

THE MESSENGER

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June 2001

The Highest Insight in Hinduism and in Swedenborg

Wilson Van Dusen

Hinduism's *advaita vedanta*, or non-dual theology, probably represents the highest mystical insight possible. It is the insight that ultimately only God exists. My friends know that I regard Swedenborg's mystical revelations as the greatest ever. We can then ask the question, Can we also find non-dualism in Swedenborg? The answer is a resounding yes. The highest revelation of Hinduism is also in Swedenborg's revelations even though the two traditions had no contact.

Though I have long suspected Swedenborg's theology was also non-dual, only recently did I find the real evidence. You must realize Swedenborg's work represents thirty densely packed volumes. Add to this that Swedenborgian scholars have not noted or emphasized the non-dual aspect of this theology. You then see how it might be difficult to find. We can look at it now and see what light it throws on *advaita vedanta* since Swedenborg represents a totally different tradition from Hinduism. Swedenborg's theology presents the non-dual in a kind of illuminating paradox. Divine Providence governs all things from the greatest to the very least (Chapter 1 of Swedenborg's *Divine Providence* and through the whole book). Yet it is not meant that we see Divine Providence at work (*Divine Providence*, chapter 9). In all things Divine Providence looks to what is infinite and eternal (*Divine Providence*, chapter 3). This Providence sees existence working toward the end of all things in every incident. This means Divine Providence has overarching concerns and ways of working far beyond our ken. For this reason what appears to be evil is permitted because it is part of the working out of these ends (*Divine Providence*, chapters 13-15). One end of Providence is that there be a heaven from the human race (*Divine Providence*, chapter 2). So far we can sum this up as: God rules all things, the basic non-dual position. In Hindu terms Brahman is the all.

Now when we zero in on the person in the midst of this

Providence we begin to see human life operating in the midst of essential non-duality. For one thing the person is divided in terms of an external and internal (*Heavenly Doctrine*, chapter 3). The external includes our senses, awareness, and all those aspects of ourselves we are aware of. The internal is a realm we are partly aware of, and largely unaware of. It is the realm of our real loves and our given nature (the love of the life). Our outer conscious aspects are really only the concretization of the far less known inner and affective aspects. We receive life and influx from God and the spiritual worlds in our inner aspect. We are not really a life in ourselves but a recipient of life. All that we take to be our real self, where we feel in control is really a recipient outer vessel. We think we have prudence, the ability to decide, but we don't really have prudence (*Divine Providence*, chapter 10) though it is intended that we seem to have it.

Now here is the essence of the paradox. When we try to reform ourselves, try to better ourselves by whatever our light of understanding, we are working on our external self. The Divine aids us in both our interior (which is under its control) and in our exterior. Swedenborg's writings call this reciprocal conjunction. Conjunction is the Lord uniting with the person. Love and heaven are major examples of conjunction. Love joins. Heaven is the state of joining to God. God and Divine Providence are superordinate to us since they are aware of the infinite and eternal in all things. So our apparent effort to improve ourselves is met by the Lord working within us. The Lord is superordinate to us. So our doing is relatively an image within the real doing.

Our effort at conjunction with God is met by the real and substantial work of the Lord.

Reciprocal Conjunction

We can then easily turn this from our us-versus-God duality to a non-duality (God alone is real). We do this by simply acknowledging and appreciating that our very effort to understand and appreciate these things comes from God. We cannot even pray without God's aid. Reciprocal conjunction. The very highest and best we try to do occurs within and is a manifestation of Divine Providence. What we try to do God is doing through us. Our apparent duality is an aspect

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(*Divine Providence* chapters 13-15).

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President's Report, June 2001

Ron Brugler

I want to begin this report by expressing that this has been a year filled with hope and optimism for our church. I share this because so many positive and exciting things are happening. For example, our new Visitor's Center at Wayfarers Chapel was dedicated in May. This September our seminary will reopen its doors as the Swedenborgian House of Studies at the Pacific School of Religion. In March the Cambridge Society and SSR signed the final papers for the society's purchase of the chapel. In April, six new worship leaders were consecrated for service to the Kansas Association. And, in many of our churches and centers from Puget Sound to Washington DC, from Ft. Myers to Cape Cod, signs of growth and renewal are evident. Indeed, God is blessing us in many, many ways.

Our General Council, Cabinet, Council of Ministers, and Support Units have all worked hard to build upon these opportunities for growth and renewal. Much time and effort has been dedicated toward developing clear goals and objectives. This, in turn, has enabled us to see and appreciate our many accomplishments, whether they be in local churches, or in national conferences and retreats, or in publications and new forms of outreach. It has also led to something else, which is a sense of optimism about our future.

This has also allowed us to see where future energies and resources can be best directed. Examples of this will be evident in three presentations that will be made before this summer's convention on the subjects of forming a new Youth Support Unit, updating the denomination's ministers salary scale, and on stewardship. Similarly, this is leading to three goals for General Council's work in the coming year. One involves identifying ways that we

can better fulfill our denomination's objectives and purpose, the second addresses a desire to evaluate our constitutional administrative structure and the third speaks to ways that we can more effectively work with our Associations for furthering growth and renewal. These things assure me that the coming year will see many more positive developments.

Yet I also must be honest and share something else. I have deep concerns about two matters. The first lies in the fact that we continue to face a shortage in our available clergy to fill pulpits and ministries. My prayer is that the work that our seminary board is doing, coupled with the proposed salary scale, will help meet that need, and quickly! The second lies in concern about our financial resources and operating income. Recent developments in the stock market have convinced me that I do not like roller coasters! But the good side of these concerns is that we are addressing them, and I thank everyone involved for that!

As evidence of our ability to address these problem areas, I want to refer again to the six new worship leaders who were consecrated April 22nd in Pretty Prairie, Kansas. Last year, when faced with little possibility of filling the two Kansas Association pulpits in the near future, the members of the association approved a training program for people interested in leading worship services. This has included workshops led by David Sonmor, Wilma Wake, Eric Zacharias, and myself. Six people completed the workshops and have now been consecrated for service: Vivian Bright, Connie Helm, Megan Helm, Carl Helm, Linda Kraus, and Jane Siebert. This is a very creative way for our associations to help bridge our shortage in ordained clergy!

Lastly, and before listing the traditional record of my various activities in the past year, I just want to add something else. As of July 31st, I will be serving full time as Convention's president. I want to take this opportunity to thank General Council for supporting this increase in my time. I also want to thank the Church of the Good Shepherd for their understanding

in this. No Convention president could have asked for a more supportive and understanding congregation.

PRESIDENT'S ACTIVITIES AUGUST 2000 THRU JULY 2001

August 19: Joint Cambridge, SSR, COM and GC Meeting in Newton

September 14-17: MINSU in Washington, DC

September 19-21: FPRSU/AFC at Almont

September 22-24: Cabinet at Almont

September 29-October 1: New York Church and Church of the Little Grain for Young Min Kim's installation service

October 19-22: General Council at Temenos

October 26-29: SSR Board Meeting at Blairhaven

November 3-6: Investment Committee and Rev. Andy Stinson's installation service in Elmwood

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FreeMan

Mona Diane Conner

Last November on a Friday night I headed into an unexpectedly bumpy weekend when some stomach pains and a fever landed me in the emergency room of the local hospital in my Brooklyn neighborhood. After a twenty-two hour ordeal in the ER and no sleep, I was finally operated on for appendicitis, luckily with no complications. The wait in the ER was the hardest part, so by the time I was moved into a genuine hospital room with my sister on hand for support, I felt that everything else would be a piece of cake by comparison.

