

THE MESSENGER

Published by the Swedenborgian Church of North America

June 2002

Editor's Note: The following article is a summary of a recent address by Dr. L. Robert Keck at the Foundation for Global Community in Palo Alto, based in part on his book Sacred Quest, published by the Swedenborg Foundation in 2000. This summary also covers his lecture given at the GTU Library in Berkeley, November 30, sponsored by the Swedenborgian House of Studies, (SHS), and the San Francisco Swedenborgian Church December 2, 2001, titled "The Human Story After September 11: Understanding the causes of violence, and why we can have hope for a more peaceful future." Keck recently served as a visiting scholar at SHS.

Transforming the Root Causes of Violence

—Summary by Mac Lawrence, managing editor of Timeline

Where others see violence as endemic in the human species, Robert Keck believes that violence is a relatively recent phenomenon in human history, limited to the past 8500 years. If that is so, he says, there is real hope for the human race to transform our world to one that is far more peaceful than it is today. Keck is not alone in assessing violence as a recent phenomenon. He points to the prestigious, international, interdisciplinary group of scientists who gathered in Seville, Spain in 1986 to address the essential question: "Did we inherit our violence propensities from our animal ancestors?" In what is referred to as The Seville Statement, they concluded that we did not. It is scientifically incorrect, they said, to think that war or any other violent behavior is genetically programmed into human nature. Nor has there been, in the course of evolution, a natural selection for aggressive behavior more than other forms of behavior. We can free ourselves from biological pessimism, these scientists concluded, because violence is not fundamental to human nature nor inherited from our evolutionary past.

EPOCH I: The "Childhood" of Our Evolutionary Journey

Keck, who has invested a good portion of his career in researching the history of human values, refers back 35,000 years to a time when he believes there is enough evidence to draw some conclusions. It was the beginning of what he calls Epoch I. Utilizing the metaphor of maturation, Keck describes Epoch I as the "childhood" epoch of human evolution. "This epoch and its dominant value system lasted for 25,000 years, or until about 10,000 years ago. "The Epoch I deep-values are evidenced in the sculpture, figurines, and the 'sacred art' found in the more than 300 sanctuaries,

or galleries, of Paleolithic cave paintings," Keck explains. The first prominent value was "a thorough unity with nature in general and a profound respect for the powers of the animal world in particular. The paintings are mostly of animals. It was thought originally that these paintings were to guarantee successful hunting, but evidence shows that the animals in the paintings were seldom the ones the people ate.

"The second deep-value was an emphasis on the feminine. Human societies were matricentric, centered around the woman, and matrilineal, tracing our lineage back through our mothers. It is important to note, however, that they were not matriarchal, a hierarchy with a woman at the top. As a consequence, humanity worshiped an immanent and very present Earth Goddess—understandable, given the emphasis upon that which gives and nourishes life.

"The third influential deep-value was that of nonviolence. In all the evidence left from this 25,000 year period—and it is considerable—there is simply no indication of human-on-human violence. No human sacrifice, no artistic depictions of war or warriors, and no evidence of standing armies."

EPOCH II: "Adolescence"

Keck extends his metaphor of the human maturation process to the movement from Epoch I to Epoch II, "humanity's adolescent epoch," which, he says, began 10,000 years ago. "We had developed the body, and now it was time to develop the mental side—the ego, the self-identity, and the mind—to distinguish that this is me and that out there is not me; this is me, that is other; this is humanity, and the rest is nature. It changed what had previously been a close and symbiotic at-one-ment with nature. We separated, divided, and distinguished, and that led to manipulation,

(Continued on page 83)



Robert Keck (photo from Sacred Quest book cover).

IN THIS ISSUE:

President's Report • Book Review: *Plain Living A Quaker Path to Simplicity*
God In the Midst Update • Warren Felt Evans—Swedenborgian Healer

President's Report to the Swedenborgian Church

Ron Brugler

I begin this report having just done something that I often do these days. I got out of bed, walked over to the motel room window, and looked out in order to see where I am. That may seem like a strange start to this report, but I share it because it sums up what I have been doing so many times this past year. I have been traveling—so much so that my daughter recently informed one caller that she was not sure that I still lived at home! I've since taken great effort to spend more time with her.

These trips are helping me to accomplish one of the primary goals that I have for this presidential term. Summed up in a few words, the goal has been for us to reconnect as a faith community, and I am glad to be able to share with you that this goal is being accomplished. My sense is that Convention is grateful for this contact. I have now spent time with almost all of our churches, centers and associations. I have taken part in the meetings of MINSU, COMSU, FPRSU, EDSU and other committees. I have also been actively involved on the boards of the Swedenborgian House of Studies and Wayfarers Chapel. Such experiences have helped me to gain invaluable insights into our denomination concerning our hopes and dreams, strengths and growing edges, as well as our disappointments and shortfalls.

There are three insights that rise above all others. First and foremost is that our members are very dedicated to our Swedenborgian faith and teachings. Second, our members work extremely hard to maintain, support and grow their ministries, whether on the local level or through the work of a support unit or related body. And third, our outreach and service programs are

increasing. I thank God for each of these realities.

But I have also learned something else, which is perhaps the most important point of all. It is that within each of our members there is a sense that they are seeking, in their own unique ways, to "help people be open to the Lord's presence and leading." Yes, those words from our Statement of Purpose hold us together and lead us forward. They unite us in wonderful ways.

Having said that, I must also note that there are three common areas of concern that we share. First, our churches and centers are aware of the fact that our membership is not growing very quickly. We want our church to grow. We work toward growth as a goal. Yet, it seems to elude us. We wonder why this is so. Also, financial concerns abound. We spend an incredible amount of our time and energy on budgets that will not balance and attempts to reduce expenses. And lastly, there is an awareness of the need for changes within our ministry, in terms of increasing our number of ordained clergy and expanding the Lay Leader and Worship Leader programs. We seek leaders who will help us. We are asking if these must be ordained clergy. But this is also to say that we worry about our future.

I hope that sharing these observations and thoughts with you will provide a sense of context for our annual sessions. With joy may we lift up our hearts in thanks and praise to God for our many blessings. With confidence may we lift up our worries and concerns. And with assurance, may we go forth, working for peace within our lives, communities and world, realizing that this effort must also include our church! Thus may we go where few Swedenborgians have gone before—and that is to go boldly into the future that God intends for us.

President's Schedule, 2001-2002

- July 13-15: Western Canada Conference Meeting
- July 22-28: British Conference Annual Session

- August 23-27: Wayfarers Board Meeting and Board Training Session
- September 6-9: MINSU Meeting
- September 9-13: Assisted our Fallen Vice President
- September 15-17: Alicia Titus Memorial Service and attended the Urbana Church
- September 22: Cabinet Conference Call
- September 28-30: Verda Winter Memorial Service and attended the Cleveland Church
- October 5-8: Led a retreat with the St. Louis congregation and conducted worship
- October 12-14: Chaired the EDSU Youth Director interviews and conducted worship for the Detroit Church at Almont
- October 18-21: Swedenborgian House of Studies Board meeting
- October 25-29: General Council meeting and Central Office work
- November 2-5: Convention Planning, Portland, ME, and preached at the Fryeburg Church

(Continued on page 85)

THE MESSENGER

Publisher: The Communications Support Unit
Published monthly, except July and August, by the Swedenborgian Church of North America (founded 1817, incorporated 1861 as the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America).

June 2002
Volume 223 No. 6
Whole Number 5271

Typesetting & Layout
Town & Country
Press, Plymouth, IN

Patte LeVan, Editor

Editorial Address:

The Messenger
P.O. Box 985
Julian, CA 92036

TEL: (760) 765-2915
FAX: (760) 765-0218

E-MAIL: messenger@julianweb.com

Business & Subscription Address:

Central Office
11 Highland Ave.
Newtonville, MA 02460
E-Mail: manager@swedenborg.org

The opinions of the contributors do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor or the Communications Support Unit, or represent the position of the church. Subscription free to members of the Swedenborgian Church; non-members, \$12.00 a year; foreign \$15.00 a year; gift subscription from a member, \$5.00 a year; single copies \$1.00.

