oil wells, and ships, of powers and claims and counterclaims of nations — that the tool we fabricate today may be on hand to help us tomorrow. But this possible strength in the City of Man is a frailty when we approach the City of God. A sense of property is a discourtesy to God. The desire to have and to hold diminishes our presence in the City of God. To claim anything as all my own is a theft against grace and a loss in gratitude.

Nothing in the City of God can be owned by creature, man or nation, for it is the realm of gratitude and communication. There is no having and no holding in our companionship with God, but reality of being and joy of response.

## Our Time and Place of Life

Our time of life is now and our place of life is here. When we are not grateful we have no home in time or in place. When we are not grateful we have no home in the presence of God, and cannot love. If we are not grateful here and now, then where shall we go and when shall we be grateful? Where shall we find home and when shall we find home? In infinity and eternity? But they would be neither infinity nor eternity if they did not also completely absorb both here and now.

Gratitude is the ground of new being. True relationship between man and man is founded in spontaneous mutual gratitude, and this gratitude releases powers of renewed life, creative powers to choose to respond and receive, to affirm and confirm one another, to choose to love.

Gratitude releases our heart to surprise and wonder.

Gratitude lifts us up to unity, identity, wholeness and communion.

— from *In Praise of Gratitude*  
by Robert Raynolds



# S.N.A.P. REPORT

*by Eric Allison,  
La Porte, Indiana*

On August 19th, 1978, in the Santa Cruz Mountains of California, a small group assembled for a two - week adventure that would be a combination of spiritual experience and physical labor. Such was the beginning of the Swedenborgian New Age Pioneers who are among those who have set out to recolonize the continent. They were writers, carpenters, artists, athletes, musicians, psychologists, teachers, religious leaders, students, technicians, and adventurers. There were seventeen of us. Most were members of the New Church while others came along seeking in the spirit of the New Age. We came not to mold the land to the form of our ideas but to listen to it, to feel its natural pulse, and to learn from its rhythms. We came to learn how we could co - operate with the land, and indeed create the beginnings of a New Age community.

The S.N.A.P. experience took place on a 160 - acre piece of property that is a generous gift to the church by Dr. Esther Perry, to whom we give our heart - felt thanks. I say this because the site is only seventeen miles from Santa Cruz, a virtual Mecca of New Age activities. The property is actually located within the township of Holy City.

Although the land is close to civilization, it does have the feeling of being in the wilderness. There are still mountain lions in the area as well as lynx and bobcats. We never saw a rattle - snake, but our closest neighbor's dog tangled with a rattler and survived. One deer was sighted as was a wild boar.

Working together as a spiritual community, we spent our morning hours engaged in physical work. The sun was hot and the flies numerous, but we worked steadily and are proud of our accomplishments. Several miles of trails were cut, often through thick manzanita, madrone, and poison oak bushes. Dead redwoods were cut down and the wood was used as steps for the prevention of erosion on the main trails, for lining the new spring that was cleaned out, and for a new foundation to the property's only remaining structure. There are only three level areas; these were cleared of bushes, poison oak, and the remnants of an old barn. The property was made more accessible by clearing away the old road. Poison oak bushes were sprayed and cut. Often our work had a spiritual dimension to it. Such was the

case when Gary Crowell spoke to the redwoods, "I'm sorry but one of you redwoods is going to have to sacrifice yourself for the foundation of our building, which one of you will it be?" At that very moment a dead limb fell down from one of the redwoods.

When we were not working, we had community activities such as doctrinal presentations and discussions, inter - personal group meetings, dream interpretations, singing, chanting, and music played on banjo, guitar, recorder, and harmonica. Group meditations were held three times daily. Worship, prayer, and drawing mandalas, the power circle, and healings were some of the other events of a spiritual nature. Every other day in the heat of the afternoon we would head to the beach to wash off poison oak, have fun in the sun, work on reports, and have activities such as those mentioned above.

The end of the two - week experience was climaxed when Joknee Avrutick, Gary Crowell, Sandie Crowell, Frank Lawson, Rachel Martin, Ben Martin, and Bob Parrott were confirmed into the New Church. After the Confirmation and Communion service each SNAP participant was awarded a paper photo of Benjamin Franklin (\$100) for their efforts and a party ensued. The next day we all went our separate ways, but we are one in the spirit of SNAP.

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## FARM AWARDS IN RIVERSIDE

The Riverside Society is justly proud of its youngest member, Miss Tina Skinner, age 16. She is active in Future Farmers of America, and in August won honors in competition by exhibiting six goats, two cows and a pig. She received seven first place ribbons, five second and two third. Some were for grade and breed, and some for showmanship, so the same animal could win more than one ribbon. She also won the Grand Champion award and Senior Champion award with her cows, and Junior Champion for her Jersey calf. She also won a large dairy trophy for her chapter of Future Farmers.