Soon after I was settled, several attendants wheeled in an elderly woman, my roommate, on a stretcher. As she entered, I wondered what my experience of rooming with her would bring. Dorothy had a bad fracture of her left arm, and other complications. She was bed-ridden and in constant pain. My sister asked her if she lived with anyone, and she mentioned her brother. "He doesn't know where I am," she told us, since the ambulance had taken her to a different hospital than originally planned. My sister asked Dorothy for her brother's phone number and went out to call him. Later that same day Dorothy's younger brother, Sylvester, arrived to visit her.

Sylvester brought Dorothy a donut. It was the only thing I had seen her eat so far; she had turned the hospital lunch down. When Dorothy and I were on our own in our room, we were not getting much help from the weekend nursing staff. As I began to be able to move around, I found myself needed as Dorothy's advocate, pressing the call button for her, and later on trying to help her eat. Through such teamwork we bonded with each other. By Monday night I was allowed to go home. Before I left, I noticed that Dorothy's call button had been placed by her broken, immobilized arm. I placed it by her other side and made sure she could press it. I promised to visit her as soon as I was feeling better. She told me she hoped she would be home by then, but in either case she would welcome my visit.

On a cold day in mid-December I was feeling well enough to go see Dorothy. I returned to the hospital, but when I arrived, the person at the front desk told me she had just been taken home. I called her house, and the next evening made the trip to Bedford-Stuyvesant in Brooklyn to visit Dorothy and her brother, Sylvester. Dorothy had a caretaker named Lorraine who had taken my call.

When I arrived Sylvester came to the door with his pit bull, Chocolate. Chocolate was uncharacteristically friendly for a pit bull, and raised from birth by Sylvester. Dorothy sat on the sofa, still dealing with pain, and Lorraine explained that she was receiving painkillers which made her drowsy. I gave Dorothy a framed photo I had taken in England that I thought she would enjoy, and immediately became engaged in conversation with Sylvester and Lorraine, who were both very chatty. Sylvester told great stories of how he trained as a boxer with his older brother, and about the time he actually had an opportunity to fight Floyd Patterson in an unofficial match. He was in fact quite strong and fit, appearing much younger than his years.

When it began to get late, Sylvester offered to drive me home. As we drove, he spoke about his brother and sisters, and how in their later years he has taken care of each of them, sharing with me about his various family relationships and their special importance to him. As we pulled up in front of my building, we were still very wrapped up in conversation, so we continued to talk for a while longer. Our conversation was concluding, when Sylvester decided, for reasons I don't know, to tell me one more story—quite an unforgettable one. One maybe even worth getting your appendix out for.

He opened by remarking, "This is a story for me to tell, and for other people to decide what they should do with it." He began to reminisce about growing up as a boy in Indiana, and living in a racially mixed community.

"My best friend in those days was a boy named Freeman," he said. "I was black, and Freeman was white, but in every way that mattered to boys of our age, we were perfectly matched. Both of

us were very athletic, and we loved to run track and practice the high jump. We did everything together. As a teenager, Freeman fell in love with a girl who was black. He was very smitten, but his parents would have nothing to do with his new girlfriend. Things got worse when Freeman's girlfriend revealed that she was 'in a family way'. He wanted to marry her, but his parents wouldn't hear of it. Freeman confided in me about his problem, and was a frequent visitor in my home.

"One evening when I came home my mother said, 'Freeman was here, and he wants to talk with you.' 'I'll talk to him tomorrow,' I said, 'it's late.' My mother added, 'I think it's important.' She was aware of Freeman's situation, and he was like a member of the family. I said again, 'I'll talk to him first thing in the morning.'

"The next morning, I found out that Freeman had shot himself in the head. He just couldn't live with the idea of not being able to marry his true love, or deal with the pressures of his parents' attitude."

At this point in his story, Sylvester fell silent and bowed his head. I could see that more than fifty years later this incident still caused him almost as much anguish as it must have on the very day it happened. I suggested that he shouldn't be blaming himself for Freeman's death, but quickly he put his hand up—

"No..no, no. Because I know Freeman; and I know that if I would have talked with him he wouldn't have shot himself." He took a long breath, as if he were reconciling himself to his deepest regret once again, and then the dark mood that had passed over his voice suddenly shifted. "Now," he said with an inward smile, "Let me tell you what happened....after Freeman shot himself.

"Freeman had a son. That boy was so full of love. No matter what Freeman's parents tried to do to ignore their grandson and his mother—and in spite of their attitude—Freeman's son just kept coming at them with love. His love became the glue, holding together

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FreeMan (Continued from page 83)

the family that was created after Freeman's death. Eventually they accepted Freeman's son and his mother as rightful members of the family. When Freeman's parents retired from their retail business, none of his siblings wanted to take it over, but Freeman's son said, 'I will.' When Freeman's parents became ill in their old age, it was Freeman's son who stepped in to care for them."

Sylvester let me know by the way he told me this story that he saw Divine Providence in the hindsight of the situation with Freeman and his family. In this same issue of *The Messenger*, Wilson Van Dusen's article, "The Highest Insight" offers an especially sensitive interpretation of the truth about Divine Providence: "Whatever we try to do God is doing through us... This Providence sees existence working toward the end of all things in every incident. This means Divine Providence has overarching concerns and ways of working far beyond our ken. For this reason, what appears to be evil is permitted because it is part of the working out of these ends... the very struggle of mankind is Divine Providence at work in the greatest and even the least of things."

Freeman was aptly named, and his life was instrumental. It took his life and his legacy to free his parents from their racism. And in his memory, his best friend Sylvester passes along Freeman's story and its gifts.

Mona Diane Conner is an artist, chair of the Communications Support Unit (COMSU), and an active member of the New York New Church. She lives in Brooklyn, New York.



Italian Philosophy Poem

Count your garden by the flowers
Never by the leaves that fall.

Count your days by golden hours
Don't remember clouds at all

Count your nights by stars, not shadows,
Count your life with smiles, not tears.

And with joy on every birthday,
Count your age by friends, not years.

—Anonymous

LABYRINTH

Elizabeth Waters Heinrichs

Last winter, in the town where I live, there was a snow-labyrinth built from mounded snow. It caused some interest but come the thaw, interest seemed to melt away. However, with the coming of spring the labyrinth builder built another, permanent labyrinth of grass paths edged with mounded-earth banks and flowers and herbs planted around the perimeter. Having walked the labyrinth several times, my curiosity was aroused, especially when I realized that Swedenborg describes the entrance to heaven as a "paradise labyrinth." (*Conjugial Love*, par. 8)

What does the word "labyrinth" bring to mind? For many people, of course, the idea of the minotaur and the prison created for him by Daedalus, are immediate responses. Others may think of winding and tortuous passages or hedge mazes such as that at Hampton Court in England. All these are kinds of labyrinths but they are not the only kinds by any means. Over the last year, I have become interested in the idea of labyrinths and what they might mean. The image of the labyrinth is an ancient one and can be found in many cultures. Today, there is enough interest in labyrinths to support several labyrinth societies in North America alone, as well as dozens of websites offering information on them.

"Labyrinth" and "maze" are synonymous, although there is frequently a perception that they are different. I have found a variety of suggestions about the etymology of the word "labyrinth," the most common being: *labris* the two-edged battle axe because some simple labyrinths do resemble the shape of such an axe and *labor*, for the labor of either entering or leaving it. "Maze," on the other hand, comes from an Old English word, *mase*, which stresses confusion and annoyance. The word *maze* then came to be understood as a noun and reflected the disorientation from following the paths of a maze.