Deadline for material: Six weeks before the first day of the month of issue.

Transforming the Root Causes of Violence

(Continued from cover)

control, dominance, use, and eventually, abuse. "Epoch II was the beginning of agriculture, horticulture, and animal husbandry. It was a shift that led, eventually, to an adolescent and selfish anthropocentrism—humanity as the be all and end all of evolution, and the rest of nature is here simply to serve our purposes." Keck likened the relationship to that of a teenager and the refrigerator—in which the refrigerator represents "a handy resource for whatever we are hungry for, with the expectation that 'Mom' will keep it well-stocked." Separating humanity from nature, which represents the organic and archetypal feminine side of soul, created a feminine-impooverished soul. That inevitably led to the subsequent values of patriarchy, hierarchies of power, wars of conquest, slavery, and a great many other forms of violence. All this emerged, virtually simultaneously, about 8500 years ago. It has been those values that have defined and dominated the world up to, and including, our time in history. Patriarchy, of course, also led all the major theistic religions that emerged during Epoch II to replace an immanent Earth Goddess with a hierarchical, transcendent Father God "up in His Heaven."

The Causes of Violence

Keck suggests that it is the Epoch II deep-values that are the causes of violence. "The value of reducing wholes into parts began with separating humanity and the rest of nature. We then reduced every whole we could get our hands on into parts, eventually believing that the parts were fundamentally separate and distinct. "We arranged the parts in hierarchical order with power and value judgment flowing from the top down. This led to viewing the world through a "prism of isms"—anthropocentrism, sexism, racism, tribalism, antisemitism, nationalism, and the various manifestations of religion-isms. Once you've separated everything, you see the other

as totally different and distinct.

Through anthropocentrism, for example, you see the whole universe as here just for human purposes—we are the pinnacle of evolution and everything is here to serve us. "In sexism, you have that same distinction—dominance, submission, and distortion. And the same in tribalism—my tribe is the one and only tribe, and if someone is different, I can fight them. They are the enemy, they are the other. You can see the pattern that takes shape. In religion, it is that my religion is the one and only religion, and since God is on our side, it means God is not on the other side.

"We then justified all sorts of violence against the 'other,' utilizing theological and sacred text rationalizations, out of the fear of 'category pollution'—the fear that 'our' religion, race, or gender, would be polluted by the nonbelievers, the infidels, the heretics, or the women who too closely represented sensuality, sexuality, and earthiness. And, the males who had assumed leadership roles, or were the self-proclaimed protectors of category purity, went to all sorts of desperate, and self-justified, lengths. The combination of these values led to millennia of horrendous violence—the extremely violent practice of slavery, the tortuous Inquisition, the Crusades, witch burnings, holy wars, genocide."

EPOCH III: Reasons for Hope

Keck believes that humanity, at this very time in history, is going through another transformation of Soul. In his view, the Epoch II values that gave rise to violence are clearly on the wane, and a new deep-value system is emerging, in what he calls Epoch III. In maturation terms, this evolving from adolescence into adulthood is reason enough, he believes, to hope that humanity might move toward a more peaceful world. Though "profoundly influential evolutionary energies are at work," the transition will not be easy, he emphasizes. "The Epoch II years were a long time to get conditioned to one particular value system, and we should not trivialize the desperate means some will use to try to maintain their favored status quo. There are people who fear the loss of the old

values and will try desperately to retain their prominence. Nevertheless, the human Soul is evolving, unmistakably, into a more mature Epoch III." The first emergent deep-value of Epoch III, he says, is in humanity's re-connection with nature. "The environmental, ecological, and eco-feminist movements, however timely and appropriate, are only the early ripples of a tsunami that will wash over the landscape of our souls and change us dramatically." Keck suggested that an "ecology of the heart" will not tolerate systems of dominance and submission. "Patriarchal institutions will either change or die out. They cannot and will not survive in an Epoch III Soul."

The second Epoch III deep-value flows from the understanding that "the entire universe is an 'unbroken wholeness.' Ironically, science, the very discipline that took reductionism to the limit, is the discipline that is probably most responsible for convincing us that everything is interconnected and interrelated.

"As we truly absorb the implications of unbroken wholeness," notes Keck, "we will still be able to see and value the distinction between the parts (religions, races, nations), but we will also value how permeable the membrane is between the parts. As in ecology, we will know the value of diversity, and at the same time, know that for the greatest amount of health and well-being there is a profound interdependence at work—naturally."

The third Epoch III deep-value that points toward a nonviolent world is the global process of democratization. "There has been an inexorable change from totalitarianism, colonialism, and imperialization, to democracy. Beginning in 1776 with the United States of America, there are now 120 democracies in the world, and virtually all scholars who study the democratization process agree that it now defines the world stage." The more democracies, the fewer wars, Keck maintains.

"Throughout Epoch II, wars of conquest were the 'name of the game.' It was the accepted strategy for the way a nation became a great nation, the way an empire became a great empire.

(Continued on page 84)

Transforming the Root Causes of Violence

(Continued from page 83)

If you had the might, you had the right to invade any other nation, or conquer any other peoples and add them to your ever enlarging entity. And nobody apologized for it. The British, for instance, said with pride that 'the sun never sets on the British Empire.'

"But in the middle of the 20th century, wars of conquest began to lose their legitimacy. Only wars of defense or liberation were permissible in the world's Soul. In the last half of the 20th century, three out of every four wars were wars of liberation. And, significantly, it appears that democracies do not wage war on other democracies. Together, these factors will make our world very different in the future vis-a-vis warfare.

"There is also a democratization emerging from the human Soul that will take over every aspect of our lives. You can also see the change in your own life. How many people do you know who have changed their notion of religious power? How many more today are saying, 'I'm not going to have anyone in any kind of position of authority tell me what I have to believe. I'm going to figure that out for myself.'

"In summary, then, the reasons why we can entertain hope for a future without violence are:

- Violence is a relatively recent historical phenomenon, apparently limited to only the past 8500 years.
- The Epoch II deep-values that gave rise to violence are clearly dying.
- The Epoch III deep-values that will not tolerate violence are clearly emerging."

THE CHRYSALIS: From the Caterpillar to the Butterfly

So we find ourselves in this transition between the values of Epoch II and Epoch III. I like to use the metaphor of the chrysalis, where the Epoch II caterpillar is dissolving and the Epoch III butterfly is beginning to take shape. I find it interesting that the Greek word for butterfly is the same as

their word for Soul—a new Soul is emerging from this chrysalis. I call it a crisis of chrysalis, because the caterpillar at this point feels death, destruction, disintegration—major loss of identity. Imagine if you think God created the world for caterpillars and you have this dissolving going on in the chrysalis. That's when the fear and desperation can emerge into an enormous amount of violence.

"Unfortunately, this kind of violence will still happen in this transition period, this chrysalis. But if enough of us awaken to the unique responsibilities inherent in living within this extraordinary transitional time in history, if enough of us choose to make a difference, to become active peace-makers, and to be diligent in our efforts to usher in this new epoch of the human journey, there are reasons for hope." To emphasize this final point, Dr. Keck closed his talk with a quote from a poem by Rumi:

The breeze at dawn has secrets to tell you.

Don't go back to sleep.

You must ask for what you really want.

Don't go back to sleep.

People are going back and forth across the doorsill

where the two worlds touch.

The door is round and open.

Don't go back to sleep.

