

THE MESSENGER

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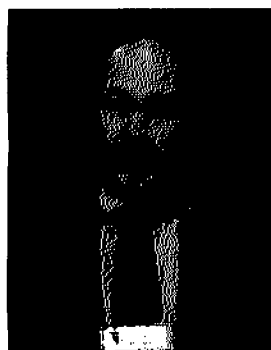
January 2003

Jim Lawrence

We seized a rare opportunity in planning our opening program segment. Though Wilson Van Dusen is very well known among Swedenborgians, the large majority have never had a chance to hear him speak. He put a moratorium on public speaking for many years, due to a condition with considerable precedence in mystical and spirituality studies, called the Gift of Tears, but nevertheless something that is not common in general and which in his view tended to make public discussions quite challenging. However, he has given a few public

talks in the past few years, and he was pleased to learn of our planning for this gathering and agreed to be with us today. What took far more effort was gaining his assent to let us begin this morning with a life-tribute, a celebration of his own career. Finally, he said, it you really feel it would be *useful*. I assured him it would be.

Why would we want to take time and celebrate his work at an Open House weekend looking at our new model of theological education as a Swedenborgian House of Studies at Pacific School of Religion of the Graduate Theological Union? For starters, Wilson Van Dusen is the most widely read author on Swedenborg, not only of the 20th century, but I think I know the history of publishing related to Swedenborg well enough to say Van is the most widely read author on Swedenborg in history. His audience outside the various denominational walls of the New Jerusalem churches has always been estimated as considerably larger than within those walls, yet within those walls he is a household name, and that would be true for all branches of the New Church worldwide.



Jim Lawrence, SHS Dean

The reason for the popularity of his works, now going on for some thirty years, is his nose for what I call the "simple-profound": a simplicity and profundity equally appealing to scholars and non-scholars. Through his books and articles, Wilson Van Dusen has effectively opened doors of spiri-

WILSON VAN DUSEN TRIBUTE

Swedenborgian
House of Studies
Open House
November 8~10



Van Dusen addresses questions from attendees.

tual experience for a lot of readers for a pretty long time. That alone would be sufficient justification for this celebration, but there is something more.

Van's work has involved a way of becoming a mystic—his own self-description. His way of spirituality has been experienced by many observers, friends, and colleagues as something real and genuine—and well, very striking. As such, his own experience in engaging the spiritual path is itself now an object of serious interest.

In the catalog of courses at the Swedenborgian House of Studies, you will find Van Dusen as part of the curriculum, not only in the sense that some of his published work is on syllabi, but that his spirituality is itself a subject of study. In my class, "Christian Spirituality through a Swedenborgian Lens," as part of our approach we look at the inner lives of three remarkable followers of the Swedenborgian way: Warren Felt Evans, Helen Keller, and Wilson Van Dusen. In Greg Johnson's class "Swedenborg and Spiritual Psychology," part of the course explores three representative figures: William Blake, Carl Jung, and Wilson Van Dusen.

In real and compelling ways, then, we have found it worth our while to arrange this morning not only to spend some time with Van in a mini-workshop dialog, but to honor his contributions in the truest way by offering substantive comment on it. Each of our speakers has been close to Van's work over the years in various and individual ways, but before we hear their sharing, I would like to note for those who may not know: Wilson Van Dusen received a Ph.D. in psychology from the University of Ottawa, specifically in the

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• Book Reviews ~ *Writing the Mind Alive* and *Chances Are* • Bretton Frost Memorial

Guest Editorial commentary by Chris Laitner, vice president of the Swedenborgian Church, and Diana Kirven Stickney, chair of development on the Swedenborgian House of Studies board.

Praise for SHS Vision

It is a wonderful experience to witness the transformation of an intriguing idea into an excellent reality. On the weekend of November 8-10, I was privileged to be part of the "Through the Open Door" gathering at the Swedenborgian House of Studies located at the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California. During the course of a twenty-four hour period from early Friday evening to the following evening, seventy or so guests had the opportunity to meet, greet, eat, listen, learn, question, and interact with SHS faculty and students, with PSR faculty and students, with each other, and with honored guest, Dr. Wilson Van Dusen.

This weekend of learning and fellowship, admirably orchestrated by Kim Hinrichs, program director at SHS, encompassed three elements: Swedenborgianism's connections with other faith traditions in this century, a special program celebrating the career and writings of Dr. Wilson Van Dusen centered primarily on his life as a mystic and the things he has learned and written about, and a discussion between a faculty panel and the gathered Swedenborgian leaders on the needs of theological education today. The time was most informative, meaningful, and thought-provoking.

Since the beginning of the denomination's discussions regarding the creation of a Swedenborgian House of Studies model, I have been interested in the concept. I've attended several of the informational meetings as the project moved forward, and to be able to see firsthand the incredible reality of the vision has been a wonderful gift. The little Paul Sperry book, *Words of Life*, which I often use as part of my daily "quiet time," was open to the

page on "Change" on the Friday that I flew to the SHS Open House. I submit two sentences that seem especially applicable in describing what I saw while there: "Change is essential to improvement," and "Intellectual changes are essential to the progress of rational understanding and the acquirement of knowledge." The weekend at SHS has illustrated that the early promise of creating a Swedenborgian House of Studies is blossoming into a growing, working educational center that can provide an extensive, excellent, and comprehensive education.

My thanks and appreciation to all concerned for the opportunity to be a part of this time of celebration!



Editor's Note: The following is the text of a speech given at the SHS Open House by Diana Kirven Stickney November 9, 2002.

Partners in Development

The program says that I am Diana Kirven Stickney, Chair of Development for the Swedenborgian House of Studies. That's true, and I am proud of it! I am the daughter of Robert and Marion Kirven, two people who devoted their lives to theological education and seminary training. I grew up surrounded by people preparing for ministry, and the experience shaped my life and my view of the world. Now I am known as Diana Stickney, mother of four children, and I am trying to pass on to them what I have learned about the intersection of religion and daily life.

We are all aware in our secularized American society of the many people who think that organized religion can no longer speak relevantly to contemporary concerns and that seminaries have become irrelevant dinosaurs. Some people consider religion to be just a pretense, or worse still, an opiate for the masses. Today's presentations and discussions disprove that statement, and point beyond to the role and responsibility of seminaries to address

the most pressing issues of the day. As Dr. Van Dusen said, "Religion is very real."

Theological education teaches people to look for and ask the deeper questions hiding behind the catastrophic and the mundane events of daily life. Seminary training prepares pastors who will attend to the material and spiritual needs of the lost, the lonely, and the alienated. Seminary training prepares prophets who will challenge the dominant culture of egotistical self-gratification and offer instead a model of Christian service founded on hope, guided by wisdom, and motivated by love.

Contrary to some popular opinion polls, theological education is relevant and addresses the needs of those in the shopping mall, the stock brokers on Wall Street, the delegates to the United Nations, and our own nation's leaders in the White House, in the Pentagon and on Capitol Hill. I believe that our small seminary, the Swedenborgian House of Studies, newly established within the Pacific School of Religion, will be relevant tomorrow because of what we are doing here today.

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THE MESSENGER

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Typesetting & Layout
Town & Country
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Patte LeVan, *Editor*
Editorial Address:
The Messenger
P.O. Box 985
Julian, CA 92036
E-MAIL: messenger@julianweb.com

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

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

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VAN DUSEN TRIBUTE

(Continued from cover)

area of phenomenology. He worked for many years as the chief psychologist at Mendocino State Hospital, where he was especially recognized for his work with schizophrenic patients. Van became a well-known figure in the so-called Third Wave of psychology, Humanistic Psychology, and was close friends and a colleague of Fritz Perls and Carl Rogers, among others. He was instrumental in designing the first Humanistic Psychology department in a state university in this country (Sonoma State University). To give just a hint of the breadth of his interests, he has also had deep journeys as an instructor of mathematics, as a marksman, as a Knight, and as a student of the visual arts.

Van Dusen's Publishing Legacy

Some wag in the 19th-century, in commenting on Swedenborgian doctrine, quipped that Swedenborgians believed in salvation by publication, and though I won't go so far as to say "guilty as charged," it is safe to say we Swedenborgians probably score near the top in ratio of members to publications, and so much the better if somebody actually reads the book. So, little wonder that we celebrate the best-selling author on Swedenborg!