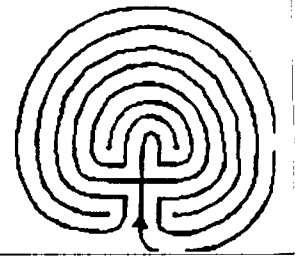
At its most basic a labyrinth can be unicursal or multicursal. A unicursal or single path design has one path, which is followed in to the center and then re-traced to return to the beginning. A multicursal design has many paths where the walker must choose the direction to travel and where deadends result from the wrong choice. The same is true of a maze of course, even though current usage tends to suggest that a maze is multicursal while a labyrinth is unicursal.

Aside from the relatively recent hedge mazes and the related wilderness mazes, there are ancient, circular mazes cut into the turf in England, laid out with rocks in Scandinavia and South America, among other places. Ancient earthworks sometimes include a labyrinth as part of the entrance-way, and labyrinth designs are found in cave paintings and rock carvings in Western Europe and the Mediterranean islands. They can also be found in Ancient Egyptian, Greek, and Roman pottery, seals, plaques, and pavements. Similar labyrinth-type designs are found on early Chinese pottery. Minoan coins usually have a labyrinth inscribed on one face of the coin. A labyrinth design is a common decoration on some Native American basket work and weaving, such as that from the Navajo and the Pima.

Medieval cathedrals had floor labyrinths where the design, laid into the stones, could be walked as a meditation; similar patterns on the wall could be followed by hand or gaze. Paintings from that time often included labyrinths as part of the composition or as designs on objects in the picture and were a metaphor for the journey of life. At the same time, people who were unable to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem were encouraged to traverse a floor labyrinth on their knees as a substitute for the real pilgrimage.

Many of the early labyrinth designs, such as the rock decorations in Neolithic tombs in North-Western Europe, can be dated at 3,500 to 3000 B.C.E.; some

Classical Unicursal Labyrinth



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later Greek occurrences to 100 B.C.E. More recently, the cathedral at Chartres in France, where there is a huge floor labyrinth, is Thirteenth-Century. Within living memory, there was a public Labyrinth at "Expo '67" in Montreal and, since the 1970s, there has been a huge increase in the number of public mazes around the world.

Clearly the concept of "labyrinth" has a long and continuing history in diverse cultures. Many of the really ancient designs, as well as many of the later ones, are circular, unicursal designs. (The graphic, beside the text on the previous page is a simple seven-ring unicursal design, which may be followed with the finger; much as some of the wall designs in churches and cathedrals were used.)

The narrative which most directly refers to a labyrinth, describes an experience which Swedenborg had in the spiritual world, and which he specifically states was an actual occurrence witnessed by him. Swedenborg observed an angel sent to gather together people who, at their earthly life, had been considered wise. The angel was to find out what it was they had believed about heaven while on earth. He and his companions had been surprised at how little was known on earth of what heaven was really like. The various groups who were gathered together described what their expectations had been while they were in the world. Each group was then taken to experience their own particular version of heaven.

The group who had believed that heaven was simply a question of sitting around and enjoying the outward things of Paradise, such as gardens and pleasant entertainment, were the people who were actually in a vast labyrinth. Circling around they found themselves unable to leave, even though they soon found no joy in their beautiful and pleasurable surroundings. When they expressed their sadness to the angel and his companions, it was explained that the things which were in paradise were only pleasures of the physical body and were soon tiresome. It was only when the delights were also pleasures of the soul or inner person that they were truly pleasurable. The people who found themselves in an environment which was eagerly anticipated but found to be unendurable, were told by the angel that they were in a maze or labyrinth which was at the entrance to heaven and that the angel would guide them there. (*Conjugial Love*, paragraphs 1 - 15, relates Swedenborg's whole experience.)

No doubt, a person as widely traveled in Europe as Swedenborg was must have been aware of the mostly unicursal, circular labyrinths in European Cathedrals and the circular, stone labyrinths in his home country of Sweden. Even the famous Hampton Court multicursal hedge maze was well established in Swedenborg's day, although not as the tourist attraction which it is today.

In referring to a labyrinth, I assume Swedenborg was referring to something well known in his day. What is not clear

however, is whether he was referring to a unicursal labyrinth or a multicursal one. My own interpretation is that the labyrinth in heaven was a single path labyrinth of circular design. The description of people wandering both back and forth and around in circles, does not seem to fit the dead endings and false turns found in a multiple path maze. As a description, it seems more appropriate to the back and forth turns of a single path winding its way to the center of the maze. In addition, a maze where there are very many choices to be made seems a less suitable metaphor for heaven since our real life choices have already been made before we go to the next world. Interestingly, one of the names for the Chartres labyrinth is "Journey to Paradise," which resonates with Swedenborg's description of the people who had to follow the labyrinth until they were in a position to enter heaven. Many other stories about mazes in this world make reference to the "journey of life" and the course which we must travel while here. Both single and multiple path labyrinths may be metaphors for our

journey. A path where we must make many choices about which turn to take reflects the choices which we make about how we will live life. A labyrinth with a single winding path is also a reflection of how we must follow the path of our lives to the center of the labyrinth: beginning life is not a choice, just as following our path to death should not be one either. Swedenborg mentions labyrinths in another context. He likens people who read the Bible from their own intelligence, rather than acknowledging that it is God who illuminates, to a person who enters a labyrinth without a cord or guide. Clearly this refers to marking the path as Ariadne does for Theseus in the myth of the slaying of the Minotaur. At the same time it is interesting to me that a cord had a very specific meaning to the Israelites, which is still present today in the Tallith or prayer shawl.

The cords which hold the tassels on the corners of the garments represent the Decalogue which was to guide their lives. The cord is then the truth which should guide the way we live.

Many people walk labyrinths as a form of meditation or walking prayer, others see them as an aid to relaxation or an exercise which stimulates both right and left sides of the brain. Such labyrinths, which are almost always circular and unicursal can be found in the grounds of churches, hospitals and schools, as well as on private property. Generally speaking, there are three stages to walking the labyrinth. The first stage is the act of quietly and meditatively letting go of the chatter of thought and superficial details of everyday life as walking stills the mind. The center of the labyrinth is the place for prayer and meditation, and the walk out is the stage of beginning to be strengthened for the work which we have to do in the world.

Bearing in mind that walking the labyrinth has had a long history, rich with spiritual meaning, it is not really sur-

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STONEHOUSE BOOKSTORE AND GROWTH CENTER

A new era was ushered in for the Stonehouse Bookstore and Growth Center in September 1999 when it moved two miles down the street from Redmond to Kirkland, Washington. The Pacific Coast Association purchased a 15,000 square foot building and made it available for the ministry of the Stonehouse and the Swedenborgian Church of Puget Sound. The bookstore now occupies the front of one end of the building and has excellent visibility to the public. At the back, facing out to a row of majestic evergreen trees, are three meeting rooms/classrooms, including a chapel for the use of the fast-growing Swedenborgian congregation, under the leadership of the Rev. Eric Allison.

The Stonehouse Bookstore and Growth Center is a non-profit learning community which facilitates the integration of Spirit into everyday life. It provides resources and programs fostering personal development, health and healing, and spiritual growth in order to bring harmony to our relationship with the Earth and with each other.

In pursuit of its goal of establishing a holistic center, the Stonehouse has leased office space to 22 health practitioners. Some of the disciplines represented by these practitioners include counseling, spiritual parenting, massage, hypnotherapy, naturopathic medicine, aromatherapy, anger management, expressive art therapy, energy healing, and acupuncture.



Photo Above: Mosswood lodge.