—Rumi

Dr. L. Robert Keck has a degree in sociology from Cornell College, a master's degree in theology from Vanderbilt University, and a Ph.D. in the philosophy of health from Union Graduate School. He has been a United Methodist minister in Iowa and Ohio, served on the medical school faculty of Ohio State University, and is currently a scholar-in-residence at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California. Keck is the author of four books: *The Spirit of Synergy*; *Sacred Eyes*; *Sacred Quest*; and the forthcoming *Sacred Healing: A Story of Personal, Medical, and Spiritual Transformation*, published by the Swedenborg Foundation.

Reprinted from the Jan./Feb. *Timeline*, the newsletter of the Foundation for Global Community, with permission of the author and the Foundation for Global Community.



TO THE EDITOR

Editor's Note: *The following questions from Mona Conner and answers from Eric Allison were an addendum to Mona's letter published in the May Messenger, which we were unable to print due to lack of space. The letter and Q. & A. are in reference to Eric's article, Breaking New Ground at the Swedenborgian Church of Puget Sound, published in the March Messenger:*

... Eric, you outline an ambitious list of 40 free advertising options which Puget Sound uses every month, in addition to newspaper and alternative publication placements. Who is responsible for placing these ads? Is this done by Gigi Sosnoski, your administrative assistant? In New York we tried very hard to establish a public relations effort through a volunteer committee that I chaired, but over a period of time we found it impossible as volunteers to keep up with the required tasks of pursuing an aggressive P.R. campaign, all of which you are juggling. Eventually we became too discouraged by the results of what sporadic efforts we were able to muster, and we disbanded our committee. Does Puget Sound feel they can keep up with the work of public relations, and is this accomplished by you through paid help?

The number of fellowship activities you cite for a congregation of 24 people sounds quite exhaustive. It's wonderful to have that many programs in place, but do you honestly feel you can maintain that level of momentum without eventual burnout? I ask the question, not to play devil's advocate, but because small congregations are constantly trying to evaluate how much they can realistically handle without feeling like church has become a 'second job' of frequent volunteerism for its members.

And finally, what kind of lead-time is involved in including as many lay-people as you are including in the Sunday worship experience? You state

(Continued on page 93)

Program Administrator Wanted for Temenos

The Temenos Retreat Center has a job opening for a Program Administrator beginning in Autumn 2002. This part-time position requires computer and internet experience as well as a grounding in Swedenborgian theology to assist the Board of Managers in their "conscious decision to wholeheartedly endorse Temenos being more closely identified with the precepts and teachings of Emanuel Swedenborg as the basis for its outreach."

Deadline for applications is June 30, 2002. Please email Personnel Chair Ruth Tafel at: topohill@epix.net or write Temenos at:

1564 Telegraph Rd.
West Chester, PA 19382
phone 610-696-8145
fax 610-696-7335
email revscurrie@yahoo.com



SHS Offers Two Mini-Courses at Convention

Swedenborg, Modernism, and Post-Modernism: A Conversation with SHS Professor Gregory R. Johnson

Contemporary conversations about religion often use terms like "modernism" and "post-modernism." The purpose of this mini-course is to understand these terms and to bring Swedenborg into the conversation.

SHS at PSR: Ministry as a Vocation for Ordained and Lay People
Co-facilitated by Kim Hinrichs and Jim Lawrence

Whether you would like to support the ministry of your local church through lay leader training, want simply to take a couple of seminary-level online classes for your spiritual growth, or are thinking about a vocation in ministry, the Swedenborgian House of Studies has a wealth of resources to share.



President's Report to the Swedenborgian Church

(Continued from page 82)

November 8-11: Investment Committee and Central Office work
November 16-18: New York Church
January 3-13: Wayfarers Chapel Board meeting and preached at the morning service
January 31-February 3: COMSU meeting at Wayfarers
February 9-11: Met with Ft. Myers congregation and preached
February 22-24: Wayfarers Chapel Board meeting
February 28-March 3: General Council
March 10-12: Met with the Urbana Society and conducted worship
March 16-17: Attended and preached at Kemper Road Center
March 22-24: EDSU meeting
April 6-7: Preached at the Wilmington Church
April 11-14: Took part in the Transitions Retreat
April 17-19: Attended Peer Supervision
April 20-21: Met with the St Paul Society and led worship
April 23-28: CAM and SHS Board meetings
May 3-6: MINSU meeting, and visited New York and Little Grain churches

May 11-13: Attended Kansas Association and preached at Pawnee Rock
May 17-19: Wayfarers Chapel Board meeting
May 25-27: Visited the Edmonton Society and installed John Maine
June 8-10: Visited St. Louis Church and installed Kit Billings
June 26 - July 3: Convention Sessions

During the remainder of my term I also hope to reach another goal, which is to have attended each of our association meetings. These entities are as broad and diverse as our churches and centers. I look forward to learning more about them. In addition, this September I will attend a Global New Church Ministers Seminar in England. Bishop Buss and I are also hoping to meet at some point in the coming year.

Again I want to note that I look forward to these meetings. I hope that our sessions increase our awareness of the diversity of projects that we are involved in, and that we can help move our church forward in the Lord's service. And above all, I pray that God will be with us, so that the Way will be made known to us.

Thank you,
Ron Brugler



Students in "Introduction to Swedenborgian Thought," (from left:) Acting Dean Jim Lawrence, instructor; Kathy Speas, Carol Anne Fusco, Alison Baxter, Sandy Wright, Michelle Huffman (guest), and Kevin Baxter. Kim Hinrichs is behind the camera.

Book Succeeds As Fundraiser for 9/11 Families

Initial book sales of *God In the Midst of the City* have produced a \$1500 donation to the Squad #1 Benefit Fund established after 9/11 to aid children whose fathers were among the twelve firemen from Brooklyn's Squad #1 who lost their lives at the World Trade Center.

J. Appleseed editor Ross Fish sent the check to Captain Portello, who responded by phone with praise for the book and thanks for the generous donations from sales.

As orders pour in from across the country, J. Appleseed will issue a \$500 check to the children's fund for every 100 books sold. General Council designated this technique of donating as books sell, rather than waiting until all books published are sold, to send the net proceeds.

Promotions for this beautiful commemorative book are producing opportunities for extensive distribution. Critics are awarding high marks for the book's dignified presentation and fundraising objective.

With almost every donation, there comes a heartfelt note—from a simple "Thank you" to letters filled with reasons why *God in the Midst of the City* does the job well as a book of healing and as a book of memory for Alicia Titus.

—Ross Fish, editor J. Appleseed & Co.

Priority Book Order

Here is my donation and order for *God in the Midst of the City*

No. of books @\$10.95 each + \$4 shipping to US/Canada: _____

Send to: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

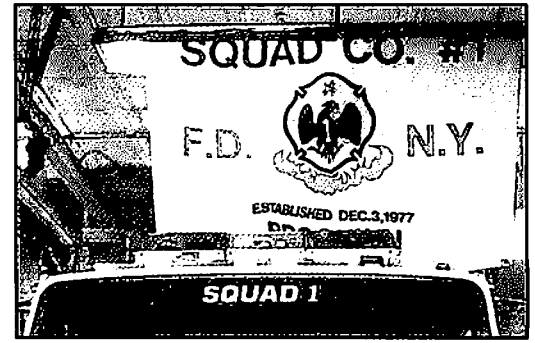
Make checks payable to: J. Appleseed & Co.

Mail Orders to: J. Appleseed & Co.
PO Box 1085
Glen Ellen, CA 95442

Or, online by credit card: www.jappleseed.org

Contact: Ross Fish
Phone: 707 938 5885
Toll Free for orders: 1-866-257-7342
email: jappleseedbooks@aol.com

Banner showing that special unit status for Park Slope's fire department as Squad Co. # 1 began 25 years ago.



Dylan Tucker, 11-year-old author of the poem, "Dave's Locker" from *God in the Midst of the City*, on a visit to Squad #1 firehouse with Mona Conner and his parents.

Mona Conner meets Jerry, owner of the fire hat photographed by Sarah Tucker, Dylan's mother, for *God in the Midst of the City*. Mona, Dylan and Sarah delivered a copy of the book to each firefighter and each family from the squad who lost a loved one.