I have been involved as an editor and as a managing director in publishing endeavors related to Swedenborg for nearly twenty years, and during this time I have worked directly with Van on a couple of significant projects and in a more indirect way on a number of other Van Dusen publications.

For the record, Van has published eleven books and approximately 375 articles. He is the only author—besides Swedenborg, of course—with his own section in the current catalog from the Swedenborg Foundation. Though he has published a number of articles in professional journals and chapters in anthologies in the academic literature of psychology, the

great vein of Van Dusen's popularity began when he brought together his interests in religion, primarily Eastern at that time, and his work with the Human Potential Movement. The first result was *The Natural Depth in Man*, published by Harper and Row, which found a ready audience for Van's ability as a guide into one's own inner life. Carl Rogers called his discussion of meditation the best he had ever read. Van's skill in working with dreams is legendary among Swedenborgians, and of course he is rather famed in our circles for his commentary on Swedenborg's dream journal. As a phenomenologist and as a gifted writer, he also helped people in *Natural Depth in Man* simply with the tool of observing oneself, of listening to one's life, noticing what is.

Though Van had to that point been primarily Buddhist and Hindu in his own religious orientation, he followed that book with another Harper and Row title in a work describing a Christian figure whom he had found particularly useful not only in working with exceptional mental states in his professional practice, but in opening up and deepening his personal inner life, as well. That 1975 release was called, *The Presence of Other Worlds*, THE best-selling book of all time on Swedenborg. Its subtitle was: *The Psycho-Spiritual Findings of Emanuel Swedenborg*. It is a classic.

Though articles continued to flow from his pen, he did not publish another significant book-length project for twenty years. His articles and short works, by the way, are a critical part of the body of his work. His short work on uses is far and away the most widely read, known and beloved pamphlet-length item in Swedenborgiana. Anyone doing serious work in the future on Van Dusen will need to explore those 375 articles, because they range into all manner of particular subjects which the books do not touch. They frequently engage specific questions of the church's appropriation of Swedenborg's writings, as well as a number of reflections and meditations on specific ideas in Swedenborg's theological and scientific works.

Starting in the mid-nineties, Van returned to book-length treatments

and has published close to a work a year since 1995. As his work on "going inward" was well established, Van's later body has been more theological and specifically teleological: that is, the science side of his mind has grown into an ever-deeper appreciation of the design of God's creation and the life God gives to us. And his ever-abiding theme of interfaith oneness has been raised with new vigor. The titles give an indication: *Return to the Source*; *The Design of Existence*; *Beauty, Wonder, and the Mystical Mind*, and *Just Beyond the Physical*. He is currently at work on two new works.

I don't have the time to go into the matter with any depth, but I want to highlight two points about the way in which Van Dusen has approached and appropriated the Swedenborg heritage, that I feel are foundational for both the popularity and reception of his works and for their significance in the higher study of religion and spirituality.

First, though Van is not unique in this regard, he has been uniquely successful in getting Swedenborgians to value the reality of the inner life as authoritative over and against bibliolatry. The history of Christianity until very recent times was a top-down business. Truth systems were canonized and polished and given to the people, and one was supposed to fit one's inner life into that framework. Theology, with little exception until the mid-20th-century, worked from theological principles which were correlated into the behavioral codes of the follower.

Then there was the "turn to subject movement," a European and North American interest focusing on human psychology, on what people actually experience. This interest in *actual experience* is not merely an interest of the academia, but in this country has captured the interest of two generations of seekers. Van Dusen has helped pioneer the way for our tradition, which historically has been exceedingly conceptual, to value and seek skills in basic inner spirituality, in talking the language of spiritual experience.

Second, Van Dusen almost single-handedly helped our church get over its problem with the word "mysticism." The longstanding distinction Sweden-

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VAN DUSEN TRIBUTE

To Wilson Van Dusen: From the Rest of Us

Jane Siebert

It is an honor to be here today to celebrate the contributions of Wilson Van Dusen. It is also quite daunting because I want to speak for the vast numbers who have been touched, enlightened, and graced by his words. I represent one of the common seekers for whom Van writes. Scholars have benefitted from his insight, but he writes not to impress or overpower the reader with his thought. He writes to bring truth down to a common level from which scores have benefitted, including me.

In speaking with Van almost a year ago about the possibility of this event, and what an honor it would be for the Swedenborgian House of Studies to house his vast library someday, he said in all seriousness, "Why would you want to celebrate my life? Of what 'use' is that?" Those of you who know Van or have read his books, pamphlets or articles know that "to be of use" is his philosophy of life, one that he has attained and continues to pursue.

His is the kind of writing that when you read it, you think, "well, of course, that's the way it is," but he is the one who has written it in such a way that you can now verbalize that truth that previously was just felt or intuited. He unites the head and the heart so that the truth reverberates within and without.

It is hard to have a favorite book of Van Dusen's because each one is unique and opens new thoughts and brings new answers to those plaguing questions that often sit unanswered. But *Beauty, Wonder and the Mystical Mind* opened the world of mysticism for me, and for this I will always be grateful. It is OK to be a mystic. For Van writes that "mystic" is one who has enjoyed a direct experience of God, and this experience has changed him or her from within. It is reassuring when we read that the experience of God is



Left: Jim Erickson, St. Paul church, browses the Swedenborg Library stacks at SHS.

everyone's potential, but it often goes unrecognized and unreported. What a sad state we are in when we experience God, but are too fogged over to realize it or too self-conscious to talk about it.

I have had the incredible opportunity to work with Van as he strives to get his arms around the internal sense of the scripture that fills the majority of Swedenborg's writings. Watching Van approach a subject is exhausting and exhilarating. He pursues it doggedly. He starts with a question, "how do you use the internal sense?" And then he researches it and ponders it, looking for an answer for himself and one that can help others.

As a favor to him I want to speak a little today about the internal sense of scripture and how it can be put to use. Swedenborg considered this his greatest contribution, the opening of the internal sense of the scriptures. In like manner Van has opened Swedenborg's writings for many.

The internal sense of the scripture opens the Word to give us guidance in all aspects of our lives; it truly is all connected. The progression of the children of Israel as they searched for the Promised Land is a psychological study in human development as we search for our inner sense, or the Promised Land. The Word covers all phases of childhood, the terrible twos, the rebellious adolescent years, the identity crisis during the early twenties, the mid-life crisis, and on and on. And doesn't that make sense, that God would give us instruction for life processes?

Let me share one quick example of how to use the internal sense: it actually happened just this week; this



Below: Jane Siebert at computer in Swendenborg Library.

is for you, Van. Our son, Andrew, is a sophomore at Kansas State University, enrolled in electrical engineering. He had a good freshman year and eagerly entered this second year. About a month into the year we started getting phone calls and emails about changing majors, changing universities, changing classes, etc. He has been home only one time this semester—for about 24 hours—compared to last year, when we saw him once or twice a month. He talks about questions concerning God, his future commitments, where he wants to live, how he is having trouble getting motivated to study. It is evident that this is a difficult time for him.

Andrew is going through the biblical period of the Judges, which is marked primarily by disorganization and confusion. There was no king in Israel during that time, everyone did what was right in his or her own eyes. The Children of Israel would forget God, get into trouble, remember God, get a new leader (a judge) who would deliver them out of their trouble, and then they would turn right around and forget God again. Does this sound like early twenties, or what?

So I sent Andrew an email last Monday.

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VAN DUSEN TRIBUTE

To Wilson Van Dusen: From the Rest of Us

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Drew (his college name), I have been studying the internal sense of the scriptures and I think I might have found something that will help you with this struggle you are going through. Many people in their early twenties start the process of figuring out who they are and that is exemplified in the Bible as the period of the Judges. This sounds like what you are experiencing. To move to the next phase of development you have to question your external sources of authority, even Dad and me, and relocate that authority within yourself. You are taking responsibility for your choices, your commitments, your lifestyle, your beliefs. While others (parents included) and their judgments will remain important to you, their expectations, advice and counsel will be submitted to your own freedom of choice, just like the Israelites were given a choice at this point in their journey as to whether they wanted to follow God or return to their ancestral religion. You are forming a new identity and although it feels very unstable, it is a necessary passage into adulthood. Don't rush it. You have many lessons to learn and God can help a lot, if you let him. Love, Mom



Rev. Dr. George Dole making presentation to Van Dusen. George was guest preacher at the San Francisco church service November 10. He is pastor of the Swedenborgian Church in Bath, Maine, and teaches online courses for SHS.

