

THE MESSENGER

Published by the Swedenborgian Church of North America

March 2004

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING AT URBANA UNIVERSITY?

Betsy Coffman

In the September 2003 *Messenger*, the message delivered by Urbana University president, Dr. Robert Head, at the June, 2003 Convention in Geneva, New York, outlined the accomplishments of the previous year and plans for the academic year of 2003-2004. Progress so far in meeting these goals has been excellent, and along with the many positive activities and accomplishments specific to the University, there has been increased interaction with the Swedenborgian Church, both on a local and denominational basis. Here are some of the highlights that have occurred during that time:

Barclay-Bailey Halls Renovation Completed: One of the most exciting events this year was the opening and dedication of the newly renovated Barclay-Bailey Halls in September 2003. Many alumni remember with great nostalgia their graduation ceremonies, traditionally held on the lawn in front of these historic buildings connected by the three arches, which have become a symbol of Urbana University. Bailey Hall was the first building on campus, completed in 1853, while Barclay was the third, constructed in 1883. As Dr. Head commented in his dedication address, "*the work [of restoration] exceeded my very high expectations.*" These buildings are now state-of-the-art spaces for student classrooms and faculty offices, yet they preserve the beautiful, historically significant architecture and form of the original buildings designed by Ohio architect W. Russell West, who was also the architect of the Ohio Statehouse. They are connected by a glass atrium which serves as an open lobby area on the ground floor and provides protection for the restored second-floor walkway. Bailey Hall was named after Swedenborgian convert, Francis Bailey, a native of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, who was the first official printer for the Continental Congress. He moved to Philadelphia in 1778 where he became a neighbor and friend of Benjamin Franklin and was a witness to his will. Barclay Hall was named after Hester Barclay, a ward of the Bailey family and zealous Swedenborgian, who began the first Swedenborg reading and discussion society in western Pennsylvania, near Bedford.

The Johnny Appleseed Museum has moved back into its space in Barclay Hall and continues to be open to the public,



Above:
Groundbreaking:
Bill Williams,
Levin & Porter
Architects;
Deborah
Hill-Grimes,
Trustee;

Nat Humble, General Contractor; Kyle Wunderlich, Student; Jennifer May, Student; Tara Zimmerman, Student; Dr. Robert Head, UU President; Bill Edwards, UU Board of Trustees Chairman.

Below: Barclay-Bailey Halls, completed.

providing educational tours and workshops for schools and other interested groups. Plans for a display outlining "Johnny's Religion" are underway, with funds donated for that purpose from the Ohio Association and General Convention. During his dedication speech, Dr. Head stated, "*I, along with our board of trustees and generations of students to come are grateful to each and every donor, volunteer, and planner through whose generosity of time and treasure has made today possible.*"

New Student Dorm Groundbreaking: The fall enrollment yielded a significant increase, with almost 100 more students living on campus than during the previous fall semester, creating a need for new dormitory space. The U.U. board developed plans and financing for new housing and broke ground in mid-November 2003. The building will add another wing to the three existing dormitories that connect to the Student Commons. The second new dormitory to be built in the last five years, it is expected to be ready for student occupancy by fall semester of 2004, providing living and learning space for 116 students.

(Continued on page 31)

IN THIS ISSUE:

NCC Report • Spiritual Renewal In Parish Life • Letters to the Editor
Gathering Leaves • SMC: Unfunded But Not Defunct • 2004 SCYL Officers

March 2004

Coming Clean

I have two antique brass table lamps, with hand-painted ceramic shades. They needed switches replaced, rewiring, and general refurbishing, so I decided to take them to a lamp specialist I'd discovered in town. He was good, but expensive, so I took them in one at a time. Within a few weeks, he called to tell me the first one was ready. It was more beautiful than when I'd bought it in the mid-fifties, and he gave me an itemized account of everything he had done. The cost was \$75, but it was worth it. In November I brought the other one in. He kept that one for nearly two months, because he had gotten a very bad case of flu and had been out for over three weeks.