Programs and classes are held at the Stonehouse seven days a week. A quarterly 24-page program brochure is mailed to over 6,200 people describing the offerings. Eric Allison and Paul Martin lead a 90-minute experiential session each Wednesday evening on healing, relaxation, and spiritual well-being. Paul Martin and Sandie Grumman are leading a new spiritual support group. Other topics for the spring include creating sacred relationships, spiritual divorce, energetic imagery healing, yoga, tai chi, Reiki, meditation, feng shui, new paradigms in nutrition, introduction to shamanic journeys, the sacred woman's rite of passage, etc.

Weekend workshops are held throughout the year at the Mosswood Hollow Retreat Center, the 50-acre homestead of Paul Martin and Sandie Grumman. Some of the best-known leaders of weekend retreats include: David Spangler, John and Caitlin Matthews, Josephine Stewart, R. J. Stewart, Stewart Cubley, and Mary McLaughlin. In July, the new-age prophet David Spangler and the acclaimed actor Richard Chamberlain will lead a weekend workshop on the topic: "Bringing Spirit Home." On Friday evening, at the Stonehouse, they will present a lecture/dialog on "Self and Spirit." Because Mosswood Hollow is so spacious, Paul and Sandie invited Paul's father, Ernest Martin, to live there in his retirement. He has enjoyed it so much that he has decided to build a little cabin on the property. He has also been furnished with a desk and chair in Paul's office at the Stonehouse, and spends seven or eight days a week there. The plaque on the door reads: "Rev. Ernest O. Martin, M. Div., Assistant to the Director." His contracted salary is \$1.00 per year, and he has already been given an advance for his third year of service.

On Easter Sunday, a sunrise service was held at Mosswood Hollow, followed by a scrumptious breakfast. The 11 o'clock service was held at the chapel at the Stonehouse. During the last year, attendance at the worship services has grown from ten or less to more than 50. Watch the pages of *The Messenger* for the names of men and women who have recently joined the church. Following Easter, two services are held each Sunday morning. The first is meditative in tone, without a sermon, or even a sermonette!

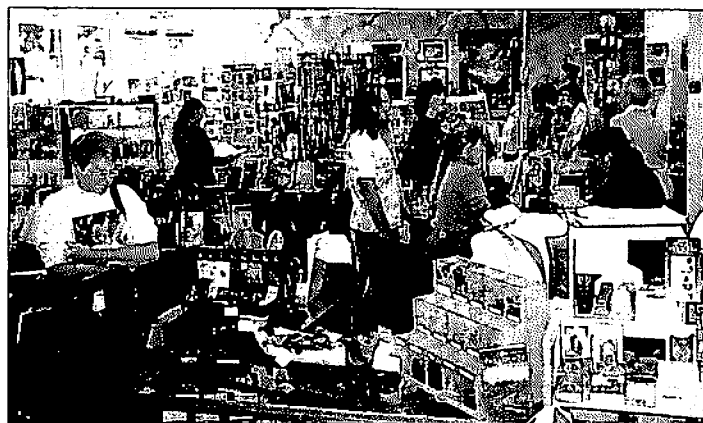
To reach an expanding community, the Stonehouse is now on-line with its own website: www.stonehouse.org Searchers

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Photo Left: Stonehouse bookstore, exterior.

Photo Below: Stonehouse bookstore inside.



STONEHOUSE BOOKSTORE AND GROWTH CENTER

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can buy books and gifts online, register for classes and programs, and learn all about other activities. Eric Allison sends out a church bulletin via e-mail to over 50 people every week, and the church has its own website:

www.Swedenborg.org The e-mail address for the Stonehouse is: paul@stonehouse.org and the e-mail for the church is: theborg@stonehouse.org

To learn more about these exciting new ministries in the northwest, or to buy books and gifts, you are as close as your computer keyboard. If you wish to see a sample copy of the program brochure, send an email request or write to the Stonehouse Bookstore and Growth Center, 12600 Northeast 85th Street, Kirkland, WA 98033. If your new computer hasn't been delivered yet, phone us at 425-889-2638. Better yet, come and visit, and be a free overnight guest at Mosswood Hollow.



Mosswood lodge.



REAL SIGNS SPOTTED ON CHURCH PROPERTY

—Come work for God. The work is hard, the hours are long, and the pay is low. But the retirement benefits are out of this world!

—God so loved the world that he did not send a committee.

Parish News

FROM ALL OVER

New York

The New York New Church has contracted with Alex Gorlin Architects and Kel-Mar Interiors to repair and renovate its 142-year-old sanctuary. Church president Pamela Selensky signed the contract in March and work on the project has begun, with the expectation of completion within six months. Cracked truss beams made the sanctuary structurally unsound and unusable for several years. Regular services and other meetings have been held on the second floor of the church, accommodating only a limited number of parishioners. "Our restored sanctuary will bring new power to our worship services, provide an attractive setting for weddings and concerts and free up our remaining space for community use," stated the Rev. Robert McCluskey, pastor since 1989. Partial funding for the extensive repair and renovation was made possible through a gift of the late Adrienne Frank, a long-time member of the church who died in 1999.

Los Angeles

With the passing of Cassius Ball in April 2000, the Los Angeles Society has eight active members. Manon Washburn has taken on double duty serving as president and newsletter person. The society continues to meet twice a year at Wayfarers Chapel, beginning with service at the Chapel, then lunch at a local restaurant followed by a business meeting at Wayfarers Center West. Between meetings members attend services at the Chapel as they can. The Women's Alliance continues to meet every other month on a Saturday at members' homes for lunch, readings and discussion of various Swedenborgian publications.

The Los Angeles Society began as ten trustees of the \$800,000 for the sale of their church on Westmoreland, two

blocks from Bullocks Wilshire in downtown Los Angeles. In the process of making grants and gifts to the growth of the Swedenborgian Church, the group became a committed and involved Society, participating in the national conventions and the Pacific Coast Association. Over the years, grants to various ministries have included:

Wayfarers Chapel	\$245,000
Church of Puget Sound	130,000
HIV Ministry	110,000
El Cerrito Church	90,000
San Diego Church	65,000
Stonehouse	30,000
Temenos	25,000
San Francisco Church	25,000
Network Center	19,200
SSR	12,500
PCA Youth	7,500

A number of smaller yearly gifts to *Our Daily Bread*, *The Messenger*, the Convention Youth Program, and individual and church grants too numerous to mention here have been given over the years. The L.A. Society has also sent seven teenagers to conventions, Almont summer and winter camps, and to PCA Association meetings.

Cambridge

The Church of the New Jerusalem Swedenborg Chapel in Cambridge is having a centennial celebration June 3, 2001, celebrating 100 years of Swedenborgian influence in the Cambridge area. Denomination President Ron Brugler will be a featured speaker. Rededication services and dinner are planned, followed by celebration with music and other speakers.

The Rev. Gladys Wheaton, Associate Pastor of the Cambridge Chapel, did a series of six weekly workshops in February and March on Spiritual Self-Love, or "What is Loving Ourselves as God Loves Us?"

(Continued on page 88)

TEMENOS SUMMER 2001 CALENDAR

Sundays 10:30 am Worship Service
Child care provided.

11:30 am Coffee Hour
12:30 - 1:15 p.m. Adult
discussion group.

YOGA

Mondays 6:45 to 8:15 p.m.
Thursdays 9:30 to 11:00 a.m.