Riverside, California

# FROM LOCAL BULLETINS

## GOOD NEWS FROM PAULHAVEN CAMP

The Paulhaven Development Committee report that a cement foundation has been poured for washing facilities at the camp, and the building itself to be made of concrete blocks ready for use next summer. A well will be made on the fire-guard behind the kitchen and water will be pumped to the washing facilities. Western Canada Conference is financing this project up to \$2,500.00.

Children's camp was again excellent — terrific staff, and great kids. Wally Schellenberg of Winnipeg was Camp Director with Eric Osborne of Calgary and Carl Dick of Seebe sharing the ministerial duties.

Edmonton, Alberta

## UNLIMITED POSSIBILITIES

The last few months have seen a very real upturn in the life of the Cambridge Society — new members added to the roll, increased attendance at worship, willing workers on every hand. These are most encouraging developments, yet we feel that the future is wide open for our Church. There are unlimited possibilities for its growth if we will only be receptive to them.

A recent reading of one of the sermons by the late Dr. Russell H. Conwell started ideas flowing along these lines. Dr. Conwell took for his text the story of Elijah, fleeing from Jezebel and going — he thought — into the desert to die. Utterly discouraged, he felt his work was finished, he was alone, unloved and unwanted, and asked only that the Lord take him. Yet Elijah was not alone! The Scriptures tell us that an angel of the Lord came to him, providing him with food, and on the strength of that food he traveled another forty days and forty nights to Mount Horeb. The Lord still had an important use for Elijah.

Dr. Conwell also wrote of a church in Baltimore which was greatly in debt, and whose members were completely discouraged. Yet a few of them gathered in prayer, asking that their church be made an instrument of the Lord's work. From that beginning the church was able to pay its debts, grow, and resume its place in the community.

Dr. Conwell concluded, "There are many churches that can do great things, but they do not think they can. They can go forty days and forty nights in the strength they now have, and at the end of the journey God will tell them what to do next. He will say, as he said to Elijah, 'Rise up: go forth and stand upon the mount before the Lord.'

"The possibilities of what we may do when we reach the limit of our strength, we have not seen!"

Cambridge, Mass.

## BEGINNING OUR 160th YEAR

"History becomes interesting and instructive, warm and living, when we see in the events recorded the ends of Divine Providence which they were designed to accomplish. This seems to me to be the case in a very remarkable degree in those events which prepared the way for the establishment of the New Church in Boston."

This quote is taken from a biographical sketch of Thomas Worcester, written by Sampson Reed. It is a delightful book telling of the way people found, and joined, the New Church. In many of the cases those who joined the New Church did so because someone cared enough to share their faith with a friend. They did it two ways; orally and by giving them a copy of the Writings.

One such receiver was a T.B. Hayward who was searching for a deeper faith. He was given a copy of *Heaven and Hell*. Before he started to read it he wondered if there was a test one could use to determine whether these doctrines were really true or false. "At that moment I seemed to hear a voice saying to me, 'There is such a test. If it has the tendency to make you a better man; to make you love the Scriptures; to bring you nearer to the Lord; it is true, not otherwise.' " Our history reports that he became an avowed receiver of the doctrines of the New Church.

Just one more tid-bit from this little book. Thomas Worcester, the first pastor of the Church, described his early youth and preparation in the teachings of the Church. He borrowed as many volumes as he could. He would read a hundred pages a day, or a volume

a week. "I did not read from curiosity, nor for the sake of laying anything up in my memory, but for the effect which the Heavenly Doctrines produced on my mind . . . I loved the truth because it did me good, and I took delight in exercising and cherishing the good affections that were given me."

I know it seems as though the Pastor stresses reading, studying and doctrinal classes often. We all struggle to protect our free time. But what will history record of our involvement with the New Church? Will we have our T.B. Hayward's testing the truth or falsity of the Writings? Or the Thomas Worcester's who speak of their love for truth "because it did me good . . ."

We cannot rest on the history of past accomplishments. Ours is to add on to this rich legacy; testing the Writings. Will we come nearer to the Lord?

Boston, Mass.

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## THE NEED FOR COMMUNITY

Long, long ago this editor recognized the sad trend toward destruction of the "sense of community" taking place in America. Just recently we attended a seminar in a little town of only 150 population, sponsored by K.U. and Kansas State University. The purpose was to study what can be done to preserve that sense of community in small towns. It certainly is not hopeless. The meeting was highly inspirational. But the big question is how to overcome the negative feeling which has been engendered by the almost overwhelming power of "bigness" so prominent in American life today. It seems that it is akin to some kind of hypnosis. One hears people say, "You can't stop the trend." Which, of course, is utter nonsense. One can change anything — yes, **one** can do it. Look what Jarvis of California did, almost single handedly. We cannot look backward to the "old things" too much. To do so would be to fall behind. We must look to the future, but the thing is to preserve a proper perspective in order to preserve the best values. We note that even in the large population centers they are talking about the need to divide people in small groups — for what reason? To preserve that "sense of community" . . .

As we said in a sermon not long ago, "They took away our local High School. Now they are concentrating on getting rid of the rural Post

Offices all over the land. If they do, what will we have left? A handful of men playing pitch in the basement of the local Grain Office, throwing cigarette butts on the floor?" But we still have our little churches — the real outposts of Christianity in a mighty badly threatened American Society.