When I went in to pick up the other lamp in mid-January, he was quite apologetic about the delay. I said it was no problem, I was just glad he was feeling better, and the lamp looked perfect. I had just come from two hours in the dentist's chair, and was still feeling numb, a bit woozy and headachy, and in need of lunch. He was inclined to be chatty, and I just wanted to pay him and leave. Then he apologized again and added that, unfortunately, somehow, when the lamp was sitting on the table in the back room while he was out sick, apparently another lamp had fallen against it; he found it leaning against my lamp and assumed that must have produced the faint crack in the ceramic shade, which he pointed out to me. He said he had put plenty of bonding material on it, the crack would never spread, and if I turned it to the wall, it would hardly show at all, but it was upsetting to him that it had happened. He said something like that doesn't happen once in three years, and he wanted me to have my lamp back free of charge.

I had barely glanced at it when he showed me, but something was stirring in my memory. I said, "It looks fine, let me pay you for your work." He said no, he couldn't let me do that, he felt responsible. I'd had a number of

extra expenses that month, and it did feel nice not to have to lay out another \$75, so I thanked him and didn't argue further.

When I got home, I put the lamp back on the night table and turned it on. I could see the small, faint, semi-circle crack that didn't show at all until the lamp was turned on. I examined it more closely. It was, as I'd begun to suspect, an old crack. I was sure of it. There weren't any other, fresh cracks. I had a dim memory of the lamp being knocked over on the rug about 25 years and six houses ago. I was relieved at the time that it didn't break, but there was this tiny crack, so unnoticeable it didn't even need repair. I had set the lamp back on the table and forgotten all about it. It became one of those things you don't see anymore, and don't remember until something nudges it back to life.

I knew that I needed to call the lamp repair man and tell him I was sure, when I took a closer look at it, that it was old damage that I had done years ago, that it wasn't something he was responsible for, and insist on paying him the \$75 that he had waived. It was the weekend, so I couldn't get back to him till Monday. Things intervened, chores, errands, and suddenly it was Wednesday, and I hadn't yet called him. I then realized there was a part of me that was procrastinating, that wanted to forget the whole thing and say nothing. It was something that could easily just slide by into the oblivion of Things I Never Bothered to Do. But I knew I couldn't do that, or I would have, far from forgetting it, been brooding about it for years.

"When I took the time to look at it closely, I realized that crack was something that happened years ago, it wasn't fresh, so I wanted you to know you're not responsible, and I want to send you a check for \$75." I'm holding the phone as though it's some kind of life-giving support.

His laugh is hearty. "Oh, no, no. Listen, look at it as a Christmas present. I'm glad you called, I really appreciate your honesty. Tell you

what, next time you bring something in I'll just overcharge you."

"I won't complain," I laugh. I feel weightless. We've made each other's day with this small exchange.

We forge our salvation in daily minutia.

Patte LeVan



A Little Magic

A little magic now and then
Can I find it?

Only when I'm not looking,
and only then will I find it waiting,
like a gentle breeze,
'round another bend.

—Jeff Holt



THE MESSENGER

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WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING AT URBANA UNIVERSITY?

(Continued from cover)

New "Church Class" Board Members Appointed: At the June 2003 board meeting, John Titus and Chuck Winter were confirmed to the "Church Class" of the U.U. board of trustees, filling openings that have existed for several years. John Titus, an alumnus and former U.U. dean of students, is a member of the Royal Oak Swedenborgian Church and presently serves on the board of the Swedenborgian House of Studies. Chuck Winter, whose daughter Deborah graduated from U.U., is a member of the Cleveland church, president of the Ohio Association and presently serves on General Council. Both are welcome additions to the university board, with much to contribute.

The Will to Excel Campaign: "Together we have labored to provide young men and women with a quality education and the opportunity to concentrate on developing their minds, their goals, and their full beings." – Dr. Robert Head, U.U. President.