JUNE

- 3 Interfaith Worship Service:
2:00 pm - Free
- 5 Evening Discussion Group
7:30 - 9:00 pm Free
- 19 Evening Discussion Group
7:30 - 9:00 pm Free
- 19-20 Nurturing Retreat for Women:
3:00 pm Tues. - 3:00 pm Wed. \$185
- 22-24 Getting the Love You Want - for
Couples Fri. 6 pm - Sun 5pm
- 23-24 Reiki: Level I Training: Sat &
Sun 9:30am - 4:30 pm \$160

JULY

- 3 Evening Discussion Group
7:30 - 9:00 pm Free
- 7-8 Soul's Journey, Fire's Breath:
Sat 9-7, Sun 9-5 \$210
- 14 If The Buddha Dated: Singles on
a Spiritual Journey: 1- 4pm \$50
- 17 Evening Discussion Group
7:30 - 9:00 pm Free
- 21 Exploring the Divine in Nature: \$45
- 26 Nurturing Afternoon for Family
Caregivers: 1:00 - 5:00 pm \$55
- 27 Nurturing Day for Professional
Caregivers: 9:00 am - 3:00pm \$95
- 28-29 Yoga Retreat: Beyond the Postures:
Fri. 6pm to Sat 5pm \$185
- 31 Evening Discussion Group
7:30 - 9:00 pm Free
- 29-8/1 African Dance and Drum Camp:
Sun 5pm to Wed. 3pm \$495

AUGUST

- 3-5 The Psychology of the Soul:
6:30 pm Fri. - 4:00 pm Sat. \$185

- 11 Maskmaking: 9:30 - 4:30 Sat. \$25
per family, \$20 materials fee
- 17-18 Nurturing Retreat for Women:
3:00 pm Fri. - 3:00 pm Sat. \$185
- 17-18 Professional Caregivers Retreat:
3:00 pm Fri.-3:00 pm Sat. \$185

SEPTEMBER

- 2 Open House 1:00-4:00pm - Free



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Temenos Center
1564 Telegraph Rd.
West Chester, PA 19382



Parish News FROM ALL OVER

(Continued from page 87)

Yarmouth Port Church, Yarmouth Port, Mass.

In cooperation with the Yarmouth New Church Preservation Foundation's ongoing efforts to raise awareness and funds to restore and preserve the beautiful 1870 Gothic church, the Yarmouth Port church over the past 18 months has held organ concerts (on their Clarke Tracker Organ), a community yard sale, historic tours and open house, and raffles. It all combined with many generous donations from neighbors and friends to help match a \$90,000 grant from the Massachusetts Historic Commission to restore their belfry and steeple, completed in June 2000. Extensive media coverage and a crowd of over 3000 people witnessed the beautifully restored steeple and bell being raised onto the steeple base. New front stairs and updated electrical service were also completed last summer.

Fryeburg New-Church Assembly: August 4 - 19, 2001

Come spend a week or two in Fryeburg, Maine this August!

FIRST WEEK: "FNCA: WHAT'S THE USE?"

The doctrine of uses is fundamental to the Swedenborgian perspective on life. This week we will examine the concept of "uses" from the context of our time here at Assembly each summer. What use does Assembly serve for those who attend? For the Swedenborgian Church at large? For the local and world community in which it exists? What use do we serve when we attend and how does attending Assembly affect the use we serve in our home communities? In short how does a theological doctrine get put to "use" in real life and how does it serve our spiritual regeneration?

SECOND WEEK: "BAD GUYS IN THE BIBLE"

From the Swedenborgian perspective of correspondence, we look at the inner sense of the Bible as representing the ongoing development of an individual's spiritual growth in relationship to God. There are plenty of "good guys" to relate to and emulate, but what do we do with all of those "bad guys"? What do they tell us about ourselves, our relationship with God and life in the world?

For a complete bulletin and registration information, visit www.fnca.org. Hope to see you there!

—Todd Woofenden



Everything You Ever Wanted to Know —and More—About The Inquiry Committee

Wilma Wake

Did you know that our church has an Inquiry Committee? If you did know that, it might have been a bit puzzling to you as to just what it inquired about. Translation issues in the *Arcana*, perhaps? Or as one Swedenborgian said: "I thought maybe it was like the CIA for Swedenborgians." This article is designed to answer questions on the Inquiry Committee that you might not have even known you had!

The Inquiry Committee is part of a structure that answers the question: "Where do you go if you have an ethical complaint against a minister?" which leads to the next question: "How can such a complaint be investigated in a way that is fair both to the person who made the complaint and to the minister involved?"

All of the mainline denominations have such a process in place. In efforts for our denomination to be "up to speed" with what others are doing, a number of us began taking workshops with the Center Against Sexual and Domestic Violence, a group in Seattle. This Center was started many years ago by people of faith who wanted to address issues of sexual and domestic violence in our society. Over time, they began to hear about issues of sexual misconduct from all of the religious faith groups. In an attempt to address those, they have become the leader in providing training and consultations for faith communities.

A number of us Swedenborgians have studied with them to gain a clearer grasp of the issues of boundaries in ministry and the responsibilities of denominational structures to articulate them and investigate possible violations.

The Council of Ministers formed a committee in the mid 1990s to explore the processes used in other denominations and to develop a procedure for our church. We were referred by the Seattle center to an attorney who specializes in these matters, Donald C. Clark, Jr. of Clark &

DeGrand in Chicago.

A committee worked with Mr. Clark over a period of a year or so to develop a procedure that was ultimately adopted by the Council of Ministers in 1996 and then by the General Council. Changes have been made since, and further changes can be made as we gain more experience with the procedure and our particular needs.

Here is a summary of the process that is currently in place:

The Committee of Inquiry is now a body of General Council. It is available to receive any complaints against professional misconduct on the part of any ordained clergy person or an authorized lay leader. It is important to note that, in our polity, the lay leaders have the same ethical responsibilities as the clergy.

Anyone can start the process of a concern by contacting a member of the Committee (as of this writing, the committee members are: Duane Beougher, Mary Crenshaw, Ted Klein, Jonathan Mitchell and myself, Wilma Wake, as chair).

Often the initial contact is an informal discussion as to a concern about a possible ethical violation of a minister or lay leader. This is, of course, kept confidential within the committee. If the issue seems to be one of confusion about the code of ethics, the situation might be referred to the Ethics Committee. The Ethics Committee, under the Council of Ministers, maintains ethical guidelines for ministerial work in Convention and is available for discussion or consultation on these issues. Sometimes, the ethics committee can help parties involved talk through a situation and reach a satisfactory conclusion through discussion. However, some cases are not appropriate for referral to the ethics committee for discussion. Other times, a situation may go to the ethics committee first for resolution, but then

in the end be referred back to Inquiry for investigation.

The purpose of the Inquiry Committee is to investigate an alleged misconduct. We start by talking with each other, generally via a conference call. If it seems clear that this is a situation requiring investigation, the following procedures are set in motion:

A. Each party involved is offered a confidential pastoral companion (not a member of the committee) to help them with any pastoral issues involved as the process continues.

B. The person or persons who were allegedly the victim[s] of misconduct are interviewed. We are very cautious about the sensitive nature of this interview. We arrange for it to be done in person, by a team from the committee. We attempt to provide a team that consists of one female and one male. When possible, the team is also one lay person and one clergy person. Mr. Clark has helped us in developing a format for careful interviewing techniques.

C. The alleged offender of ethical violations is also interviewed with the same techniques by the same team.

D. The entire process is done with the greatest confidentiality. The only situation in which that would not be maintained is if there were a situation that the committee felt could be dangerous or there were a legal obligation.

Say, for example, that we got a report that a minister was sexually abusing children at a camp. We would have to explore the laws in the state where the camp was located to see if we had to report the complaint to the authorities in that state. If we were concerned that a minister or lay leader were harming people, we would contact the employing

(Continued on page 90)

Everything You Ever Wanted to Know . . . (Continued from page 89)

body in writing and inform them that an investigation was underway, letting them make a decision about administrative leave during the investigation. The Inquiry Committee would meet or talk together after the interviews to make certain that the interviews were as fair as possible and that we felt we had ascertained the facts of the situation. We would consult with Mr. Clark to make certain we had correctly followed our own procedures and been fair to all parties involved.