— from the Kansas Plains Banner

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## ALL IN GOOD FUN

### A MODEST CONTEST

Martin Luther, in 1531, at the age of 48 and having been married for six years said, in defining the differences between men and women:

"Men have broad shoulders and narrow hips, and accordingly they possess intelligence. Women have narrow shoulders and broad hips. Women ought to stay at home; the way they were created indicates this, for they have broad hips and a wide fundament to sit upon, keep house and bear and raise children".

We assume this was written when Martin was temporarily bereft of his senses. However we will send a modest (but appropriate) prize to the reader who sends us the best response to the above definition. **Best** means wittiest, most perceptive, most enlightening, etc.

### COMMENTARY ON MATTHEW 22:29

An official board was examining a candidate for church membership. One of the questions was, "What part of the Bible do you like best?" He replied, "I like the New Testament." "What book in the New Testament?" "The book of parables, sir," was his response. "Would you kindly relate one of these parables to this group?"

The uncertain candidate bluffed as follows: "Once upon a time a man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among the thieves, and the thorns grew up and choked him. And he went on and met the Queen of Sheba, and she gave that man, sir, a thousand talents of gold and silver and a hundred changes of raiment. And he got in his chariot and drove furiously, and when he was driving along under a tree his hair got caught in a limb and left him hanging there.

“And he hung there many days and many nights, and ravens brought him food to eat and water to drink. And one night while he was hanging there asleep, his wife, Delilah, came along and cut off his hair, and he dropped and fell on the stony ground. And it began to rain, and it rained forty days and forty nights. And he hid in a cave. He went on and met a man who said, ‘Come in and take supper with me.’ but he said, ‘I can’t come for I have married a wife.’ And the man went out into the highways and byways and compelled him to come. He went on to Jerusalem and saw Queen Jezebel sitting high up in a window, and she saw him. He laughed and said, ‘Throw her down out of there.’ They threw her down seventy times seven times, and of the fragments they picked up twelve baskets full. Now whose wife was she in the judgment?”

The members of the board marveled at this man’s knowledge of the scripture and voted to receive him. — Quoted by James L. Sanders, Winters Chapel United Methodist Church, Doraville, Georgia.

(Pulpit Digest)

## URBANA COLLEGE CELEBRITY SERIES

ABC news journalist Herbert Kaplow will offer incisive commentary on the American political scene when he guest lectures at Urbana College just five days after the November general election. Kaplow’s Nov. 12 appearance at UC will open the 1978 - 79 Urbana College Community Celebrity / Concert Series.

In addition to Kaplow’s program, the series also features performances by Broadway actress Peggy Cowles, on Dec. 10; pianist Albert Lotto, on March 11; the Jazz Arts Group of Ohio, on Jan. 14; and the Dayton Ballet Touring Company, on April 18. Each of the Sunday programs will be held in the College Community Center, beginning at 8 p.m.

A top political analyst now based in Washington, D.C., Kaplow has reported on five Presidential campaigns and covered scores of major national and international events during his career. He will share his impressions of the changing political climate and discuss his involvement with the news media during the presentation.

## PRESIDENT PATZER’S EFFORTS LAUDED

The resignation of President Patzer, effective June 1979, was accepted this summer by Charles F. Johnson, chairman of the college’s board of trustees.

In announcing the resignation, Johnson said, “It is with deep regret that the Urbana College board of trustees has accepted President Patzer’s resignation. We appreciate the dynamic contributions he has made to the college during his service here.”

“President Patzer,” Johnson continued, “arrived at a time when the institution was suffering from lack of leadership, poor enrollment and financial insecurity. Under his guidance the college achieved accreditation, more than doubled enrollment and secured a stable base of financial support. Roland Patzer’s contribution to Urbana College and its constituents has been remarkable. His dedication, leadership and total commitment to the development of higher education has been evidenced through all facets of the college and we are indebted to him.”

Patzer explained that his decision was based on a desire to seek a position with a “larger, more complex institution and to serve in a position in government where I might affect public policy prior to concluding my professional career.” He says the announcement was made in June so that a smooth leadership transition could take place, but advises the college community that “in no way do I intend to be a caretaker president.”

“My most memorable experience at Urbana, has been the opportunity to observe, understand, as well as participate in the unique relationship that exists in the Urbana College student who, in times of stress, has demonstrated an extraordinary cooperative spirit, and, in periods of success, revealed a quiet modesty in accomplishment.”