The silent phase of Urbana University's 4.7 million dollar capital campaign began in earnest this past fall, with President, Dr. Robert Head; Vice-President for Institutional Advancement, Robert Keller; and a strong campaign committee leading the way. As Bill Edwards, chair of the Board of Trustees has stated, "The campaign is a step forward by the University toward the next phase of its growth. The facilities, scholarship endowments, infrastructure and operating support that this campaign will provide are absolutely necessary for Urbana University to continue its current pattern of growth. It is an exciting time and I am glad to be a part of a growing and dynamic Urbana University." To date the University has reached \$1,375,000 in pledges or donations for the campaign, which seeks to further strengthen student recruitment and retention. One of the major uses of campaign funds will be to build a much-needed student center which will

house a wellness center, bookstore, snack bar, lounge, multipurpose room and reception area. Other portions of the campaign funds will be used for student scholarships, a basic, much needed on-site football field, improvements to the infrastructure, and annual support. If you are interested in making a donation or pledge, please write or contact **Robert Keller, Campaign Director, Development Office of Urbana University, 579 College Way, Urbana, OH 43078, or call 937-484-1301.**

URBANA UNIVERSITY/CHURCH COLLABORATIONS

U.U. – Swedenborgian Alumni/Associates Group Established: Some of you may have noted the picture in the September 2003 *Messenger* of the Convention attendees who are or have been associated with Urbana University as students, faculty, or staff. We hope to develop an accurate database of these people and find ways to keep in touch, convey information, and otherwise maintain our connections with Urbana University. If you fit one of the categories noted above and did not have the opportunity to be involved at Convention, please contact Betsy Coffman at bbcoff@iapdatacom.net, or write to her at 3156 Adell Drive, Urbana, OH 43078, so your name and updated information can be added to this unique group of "U.U. Swedenborgians."

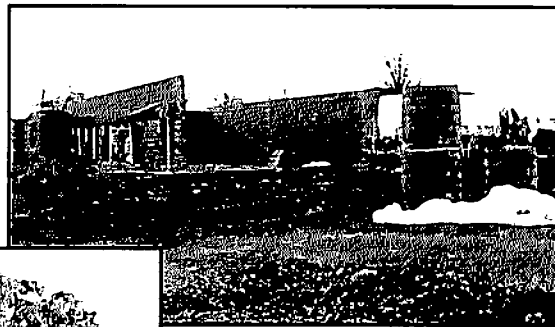
College Fair: Every year early in the fall semester, the University holds a community fair for students, inviting local groups and churches to share

information about their organizations so students can be aware of the community resources available to them. As it has done for several years, the local Urbana Swedenborgian Church participated as well. Many free books and pamphlets with information about the Swedenborgian Church and its beliefs were given away to interested students and faculty, most of which were provided by the Swedenborgian Church's J. Appleseed & Co.

Urbana University Singers Concert: In an effort to collaborate more with U.U. on the use of facilities, the Urbana University Singers held spring and fall concerts, free to the community, in the Urbana Swedenborgian Church. This is a great use of the church, which has wonderful acoustics and lends itself well to such events. It is likely to become a regular tradition.

Swedenborg Lecture Series: With funding aid from the Ohio Association and General Convention, Urbana University was able to invite Dr. Jane Williams Hogan, professor of Sociology at Bryn Athyn College, Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, to spend time researching in the Swedenborg Collection of the U.U. library and provide community lectures for the Swedenborg Scholar Lecture Series in September 2003. The presentation, entitled, "The

(Continued on page 32)



Start of construction of a new residence hall.



Barclay-Bailey Halls completed, another view.

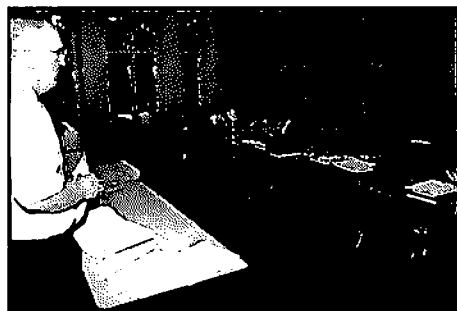
WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING AT URBANA UNIVERSITY?