I called Drew last night before leaving Kansas and when I asked him how he was, he said "great!" It was the first time I had heard that response this year. He said, "I still don't know what I'm going to do, but I feel better about the indecision and I'm going to weigh all the options before making up my mind. This is my decision. I shared your email with a friend who is going through the same struggle; she said it helped. Thanks, Mom."

So to Van, I, too, say thanks. Thanks for your persistence in finding answers and thanks for sharing those answers with the rest of us.

What greater use than to help one find their use.

What greater service than to show one how to appreciate the mystical.

What greater gift than to give words to depths others can only feel.

What greater truth than to unlock truth for each to find.

What greater love than to be an instrument of God's love.



Jane Siebert is the chair of the Swedenborgian House of Studies Board of Trustees, and secretary of the Pretty Prairie Swedenborgian Church in Pretty Prairie, Kansas.



Van Dusen's Response

During his remarks on this occasion, Wilson Van Dusen described his unusual religious background with the direct experiences of God from infancy on, though raised in a totally irreligious household. By adolescence he learned how to return to the very pleasant experiences of God. He feels he is of the universal church described by Swedenborg. When God looks at churches he sees one church. If you think in terms of doctrine there are many. But if you think of the good, there is only one universal church. Van Dusen is a formal member of five Christian churches and is a Hindu and a Buddhist. Upon his death his over 2000 volumes on world mysticism will go the SHS Library.

Van reports that he has long seen great vistas in Swedenborg's writings. He is now at work on a book on advanced Swedenborg. He outlined the supreme doctrine in the writings. Only God really exists. There is one Life of which we are recipient vessels. This has great significance. This same supreme doctrine also exists in Hinduism and Buddhism. Though many have read the references to this in Swedenborg's writings, oddly, it appears that no one else drew it out of the writings or went into its significance. In Advaita Vedanta and in Buddhism there are centuries of work on how to approach the direct experience of God alone. This is only one of the great vistas he sees in Swedenborg's writings.

Van ended by taking questions from the audience and later indicated public praise is hard on a quiet scholar, and was pleased to have survived the day.

—WVD



Van Dusen's Publishing Legacy

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borgians have wanted to make between classic mysticism and Swedenborg's experience has its merits, but in the contemporary world of seekers, Christian mysticism has become one of the most important large frameworks for engaging the spiritual life. Swedenborg needs to be available in that discussion, and he has been brought more fully into that discussion over the past decade as we have learned to use the term appropriately.

In concluding this cursory trapeze through Van's remarkable publishing legacy, I would like to announce that he has graciously made the legal arrangements that at an appropriate time in the future, his personal library, papers, and archives will come to the Swedenborgian Collection at the Swedenborgian House of Studies at Pacific School of Religion: a substantial gift of 632 volumes of Swedenborg and Swedenborgian collateral works and 1,405 works on religion and psychology, for a total of 2,037 volumes.

The Rev. Dr. James F. Lawrence is dean of the Swedenborgian House of Studies.



SHORT TAKES

The Revs. Harvey Tafel, Marlene Laughlin and staff at Wayfarers Chapel are delighted to welcome the Rev. Jonathan Mitchell, pastor of the Washington D.C. church, who will begin as the new minister at the Chapel in February 2003.



The Fryeburg New Church held an Open House July 14, 2002, to "celebrate the love and to honor the devotion" of Sally Harnden, who retired after 24 years as their church secretary.



The longtime Los Angeles Alliance group, Stitch and Study, held its final meeting May 25, 2002, at the home of Manon (Washburn) McGee in Palos Verdes, California. It was agreed that



Above: Panel leading discussion on theological education: Robert Reber, Vice-Chair SHS Board of Trustees; Jim Lawrence, Dean of SHS; Doug Adams, Professor of Christianity and the Arts at PSR; Greg Johnson, SHS Assistant Professor of Philosophy and Swedenborgian Studies; Mary Donovan Turner, Associate Professor of Preaching at PSR; George Dole, SHS Adjunct Professor of Biblical Studies.



Above: Rev. Dr. Rachel Rivers, SHS Board member and pastor of the San Francisco church offers her tribute to Van.

Left: Reception in Holbrook Hall, November 9.

they disband in their present form, due to distance, age, and infirmities. They will continue as a circle of friends who meet whenever possible for fellowship and study, with no formal structure, slate of officers, or dues. Manon has agreed to be social secretary of this friendship circle. It was also voted to distribute the balance of the treasury to the Mite Box Fund of the National Alliance of New Church Women (\$30) and to the Wayfarers Chapel Visitors Center (\$500).



Gordon Kuphal, secretary of the General Conference of the New Church in the UK, sent a note of sympathy to us on the anniversary of 9/11, which President Ron Brugler shared with us when he returned from the U.K. in mid-September. Kuphal was pleased also to receive a copy of *God in the Midst of the City* at the Ministers' Seminar at Purley Chase in September 2002.



The Rev. Nadine Cotton was candidating for the position of minister in Pretty Prairie from October 1-7, 2002,

conducting church service there October 6th, and at Pawnee Rock on the 2nd. She was accompanied by her new husband, Jeffrey Durgin.



Kathy Speas, a second-year student at SHS, led the service at Pretty Prairie October 13, 2002.



The traveling egg tempera show that includes New York member Mona Conner's painting (of the woman and the bird of paradise, called "Longing to Be Seen," based on a quotation from *Divine Love and Wisdom*) just opened at its final venue at Wistariahurst Museum in Holyoke, Mass., where it will be until about January 20, 2003. Wistariahurst Museum is a gorgeous Victorian mansion, named for its famous Wisteria vines and gardens surrounding the property. You can see photos of the museum on the Wistariahurst website: www.holyoke.org/wistariahurst.htm (be sure to spell wistariahurst with two "a's", the proper spelling). Click on "Music Room" to see a photo of the room where Mona's painting is hanging.



THE PEACE MOVEMENT TODAY: *A View From Some Faith Traditions*

Wilma Wake

I was shaken and shattered on Sept. 11, 2001, as we all were. As the day unfolded with its horrific events, I became increasingly concerned that we would be pulled into war. Yet I felt that peace had never been more important for us. I knew I could find the Lord's peace inside of me. But if my nation moved toward war, I wanted to advocate for peace in the world. What had the peace movement been doing since the end of the Viet Nam war? Where were the flames of the peace candle being tended in North America? In the sixteen months since that day, there has been an increasingly vocal peace movement in North America, and various faith traditions are leading the way. I have been exploring what a few of those traditions are bringing to the discussion about peace, and want to share what I am learning.

The Quakers and the American Friends Service Committee

On 9-11, my first thought was to find out how the American Friends Service Committee was responding to the event. They had a comment on their website that very day, saying "We hope with all our hearts that in responding to today's tragic events, all persons will find ways to end the violence that is consuming our world." They added: "The Religious Society of Friends, since its inception in the 1650s, has been led to eschew war and all forms of violence for any end whatsoever. Time and again we have ministered to the victims of war and violence. We believe that the challenge before us all is to break the cycle of violence and retribution."

One of my projects since that day has been to learn more about the Friends and their attitude toward nonviolence. The Quakers were

founded in the middle years of the Seventeenth Century. To get some perspective, in 1630 Galileo was questioning gravity and the motions of the planets. In 1688 our own Emanuel Swedenborg was born in Sweden. In 1620 a group of religious dissenters, the Pilgrims, sailed to the New World on the Mayflower.

There were many other religious dissenters still in Britain who were not happy with the Anglican Church. Among those was a man named George Fox. He traveled around the country talking with people about the importance of connecting with the Divine within. He found some people who loved his message, and others who put him in jail. In 1652 he was in Lancashire and climbed up Pendle Hill. At the top of it, he had a vision of "a great people to be gathered." This date is considered to be the birth of the Quakers, and his vision to be one of the future Society of Friends.

George Fox and his followers were opposed to violence from their earliest days. Our convention speaker this past summer was Quaker author Cathy Whitmire. She told us how in 1656 George Fox was offered a commission to serve in the military, and he refused because he "lived in the virtue of that light and power that took away the occasion for all wars." Cathy went on to tell us that for Quakers, "living in peace is about trying to live a life that takes away the occasion of war; it is a day by day process, the journey of a lifetime."