“Each summer, I look forward with great anticipation to the Fall when the campus comes alive with activity and enthusiasm. Despite the fact that we have one of the largest summer school enrollments in our history, my enthusiasm for the beginning of Fall Quarter is even greater than ever because of the efforts by so many to develop new and existing programs for students this year. I hope, in this my last year with you, we can look back at the end of

(cont’d. on page 255)

**FOURTH FLORIDA CONFERENCE  
SWEDENBORG HOUSE**

**February 21 — 25, 1979**

**Theme:** Spiritual Well Being: From Birth to Eternity  
**Time to Relax** — to re - establish old friendships and to make new ones.  
**Time for Meditation Practice** — a means of opening awareness to our intuitive knowing of what is good and true and as a means of enhancing our sensitivity to the Lord's presence with us.  
**Time for Reflection** — on the meaning of Spiritual well being and our Swedenborgian belief system.  
**Under the sponsorship of the Adult Work Committee of the Board of Education, the staff will include the Rev. Dr. Calvin E. Turley, and his wife, Marilyn, and a theological student from SSR.**  
**Who is it for?** **Mature Adults** — who plan to participate in the full program as we build a sense of community and deepen our spiritual awareness. Program will begin with supper on Wednesday, February 21st and end with lunch on Sunday, February 25th.

<b>Costs:</b>	<b>Registration fee:</b>	<b>Single</b>	<b>\$35.00</b>
		<b>couple</b>	<b>\$50.00</b>
<b>Swedenborg House</b>			
	<b>Room and Meals</b>	<b>Single</b>	<b>\$16.00 per person, per day</b>
		<b>double</b>	<b>\$14.00 per person, per day</b>
	<b>Motel (meals at Swedenborg House)</b>	<b>single</b>	<b>\$36.00 per person, per day</b>
		<b>double</b>	<b>\$24.00 per person, per day</b>

*(Make reservations for Swedenborg House early, please)  
Dates include travel time*

**APPLICATION: PLEASE RETURN WITH REGISTRATION  
FEE TO:**

Nancy Perry  
Central Office  
48 Sargent St.  
Newton, Mass. 02158

Number of participants will be  
limited due to space.

NAME ..... PHONE .....

ADDRESS ..... NUMBER IN PARTY .....

We/I plan to arrive on ..... at ..... We/I will travel  
by ..... and will arrive at .....

We/I will ..... will not ..... need to be met and provided with local transportation to Swedenborg House.

Please indicate housing preference: Swedenborg House ☐  
Motel ☐

Make all checks out to: General Convention  
If flying, please fly to Daytona Beach airport  
If you would like to stay at Swedenborg House for a few days following the Conference, please write to Mr. Frederick, 1001 Mercer's Fernery Rd., DeLand, Fla. 32720

# NOW HEAR THIS!

## THE GREAT CELEBRATION HOAX

Celebrations are those special times when we gather with family, friends and community to share an important personal, social or spiritual occasion. Stepping out of our hectic day - to - day pace, we are able to at least briefly express our innermost feelings about those we love, and in general become more human in our relationships.

Or at least that is what we like to think about celebrations.

Many of us have either consciously or unconsciously substituted shallow commercialized rituals for those events in which the real meanings of the occasions were long ago smothered by layers of wrapping paper, tinsel, chocolate candy, catered banquets, and so on. This year the average American family might spend anywhere from \$500 to \$3000 or more on celebrations. For every special event in our lives there now exists a commercial industry which offers and promotes a particular view on the "proper" way to celebrate. These Madison Avenue models, presented through high powered advertising and promotion campaigns, soon become our habits. It is then that we find our tastes are a bit expensive, excessively consumptive, and if we give it some thought, not even particularly related to the meaning of the celebration.

For example, the toy industry last year poured over \$109 million into local television spot advertising during the Christmas season. Children in major cities were bombarded with as many as 80 TV commercials for some individual product lines. Christmas, the ads told them, would not be Christmas without a Farah Fawcett Doll or a Stretch Monster.

The diamond and jewelry industry hits us with the soft and romantic sell in magazines through pictures of young couples in love. If you really care, we are told, you show it to your loved one with the purchase of an expensive gem.

The funeral industry, which was the subject of a recent government investigation for a whole range of questionable practices, has turned the deepest emotional crisis a family can face into a financial shock as well. Uninformed, distraught relatives are subtly,

and sometimes crassly, pushed into extravagant and unnecessary services.

The examples of Sell - ebration taking the place of Celebration are endless. But along with the obvious financial cost, we've paid an immeasurable human, social and spiritual cost also.

It's long overdue that we take a serious look at the alternatives to our present situation.

## The Alternative Celebration

Alternative celebrations are based on three simple ideas: 1) freeing our special occasions from mechanical and materialistic commercialism; 2) getting them back closer to the original meanings, and 3) finding ways to celebrate so that these events become life - supporting, Earth - supporting, and further the values of global peace and justice.

With an alternative Christmas, one begins to discover that giving or receiving a creative home - made gift is actually more meaningful and fun than giving or receiving a new 23 speed blender. It is also a time to "unbuy" your dollars out of the Madison Avenue Christmas habit, and put that money into worthwhile, and financially deserving, human needs projects — a much more appropriate way to commemorate the birth of Jesus.

An alternative graduation for students might forego the caps, gowns and class rings, none of which have anything to do with the educational experience. That money could be better placed in relief efforts for the thousands of young students who are fleeing for their lives from South Africa's apartheid system, or in any number of domestic or international education projects.