Mona comments, "The book is selling at the Food Cooperative and two small bookshops in the Park Slope area. We hope, of course, to place it also in several NewAge/Spirituality bookstores and to register it with Barnes & Noble.

"One of my friends who is very ill with Lyme Disease wrote me a special thank you note for the book and told me that she is

using lines from "Pueblo Blessing" to repeat to herself when she becomes too discouraged. Another friend's daughter is asking for donations to the Squad #1 Benefit Fund at her confirmation party and giving each guest a copy of *God in the Midst of the City*."



Meet Your New SMC!

Wilma Wake

Our new SMC?" you ask. "What is an SMC?" You might already be thinking of answers. A Sample of Mediocre Chocolate? Sneaky Ministers in Cahoots? What we need is another acronym, right? Spiritual Ministries Consultant—yup, SMC—is a new position which has been developed by MINSU and approved by General Council. It will be utilizing the work of our previous Pastoral Ministries Consultant, the Rev. Eric Allison, yet providing a focus on spirituality resources for our centers. I am honored to be starting in this half-time position in September.

These are the objectives of this new position from the job description approved by General Council:

To develop and implement programs for spiritual growth through:

A. Spiritual growth workshops and programs—that appeal to our centers and to the communities beyond the church

B. Worship Leadership programs—to bring more interested people into worship leadership roles within Swedenborgian communities through spiritual growth and education

C. Courses of study—to utilize the readily available resources for spiritual education

D. Publicity and newcomer programs—work with local centers to advertise what they offer to the community and develop materials and programs for newcomers

In regard to developing programs for spiritual growth—I want to take a look at some of the spirituality programs already in place in various centers of our church with the idea of sharing the best programs with all centers. I hope to include what is being done in the British Conference and other Swedenborgian bodies in the world.

I would also like to offer some training for leaders of workshops and spiritual growth groups. I'm attending Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation in Maryland where I've completed their Spiritual Guidance

program and am now learning a model of facilitating spiritual support groups that I think could work well in many of our centers.

Using this as one model, I'll offer training for those who would like to facilitate a spiritual growth group in their own center. In this format, the facilitator meets with a small group of people who come together every few weeks for a couple of hours. There is a period of silent meditation at the beginning, and then each person has a turn to talk about what is happening in their spiritual life. The group supports and encourages the person to look at "what is happening between you and God." There is time for silent prayer by the group for the person who has just shared before moving to the next person. It is a powerful model of group spiritual companionship that was developed at Shalem Institute and is only recently being taught to others.

I want to put together materials to support centers in exploring a wide range of spiritual growth groups, retreats, and workshops. We have material on offering 12-step spiritual growth groups in a Swedenborgian context and are developing resources for other types of groups. This material can be used to support the current congregation as well as become a significant outreach tool for the larger community.

Regarding Worship Leadership programs—Would your center like some help putting together a preparation program for worship leaders, unique to your center? I hope to compile resources and workshops that will help you design your own worship leader training program within your own center, yet with access to a wide range of resources.

Regarding Courses of Study—I hope to help develop and gather materials for study for personal growth.



This summer, I'm working with the Rev. John Sutton in the British Conference to jointly write a module on Swedenborgian spirituality called "Nurturing the Soul" for the New Church College in Britain. We are sorting out how to make this available to convention people this fall. I hope to support some of our ministers and lay leaders in serving as mentors for the course. Students would receive various lessons through the mail which they could do on their own or in a small group. Every student would have a mentor available to talk with about the material. (Given our geographical size, this might include telephone, mail, and email.) The course will provide some Swedenborgian concepts on spirituality as well as suggest a variety of experiences that students can do on their own.

We are in conversation with the British Conference about the possibility of other of their distance courses becoming available to our Convention people. This could mean that on a regular basis, an individual or small group could sign up to join in a topic being explored throughout Convention with the use of New Church College modules and Convention mentors. We might even be able to offer topics in Convention simultaneously with the topic being offered by NCC in British Conference, with the possibility of trans-continental sharing!

Regarding publicity and newcomer programs—I'd like to talk to our centers who have materials and programs for newcomers to learn what you are using and what is working well for you. I'd like to start collecting materials to be shared with all of our centers.

Part of what I hope to do in this position is to facilitate discussion among us all about what it means to us spiritually to be a Swedenborgian.

Here are some questions for you to start thinking/meditating/praying about:

► What is the essence of being a Swedenborgian to you?

(Continued on page 89)

General Council and Cabinet met jointly in Delray Beach, Florida on March 1- 2, 2002. The first evening and much of the following day were spent doing organizational review and visioning. We were led in an exploration and discussion of various Convention bodies' roles and functions. The group looked at the stated purpose and function of each of the support units, Council of Ministers and General Council, and received reports on what is currently on each of their agendas. After breaking into small groups to look at various areas of concern (ministers and ministry, education/youth, communication, financial, and focus) we gathered to summarize ideas and action plans.

Ideas and future goals discussed included the idea of regional ministerial teams, active viable youth groups, online services to help coordinate ministry, a paid webmaster position, Association per capita tax donation to the denomination, growth in membership through youth, ministries that attract and keep committed members, accountability measurements, stewardship plan and marketing plan development. This planning session was just the beginning of a process that will continue at the fall General Council meeting.

Among other items of business, it

GENERAL COUNCIL REPORT

was voted to approve Camp 2003, headed up by Chris Laitner. It will be held July 28 - Aug 3, 2003 at Temenos, for 30-some international campers ages 18-22. The theme will revolve around plurality—Swedenborgian thought and other faith paths. Planning is underway.

The Communications Support Unit will be looking at guidelines on the use of the Logo. They are also going to write an article on the symbolism of the logo.

It was voted that \$5.00 from each copy sold of *God In the Midst of the City*, published by J. Appleseed, would be accumulated to \$500 and sent to the squad (as stated on the book cover). The \$5.00 amount will be reevaluated at the end of the year.

Kurt Fekete, the new Youth Director, shared a brief history of why he is doing this job and how it has been

going for the last four months. His first priority is going to the local churches and seeing what is out there. He will be updating database and energizing the youth.

The Spiritual Ministries Consultant position was funded, and MINSU is in the process of hiring for that position. It will be a 3-year trial with annual evaluation. The focus will be to explore, develop, and implement new programs.

Funding was also budgeted for immediate roof repairs at the National Church.

We discussed the recommendation of a paid chair or manager on the Communications Support Unit. Cabinet will explore this further at its next meeting.

The Executive Committee was directed to supply a set of address labels to the Cambridge Society for their appeal letter, assuming the content of the letter is satisfactory.

The travel policy was discussed and will be explored further by the Financial and Physical Resources Support Unit.

The current financial situation at Stonehouse was discussed. At this time the Pacific Coast Association has been compelled to put the property on the market.

There was discussion about sexual misconduct insurance as well as insurance for youth outings, etc. Further study of this matter will be undertaken.

After a review of the 2002 budget, it was felt that, historically, our expenditures have been less than the budget. So, rather than try to micro-manage it, the deficit budget was passed with one *no* vote.

The following meeting dates were scheduled:

General Council Pre-Convention Meeting: June 29, 2002 - 9:00 AM

General Council Post-Convention Meeting: July 3, 2002 - Noon to 3:00 PM

Cabinet: September 19 to 22 in Cincinnati

General Council Fall Meeting: October 24 to October 27 at Temenos

Gloria Toot, Secretary

SSA Website to be Unveiled at Meeting

The American New Church Sunday School Association will hold its Annual meeting on Monday, July 1st at 2pm in Gorham, Maine at the Annual Convention of Swedenborgian Churches. All are invited to attend. We will unveil our new website, located at www.swedenborgianresources.org. All members of the Sunday School Association are encouraged to view the site and to enter lesson plans to the database. It is our hope that this tool for sharing will bring us closer together in our common goal of providing education to the children of our church.