The Society of Friends has been faithful to that goal. In 1917, fourteen Friends met in April to respond to the U.S. declaration of war. They began exploring and supporting conscientious objection. In the 1930s, Herbert Hoover asked them to take on a program to feed hungry children of miners in Appalachia. They did not only that, but also helped miners make and sell furniture. In World War II, they were again involved in the support of conscientious objectors who worked in

community-minded programs rather than serve in war.

They have been a leader in nonviolence in many arenas of our society. They worked with Martin Luther King, Jr., from the earliest days of the Civil Rights Movement. In 1947, both the AFSC and the British Friends Service Council received the Nobel Peace Prize for the work of Quakers everywhere.

Their website today gives important information about their values. They strive to live the Quaker principles of nonviolence and justice. They believe that the Spirit is found in all who share its values, so they work with people of many faith traditions.

Their hope is to transform the conditions in both ourselves and in the world that lead to violence. They say, "We nurture the faith that conflicts can be resolved nonviolently, that enmity can be transformed into friendship, strife into cooperation, poverty into well-being, and injustice into dignity and participation. We believe that ultimately goodness can prevail over evil, and oppression in all its many forms can give way."

The AFSC has been actively supporting a non-violent response to 9-11. They are people whose faith tradition leads them away from violence. This makes them a shining light in our world today, as they live their daily lives in an effort to avoid violence on all levels. Cathy Whitmire's talk at Convention [reprinted in the November *Messenger*], gives us many other ways the Quakers work to make everyday life an experience of peace and love. Not everyone agrees with their perspective on the world situation today. But their integrity and faith-based witness are beyond reproach.

Gandhi's Hindu Faith

Understanding faith-based witness must include some reference to Gandhi, an Indian Hindu. He started a nonviolent struggle against the British oppression of India in 1919. His understanding of love, coming from his Hindu faith, led him into a life that inspired Martin Luther King, Jr., the

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THE PEACE MOVEMENT TODAY: *A View From Some Faith Traditions*

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AFSC, and probably all nonviolent movements since his time.

Gandhi understood the reality around us to be an illusion hiding a much deeper reality. Life was a process of ongoing change, and each human being a unique contribution to the flow. We each perceive life from a somewhat different perspective; and each viewpoint is a crucial part of the whole. So life was to be preserved; not destroyed in violence. And our differences were part of our uniqueness. As we learned to share them, we would find ways to settle our conflicts without violence. He valued Karma yoga, yoga of action. It is a way of seeking unity with God through good actions in the world. Gandhi felt that each time a conflict was resolved nonviolently, it open the door to the next conflict being resolved even more easily without violence.

His grandson, Arun Gandhi and Arun's wife, Sunanda, founded the M.K Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence in 1991. They work on finding ways to resolve conflicts peacefully. Their website offered an article by Arun after 9-11 on how he thought his grandfather would have responded to the terrorism of that day. He recounted the events of April 19, 1919, when the British rulers of India were demanding that Indian citizens crawl on their stomachs whenever they passed a British citizen or establishment. Disobedience would lead to public flogging, if not death.

There was a nonviolent protest in Punjab where ten thousand people stood peacefully listening to values of nonviolence. The British Governor sent in his troops and opened fire on the crowd. Soon, hundreds were injured or killed. As news of this spread, Indians were eager for revenge. Gandhi spoke out to turn the anger into nonviolent actions for peace, liberating the Indians from oppression and even the British themselves from their imperialism. He helped turn anger into constructive action. It is this example from his grandfather that Arun Gandhi urges us to follow in responding to today's terrorism.

National Council of Churches

We Swedenborgians, of course, are members of the National Council of Churches, and through that body have been a part of speaking out for peace. Right after the attacks, the NCC website stated "We call on people of faith to reach out to one another...We stand united against the temptation to retaliate against innocent persons."

Working in consultation with Jewish, Muslim, and Christian clergy, the NCC developed an interfaith statement on a faith-rooted response to terrorism. They said: "Let us deny them (the terrorists) their victory by refusing to submit to a world created in their image...We must not allow this terror to drive us away from being the people God has called us to be." They asked citizens to rededicate themselves to the idea of community, tolerance, compassion, justice, and the sacredness of human life, which lies at the heart of all our religious traditions.

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Writing the Mind Alive: The Proprioceptive Method for Finding Your Authentic Voice

Linda Trichter Metcalf & Tobin Simon: ©2002 Ballantine Books, \$14.95 paper.

"Thought from the eye
closes the understanding,
but thought from the
understanding opens the eye."

—Emanuel Swedenborg



Tom McEntee

Reviewed by Tom McEntee

Often we are ignorant of what drives us, either by chance or intent. The true causes of our behavior may stay hidden for a long time, and we may prefer it that way—choosing not to turn on the light in the basement. (Little wonder, then, that we often perpetuate a cycle of mistakes, only to berate ourselves when things go wrong.)

So how can we know what drives us? How can we learn why we behave the way we do, and why would we want to discover this about ourselves? Wouldn't it be better if we could face our thoughts, emotions, and reactions with compassion and understanding instead of condemnation and fear?

Regeneration is a central concept in Swedenborgianism; it is a lifelong process of spiritual growth. From repentance, or recognition of our own faults, blockages, "dark corners," to reformation, or choosing the right path because we know we should, and finally to regeneration, or doing it right without thinking about it; this process of personal evolution is essential to our spiritual life.

We have so many avenues that can carry us into that first stage of recognition. Prayer, meditation, journaling, spiritual growth groups, Sunday worship—these and other approaches can point us in useful directions, can help us shine a light in the basement, though it can be challenging to sustain the courage to examine ourselves. When we do, we are able to move toward reforming ourselves, our thoughts, behaviors, and emotions.

Different things work for different people: I suggest that creating a proprioceptive writing practice is one approach that can help many of us on our regenerative journeys. Linda Metcalf and Toby Simon have been developing and teaching their proprioceptive writing (PW) method for 25 years. (In the September *Messenger*, Carla Friedrich gave a terrific description of the method and her experience of it in a workshop setting.) PW is not a 'writing practice, but rather a self discovery practice that uses writing, another means by which we can come to know ourselves better. Unlike forms of process writing, such as morning pages, automatic

(Continued on page 9)

Writing the Mind Alive. (Continued from page 8)

writing, and stream of consciousness, which urge us to keep writing—don't stop, don't think, just write—Metcalf and Simon say that PW "is specifically designed to slow thought down and allow us time to explore it—and not to judge it. [It] improves our ability...to suspend judgment and maintain openness" so that we can reflect on our thoughts and not judge or criticize them. "Hold your thought in your imagination and scrutinize it...hang out with your feeling and search for its source in situation and emotion."

Compare this with a few lines from *True Christian Religion*:

"A person who has never repented, or looked into himself and examined himself, ends up not knowing what is the evil that damns him and what is the good that saves him."

"The evil which a person does not see, recognize and acknowledge, lasts; and that which lasts grows deeper and deeper roots until it blocks the interiors of our minds."

"Regeneration is impossible without truths through which faith may be formed, and [with] which compassion may link itself."

"When we are regenerated, we acquire a new will and a new understanding."

And this line from the *Arcana*: "Before a person can know what truth is, or be moved by good, the things that hinder and offer resistance must be removed. Thus the old person dies before the new one can be conceived."

"PW is both a therapy and a meditation," the authors write. "It is part of the humanistic tradition that values the examined life, and it offers a ritualized form for going within." The authors do not offer PW as a substitute for religion, but suggest that one would take up the practice for reasons similar to a spiritual or meditative practice: "...out of a wish to establish a new relation to your own thinking so that you do not feel imprisoned or weighed down by it; to lessen your psychological suffering; to find greater clarity of mind; and to develop compassion."

A writing session, or "write," lasts for 25 minutes. It begins with the lighting of a candle and centering oneself

with slow, deep breaths, closed eyes, and quiet calmness. Then peaceful Baroque music starts as a means of making you calmer and more accessible to your inner self. (Studies have shown Baroque music to have "a calming effect on the body, including lowering blood pressure; its slower tempos, which have roughly the same number of beats per minute as the human heart, shifts the brain off its everyday beta rhythms to alpha rhythms, which are more conducive to creativity and learning.") Personal taste can sometimes override this effect. Other instrumental music, gentle but with rhythmic and structural complexity, can be used, such as classical Indian ragas, or even some types of new age music, like that of Steve Roach or Michael Stearns.