Cooperative memorial societies have already been launched by hundreds of communities and church congregations around the U.S. and Canada as an alternative to the high - profit funeral industry. For a typical \$15 lifetime membership fee, these groups offer members counseling and information, and through group association they cut funeral costs down to 10 - 30% of the standard commercial overcharges.

Alternative celebration ideas are as boundless as human creativity. But this idea of people - oriented alternatives can do far more than put special events back on a human and community

level. It can help us look into broader questions of lifestyle and society.

Wastage and over - consumption of energy, environmental destruction, pollution and glaring disparities in resource use, food and income, are all major challenges to the global community. As the major world consumers, North Americans bear a particular responsibility in these areas. How we choose to live our lives, relate to other societies, and effect the distribution of resources and wealth, will ultimately determine to a large degree the future of humankind.

Some would say that problems of such magnitude are too large and complex to tackle through small scale groups such as families and communities.

We think they're wrong. Alternative celebrations and lifestyles could be an important lever for social change.

In fact, it could become a movement of some force.

MAYBE IN THE PROCESS  
OF CHANGING OUR  
WAY OF CELEBRATING, ALL OF US  
CAN BECOME MORE HUMANE,  
MORE SENSITIVE  
TO THE WHOLE HUMAN FAMILY,  
AND MORE CARING  
OF OUR MOTHER EARTH.

Alternate Christmas  
Catalogue 1973

*For further information write:*

National Alternative Celebrations Campaign  
4274 Oaklawn Dr.  
Jackson, Mississippi 39206

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## **PRESIDENT PATZER'S EFFORTS LAUDED**

(cont'd. from page 252)

the year and say, borrowing from the Chinese, this was truly the year of the student."

The board of trustees has formed a Presidential Search Committee which will be responsible for interviewing appropriate candidates for the position Patzer will vacate next year.

Appointed President on July 1, 1973, Roland Patzer is a native of Cleveland, Ohio. Prior to joining Urbana College he served as Dean of Students at the University of Vermont, but had been on leave for one year to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare as an Education Program Specialist.

## **AUSTRALIA JANUARY 1981**

### **CENTENARY CELEBRATION**

9 days of meetings and other activities at Convention Centre near Melbourne.

### **ARE YOU COMING?**

Enquiries: Mr. N. C. Jarvis,  
1 Eve Court,  
Ringwood,  
Victoria, 3134  
Australia.

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## **ADDRESS CORRECTIONS**

Rev. and Mrs. Paul Zacharias  
81 Church St., #905  
Kitchener, Ontario N2G 4M1  
(The postal code in the October issue is incorrect.)

Rev. and Mrs. David Rienstra  
8 Elm St.  
Fryeburg, Maine 04037  
(Not Box 111)

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## **NAME CORRECTION**

The name in the fourth line from the bottom in the last paragraph on page 224 (October issue) should be Edith Swanton Capon.

## **CONVENTION APPEAL INFORMATION WILL BE CONTAINED IN THE DECEMBER MESSENGER**

# WE GET LETTERS

## GREETINGS FROM AFRICA

Dear Mr. President:

I am extremely sorry that I did not send off this message of greeting in time for Convention which met in Kitchener a week ago. But you know that your brethren in South Africa are ever with you in spirit, and pray for your continued success in the great work that you are doing for the Lord's New Church in that great country of yours, the U.S.A. and Canada.

Please be assured of our great interest in you and in this work, and please do not lose heart at the seeming slow progress which we are all making. We believe that the "Woman" will remain in the wilderness for some time only, but **must** return eventually to fulfill her responsibilities upon the earth.

Our Conference was held in Petermautzborg this year, and was well attended by both ministers and laymen, and I was asked to send you cordial greetings.

Obed S. D. Mooki  
Orlando, South Africa

## MARRIAGE DEBATE CONTINUES

Dear Editor:

I am bothered by some of the ideas of Rev. Martin's article on Marriage. He said, "Over half were living together without a legal paper." I got the impression that, "The majority of people do it. We might as well go along with it." And then he explained marriage in the spiritual sense, which was O.K., but we live here in a natural, materialistic world. We have to begin here, with our ultimate basic principles, the Ten Commandments, the rules of law and order. Shouldn't the Church teach and stand up for "high ideals" instead of going along with lower ones?

Marriage is recognized as a sacred institution and the ideals have to be worked for. It is not a deal starting out with the idea, "We will live together as long as we like it. If we don't like it or get tired of it, we can leave any time we want to." Why encourage, condone or excuse this breaking of civil, moral and spiritual laws? We

don't begin marriage here in a "Spiritual State." We work for it. Our Lord God is a God of law and order.

The eyes of the world are on the churches. People watch and see how the churches perform, what they say and do. With some of the Lord's great Love in our hearts, let us try to lift our banners high, above the claims of the world. Read Matthew 5:17 - 18.