(Continued from page 31)

Buckeye Swedenborgians: The Impact of a Second Coming Movement In Ohio, 1797-2003, focused on several Ohio Swedenborgians who had considerable impact on Ohio history and culture through arts, crafts and business. They included John Chapman (Johnny Appleseed) and the impact of his orchard business throughout the Midwest; Colonel John James, known locally as "The Buckeye Titan," who was instrumental in the founding of Urbana University; and Ben Pitman, artist and woodworking craftsman from Cincinnati.



Crowd at opening and dedication, Barclay-Bailey Halls.



Dr. Herschel Purdue, Professor of Business, MBA class in progress.



Classroom

New U.U. "Halls of Fame" Held at Urbana Swedenborgian Church: On October 3rd, 2003, Urbana University recognized the accomplishments of past graduates in the areas of business and education. The induction ceremony, open to the public, was held in the beautiful setting of our Swedenborgian church sanctuary with coordination and cooperation of the church and the University. The first inductee in the Educators Hall of Fame was Dr. Emily Taylor, who completed an Associate degree at Urbana College in 1935. She went on to complete a doctorate degree and became a leader in the field of education nationally. In 1988 she was inducted into the Ohio Women's Hall of Fame. Much of Dr. Taylor's work focused on initiatives to prepare and aid women in obtaining high-level administrative positions. She served on the U.U. board for several years beginning in 1976. Some of us might also remember her as the speaker at the Women's Alliance luncheon during a church Convention held in Urbana in 1989.

The Business/Professional Hall of Fame inductees were Clarence (deceased) and Emma Dale, Urbana natives who founded the oldest and most prominent funeral home in the city of Toledo, Ohio. It was also the first "black-owned" facility. Mrs. Dale, who excelled academically, was valedictorian of her Urbana High School class and named to the National Honor Society. Representatives of Urbana Junior College offered her a scholarship at her high school graduation in 1937. She received her associate degree two years later.

Ohio Association Meeting/Homecoming: Probably the most exciting happening that involved the collaboration of U.U. and the local church was the hosting of the Ohio Association's 150th Annual meeting during the first weekend of October 2003. While the previously-mentioned "Hall of Fame" inductions were being held in the church, members of the Ohio Association from Cleveland, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh and Urbana met in the newly renovated Bailey Hall. It was an inspiring and exciting weekend, during which each

church group provided researched history of their local churches. The Rev. Dr. Wilma Wake led us in a group experience starting with the early beginnings of our churches, developing from the Swedenborg Reading Groups to decisions to form congregations, the formation of the Ohio Association, the many projects, issues and struggles of various groups and how they related to the developing national denomination. It's hard to describe the effect of exploring our history together right in the very first building erected on the Urbana University campus. The vision and dedication of our founding fathers and mothers became so evident as we progressed through our history – and it was with great pride that we began to realize the enormity of the accomplishments of our forebears in creating such a strong Swedenborgian presence in the Urbana and Ohio area and in founding the University as an institution of higher learning based on Swedenborgian principles and philosophy.

As it was homecoming weekend for U.U., we were invited to join staff, students and family for lunch at the "tailgating party" prior to the football game. That evening, the food service prepared and served an excellent dinner at Bailey Hall after which everyone was invited by the University to attend a concert called "Keyboard Conversations" by Jeff Siegel, a world-renowned pianist. The concert was sponsored by U.U. for the community as part of homecoming festivities and was a special treat for those who attended.

Dr. Head joined us during our Sunday service in the church. Many people exclaimed that it was the "best Ohio Association meeting ever."

Alicia Titus Memorial Peace Fund: At this point additional donations to the Alicia fund from several sources including the Convention worship service collection, Bev and John Titus, the Ohio and Michigan Associations, and funds raised by a friend of Alicia's through race pledges, now bring the total amount to \$21,280. In order for the fund to be fully self-supporting, the goal is to raise a corpus of \$25,000

(Continued on page 33)

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING AT URBANA UNIVERSITY?

(Continued from page 32)


to \$30,000 so that interest income can be utilized for planned programming. At this time a committee comprising U.U. faculty and members of the Church Relations Committee are working on plans for the first program.