So how well do these ideas come through in the book? I read *Writing the Mind Alive* about a month before attending the authors' PW workshop. On my own, it was easy to understand the method and the reasoning behind it. Trying it alone at home, though, I didn't think much of the results—but had done only one "write," and it felt very mechanical and forced. The authors suggest giving the method three months, once a day at least five days a week. In the workshop I became comfortable with the process fairly quickly, when I could settle down and not worry about "Where did put the matches?" "Which Baroque pieces will add up to 25 minutes?" or "Will I get interrupted?" It's almost like that "conscious competence" stage of regeneration, where you do something the right way because you should, even though you may not want to because it feels awkward or artificial.

During a write, you ask yourself the proprioceptive question (PQ)—"What do I mean by...?"—as a way to more deeply explore what you are thinking or feeling. In a fictitious example, I may write: "I don't know why I fly off the handle when someone doesn't take me seriously." As I pause a moment and reflect, I may think and then write:

"What do I mean by 'not being taken seriously?' When my experience is discounted, when what I have to say is undervalued or not even considered? Like the way my older sister used to do all the time. That time, when I was 8, when she stood in the swing in the backyard to see how high she could go. Something didn't seem right, the branch holding the swing seemed funny. I told her I thought she better get down, but she just laughed at me, called me scaredy cat. When the branch broke she fell and landed on her arm, breaking it in two places.



Workshop leaders Linda Metcalf and Toby Simon with Messenger editor Patte LeVan.



Proprioceptive Writing Workshop Group at Esalen.

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Chances Are . . . Providence? Serendipity? Or Fate?

Edited by
Carol S. Lawson and Robert F. Lawson
A Chrysalis Reader, Chrysalis Books,
Swedenborg Foundation Publishers
West Chester, Pennsylvania, 2002.

Reviewed by Bette McDonnell

Does God rule? This is, in essence, the conundrum that *Chances Are . . . Providence? Serendipity? Or Fate?* seeks to explore. The shift, in recent years, in the collective consciousness to one that seeks a greater meaning will make *Chances Are . . .* now, more than ever, particularly welcome. This richly illustrated anthology gives a glimpse of how the higher order just might be participating in life's design. The collection of poetry, short stories and essays explores the role of unseen causality in our lives. Might it be providence, serendipity, or fate? Or perhaps synchronicity? Chances are that after reading this anthology you will find yourself wondering (anew) about the mysterious 'coincidences' occurring in your own life.

Arranged in five sections subtitled Life or Death?, Self-Discovery, Shadow Side, Fate or Chance?, and Being Open and Alert, this ninth volume of the Chrysalis Reader is made up of creative writing from a diverse group. Contributions come from renowned authors such as Wilson Van Dusen to first-time published writers such as the gifted Bay Area poet, Gregory Kimura. There are many pieces in this collection that encapsulate authentic feeling, subtle language, and poetic expression while provoking the big questions. I was moved by several of these (more than I can write about here) and that reading pleasure was enhanced by the wonderful illustrations carefully chosen by art editor Alice Skinner.

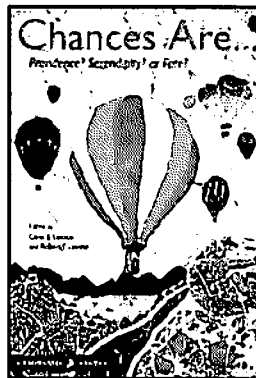
Before delving into the individual pieces, read first the preface, *Plugging into the Worldfield* by John L. Hitchcock and Stuart Shotwell. You'll be glad you did. This exploration of

synchronicity is an exciting and rich read. The authors uncover its meaning and origin and how serendipity—although similar—is

distinguished. Synchronicity comes from the Greek roots that mean "together-time." Carl Jung first used the term to mean that connection between our *outer world* and our *inner life* in which causality can be ruled out. The authors suggest that, "Another aspect of synchronicity is that it makes us feel that something larger than we are is trying to get our attention." Serendipity, on the other hand, is finding something desirable without looking for it. Unlike synchronicity, there is no connection between the outer and inner.

Hitchcock and Shotwell's discussion of this connection between inner and outer life is stimulating and provides a framework for exploration of the central question: If we do indeed reside in both the earthly and spiritual realms, what is the medium for connecting our two worlds together? There is background on phenomena that cannot be explained by science (formation of a snowflake, for example) and fascinating talk of the Worldfield. The authors propose that synchronicity occurs, "because the Worldfield wants the psyche to grasp the notion of a greater unity" and it does so "by making an inner and outer event occur at the same time, and letting the psyche perceive the meaning of the connection." Correspondential or coincidental?!

The authors use the term "the Worldfield" over seven pages of discussion until finally we read, "... the Worldfield, or if you prefer, God, (italics mine) is bringing forth the ultimate unity of all things through the experience of meaning." I wondered about



this 'delay' in coming to God. A device used to keep the reader guessing? No matter. After digesting this masterful and thrilling prelude, I eagerly began to read the individual contributions that followed.

The one hundred and fifty-plus pages offer a wide range of writing styles and subject matter. Nearly all, to varying degrees, prompt such questions as: Do we direct our own lives or is it Something Else? Do we *create* meaning in our lives because the world so often seems devoid of it? Does God rule or is it all coincidence? In M. Garrett Bauman's thoughtful and beautifully written essay, *The Poem of Creation*, we journey with him on a day that he must take the family's dying pet rabbit to the vet for humane release. His affection for the afflicted animal sets in motion an eloquent discourse in which he says, "Chance and uncertainty principles rule; order is often only a temporary illusion we chase around our cage" and "eerie chance may measure out our fates." This poetical essay ends with, "For now we both strain to see the vague design ahead, one eye to earth and one to sky."

Wonder with David L. Bergmann, the author of *The Beekeeper*, as he recounts the story of the gifted inventor who might never have invented had he been able to read as well as his schoolmates. Because of his dyslexia, he was not constrained by conventional thinking. Was this a blessing in disguise, a gift from God? In *Encountering Sainte Suzanne* we hear of Suzanne Gold's personal encounter with her namesake while on holiday in France. A series of serendipitous events occurs beginning with the writer's escape from a horrific accident, which she believes came about as a result of her desire to forge a connection with the saint by visiting the town of Sainte Suzanne. *Tunnels of Light* portrays the contrasting reactions of its two main characters to a 'miracle.' An atheist man and his Christian girlfriend debate whether to continue their car journey through a treacherous snowstorm. He votes to carry on because he has a "feeling" he

(Continued on page 11)

Chances Are . . . Providence? Serendipity? Or Fate?

(Continued from page 10)

should. When they end up rescuing a woman from her snow-buried car, he cannot agree with his girlfriend on the reason he had felt compelled to continue driving. He asks, "Why does it always have to follow a plan or some form of divine providence? Why can't things just happen?"

The Gift of Tears did not at first seem so to Wilson Van Dusen. The writer and mystic shares his story of how God responded to a request. He asked the Lord for a sign so that he might tell the difference between what was his and what came from the Lord as he rekindled his direct experience of God. Soon after, he began to weep uncontrollably as he gave a lecture on spirituality to a group of students. Tears then were the sign he had been given. It was not until years later that the mystic learned that the condition behind the tears was *felt understanding*. This history of the gift of tears will, I think, resonate with many who cry. It may also be a relief to those who have been puzzled by sudden and "unexplainable" flows. As the writer says, "One suddenly runs into what is engraved on the heart, and the feeling around it is released. It is felt meaning, full of life."

In each of Ann Jauregui's *Three Tales*, tears are the portal to the Divine. In one vignette she recounts an experience with one of her psychotherapy clients. The woman tells her about being ostracized from her family "in a tight voice too hardened around the pain to cry." After gentle exploration, the psychotherapist learns that the woman had stopped praying years before and suggests now trying a non-directed prayer. As she does, her tears begin to flow. The relief of connecting with the Divine breaks down the wall around her heart and she says, "Something wonderful has come into the room."