PLEASE NOTE: Our membership book has been misplaced and we are attempting to recreate our records. If you are a member, could you please let us know.

Rev. Susannah Currie, President
685 Broad Run Road
West Chester, PA 19382

phone 610-696-8145,
fax 610-696-7335
email revscurrie@yahoo.com.



Meet Your New SMC! (Continued from page 87)

- ▶ How does being a Swedenborgian impact your spirituality on a daily basis?
- ▶ Does it impact your spiritual practices in any way?
- ▶ How do you take your spirituality into the world?

Think about these questions, and we hope to offer a forum in *The Messenger* this fall and winter for sharing ideas.

If you or your center have a particular interest in any of these areas, fill out this handy form below and you will be contacted soon: All centers will be contacted this fall.

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

E-Mail: _____

- ☐ I'm interested in being a mentor for students [for ministers and lay leaders]
- ☐ I/we want to know more about courses of study available this fall
- ☐ I/my center is interested in developing a spiritual support group this fall
- ☐ Our center wants to talk about a Worship Leader training program
- ☐ Our center wants to share our newcomer material programs
- ☐ Our center is open to sharing the spirituality programs that we have

Mail or email to: Wilma Wake
338 Smith Hill Rd.
W. Franklin, NH 03235
Wakewil@aol.com

The Rev. Dr. Wilma Wake is, as of September 2002, the new Spiritual Ministries Consultant. She lives in W. Franklin, New Hampshire, and is currently on part-time sabbatical.



Writers Scholarship Winner

The winner of the COMSU-sponsored writers scholarship for spring 2002 is Carla Friedrich of Macon, Georgia. She is a longtime Swedenborgian with roots in our DeLand, Florida church, and is also a ministerial candidate who will be entering the Swedenborgian House of Studies this fall. Carla attended Linda Metcalfe's Proprioceptive Writing workshop in New York City May 4-5, and was able to stay with Sirat Golden, longtime friend of New York Church member Virginia Branstion. Mona Conner, COMSU chair and New York church member, met with her over the weekend as well. Carla's article about her experience will be published in the September *Messenger*.



ARCHIEVAL GOLD

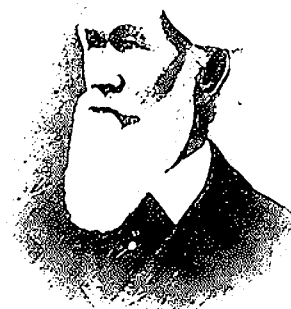
Warren Felt Evans and His Swedenborgian Healing Practice

Jim Lawrence

One of the more significant Swedenborgians in nineteenth century America is little known to most of us. Warren Felt Evans (1817-1889) wrote the first effective literature of New Thought, a notable branch of the movement Yale church historian Sidney Ahlstrom calls

"harmonialism"—a broad nineteenth and twentieth century American movement with roots in Transcendentalism and encompassing "those forms of piety and belief in which spiritual composure, physical health, and even economic well being are understood to flow from a person's rapport with the cosmos." New Thought includes Unity, Religious Science, Divine Science, even Christian Science, as well as numerous permutations of contemporary holistic and New Age spirituality.

Evans was a New England Methodist pastor, Swedenborgian philosopher, and mental healer; he linked scientific notions of causality, affirmative prayer, and physical wellness to each other. Although his work had to endure a half century of obscurity, it was finally recovered by numerous scholars in the 1960s and inspired one of the most far reaching spiritual healing movements in modern America.



Swedenborgian Metaphysics Prove Decisive

His health had always been poor. In various biographical sources we see him in depression and frustrated professionally. In the early years of his ministry he was nearly crippled with fistula; through his adult life until the age of 47 when he was healed, he had bouts with recurring, and at times "aggravated and obstinate," dyspepsia, though he overcame it from time to time "through spiritual means." Nevertheless he flowered into mystical experience and developed a spiritual praxis touching tens of thousands of lives.

Evans found most Methodist church literature, prayer life, and practice superficial; spoken prayers seemed to be all that was necessary for a spiritual life. After "praying to the Lord most sincerely to lead me to some book or books which could satisfy this inmost need," he entered a Portsmouth New Hampshire bookshop and almost immediately felt led to Swedenborg. Over the next several years Swedenborg's works renovated his views of cosmology, psychology, the Bible, and prayer.

(Continued on page 90)

Warren Felt Evans and His Swedenborgian Healing Practice

(Continued from page 89)

Evans' health continued to worsen. His feeble condition led to several suspensions of his parish work, and in 1859 he was unable to preach for six months. "But," he noted, "during this complete prostration of my nervous system my soul has tranquilly reposed in God. Far down below my trembling nerves there is a region of soul where all is still and silent." Here is perhaps the earliest evidence of his sense of spiritual healing. It relied on Swedenborg's "new" teaching that one should focus not so much on the body, on the symptom, as on the deep, inmost well of life from which healing energy springs. His spiritual unrest and beginning vision supplied him with enough energy to write an inspirational book combining cosmology and spiritual practice: *The Celestial Dawn; or, Connection of Heaven and Earth*, published in 1862.

Though Swedenborg is not mentioned, the source of his views was immediately ascertained, creating considerable tension with colleagues and parishioners. Phineas P. Quimby (1802-1866) now comes onstage; a figure with no philosophical standing, he is regarded as the godfather not only of New Thought but of the whole "Metaphysical Movement" in America. He was an unpublished, uncredentialed clockmaker who developed a theory of the psychic origin of disease. Quimby drew his principles from animal magnetism and mesmerism and incorporated them into a therapeutic of mental healing, promptly healed himself of a chronic consumption and then a serious kidney disorder. He considered his method a "science of mind." Leaving the clock making business, he opened a now legendary office in Portland, Maine, and spent the rest of his life as a healer of

considerable celebrity throughout New England.

In 1863 he received two patients who brought his insights into a Christian framework and took them to the world: Warren Felt Evans and Mary Baker Eddy. Evans developed and published a Christian theory of prayer, and Eddy launched a worldwide religion. Evans, though, was the first to organize the philosophical foundations of this healing practice into an intellectual discipline and preach it to the world in a series of widely read books; New Thought was born. The leading source on Evans, C. Alan Anderson, writes, "If Quimby was the Socrates of the New Thought movement, Evans was its Plato: by the time Evans finished publishing . . . his

Though new structures of natural theology met the challenge for some, when Darwinism was added to the rationalist offensive, intellectuals began to abandon Christianity in droves, beginning about 1869—the very year Evans issued "The Mental Cure." It is not incidental that Evans's "savior" was a scientific Christian theologian (Swedenborg) who, in his estimation, successfully integrated the two domains.

six books on mind and healing, New Thought . . . became a series of footnotes to Evans' work."

His journals do not tell us why he chose to visit Quimby as a patient in 1863, but we know he made two visits and experienced nearly immediate recovery from his decades long dyspepsia. He realized that he could do what Quimby was doing; Quimby agreed. Horatio Dresser, whose father, Julius, was also cured by Quimby, had known Evans intimately over a period of twenty years. He believed that Evans' philosophic training, and especially his theosophic framework—derived from Swedenborg—prepared Evans to

understand and interpret Quimby's method of mental curing: "Evans needed only to find a man who was actually proving what he had theoretically anticipated."

From that point on, Evans became more confirmed in his spiritual views. His relationship with his church deteriorated rapidly. In April 1864 he severed his connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church; five days later he was re-baptized by the Rev. Thomas Worcester at the Swedenborgian Church on Beacon Hill; he and Charlotte moved into the Boston area, and for the next twenty years practiced and taught informally at their home a method of healing meditation or prayer. Among a number of testimonies, Julius Dresser reports that

Evans was an effective practitioner, producing so many dramatic improvements in people's health that in another age he would have been deemed a saint or a miracle worker. "He seemed to produce the wonders of the Gospel history." Evans published nine books, three on Swedenborg's theology (none of which gained any reputation within or outside of the Swedenborgian Church) and six on mental healing, which, notes the *Dictionary of American Biography*, launched a movement of historic significance.