E. We then would refer our report to the Misconduct Determination Board. This is a board that is part of the Council of Ministers. Its function is to make a determination as to the fitness of an accused person for ministry at the present time. The Inquiry Committee only does the investigation. We make no recommendation on the validity of the

complaint or what action should be taken. The Misconduct Determination Board would decide whether they felt the person were indeed at fault for an ethical violation. If they felt the person was unjustly accused, then they would do whatever is necessary to restore any damage to the person's reputation.

If, on the other hand, they felt that there was validity to the complaint, they would determine how to respond to it. There could be a letter of censure with recommendations for treatment or supervision. If they feel the person is not capable of ministry at the present time, they can issue a statement that the person is not in good standing with the Council of Ministers and inform the employing body of such. They might designate a treatment program with requirements to be met for the person to return to good standing in the Council.

An appeal could be made by either party to the entire Council of Ministers. As in court hearings, the appeal is based on whether there is any deviation from approved procedures. One of our items states: "All persons involved with these procedures will maintain confidentiality as mandated by law and expected by ethics. This means that only information that must be shared with appropriate bodies or persons legally or ethically will be shared." We attempt to do all that we can to maintain confidentiality.

Hopefully, this article has answered questions you didn't know you had about the Inquiry Committee.

Wilma Wake is a professor at the Swedenborg School of Religion and author of two recently published books, available from the Swedenborg Foundation and J. Appleseed.



ASK SWEDENBORG

Question:

Are people in heaven always happy? If so, how do they know what happiness is without its opposite?

Answer:

In short, no, they're not always happy. Swedenborg had much to say about the emotions of the angels in heaven. First, that everything they see, feel, intuit, think and enjoy occurs with more intensity than in this plane on earth, especially in the highest and middle heaven. The kind of joy and happiness that angels feel is often more meaningful and delightful than what we typically experience here because they are spiritual beings *only* there. They no longer need to deal with the "molasses-like" level of energy that our physical bodies work with. Thus, when the joyful states of being in heaven depart for a while, these people/angels *really* feel it!

Angels feel more delight overall, too, because their regeneration is complete

in the sense that they've reached stage seven (imaged in the seventh day of creation in Genesis). Their spirits are no longer tempted by the many varieties of evil and falsity that many of us are struggling with throughout life. Their hearts and minds are attuned to a kind of purity, depth, strength and usefulness that we are working toward, but may not reach until we cross over after death.

Swedenborg also wrote that "changes of state" are crucial for the well-being of angels in heaven. That is, they truly *need* to fluctuate between states of happiness and peace and states of doubt, anxiety and generally low inner places. There's something about the *contrast* that's really important for their ability to more sharply perceive and feel what heavenly joy, peace, truth and mercy are about. I know that I appreciate summertime *a lot* more after going through winter.

The "lows" the angels go through never get as severely low as when they

were on earth, however (regeneration has some wonderful effects!) Sometimes they need to be let down into their own ego, but they sense deeply when this happens and begin to pray for a speedy return to closeness with God. Their fluctuations of inner state continue to lead them into an eternity of ongoing growth and spiritual abundance. Their spiritual happiness grows and increases within a life of depth, learning alternation of state and uniqueness.

If you have a theological question that you would like addressed, please send your questions to the Virginia St. church, 170 Virginia St., St. Paul, MN 55102, attn. Rev. Kit Billings, or email them to st.paulswedch@juno.com

Reprinted from the Nov./Dec. 2000 *Correspondences*, newsletter of the Virginia St. church.



Dear Editor:

Regarding "Who Was Listening," your personally penned article in the April 2001 issue of *The Messenger*, I would like to offer my thoughts.

In the article you link school shootings to a lack of programs and systems for anticipating warning signs, to bullying, to access to guns and that, "we need to do a better job of listening to kids." Additionally, the context you create at the beginning of your article is "community building."

In my opinion, there is a glaring absence in your article of any mention of what I consider the fundamental or root cause of what has happened in America's schools. It is my belief that what is happening in schools specifically is a reflection of what is going on in our culture generally: killings, drugs, intimidation, bullying and illiteracy (especially when it comes to critical thinking skills) ... the list is long.

More programs and systems, community building, listening, more gun controls and the like are "band-aids" applied to easily discerned and "safe" to deal with symptoms of a deeply imbedded cancer ravaging the fabric of our culture. What is this disease? To even

TO THE EDITOR

utter the words to myself sounds "politically incorrect," and I shudder at the thought of being picked up by the PC Police.

However, I will risk arrest and say the cancer is the "breakdown of the family." Tangential to this is the failure of too many parents in providing discipline, ears to listen, values and standards of civility, rules about acceptable behaviors, consequences for unacceptable behaviors, religious training...another long list. In a sense, the "inmates" (children) are in charge. Parents are abdicating their responsibilities to schools, government programs and gangs who then provide the direction these children are desperately seeking.

When people have a "symptomatic" view of problems and apply symptomatic solutions, they feel better right away, but later on end up feeling worse, that is, disillusioned. While I support the idea of community building, in general, it


is largely a "feel-good" activity addressing symptoms. I am reminded of Hillary Clinton's, "It Takes a Community." Going after the bullies and guns, setting aside safe zones and the "we" (whoever that might be) doing a better job of listening are feel-good activities.

With the symptomatic approach, problems really don't go away, they only get worse over time. Seeing problems getting even worse, people will then apply more and more symptomatic solutions with situations progressively deteriorating.

Conversely, when people apply fundamental solutions to problems, in this case taking action to strengthen families, they find it doesn't feel especially good. In fact, they find it difficult, requiring commitment and sometimes taking a risk. Later on, though, with perseverance, true and lasting improvement can be experienced. As the fundamental approach is taken time after time with problems, a culture (any organization for that matter) can attain and maintain a high degree of health.

I believe the family is the basic building block, the foundation, of any healthy culture!

I appreciate the opportunity to express my thoughts on this matter. Thank you.

Ron Siddell
Lynnwood, Washington 

The Highest Insight in Hinduism and in Swedenborg

(Continued from Cover)

within a transcendent non-duality. The non-duality of God alone is superordinate to all appearances of duality. And we can experience this non-duality when we appreciate that all our efforts are simply manifestations of a Providence that rules all, that envisions a heaven of the human race and that is leading us toward this. Those in heaven become a conscious and coordinating part of the real order of things in which God is really all there is.

So the highest teaching of the Upanishads and of Hindu *advaita vedanta* also exist in what Swedenborg found in his great exploration. The non-dual position in Hinduism helped me to see it in Swedenborg's writings. But in a way, the writings better illuminate the human situation by providing a direct way to


move from a dualistic struggle to oneness. The very struggle of mankind is Divine Providence at work in the greatest and even the least of things. Our struggle is an aspect of Divine Providence at work. There are other ways where the writings of Swedenborg see reality in a unitary way. But this is a good first statement. All our efforts to improve ourselves do not create an us-versus-God dualistic situation—but rather our efforts are a part of the working out of Divine Providence. We are better off to see it as such because that is the truth. In this way we can sense God working right in the midst of our situation.

Wilson Van Dusen is a clinical psychologist, Swedenborgian scholar, mystic, and author of numerous books on the inner world.