Helena Moore  
Pawnee Rock, Kansas

## LIFE HERE AND THERE

Dear Editor:

The collected "life after death" stories of Dr. Raymond A. Moody, Jr., Dr. Elizabeth Kubler - Ross and others show that many of the persons involved had uniform experiences which would tend to support their testimony.

Heretofore people who had a "near death" experience would conceal it, never talk about it because of the implications it could possibly arouse in the mind of the listener. In recent years however, the "life after death" case histories have been carefully documented, researched and revealed by qualified persons.

To this expanding collection of stories one more can be added. It is taken from the "Reminiscences" of the late Reverend John Randolph Hibbard, Swedenborgian minister.

Reverend Hibbard's ministerial work was to be in Illinois. In order to put his affairs in order he returned to Ohio and while staying at the home of his uncle, J.M. Hibbard, near Athens, became severely ill. "For some weeks my physician was baffled. One morning about daylight my breathing became short and difficult, and, as it seemed to me, ceased altogether. My wife, mother, uncle, aunt, and cousins, surrounded my bed. I lay perfectly conscious but unable to speak or move. This condition continued but for a short time. A sudden gasp, an instantaneous catching of breath, and this a few times at short intervals repeated, and I began to breathe easily. My uncle was the first to speak, "He's going to live! His work here is not done, thank the Lord!" I had given myself up as dead, and though conscious, supposed I had passed so far within that I should not again breathe in the outer world. And when I found myself again



breathing, and heard my uncle's words that I was going to live, though yet unable to speak, the thought came to me, "And am I really to live here again? Is there more work for me to do in this world? And is this or a similar sickness and death - bed scene to be experienced again some time?" And I must acknowledge that I felt a little disappointed at the idea of returning again to this world.

I had not suffered greatly during my illness, and during all this morning scene felt no pain whatever, nor do I suppose I would have felt any if I had really "passed on" and in to the spiritual world. Nor do I suppose that dying is generally a painful process. I believe that in nearly all cases what is known is quaint theology as "the hour and article of death" is painless and frequently a pleasant experience. This was the 'turning point' of the disease, and I recovered rapidly.

. . . Later I again lay under hands of a physician for four weeks, most of the time so ill that I was given up to die, and once published in the Peoria papers in the obituary column. For two or three days during this illness I experienced several times each day the sensation of being two separate persons, or rather of being quite separate and distinct from my body. I seemed to myself to be lying on my back in a horizontal position, but elevated a few inches over my body which was lying in the bed beneath. This experience occurred when I was broad awake, and did not appear to myself or others to be at all delirious. Instances of a similar kind are found in medical reports." And so they are.

Dorothea E. Abbot  
Arlington, Virginia

Ref. New Jerusalem Magazine 1884, p. 137  
*Reminiscences of a Pioneer* Chapter 24.

## DAVID FEKETE'S ARTICLE

Dear Editor:

"An Undisputed History To Come" was excellent. It contained substance which can benefit all branches of the New Church in these troubled times.

History can be an astute teacher, provided we possess a proper understanding, and desire to extract the lessons. The writings were given to the New Church in order that we could acquire a proper understanding, and from this

understanding a deep consciousness of life and its truths. History, to the people of the New Church, then becomes a panoramic lesson which promotes spiritual growth.

Besides Philip Sherrard's book *Byzantium*, I would like to recommend, *The Ottoman Centuries* by Lord Kinross. I feel that after reading this work which describes early Eastern Christianity and Ottoman Mohammedanism, New Church people will become more deeply conscious of their church, the writings, and Christianity in general.

Stanley Libiszewski  
Brimfield, Mass.

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## From Church Records

### BIRTHS

**WOOD** — Congratulations to Ray and Betty Guiu, the proud grandparents of Marina Montserrat Wood, born September 4, 1978, to Christina (Guiu) and Willis Wood.

**YOUNG** — Congratulations to Linda and Larry Young, Jr., on the birth of their son, Ryan Christopher, on August 14, 1978.

### BAPTISMS

**HAMEL** — Jessica Lynne, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. James Hamel was baptized into the Christian faith at Elmwood, Mass., on June 4, 1978, the Rev. Arvid Anderson officiating.

**GRAFFAM** — Jessica Mae, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Robert Forest Graffam was baptized into the Christian faith at Fryeburg, Maine, on September 24, 1978, the Rev. David Rienstra officiating.

### CONFIRMATIONS

**AVRUTICK — CROWELL — CROWELL — LAWSON — MARTIN — MARTIN —**

**PARROTT** — Joknee Avrutick, Gary Crowell, Sandie Crowell, Frank Lawson, Ben Martin, Rachel Martin and Bob Parrott were confirmed into the faith of the New Church at SNAP in the Santa Cruz Mountains on September 1, 1978, the Rev. Eric Allison officiating.

**FARBACK** — Kay Farback, on May 14, 1978, was received into membership in the New Church through the rite of confirmation, the Rev. Thornton Smallwood, Chicago, officiating. In the same service her parents, Mr. and Mrs. LeRoy Morgan, renewed their membership vows.