Evans' Prayer Practice

We have a small number of personal journal entries interpreting his relationship with God. I have chosen seven that explore the connection between prayer and healing. The first two reveal Evans' capacity for a growing experience of union with God, and the final entries explore the connection between his faith and its effects especially on his physical well being.

These entries also show us his journey into mystical prayer:

(Continued on page 91)

Warren Felt Evans and His Swedenborgian Healing Practice

(Continued from page 90)

At times my soul has had a clearer sense of the Allness of God than I ever before experienced. One night on my bed my soul lost itself to the All. It seemed to me that there was nothing but God; that he was the life, the support, the substance of everything which exists. I thank God for rest in the All pervading Deity. This inward consciousness of God, this living and moving in the Divine element has made all times and places alike. . . . Sometimes I find formal prayer to be an impossibility. I enter my closet and hold my soul in the Divine presence. I can only sweetly rest in the will of God, while my heart from its inmost center silently breathes out the prayer, the holiest in earth or heaven:

"May thy will, not mine, be done, May thy will and mine be one."

Prayer is becoming with me an inward life. The soul in a ceaseless current flows out after God. Its desires silently flow into my soul.

I have recently enjoyed a deeper consciousness of the love of God, his boundless and everlasting love, than I ever before reached . . . I have found that my growth in the spiritual life has gone forward by new manifestations of God to my consciousness and every successive stage of that growth has been based upon, and preceded by, some new and enlarged view of God . . . Long have I found God so near to me that I could not move without moving in Him. I am floating in the depths of the ocean of the Infinite Life. But that Life seems to me to be Love.

On April 12, 1860, Evans writes for the first time that his own condition resides in the mental sphere:

My health is not yet adequate to the full work of the ministry. I long for strength to employ it in the work so dear to my heart . . . I have hope of regaining my former power. The Lord is my strength. "He is the health of my countenance and my God." I will find in Christ all that I need. He can cure every form of mental disease, and thus restore the body, for disease originates generally, if not always, in the mind.

All through 1860-1862 Evans struggled to apply his understanding of Christian cosmology to his need for healing. As he had throughout his life, he experienced occasional physical improvements from his spiritual work, but he also continued to relapse. In August of 1862 something happened which suggested that he was ready for a new work:

This has been a remarkable day in my experience, a new epoch in my spiritual history. My faith was put to the trial, and through Christ gloriously triumphed. I enjoyed an extraordinary season in prayer. Out of the depths I cried unto the Lord and He heard me. While sinking, like Peter, I seized hold of Christ, and walked upon the abyss as if it had been marble. I touched Him who is the Life, and life thrilled through my whole being. More than twenty years ago, after a long season of desolation and self imposed condemnation, Christ spake me whole, soul and body. There is a faith to which the Divine power always responds, 'Go in peace, thy faith hath saved thee.' With holy violence I laid hold upon Him who has become my salvation. I live because Christ lives. Here is the connection of cause and effect. I no longer live, but Christ liveth in me. I am dead and my life is hid with Christ in God. I feel myself saved—perfectly well, soul, spirit, and body. . . . From this time forth I live a life of faith. . . .

About eight months later, possibly after his healing, he observes even more pointedly:

I see how it is that by believing I have the thing for which I am praying [that the believing] causes me to have it. It is implied that the faith is divinely imparted. It proceeds from God. Faith is truth and truth from God is something real and substantial. If one prays for recovery to health and the Lord gives him to believe that he is recovering, that faith is only the truth that it is so, received from the Lord. To believe that I am recovered to health, if that faith is self originated, accomplishes nothing. But if my belief of it is a truth received from God, or if my faith is the faith of God, it becomes a substantial reality . . .

Considering the role his subsequent books played in the larger culture, we can say the rest is history. His six books on Christian healing prayer feature three themes: the philosophy integrating science and theology and showing the fundamental unity between physical and spiritual aspects of the human being; Jesus as the representative healer; and a prayer theory (or method) for healing oneself and others.

Modern Science Considerations

The century in which Evans spent his entire life served as a bridge between the two great eras of modern science: the scientific revolution which produced the Enlightenment (Bacon through Descartes) and the New Physics begun in the early twentieth century. The former eclipsed an immanent God for many, while the latter supplied models for an interactive divine ontology. Though Evans was never tempted to regard science as religion's master, he seemed keenly aware of the issues science raised for religious people of his era, especially in his world of well educated New Englanders.

The Enlightenment created numerous problems for Christians among the intelligentsia: radical dualism (resulting among other things in a mind/body split); material determinism (with its dismissal of idealism); and Deism (with its relegation of God to a remote, uninvolved post). Though new structures of natural theology met the challenge for some, when Darwinism was added to the rationalist offensive, intellectuals began to abandon Christianity in droves, beginning about 1869—the very year Evans issued *The Mental Cure*. It is not incidental that Evans's "savior" was a scientific Christian theologian (Swedenborg) who, in his estimation, successfully integrated the two domains.

If the hallmark of the scientific revolution was a new method of inquiry rooted in empirical

(Continued on page 92)

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, 2001, through April 30, 2002. 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.

Philip Alden
Naples, Florida

Norman & Jean Bestor
Bay Village, Ohio

British Columbia
New Church Society
Summerland, British Columbia

Josephine Cowern
St. Paul, Minnesota

Julia B. Cook
Urbana, Ohio

Stan & Karen Conger
Bishop, Calif.

Rev. Susannah &
Deane Currie
West Chester, Pennsylvania

Forrest Dristy
Delray Beach, Florida

Rev. Forster Freeman
Portland, Oregon

Fryeburg New Church Parish
Fryeburg, Maine

Janet Garcia
Bakersfield, California

Johnie & Gloria Grabin
Santa Maria, California

Elizabeth and Rafael Guiu
East Bridgewater, Mass.

John R. Harrington
Bridgewater, Mass.

Donna M. Humes
Denver, Colorado

Joy Jepson
Silver Spring, Maryland

David J. Keating
Hamburg, New York

Rev. C. Henry & Maria
Korsten
Edmonton, Alberta

Gordon Kuphal
The General Conference
of the New Church
Great Britain

Joan Lechner
McHenry, Illinois

Mrs. Martin F. Lynn
Winter Park, Florida

Lynne McClure
Kenwood, California

Irv & Pearl McCallum
La Jolla, Calif.

New York Association
of the New Church
New York

John & Anne Perry
Harpwell, Maine

William B. Radcliffe
Mitchellville, Maryland

Hampton & Elora Schoch
Roxboro, North Carolina

Margaret D. Schneider
Cincinnati, Ohio

Mrs. Sylvia Schulte
Norway, Iowa

Rickey Sheppard
Rockfield, Kentucky

Stuart Shotwell
Lubec, Maine

Meredith L. Swanson
East Bridgewater, Mass.

Barbara Tourangeau
Fraser, Michigan

Jean Treash
San Diego, California

Janet A. Vernon
Long Beach, California

JC & Gloryann Webb
Amenia, New York

Charles Winter
Lakewood, OH



Warren Felt Evans and His Swedenborgian

Healing Practice (Continued from page 91)

observation, statistical analysis, and the formation of hypotheses by inductive reasoning, then empiricism could be said to be holy writ in the natural sciences. That is probably why Evans' work, and that of those who followed him in mental healing, received the pointed attention of America's most important psychologist of the period, William James. James believed that the healings that were sweeping through America, especially New England, fit into his interests in the psychological aspects of religious faith. In his famed Gifford Lectures of 1902, James addressed issues raised by such experiences, considering these experiences within his category of religious experience called "religion of the healthy minded."