Alban Institute Course In Conflict Dynamics Scheduled Fall 2001

The Alban Institute is offering a course titled, Conflict Dynamic: Understanding Self and Others in Difficult Interactions, September 25-28, 2001, a Four-day Learning Opportunity for Clergy, led by Terry Foland.

For information on this and many other Alban courses, call 1-800-486-1318, Ext. 230, or register online at www.Alban.org

The Alban Institute
7515 Wisconsin Avenue
suite 1250 West
Bethesda, MD 20814 

Thank You

The Messenger and the Communications Support Unit wish to thank these individuals and groups for subscriptions and donations to *The Messenger* from May 1, 2000, through April 30, 2001. We are most grateful for your enthusiastic support. We hope no contributor has been omitted from this list, but if your name is not here and should be, please let us know.

Alliance of New Church Women	Richard A. Foster Koenigsfeldweiler, Germany	Mark J. McCarthy Chesterfield, Missouri	Ricky S. Sheppard Rockfield, Kentucky
Christine Blackmer E. Holden, Maine	Fryeburg Society	George W. McClure & Lynn McClure Kenwood, California	Laura A. Simpson New Westminster, BC
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Don't Forget Convention 2001!

Journey to "A Swedenborgian Odyssey,"

June 27-July 1

at St. Thomas University

St. Paul, Minnesota

*(You don't want to miss that wrestling match.
You know the one we mean.)*

President's Report, June 2001

(Continued from page 82)

November 10-12: Convention Planning Committee and preaching in St. Paul

November 18-19: Jun-Chol Lee installation in Cleveland

November 25-27: Visit to the Edmonton Church

January 7-9: SSR Transition Committee meeting in Dayton, Ohio

January 12-17: Wayfarers Board Training and COM Executive Committee, including preaching at the Puget Sound church.

January 26-29: Central Office Review Committee and preaching at the Boston Church.

February 1-4: AFC meeting in Ft. Myers, including preaching there.

February 10: Conference call with Wayfarers Board (trip canceled due to snowstorm)

February 15-18: SHS Board meeting in Berkeley, California

March 8-11: MINSU in DeLand, Florida

March 24-27: Rev. Carl Yenetchi's installation in LaPorte and CAM meetings

April 19-22: Worship Leader Training and Consecration in Pretty Prairie

April 23-25: Great Lakes Peer Supervision meetings

April 27-29: SHS Board and preaching in Fryeburg, Maine

May 4-6: Investment Committee and preaching in Portland, Maine

May 17-20: Wayfarers Chapel Visitors Center Dedication

June 1-3: Cambridge Chapel Centennial

June 24-July 1: Convention in St. Paul

July 13-15: Western Canada Conference

July 22-29: British Conference meetings (as keynote speaker and Sunday preacher).



Transitions Spring Retreat

The young adults organization called Transitions held a terrific retreat this spring!

Twenty-five people attended our spring Transitions retreat, March 9-11, 2001. We met at Almont New Church Assembly, in Almont, Michigan.. Our facilitator was the Rev. Carl Yenetchi, and our theme was "Transfiguration: In Practical Terms." Together we discussed how Jesus' Transfiguration relates to the nature of our reception, filtration, and reflection of influx from God. We focused on the mechanics of the subconscious and how ritual and faith can minimize the clouding and distorting effects that our proprium and outside negative influences have on the Lord's influx. We celebrated our individual potential to allow the loving nature of the Divine to outwardly shine the true beauty of our soul. We did all this amid much love and laughter, and Rev. Yenetchi's own unique brand of spirituality and humor. We closed with an evening group participation service that demonstrated the real strength and growth that the transfiguration experience can bring to our spiritual lives. Other weekend activities included rejuvenation time with mud and facial masks, foot massages, and other "spiritual" makeovers. We also enjoyed the crisp, cool, and rainy spring weather, some with a nice long walk and others in front of the fireplace.

Our next Transitions retreat will take place in late October 2001, at Temenos Retreat Center in West Chester, Pennsylvania. Members of Transitions also participated, both in staffing and in sessions, at the Swedenborgian Church Youth League Memorial Day Retreat at Fryeburg New Church Assembly.

If you currently do not receive Transitions information and would like to join this dynamic group, please contact Kurt Fekete at klf@mack.com or 802-297-2735. Questions, comments or suggestions are always welcome and appreciated. The Transitions group also has "Little Known Support Units" T-shirts for sale.

Transitions is a Swedenborgian Spiritual Community for Adults (18+). Our mission is to explore, discuss, and learn about our theology and spiritual paths, to foster the development of leaguers as they move into adulthood, and to support people of all ages in times of change and life transitions.

Kurt Fekete and Michelle Huffman.

Michelle J. Huffman,
Rabbit River Watershed Program
Office: (616) 673-8965
Home: (616) 673-0158



Daddy, How Much Do You Make An Hour?

With a timid voice and idolizing eyes, the little boy greeted his father as he came home late from work "Daddy, how much do you make an hour?"

Surprised and irritated, his father said, "Look son, that's nobody's business but mine. Don't bother me now. I'm tired."

"But Daddy, just tell me, please. I won't tell anybody. How much do you make an hour?"

The father gave in. "Twenty dollars."

"Okay, Dad. Can you lend me ten dollars?" the boy asked.

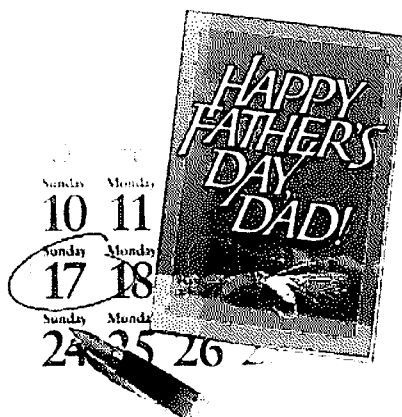
Thoroughly annoyed, the father yelled, "So that's your reason. Go to sleep and leave me alone."

The father sat chewing over what he'd said and began to feel guilty. Maybe, he thought, his son wanted to buy something. He went to his son's room. "Are you asleep?"

"No, Daddy. Why?"

"Here's the money you asked for earlier."

"Thanks, Dad!" said the boy, putting his hand under the pillow and removing



some money. "Now I've got enough. Now I have twenty dollars," the boy said to his very baffled father.

"Daddy, could you sell me just one hour of your time?"

—Anonymous

Edited reprint from *The New Age: The Official Journal of the New Church in Australia*



LABYRINTH

(Continued from page 85)

prising that the practice continues. For me, what I have read in the work of Swedenborg informs a practice which I might simply have filed away as historically interesting but not applicable to me. Instead, labyrinth walking as an occasional practice allows me to make a special time to empty my mind of trivia and to pray in an active way, or meditate on a short passage from the writings of Swedenborg. The cord which guides and keeps me on the path is made from things I have learned from the Bible and the spiritual work of Swedenborg. Sometimes the result is a calming of my mind and a sense of peace to take into my daily life; at other times it is a different perspective on my life.

Perhaps if you come across a labyrinth you will have the opportunity to step aside from daily life and walk the path to the center and back.

Liz Waters Heinrichs has been the executive director of Information Swedenborg, Inc. (ISI) three years. She lives in Kitchener, Ontario with her husband and two teenage sons and is "happy to go to both of the Swedenborgian Churches here."

"The mission of Information Swedenborg Inc. is to raise public awareness of the life and work of Emanuel Swedenborg." We publish a bi-monthly newsletter of articles about Swedenborg and his teachings and influence.

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Reprinted from *ISI News* #47, October-November 2000.