## WEDDINGS

**BROWN — EMERY** — Steven C. Brown and Barbara L. Emery were married in Fryeburg New Church on July 14, 1978, the Rev. David Rienstra officiating.

**COOTS — BARTON** — David Allen Coots and Sharon Elizabeth Barton were married in Elmwood, Mass., on February 18, 1978, the Rev. Arvid Anderson officiating.

**FOX — DAVIS** — Kenneth R. Fox and Elizabeth J. Davis were married in Fryeburg, Maine, on July 22, 1978, the Rev. David Rienstra officiating.

**MAGEE — HATCH** — Carl E. Magee and Betty I. Hatch were married in Fryeburg New Church on September 28, 1978, the Rev. David Rienstra officiating.

**RIDLEY — HORTON** — Wayne Francis Ridley and Deborah Lee Horton were married in Elmwood, Mass., on July 23, 1978, the Rev. Arvid Anderson officiating.

**SMITH — MULHERIN** — Steven Smith and Alice Mulherin were married in Fryeburg New Church on August 19, 1978, the Rev. David Rienstra officiating.

**WARREN — CRESSY** — Patrick Warren and Andrea Cressy were married in the Fryeburg New Church on August 5, 1978, the Rev. David Rienstra officiating.

**WATSON — MORRIS** — Clyde W. Watson and Twyla Morris were married in Fryeburg New Church on September 23, 1978, the Rev. David Rienstra officiating.

**WOOFENDEN — ZIMMERMAN** — Trevor George Woofenden and Lynn Christine Zimmerman were married in Almont, Michigan, on June 25, 1978, the Rev. Dr. William R. Woofenden officiating.

**SCHNEIDER — POSER** — Gregory Schneider and Robyn Poser were married in St. Francis Church, Kitchener, Ontario, on September 30, 1978, Father William Burns and the Rev. Paul Zacharias officiating.

**BUSH — SONDRUP** — Robert Edgar Bush and Kim Elaine Sondrup of Burnaby, B.C. were married on August 19, 1978, the Rev. Harold Taylor officiating.

**RICHARDSON — ANDERSON** — William Richardson and Karen Anderson were married in the Church of the New Jerusalem, Philadelphia, on September 16, 1978, the Rev. Richard H. Tafel officiating.

## DEATHS

**DURGIN** — Albert J. Durgen of Fryeburg, Maine, died on September 3, 1978. Resurrection service was held in Fryeburg, the Rev. David Rienstra officiating.

**FOBES** — Gertrude Bliss Fobes, widow of George S. Fobes, died on Sept. 7, 1978, in Agawam, Mass. A memorial service was held on September 10th, with burial in Newton Center Cemetery. She is survived by her daughter, Sally Fobes Lowell with whom she made her home, and three grandsons. Mrs. Fobes was a member of the Cambridge Society from 1920 - 1957.

**PRATT** — Minna Pratt, 95, died on January 18, 1978. A committal service was held in Elmwood, Mass., on May 1, the Rev. Arvid Anderson officiating.

**ROPES** — Miss Charlotte Ropes, longtime member of the Boston Society, passed from this world into the higher life this past August.

**SWAIN** — Irene Genevieve Swain, a member of the Western Canada Conference, died on May 23, 1978. A memorial service was held in Duncan, B.C., on May 29.

**SWINNEY** — Edward B. Swinney of Plymouth, Mass., husband of Carolyn Swinney, died on January 5, 1978, and Raymond Edward Swinney, son of Carolyn Swinney, died on April 27, 1978. The Rev. Arvid Anderson officiated at the resurrection services.

**TAFEL** — Dorothy Tafel, a member of the Philadelphia Society, died on August 24. A memorial service was held in the Philadelphia Church on October 8, the Rev. Richard Tafel Sr. officiating.

**UNRUH** — Leo Unruh, 90, died on July 6, 1978. He is survived by one daughter, Mrs. Delilah June Clarkson of Larned, Kansas. A memorial service was held on July 9 at Larned, Kansas, the Rev. Galen Unruh officiating.

## THE UPPER ROOM

# THE SHEEP AND THE GOATS

by Leon LeVan  
St. Petersburg, Florida

As we read Jesus' "Parable of the Sheep and Goats" in *Matthew 25* we behold a scene of judgment. The "Son of Man" (the "King") comes in glory. He sits upon the throne. Before him are gathered all nations. And (it is said) he shall "separate them one from another as shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats". The sheep are at his right hand; the goats on his left. The King says to those on his right: "Come ye blessed of my Father; inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." To those on the left he declares "Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels."

Since both the "sheep" and "goats" are surprised by their judgments, the King tells them that inasmuch as they did (or failed to do) certain things for even one of the least of his "brethren" they did it (or failed to do it) unto him.