James viewed the subject of religion and New Thought through the lens of psychology. Though criticizing quackery in the mind-cure movement, he also identified genuine human experience worthy of close scrutiny, and he attributed its popularity to the optimistic and pragmatic character of the American people. Citing the power of suggestion, the taming of fear, and the ability of the mind and the body to induce deep relaxation, he provided a psycho-dynamic approach to mental healing.

Three quarters of a century later, another Harvard scholar would return to the subject. Herbert Benson is credited with laying original groundwork in biophysical research. *The Relaxation Response* opened one of the most important avenues of health research in the past quarter century. Benson launched a new critique of Descartes' mind-body dualism. Dozens of studies of the connection between the mind and the body followed, many of which have cited both powerful and statistically predictable effects of the mind upon the body through visualizations or affective affirmation prayer.

After two more books on the mind and healing, Benson has moved toward a stronger interest in a spiritual context for our thinking and perspectives. Within the year he will publish the most extensive double-blind study to date on the connection between prayer and healing. Research, he notes, confirms that people with spiritual perspectives experience stronger positive effects than do people using the same meditation exercises but without spiritual convictions. He has been followed by a long line of medical researchers investigating the role of thoughts as causes of physical and psychological healing.

Conclusion

Evans' legacy is still alive today. Not only has his life's work been duly footnoted as historically significant, but the questions he cared about, and the creative path he opened, speak uncannily to modern concerns. How to heal the chasm between science and theology, how to discover an inner practice that leads one to authentic and transforming

(Continued on page 93)

"I wish you enough!"

Recently I overheard a father and daughter in their last moments together. They had announced her departure and, standing near the security gate, they hugged and he said, "I love you. I wish you enough."

She said, "Daddy, our life together has been more than enough. Your love is all I ever needed. I wish you enough, too, Daddy."

They kissed and she left. He walked over toward the window where I was seated. Standing there I could see he wanted and needed to cry. I tried not to intrude on his privacy, but he welcomed me in by asking, "Did you ever say goodbye to someone knowing it would be forever?"

"Yes, I have," I replied. Saying that brought back memories I had of expressing my love and appreciation for all my Dad had done for me. Recognizing that his days were limited, I took the time to tell him face to face how much he meant to me. So I knew what this man was experiencing.

"Forgive me for asking, but why is this a forever goodbye?" I asked.

"I am old and she lives much too far away. I have challenges ahead and the reality is, the next trip back would be for my funeral," he said.

"When you were saying goodbye I heard you say, 'I wish you enough.' May I ask what that means?"

He began to smile. "That's a wish that has been handed down from other

generations. My parents used to say it to everyone." He paused for a moment, and looking up as if trying to remember it in detail, he smiled even more.

"When we said 'I wish you enough,' we were wanting the other person to have a life filled with just enough good things to sustain them," he continued, and then turning toward me he shared the following as if he were reciting it from memory:

I wish you enough sun
to keep your attitude bright.

I wish you enough rain
to appreciate the sun more.

I wish you enough happiness
to keep your spirit alive.

I wish you enough pain
so that the smallest joys in life appear
much bigger.

I wish you enough gain
to satisfy your wanting.

I wish you enough loss
to appreciate all that you possess.

I wish you enough "Hellos"
to get you through the final
"Goodbye."

He then began to sob and walked away.

My friends and loved ones, I wish you ENOUGH!

Reprinted from the *Edmonton Newsletter*, Church of the Holy City in Edmonton, Alberta.

—Author Unknown



Warren Felt Evans and His Swedenborgian Healing Practice

(Continued from page 92)

experience, and how to construct a life centered upon helping oneself and others become more whole: these are the central questions the present generation is asking.

His sustained inner practice across decades of physical debilitation, while faithfully ascending a mountain of faith and spiritual vision, carried him at last into, as he put it, "an extraordinary season in prayer." It was a

gift he tried to give away for the rest of his life—by teaching and by healing, opening his home as a sanitarium, and especially by writing, which he felt was his "higher use."

The Rev. Dr. James Lawrence is acting dean of the Swedenborgian House of Studies on the campus of the Pacific School of Religion. The foregoing article is a condensation and adaptation of a major article being published in a forthcoming issue of Studia Swedenborgiana.



The Fryeburg New Church 2001 Cookbook

Hundreds of tried and true recipes of all kinds handed down by generations of Fryeburg's famous country cooks!

- Equivalency tables
- Substitution charts
- Tips for when the power goes out
- Spice and herb guide
- Memorable quotes from Swedenborg
- Historical notes
- Pictures of Fryeburg past and present

\$8.00, plus \$3.00 shipping and postage Make check out and send to:
Fryeburg New Church
4 Oxford Street
Fryeburg, ME 04037

Remember: For updated Convention info, visit:
www.theportlandchurch.org



TO THE EDITOR

(Continued from page 84)

that your main function is to help others lead, and that "it's a lot more work, but it makes a big difference." Can you flesh out in more detail how you prepare each service and how lay leaders are enlisted each week? What is your development process?

My thanks in advance for your answers to these questions.

Mona Conner
Communications Support Unit Chair
New York

Answer from Eric

Good questions. We have more than 24 people. We have only 24 official members and another five who will join soon. Our average weekly attendance in January was 48. We had 56 on Palm Sunday and 64 on Easter.

So far the number of programs is
(Continued on page 95)

Meet the Young Woman Behind the Friendly Voice

For those of you who wanted to know a little bit more about Kate Cuggino, who works in the Central Office alongside Martha Bauer, here it is:

"I have been working in the Central Office now for just about two years. I started here in May of 2000 and I am a native of Newton, Mass. I attended the Newton public schools, graduated high school in 1992, and graduated from Framingham State College in 1997 with a degree in Communication Arts.

"Throughout my childhood I was a competitive figure skater, competing in many competitions, representing The Skating Club of Boston. At age 15, I turned professional and have been

coaching figure skating ever since. In my free time you can often find me at a local rink, teaching the sport I love.

"My other interests include knitting, sewing, quilting and spending time in my garden. I also enjoy time outdoors, hiking or spending time on Cape Cod with family and friends. I currently reside in Newton with my husband Guy, and our two cats."

Of course, I couldn't stand it, I had to know the cats' names, to which Kate replied,

"Our Cats are named Squeaky & Manny.

"Squeaky is a two year old. She was a stray when we got her at 13 weeks and was extremely scared of people and of being trapped in a house. As a result she ran around meowing like crazy—that's where we got her name. She's a great cat. She's still wary of strangers, but very warm to us.

"Manny is another story. He's one year old. I got him as a kitten from a

cousin; he was so cute and fluffy as a baby and I chose him because I thought he might help



Squeaky to not be so leery of people. They do get along great, but I hadn't told my husband that I was bringing another kitten home, so I chose to give him a name that he couldn't resist—Manny (as in Manny Ramirez from the Boston Red Sox). Seeing as my husband is a big Red Sox fan, Manny the new kitten went over well. They are such fun pets. Maybe a little more info than you wanted, but they have stories behind their names. :-)"



The Swedenborgian Church Statistics—as of December 31, 2001

Associations	Churches		Ordained Ministers			Authorized	Members		Total	No of
	Active	Inactive	Active	Inactive	Retired	Lay Leaders	Active	Inactive		Delegates
Canada	1	0	2	0	1	1	134	29	163	15
Connecticut	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	4	4	2
Illinois	6	0	2	2	0	0	118	63	181	13
Kansas	2	0	0	0	2	0	86	0	86	10
Maine	3	0	3	2	0	0	149	156	305	16
Massachusetts	5	2	8	3	2	0	188	39	227	20
Michigan	1	0	1	0	0	0	65	21	86	8
Middle Atlantic	3	0	4	0	0	0	88	50	138	10
New York	2	0	2	0	0	0	61	22	83	8
Ohio	3	2	2	2	0	1	69	18	87	8
Pacific Coast	5	0	6	2	5	2	299	59	358	31
Southeast	2	0	3	0	0	0	59	7	66	7
Western Canada	6	0	1	1	1	0	100	25	125	12
Conference										
SCYL									2	2
Societies										
*Bayside	1	0	0	0	0	0	15	0	15	3
TOTAL	40	4	34	13	11	4	1431	493	1926	165

BAPTISMS

Linn—Cindy Linn was baptized into the Christian church February 24, 2002, at the LaPorte New Church in LaPorte, Indiana, the Rev. Carl Yenetchi officiating.