In the fable about the three princes of Serendip (the land now known as Sri Lanka), the princes set out on a journey "in search of character, compas-

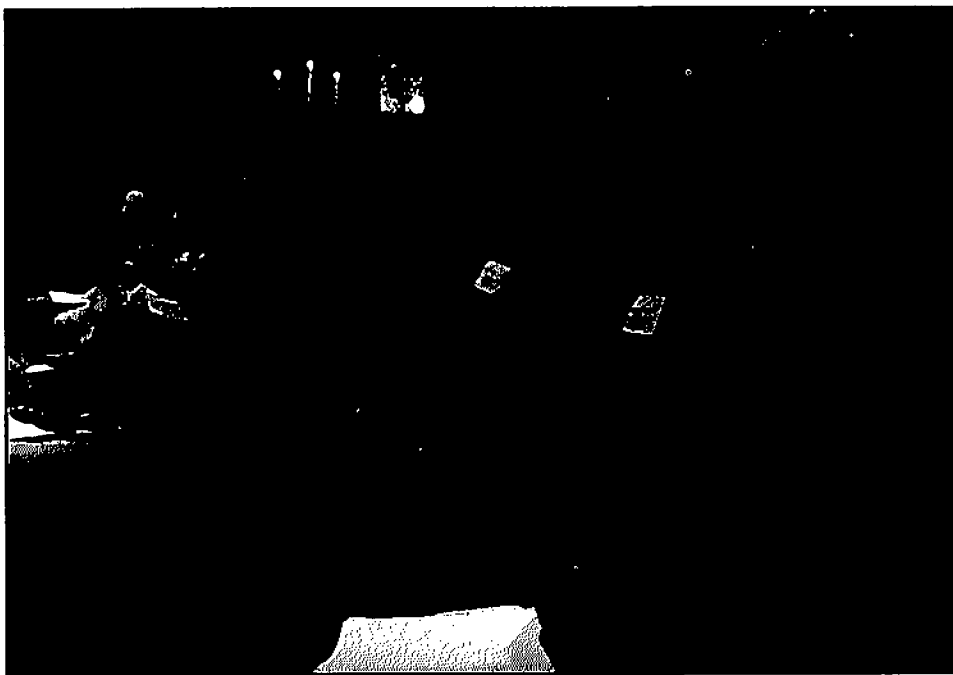
sion, and wisdom. And something else too." They discover that it is their tears of compassion that end up being the magic fluid that will mean Death to Dragons. With a light touch, Jauregui shows us that serendipity is that wonderful faculty for making desirable discoveries as if by accident. As the writer says, "The surprising and marvelous is ever-present, and the three princes are endowed with the natural capacity to apprehend it." Ah, yes, the surprising and marvelous is ever-present. *Chances Are . . .* offers a rich array of perspectives into the mysteries of unseen causality. Both believers and non-believers alike, I think, will find the common thread of Something Else and the Surprising and Marvelous ever-present in this collection.

The anthology ends with *Unpacking the Latin* in which we learn of the new translation of Swedenborg's *Divine Providence* by Dr. George Dole. In the summary, we are reminded that Swedenborg teaches that "... divine providence extends into the least details of our world." As Hitchcock and

Shotwell say, "Thus the realm of meaning is painted with the colors of the psyche, making it tantalizingly elusive and endlessly circular; but from that circularity arises the tremendous power of synchronicity to teach us about ourselves." In teaching us about ourselves, we learn about one another. Thus, we see how inescapable—like the circle—it is: we are bound to one another, and nothing we think, say or do occurs in isolation. So, every time we perceive meaning through synchronicity or serendipity, we may know that it is God showing us the truth: all things are ultimately one, and we are as united to one another as the stars are united to the sky.

Bette McDonnell is a member of the San Francisco Swedenborgian Church and was a 2001 winner of the writers scholarship sponsored by the Communications Support Unit. This is her second appearance in *The Messenger*.

To order *Chances Are...*, call the Swedenborg Foundation, (800) 355-3222



Chrysalis Reader reading event, evening of November 7, at the San Francisco Swedenborgian Church. Chances Are...authors and authors of past Reader selections read their works by candlelight to a rapt audience. A raging thunderstorm outside added to the drama. A sumptuous dinner was provided by J. Appleseed editor Ross Fish, with a reception following the reading. (From right) Alice Skinner, Chrysalis Reader art editor; poet Gregory Kimura, and Wilson Van Dusen.

Ken Turley

I've done hundreds of funerals for all kinds of people. I've held hands with people while they breathed their last. I've comforted friends and families who sought to make sense out of something that always challenges us to examine our basic assumptions about life. I've been there for people whose deep faith provided a touchstone and to some degree eased the sense of pain and loss; I've also been with families who, in dealing with the passing of an aging parent, in spite of everything that was said, reacted as if somehow God had singled them out for some kind of unjust punishment. I've been there for deaths that were tragic, and I've been there for deaths that were blessings. I've been there for the passing of people I didn't even know, and I have been there for the passing of my father.

Mostly it has been alright. I understand death to be the natural conclusion of every life, and I truly believe in a just and loving and compassionate God. Most of the time there has been a sense of completion, at times even relief, for I've seen their lives stretching out behind them and know, given what they left behind and what they were most likely going to, that there was a sense of rightness about it. While it would be stretching the truth if I said I remembered them all—there are just too many years gone by—I remember far more than I have forgotten. For, next to birth, there are few experiences in a person's life as powerful as the passing of a loved one.

But I will remember the passing of Bretton Frost, like I remember few others. And this is why: from this moment on, whenever I feel overwhelmed by life's little problems; whenever I am feeling sad or depressed because things aren't going the way I want; whenever I am frustrated because I can't do things I used to, or never could for that matter; whenever I am feeling any of those things that make life a burden for myself and as a result for the people around me, I am going to remember sitting right here in

Bretton Frost

The Most Painful Happy Memory I Will Ever Have

this church on these steps, giving a children's talk about the importance of having good hearts and having Bretton look up at me with those bright eyes, pat his chest with the pacemaker inside, and say with genuine excitement, "I have two hearts!"

Whenever I am feeling bored or unmotivated, I am going to remember his little camo outfit and how much he loved going fishing with his uncle, how much he loved playing with his toys and with other kids, how unashamedly he simply loved everything and everyone. Most of all, whenever I am feeling frustrated by my life, feeling useless and hopeless, thinking that what I do doesn't really matter, I am going to remember standing at the back of this church on Sundays and seeing Bretton coming, sometimes running, sometimes walking slowly holding his father's hand, sometimes resting not so comfortably in his mother's arms, but always looking up to me, his face lit up with anticipation as he gently, almost hesitantly, reached out his hand to shake my hand.

That moment never failed to give me a thrill of joy and wonder, a person to person connection that needed no words, an affirmation of the preciousness, the blessedness, and the rightness of life. It was a moment that, in feeling the gentle frailty of his hand and at the same time the piercing power of his eyes, reminded me that joy and fulfillment in life come not from having everything you want, but in savoring to the fullest what you have; not from doing everything you can that there is to do, but in putting your heart into what it is you find yourself doing; not from trying to deny or escape what you do not like about your life or yourself, but by being, to the best of your ability, the best part of who you are.

In that brief moment of touching

souls, which came all too few times, I was reminded that however big my problems may seem in any given moment, they are nothing compared to my blessings. I was reminded that what I find myself overwhelmed with is simply a matter of what I choose to focus on. Even if Bretton had never met anyone but me, his life will have had meaning, for what I remember when I think of Bretton has taught me something I needed to learn, and his death has only served to hammer the message home. And yet Bretton met *way* more people than just me. And I expect that Bretton has touched each and everyone of your lives in some similar way. And in that I know that the meaning of his life has been multiplied countless times over.

Yes, we mourn his passing and we will miss beyond words his presence among us. But that little tyke has given each one of us a gift by putting before us the greatest challenge any of us could imagine. By being blessed to have had him as a part of our lives, he challenges us to meet life with the joy and enthusiasm that he did. He challenges us to face adversity with the strength and courage and the irrepressible optimism that he did. He challenges us, in whatever situation we may find ourselves, to reject feeling sorry for ourselves and instead find the joy and the goodness that is there to be had, just as he did. Whatever we are, or are not, he challenges us to wring the very essence out of every moment of our lives, just as he did.

I remember his smile, his face, his touch, and I cannot help but feel my heart lift. I remember him running down the aisle to play with the other kids, and I cannot help but feel my own step lighten. I remember the impish grin and his flashing eyes, and I cannot help but feel a wave of happiness pass over me. It is the most painful happy memory I will ever have. And yet I thank Bretton, and I thank God, that I will carry this memory, with both its sprightly joy and its stabbing pain, as part of who I am for the rest of eternity. For without even knowing it, Bretton prepared himself for heaven in how he lived his life, and

(Continued on page 15)

Congratulations, Sue!