Summer 2001 Courses Offered at Bryn Athyn College

Several graduate and undergraduate courses are being offered by Bryn Athyn College of the New Church and the Academy of the New Church Theological School from June 25-July 14, 2001, co-sponsored by The General Church Office of Education:

Courses scheduled are:

Religion 301/501: Correspondences

Education 311: Introduction to Special Education

Education 325/525: History & Philosophy of New Church Education.

Economics 101: Personal Finances & Basic Accounting Principles

Fine Arts 110/210: Ceramic Tile & Mural Making

Fine Arts 125: Photography

For further information and to request a brochure, contact: Brian L. Schnarr

Summer Program Director
(215) 914-2789
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PASSAGES

BAPTISMS

Dupuis, Emery—Tammie Marie and Donald Dupuis, and Catherine Rachel And Randall Jesse Emery, children of Gilbert and Michelle (Emery) Dupuis, were baptized into the Christian church April 8, 2001, at the Church of the New Jerusalem in Fryeburg, Maine, the Rev. Kenneth Turley officiating. Godparents are Ola-Mae Wheaton and Michael Lawrence.

Gentili—Kyle Jared Gentili, son of Laura and Greg Gentili, was baptized into the Christian faith December 17, 2000, at the Elmwood New Church in Elmwood, Mass., the Rev. Andy Stinson officiating.

Stroh—Eric David Stroh, son of Darren and Kristina (Laakko) Stroh and grandson of the Rev. Randall and Millie Laakko, was baptized into the Christian faith April 22, 2001, at the Church of the Holy City, Wilmington, Delaware, the

Rev. Randall Laakko officiating.

Stroh—Ryan Michael Stroh, son of Kristina (Laakko) and Darren Stroh, was baptized into the Christian faith June 20, 1999, at the Church of the Holy City, Wilmington, Delaware, by his grandfather, the Rev. Randall Laakko.

CONFIRMATIONS

Benning, Davis, Lanigan, Simenc—Barb Benning, Fred Davis, Mary and Tom Lannigan, and Fanny and Jim Simenc were confirmed into the life of the Swedenborgian Church Palm Sunday, April 8, 2001, at the Swedenborgian Church of Puget Sound, Washington, the Rev. Eric Allison officiating.

Burger, Little, Rooney—Lorraine Burger, Debbie Little, and Laurie Rooney were confirmed into the faith and life of the Swedenborgian Church May 28, 2000, at

the Elmwood New Church in Elmwood, Mass., the Rev. Andy Stinson officiating.

Locke, Mitchell, Winsor—Judy Locke, Donna Mitchell, and Jennifer Winsor were confirmed into the faith and life of the Swedenborgian Church April 8, 2001, at the Elmwood New Church, Elmwood, Mass., the Rev. Andy Stinson officiating.

DEATHS

Campbell—Eva Wallin Campbell, 85, longtime member of the Elmwood New Church, entered the spiritual world March 23, 2001. A resurrection service was conducted by the Rev. Andy Stinson.

McSherry—Thomas E. McSherry, age 89, entered the spiritual world April 12, 2001. A resurrection service was conducted at the Fryeburg New Church April 14, 2001, the Rev. Kenneth Turley officiating.



The Swedenborgian Church Statistics—as of December 31, 2000

Associations	Churches		Ordained Ministers			Authorized	Members			No. of Del.
	Active	Inactive	Active	Inactive	Retired	Lay Leader	Active	Inactive	Total	
Canada	1	0	1	0	1	2	135	47	182	15
Connecticut	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	2
Illinois	6	0	3	3	0	0	92	87	179	11
Kansas	2	0	0	0	2	0	103	0	103	12
Maine	3	0	3	0	0	0	143	155	298	16
Massachusetts	5	2	9	3	1	0	196	32	228	21
Michigan	1	0	1	0	0	0	79	10	89	9
Middle Atlantic	3	0	4	0	0	0	88	49	137	10
New York	2	0	2	0	0	0	61	34	95	8
Ohio	3	2	2	0	0	1	68	21	89	8
Pacific Coast	5	0	9	2	4	1	293	0	293	31
Southeast	2	0	3	0	0	0	60	7	67	8
Western Canada	6	0	0	2	3	1	90	22	112	11
Conference										
SCYL										2
Societies										
*Bayside	1	0	0	0	0	0	16	5	21	3
**Guyana	1	0	0	0	1	0	57	13	70	7
*Figures from	12/31/99									
** Figures from	12/31/98									
TOTAL	41	4	37	10	12	5	1483	482	1965	174

Emanuel Swedenborg was born January 29, 1688, in Stockholm, Sweden.

Although he never intended a church denomination to be founded or named after him, a society was formed in London 15 years after his death. This 1787

organization eventually spawned the present General Convention of Swedenborgian Churches. As a result of Swedenborg's own spiritual questionings and insights, we as a church today

exist to encourage that same spirit of inquiry and personal growth, to respect

differences in views, and to accept others who may have different traditions.

Swedenborg shared in his theological writings a view of God as infinitely loving and at the very center of our beings, a view of life as a spiritual birthing as we participate in our

own creation, and a view of Scripture as a story of inner-life stages as we learn and grow.

Swedenborg would conclude, "All religion

relates to life, and the life of religion is to do good."

He also felt that the sincerest form of worship is a useful life.

A CALL FOR INTERESTED PARTIES


Managing Director for J. Appleseed & Co.

The Rev. Dr. James Lawrence is resigning as the manager of Convention's book and pamphlet publishing arm, J. Appleseed & Co., in order to take the newly formed position of Acting Dean of Convention's Swedenborgian House of Studies at The Pacific School of Religion. The Communications Support Unit of Convention (COMSU) is therefore looking for one person or a team of persons to be involved in the professional leadership and management of our eleven year-old outreach publications ministry.

Please respond to Mona Conner, chairperson of COMSU, at either of the following addresses.

Email: monadiane@earthlink.net

Street address: One Montgomery Place #8
Brooklyn, New York, 11215

Please include your email and street addresses and phone number. 

And the Winner Is...

The December 2000 and January 2001 Messengers carried notice of a writer's scholarship offered by COMSU, providing an opportunity for a writer "18 years or older who is interested in writing for the Swedenborgian Church to attend 'WRITING FROM WITHIN,' a three-day workshop at Temenos Retreat Center, with all expenses paid." The workshop, presented by Mary Bok, took place April 27-29, 2001.

We received a total of eight entries. It was a difficult decision, as we received a number of interesting ideas and impressive writing samples and ambitions which we want to strongly encourage.

The person we chose for the April workshop was Anna Rich Martinian, a member of the New York New Church. She will be writing about her workshop experience, which we will publish in the September *Messenger*.

But, as we stated to the applicants in the letters we sent out to them, this is not the end. The scholarship offer is a project COMSU is planning to continue in the hope that we can encourage and develop an ever-widening list of persons who are interested in writing for the Church. There will be another workshop in the fall, and if you wish to apply for that, please write to:

COMSU, c/o Patte LeVan
Editor, The Messenger
P.O. Box 985
Julian, CA 92036
Email: messenger@jinet.com

New applicants, please write a few brief paragraphs telling us:

- A. Why you want to take the workshop
- B. What you are interested in writing for our denomination
- C. What specific subjects, if any, you feel you may have useful experience or background in (i.e. psychology, health, creativity, experiential subjects, mystical subjects, etc.) that you can relate to Swedenborgian spirituality.
- D. What topics or themes you would most like to see J. Appleseed and *The Messenger* address in future publications.

The deadline for applications is September 1. Applicants will be informed of the exact date of the workshop. Those who have already applied needn't do a whole new application; your material is in our files. Just let us know of your interest, and feel free to add any writing samples or further ideas.

PWL



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of North America
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