Potucek—Paige Potucek, daughter of Heidi and Patrick Potucek, was baptized into the Christian church April 14, 2002, at the LaPorte New Church in LaPorte, Indiana, the Rev. Carl Yenetchi officiating.

Phillip—Edward Phillip, son of Dr. Peter Wiens and Dr. Tracy Ridley of Winnipeg, Manitoba, born January 25, 2002, was baptized into the Christian faith and life March 30, 2002, at Kaleden, British

Columbia. The Rev. Erwin D. Reddekopp officiated. The sacrament was shared and observed by about forty family members and relatives.

CONFIRMATIONS

Ebbs, Larson, Platter—Priscilla Ebbs, Ingrid Larson and Pauline Platter were confirmed into the life and faith of the Swedenborgian Church and welcomed into membership on Easter Sunday 2002 at the Elmwood New Church, the Rev. Andrew Stinson officiating

Golob, Ladra, Shoupe, Steinhiser, Vogel—Lou Golob, Billy Ladra, Judy Shoupe, Alan

Steinhiser, and Gene Vogel were confirmed into the life of the Swedenborgian Church respectively on the following dates: March 10, February 3, April 28, January 17, April 24, 2002, at the LaPorte New Church in LaPorte, Indiana, the Rev. Carl Yenetchi officiating.

MARRIAGE

Everett—Susan S. Everett and Wayne T. Wolski were united in marriage March 22, 2002, at the Fryeburg New Church in Fryeburg, Maine, the Rev. Kenneth Turley officiating.

DEATHS

Dow—Benjamin A. Dow, age 88 of Standish, Maine, entered the spiritual world March 20, 2002. The resurrection service took place March 30, 2002 at Dolby & Dorr Funeral Chapel in Gorham, Maine, the Rev. Kenneth Turley officiating.

Smith—Iva Fay Smith, age 81, of West Stockbridge, Mass., formerly of East Fryeburg, Maine, entered the spiritual world April 16, 2002. The resurrection service was held April 22, 2002, at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery in Denmark, Maine, the Rev. Ken Turley officiating. She was the daughter of Gilbert Arthur and Lula Harnden Smith.



ADDRESS CHANGE

The Rev. Susan Turley's new email address is:
Turleys@sutterhealth.org.

Plain Living: A Quaker Path to Simplicity

(Continued from back page)

are basically all the important messages that one person can give to another:

I love you
Thank you
I'm sorry
That's not good enough
No" John Calvi (p. 52)

Swedenborgians could learn much from Catherine Whitmire.

Perry Martin, Ph.D., is a psychotherapist living and practicing in West Chester, Pennsylvania.



TO THE EDITOR

(Continued from page 93)

not exhaustive because everyone does think they have to come to everything and we draw new people to every event from the Stonehouse.

Six people are involved each week in leading the service opening, although we don't have the same opening every week. I type a new opening to go with the theme of the service and pick out individuals from the early people who show up for the service. It is very last-minute but it usually works. I just make sure that they can pronounce all the words and ask them to stand up and read it loudly.

For the welcome, I ask the person ahead of time by phone. "Say your name, welcome to the Celestial Circle and in one minute say what it is that keeps you coming back. Then explain the prayer bowl and invite everyone to get up and greet those people around them."

Sometimes I ask someone well in advance to do the children's message and I give them some help.

For the scripture reading each week I photocopy the text and use a different colored highlighter for each of the readers if there is more than one. Last week we did the road to Emmaus. I ask them to come twenty minutes before the service to practice.

I ask the treasurer or someone else to take the collection and the words

are different each week to go along with the theme of the service.

I ask people to announce during announcement time the projects with which they are involved.

Lisa Cole or someone else introduces and leads the songs.

So there are about fifteen people involved in leading the service.

I do the children's message (usually), sermon (dialogue), some announcements and the closing prayer.

As far as the process personally, I try to do some of it in advance and I use a variety of resources which have been very helpful. The bibliography of resources was sent out in a binder to each congregation's president in January. Hope this is helpful.

I am still available to make a few trips every year to help congregations, but your congregation has to pay my way or ask MINSU to help. There is no fee as I am heavily aided by augmentation and obligated to make so many trips each year.

Thanks for your interest and kind words about my article.

Rev. Eric Allison
Puget Sound Swedenborgian Church
Kirkland, Washington

Editor's Note: MINSU's New Directions, Growth, & Enrichment budget item allows partial aid for travel and meeting expenses for churches who are interested in sharing their resources or expertise with one another.



Plain Living: A Quaker Path to Simplicity

by Catherine Whitmire
Sorin Books, Notre Dame, IN. 2001

Reviewed by Perry Martin

A young musician is reputed to have asked Artur Rubenstein how to get to Carnegie Hall. The answer he received was, "Practice." Swedenborgians are big on doctrine: Now it is permitted to enter into the mysteries of faith with our full minds. Our sermons exhort us to live a good life. But our church gives us little practical help in how to achieve the spiritual lives to which we aspire.

Our Convention keynote speaker Catherine Whitmire will likely cajole us toward positive action. She holds a Master of Divinity degree from Harvard, and she has been a Quaker for twenty-five years. What I have been noticing about Quakers lately is their emphasis on practice. Their manual is called simply, *Faith and Practice*. They do not get tangled so much in what they believe as they struggle with how to practice their basic principles of love, simplicity, and peace.

Catherine Whitmire's book, *Plain Living, A Quaker Guide to Simplicity*, is not so much a book to be read through, as a quiet place, like a Quaker meeting, where one may sit in silence with a nugget of truth and a query: How do I live that truth? The table of contents is an education in simplicity:

Chapter 2: Beginning with Ourselves and Our Work, Time, Integrity, Plain speech, Money and Resources.

Chapter 5: Opening Our Hearts Through:

Longing, Seeking God, Faith, Prayer, Scripture.

Within each section you will find quotes from Quakers like George Fox (1667) or Rufus Jones (1927) or Elizabeth Watson (1992). Some are like one-paragraph sermons, some are poems or hymns, and some are little stories. At the end of each section are three queries, e.g., Do I look for and recognize that of God in all people? Am I committed to learning the skills necessary to end racism and other forms of prejudice and discrimination?"

I was attracted to the section on faith, having bogged down in fifty pages of Swedenborg's discussion of faith assigned in the SSR correspondence course some years ago.

"When I talk about 'practicing our faith,' I am thinking about 'practice' in the most common use of that term. That is, we have to practice our faith the same way we practice the piano, or practice dancing, or practice a variety of skills and crafts. Our faith is, in many ways, something we learn more about and grow in by doing, trying to embody our intentions and ideals, and by learning from our failures as well as our successes." (Thomas Jeavons, p.110)

The Friends, as Quakers like to be called, endeavor to practice their belief in peacemaking not only by working for international peace and many of them registering as conscientious objectors to war, some of them refusing to pay taxes that go into war material, but also by the way they do their church business. "Our primary purpose is not to 'make decisions' but to affirm the truth of our particular community of faith which builds up that community." Janet Hoffman (p. 148). Decisions are made not by voting but by working together until they reach unity in a "sense of the meeting." The process can be time-consuming, but in the end the community is not rent with winners and losers. As to committed relationships: "These six sayings

(Continued on page 95)

The Swedenborgian Church
of North America
The Messenger
11 Highland Ave.
Newtonville, MA 02460

Address Service
Requested

Non-profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Plymouth, IN
Permit No. 105

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.