Editor's Note: *The following letter was received from the Rev. Susan Turley on November 19, 2002:*

Dear Friends:

After seven years of blood, sweat, and tears I am thrilled to share with you that on Sunday morning, November 17, in Atlanta, Georgia I met with the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education Certification Committee and was granted full ACPE Supervisor status. This, my friends, is the last of four levels of certification one must achieve before the process is complete. Not only am I qualified to independently run a CPE program but I am also certified to supervise CPE supervisors in training.

I want to thank each and every one of you for your support and prayers, which made it possible for me to achieve this professional goal. When times got rough and I wanted to throw in the towel, I thought of you. This gave me the extra boost of energy that I needed to push on through. I am now able to return to Convention as the first Swedenborgian ACPE Supervisor and celebrate with you this wonderful moment in our church's history. I want to brag a little here just so you can feel even more proud of one of your own. At each level of certification, I passed the first time, and my theory papers were rated "Superior." I hope that brings a sense of joy in your heart.

I want to thank our Convention presidents, past and present, the Revs. Edwin Capon and Ron Brugler, for endorsing me on behalf of Convention to become a CPE Supervisor. Without endorsement from one's faith community, one cannot even sit for the initial interview to determine readiness to begin the process. Days before my committee appearance in November I received a call from the committee chair. He informed me that I needed an endorsement letter and without it they could cancel the committee and I would have to wait a year to go up! I

tracked Ron down (and you all know how hard that can be—half the time I think he's on a plane)! He was at a meeting at Temenos. Ron took the time to talk to me personally, gave me words of support and faxed the letter from Temenos! I felt it was sent with fresh blessings from General Council.

When I was sweating bullets trying to write my theological position paper and got terribly stuck, Alan Thomsen came to the rescue and spent hours helping me find the right words. He kept me laughing when I wanted to throw the computer out the window! Thanks, Alan, for your never-ending support throughout all these years.

In addition to Convention endorsement, the board members and volunteers of Living Waters HIV Ministry made it possible for me to continue my AIDS ministry while pursuing this certification. They embraced my becoming a CPE Supervisor as a natural offspring and extension of the ministry. I know {the late} Jerry Peterson and Howard Torpey were with me all the way. The day before I flew to Atlanta while walking the beach and saying goodbye to Howard, I hear his voice say, "You're going to make it Sue—you're going to make it." My panic was removed that very moment. Thank you Howard. Thank you Jerry. We miss you and we love you.

So many of you were there each step of the way talking me through times when I felt so weary, discouraged, and without hope. Carl Yenetchi consistently reached out and somehow knew when I needed a call from him—just in the nick of time he lifted my spirits. Robert McCluskey gave me pep talks when I was down, and Wilma Wake sent me encouraging emails.

Thank you to all my fellow Swedenborgians, so very much for being there, for ministering to me, for making it all possible.

I especially want to acknowledge my deepest, heartfelt gratitude and appreciation for the constant love, encouragement, strength, and fortitude my family gave me. Ken listened to me complain, throw temper tantrums (imagine me doing that) and just stood by me in that calm and reassuring way until it passed and I rediscovered that I

can do this! Cyndy never wavered in her conviction that I will succeed and celebrated every accomplishment with me as only a sister can do. Matt just looked at me with those sweet eyes, gave me big hugs, and I felt total confidence again. My son, Keith, put up with my anxiety attacks, made me laugh, told me I could do it and celebrated every step of the way with me. It's true you can be friends with your Ex. Cliff continued to stay by my side through every inch of the journey with a steadfast reassurance that helped me stay calm and persevere. But most of all I want to thank my mom. Marilyn gave me hope when I felt despair. She took me on trips when I was exasperated, which gave me a new perspective. She loved me when I was optimistic and when I was scared and ready to quit. She was my rock, my role model, my teacher, my friend and through her I knew Dad was with me, too. FYI: As one of my faculty advisors, Cal encouraged me to become a CPE supervisor during my seminary years. I was too rebellious to heed his good advice back then. Well, Dad, this one's for you! Thanks Mom, I couldn't have done it without you. The fact is, I could not have done it without any of you, and from the bottom of my heart I thank you. And last but not least I want to thank God who made all of this possible. Thank you God for our walks on the beach—for my friends and family, for giving me such a beautiful life and letting my dreams come true!

Sue

Rev. Susan Turley, ACPE Supervisor
reverendsusan3@aol.com



Correction

In the December 2002 issue (p. 161) the article on Corina Fain receiving the Outstanding District Educator Award in Columbus, Ohio, neglected to attribute the piece to her mom, Betsy Coffman. Betsy's byline disappeared during the proofing, and printing process. We apologize.

Writing the Mind Alive. (Continued from page 9)

She didn't believe me, but she blamed me for her getting so badly hurt. Is this a part of why I must have people believe in me, why I place such an emphasis on establishing my credentials? What do I mean by 'establishing my credentials'? Proving that I know something, that I can make a difference, a contribution. But why do I need to prove that? What do I mean by 'prove' anyway?" Etcetera.

This asking the PQ makes me think of looking at a fractal, that beautiful mathematical construct, each section of which contains the pattern of the whole. And in particular one known as the Mandelbrot Set; it has a definite shape, and yet is infinite. No matter how deeply you look, further into layers and layers of detail, you see details you never imagined, which repeatedly reveal the pattern of the whole. This also reminds me of Swedenborg's account of the language of angels, how their language corresponds to inner events. In *Heaven and Hell* 240, he says, "Angels can express in a minute more than we can say in half an hour, and can present in a few words things that would take many pages of writing." A word Metcalf and Simon used in the workshop was "unpack," using the PQ to unpack the meaning from the words we use. (Akin to unpacking Swedenborg's Latin?) After experiencing a week of "writes" I can relate to the notion that many pages of writing can be packed into a few words.

Proprioceptive Writing is a terrific way to ompassionately, non-judgmentally examine the sources of our thoughts and emotions, to observe, listen, reflect upon, and understand ourselves. PW can bring us into an altered state where "we are removed from our familiar, conditioned ways of thinking and feeling and begin experiencing the joy that comes from being in harmony with ourselves. How liberating it is to say goodbye to guilt and blame." It is a tool that can help us nurture self trust. Having seen PW "in action" in the workshop setting, I can say the book does a good job of bringing the method alive. (If you are the type who prefers not to do this kind of work in a "vacuum," you can always take a look at the authors' website, www.proprioceptivewriting.com. for information about online PW groups.) If you choose to try PW, give it the time any new practice deserves before deciding if it's for you.

One more from *True Christian Religion*: "Our regeneration does not occur in an instant, but successively from the beginning to the end of our life in the world, and after this it continues and reaches higher perfection."

Tom McEntee is a member of the San Francisco Swedenborgian Church, and the fall 2002 winner of the writing workshop scholarship sponsored by the Communications Support Unit. The Proprioceptive workshop he attended took place at Esalen, in Big Sur, California. Tom has been studying Swedenborg's writings with the Rev. Rachel Rivers, pastor of the San Francisco church, in her weekly doctrinal classes. This is his debut in the pages of *The Messenger*.



THE PEACE MOVEMENT TODAY:

A View From Some Faith Traditions

(Continued from page 8)

The various communions of the NCC have their own thoughts about peace, including our own Swedenborgians. You might wonder just what role we as a church body and as individuals have played in the US and Canada on the subject of war and peace. This is another story, and one that needs to be explored. Pick up next month's issue of *The Messenger* for our own story of our faith journey in relationship to world peace.

Some Helpful Websites on the Peace Movement:

<http://www.afsc.org>

<http://www.nccusa.org/>

<http://www.gandhiinstitute.org>

<http://www.nonviolence.org/>

The Rev. Dr. Wilma Wake is the Spiritual Ministries Consultant, working under the Ministries Support Unit (MINSU), and will also begin this month as part-time minister to the Portland, Maine, Swedenborgian Church. She is author of Wings and Roots, published by J. Appleseed & Co., and Crystals, Crosses, and Chakras, published by the Swedenborg Foundation.

**Guest Editorials** (Continued from page 2)

And that is why I am standing before you now as Development Chair. I want you to join me in spreading the good news that theological education and church ministry in the Swedenborgian tradition are worthwhile, valuable and deserving of our wholehearted support. I am totally convinced that the seminary training offered by the Swedenborgian House of Studies in partnership with the Pacific School of Religion is one way to make a difference today and tomorrow.