### STRENGTHEN EVEN THE LEAST

Jesus did not normally refer to his disciples as "brethren". He did not do so at all until after the Resurrection. But after the Resurrection and Glorification, a closer bond of conjunction was possible between God and man; and the term "brethren" could be employed to designate that conjunction. The "least of the brethren" would be those who have even some least or smallest possibility of being regenerated and conjoined to the Lord. Thus, in this parable of ministering to even the "least," the Lord intends us to strengthen even the least possibilities of regeneration in women and men.

### WE ARE ALWAYS SET BEFORE THE LORD

The Divine title "Son of Man" identifies the Lord as the Divine Truth of the Word. The "Son of Man comes in glory" when the internal light (or spiritual truth) of the Word is revealed. The "nations" which are set before the King are all persons (of whatever time or place) both good and bad. We are always set before the Lord. "Nations" in Scripture mean individuals, persons, whether good or evil. The separation between them is effected when their spirits are unveiled.

The Lord sees what is within all people; and the Divine Truth has such power that all are judged in the light of it. We bring our interiors

with us after death. We bring our inner life with us. Nothing is left behind except the physical body. The "sheep at the right hand" are those in charity; those who live according to the teachings of the Word. The "goats at the left" are men and women who have religion in their memory but do not use it to change their lives.

### ALL MUST BE JUDGED AFTER DEATH

In our personal last judgments (which no one escapes) our interiors will be fully revealed. Those "interiors" are the "works" according to which we must all be judged. They are our thoughts and affections; our purposes; our aims and intents, for these are the things that go into our works. This is what is meant when "all nations" shall be gathered before the Son of Man. We shall be judged according to our interiors. It could even be said that our interiors make our judgments, according as they favor or oppose the truths of the Word. "Come ye blessed of my Father" summarizes the judgment on the good. "Depart from me ye cursed" expresses the judgment on the bad.

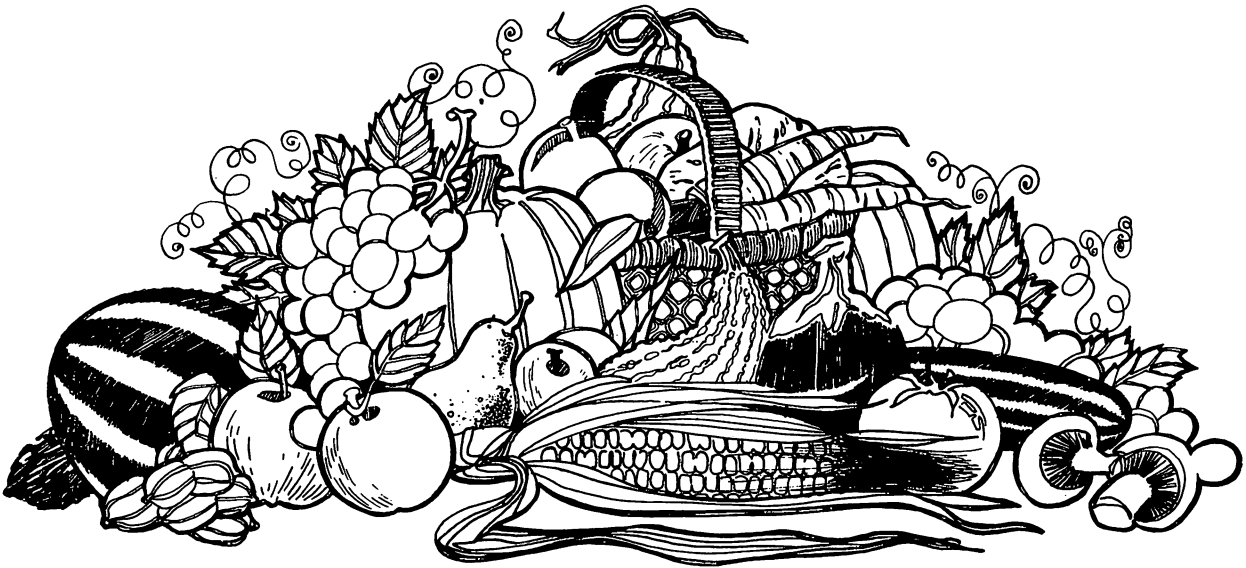
This parable of the sheep and goats which Jesus told holds its high place in the *Gospels* because it warns of the judgment which every man and woman must experience after death.

### THE FIRST BEGINNINGS OF ANGELHOOD

Let us look again at the Scriptural "least." The "least" (as already stated) are the least or smallest beginnings of regeneration; that is, the first beginnings of Angelhood. These at first seem "least." But if there is to be regeneration at all there must be a beginning. Those beginnings (or "least" things of the new spiritual man) are called the "least of these my brethren." "Brethren" mean charity. Therefore, the way we treat the goods of charity, is the way we treat the Lord; for it is actually the Lord who is that precious "least" from which our Angelhood begins. In the beginning of regeneration the Lord seems as "least." The life of charity at that time is almost non-existent, and almost unvalued. It is the "least of the brethren" — the least valued thing in life. But Jesus makes it great. He turns it around. He makes it the highest, purest, and holiest, for He said: "inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

**THE MESSENGER**  
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Kitchener, Ont. N2H 6N2

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