I firmly believe that our world's issues—war, peace, terrorism, mass starvation, infant mortality, the AIDS epidemic, global ecology and global economy—are all based on ultimate concerns which cannot be resolved without the active input and participation of theologians and ministers.

I am here today to ask you, yes, even to beg you, to become *partners in development* with the Swedenborgian House of Studies. I want you to seek out and nurture those you know who are burning with desire to learn more about their faith and to share that knowledge with others.

I want you to take up Bill McKinney's challenge of continuing and nurturing our intellectual capital in Swedenborgian theology, in Swedenborgian biblical studies and in Swedenborgian Spirituality. I want you to share with those back home and at church what you saw, heard and felt today, what especially intrigues you about life and studies and ministry here at SHS. I want you to become partners with me in feeling personally responsible for the present and future success of our seminary.

I pray that we continue in this partnership of supporting, tending, and developing our Swedenborgian House of Studies.



BIRTH

Hoffman—Eiryn Mariah Hoffman, daughter of the Rev. Eric and Norma Hoffman, was born November 14, 2002 at LaPorte Hospital in LaPorte, Indiana.

MARRIAGE

Buchanan and Tripp—Beth Buchanan and Glenn Tyler Tripp, both members of the Boston Swedenborgian Church, were united in marriage October 5, 2002, in Bourne, Mass., the Rev. G. Steven Ellis officiating.

DEATHS

Liebert—Ted Liebert, age 70, member of the Swedenborgian Church at Temenos, entered the spiritual world on November 18, 2002. Ted was the son of Ad and Anne Liebert. A memorial service was held November 26, 2002, at the Swedenborgian Church at Temenos Conference and Retreat Center, West Chester, Pennsylvania, the Rev. Susannah Currie officiating.

Dick—Carl Clifford Dick, a lifelong member of the New Church in Calgary, Alberta, born in Sunnyslope June 29th, 1929, entered the spiritual world in Canmore October 23rd, 2002. A memorial service was conducted in Canmore October 26th, the Rev.

Michael Gladish officiating. Carl leaves his wife, Doreen, daughter Diana and son Cary. He was predeceased by his other son, Gregory, who died in 1984. There were over 250 people at his service. Carl was best known for his music, with versatility on many instruments—and for his service in many varied capacities on church boards and committees. He was president of Western Canada Conference for many years, and president and secretary of the Calgary Society. He was a career teacher, well respected by his colleagues and students alike.



Saul—Mareta Poole Saul, age 92, entered the spiritual world November 25, 2002. A lifelong member of the Los Angeles Swedenborgian Society, she had been the heart of Stitch & Study for many years. She was Stewart Poole's sister. She is survived by three sons and a daughter—Stewart, Don and Mareta (Tafel), who are twins, and Ken.

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

Polly Baxter underwent a quintuple by-pass operation November 13, 2002, at the Washington Hospital Center. At this writing she is recovering at home.



We hope you can join us as we commit ourselves with abandon and courage to the heart of this agenda, as we greet, encourage, challenge, and sustain one another for the living of these days.

Edwin T. Earl founded Pacific School of Religion's Earl Lectures in 1901 to bring prominent religious leaders to Berkeley's university community. In 1921, the lectures expanded to include a pastoral conference for clergy and lay people. Each year this event provides hundreds with the opportunity to learn, teach and worship in a convivial setting. For more information, see <http://www.psr.edu> or call SHS at 1-800-999-0528 ext. 1228.



Bretton Frost

(Continued from page 12)

in doing so he showed the way for the rest of us. He met life with joy and enthusiasm, he met adversity with courage and strength of spirit. It's not that he was always happy and carefree, just ask Stew and Dede, he wasn't. But as angry and as frustrated as he got about the limitations placed upon him, he did not spend much time feeling sorry for himself. Yes, he felt his feelings to the core and yet somehow his love of life and his love of other people never failed to lift him up out of his own problems.

He lived a short life compared to the rest of us, a life filled with pain and discomfort and constrained by limitations and constantly teetering on the edge of tragedy, and yet he lived that life to the fullest, and in so doing he brought something of immeasurable value to everyone who met him. And now the memory of who he was and how he lived will sustain me and challenge me for the rest of my long and comparably easy life. For if that little guy with two hearts can do it, well then maybe, just maybe, so can I.

A Memorial Service for Bretton Maxwell Frost (December 2, 1997 - November 21, 2002) was held November 27, 2002 at the Fryeburg New Church, the Rev. Ken Turley officiating. Bretton, the son of Stewart and Dede, brother to Bailey and Makayla Frost, had undergone countless open heart surgeries and medical procedures in his almost five years on this earth. He had a pacemaker for most of his life. He was an inspiration to everyone who met him. Our very own 'Tiny Tim' brought joy and love to all. He did not recover from his last operation.

The Rev. Kenneth Turley is the pastor of the Fryeburg New Church in Fryeburg, Maine.



SHS CURRENT EVENTS

(Continued from page 16)

It was at PSR's Earl Lectures in 1971—while many communities of faith were still largely silent about the Vietnam War—that Bob Brown stood up from the audience and announced that “anyone who wants to come with me to the Oakland Induction Center to protest the war meet at the piano down here in front.” With that jubilant, characteristic gesture he helped generate and focus the Bay Area inter-faith witness against the war. It is this faithful and insistent spirit—this belief that theology must add value to the public square—that we examine and honor at Earl Lectures 2003.

The editor and the Communications Support Unit wish you peace in a New Year filled with love, wisdom, and inspiration.

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.

SHS CURRENT EVENTS

"Contemporary Principles of Church Transformation"

Rev. Eric Allison, Adjunct Professor of Leadership Training and Church Growth, is teaching this course January 13-17, 2003. Monday-Friday, 9:00am-1:00pm at the Swedenborgian House of Studies at Pacific School of Religion Berkeley, California.

Designed especially for people in the practice of congregational ministry and for students with an interest in congregational leadership skills, the course will focus on three aspects of church renewal or transformation: developing the spirituality of the ministry; developing leadership skills in working with groups of people; and developing effective methods of outreach to the surrounding community. Practical areas of emphasis include the role of worship, discovering the needs of your neighborhood, creating dynamic worship responsive to the changing needs (and tastes) of today's "church shopper," cultivating leaders and volunteers, and creating spiritual community together.

Tuition cost to audit this course is \$200. On-campus housing is available. For more information, please contact Kim Hinrichs at 510-849-8228 or khinrichs@shs.psr.edu.

Thinking about seminary?

The Swedenborgian House of Studies at Pacific School of Religion offers an inspiring environment to explore the theology of Emanuel Swedenborg and the spirituality of the Swedenborgian tradition today. The deadline for admission to the Master of Divinity program is February 1,

2003. For more information, please see <http://www.shs.psr.edu> or call 1-800-999-0528, ext. 1228.

2003 Earl Lectures and Pastoral Conference

Sponsored by Pacific School of Religion "For the Living of These Days: Reclaiming Theology as a Public Resource," the conference will take place January 28-30, 2003 Berkeley, California. The lectures feature Nancy Ammerman, Sydney Brown, Gary Dorrien, Daniel Ellsberg, John Fife, C. Welton Gaddy, Gustavo Gutierrez, Thomas Hoyt, Jr., Kah-Jin Jeffrey Kuan, Leontine Kelly, Richard Land and Hubert Locke. Jim Lawrence, Dean of the Swedenborgian House of Studies, will offer a workshop entitled, "Spirituality as Resource for Civic Engagement: The Historic Examples of Swedenborg, Dorothy Day, and Thomas Merton."

This year's Earl Lectures are inspired by the ministry and life of Robert McAfee Brown. Taking his example, we ask ourselves:

- How can we reclaim theology as a vital voice in the shaping of public policy?
- How do we form and sustain conscience in ourselves and in our children?
- How do we live out the gospel imperative in our international human family?
- How do we turn the tide of our participation in injustice and actively create the arrangements that enhance *shalom*?

Today, the religious community in America is greatly challenged to add our voices and our values to the public debate. If we fail to ask these questions, if we fail to answer them, we risk allowing the public square to become what Gustavo Gutiérrez has warned, "...one gigantic cemetery or one vast prison."

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