Damage to the Urbana University Swedenborg Book Collection: Due to an extremely wet summer season and an aging building, water damage occurred to the Swedenborg book collection housed in the University library. Since discovery of the problem, the collection has been moved to a safe and dry location off-campus, and bids are being sought to assess the cost of restoration. The Ohio Historical Society has been onsite and offered consultation and assistance. The University librarian is in the process of writing a grant proposal to seek funding, and another grant application is being considered. At this time, estimates of the total cost for repair and restoration are in the range of \$50,000. The Ohio Association has contributed \$2,000 for the cost of the present rental space, but additional funds will need to be raised over and above what might be received from grants. The University is hoping that interested individuals and groups within the Swedenborgian church might be willing to donate to this very worthy cause of saving these valuable records of our church history and the-

ology, since many of these volumes have been donated over the years by groups and individuals from the denomination. Any groups or individuals interested in contributing to this worthwhile restoration effort may inquire by e-mailing Betsy Coffman at: hbcoff@iapdatacom.net.

U.U. – Church Academic Program Explored: A group of representatives from Urbana University and Convention are exploring the possibility of developing an academic program that would exemplify the underlying Swedenborgian principles and values upon which the University was founded.

At this time discussion has focused on establishing a Center for Applied Ethics, which would incorporate within the curriculum of all major areas of study, courses focusing on examining and developing a strong sense of personal ethics and values to guide students in their professional and personal lives, hopefully leading to a strong commitment by graduates to honest and useful service to the community as “neighbor.” It is hoped that part of the program would include a faculty position to be filled by a qualified Swedenborgian who would play an important role in seeking funding and in implementation of the program.

Betsy Coffman is a consecrated lay leader serving at the Urbana Swedenborgian Church, and is on the board of trustees at Urbana University. 

NCC Report

Marlene Laughlin

We can become one with God only through love and loving actions, love being the essence of spiritual connection.

Emanuel Swedenborg
Divine Providence #318

The Assembly

The meeting of the General Assembly of the National Council of the Churches of Christ and the Church World Service took place November 4-6, 2003, in Jackson, Mississippi. The General Secretary, Rev. Bob Edgar, has completed the nearly miraculous turn-around of the NCCCUSA. Taking on a top-heavy, nearly bankrupt organization four years ago, Edgar has not only balanced the budget, but through his extraordinary peace efforts all over the world, this General Secretary has brought new funding and increased respect to the organization. In addition to Edgar, the exceptional leaders who have been hired to head the major areas of outreach and concern have excelled in education, experience, and skills needed for their position. The power of this extraordinary leadership energized all attendees at the Assembly.

There in Jackson, Mississippi, where the power of the church was felt so strongly during the civil rights struggle of the 1950s and 60s, the first African-American was elected and installed as president of the NCCCUSA. Supporters and friends of The Rev. Dr. Thomas Hoyt came in celebration. Over five hundred guests from across the country, including many African-American bishops from the Deep South, attended the dinner and very powerful installation service.

All the officers and Commission members were voted upon and installed in preparation for the beginning of the next Quadrennium. The focus of these next four years will emphasize education and aid to children; “The Church is in a unique position to proclaim God’s blessing and justice for children ... the Church is called to be

Paul Zacharias Retires on Thanksgiving

The Rev. Paul Zacharias chose October 14, 2003, (Canadian Thanksgiving) for his last service at the Church of the Good Shepherd in Kitchener, Ontario. In his farewell message in *The Tender*, he said:

We arrived in Kitchener in the fall of 1963, exactly 40 years ago. At that time I fully expected to stay here for about eight or ten years, then move on. But sometimes life has surprises in store for us! The greener pastures were always right here. And it’s turned out to be 40 very happy and fulfilling years for us.

As you know, our Church teachings

tell us that in the Bible, words and terms have deeper, spiritual meanings. Think of the number forty: the Hebrews spent 40 years wandering in the wilderness; Noah saw 40 days of rain; Jesus fasted 40 days in the desert. In all of these stories, the number 40 represents the end of a cycle or stage in life, and the beginning of a new phase. So it seems appropriate to hang up my collar after 40 years at the Church of the Good Shepherd—the completion of a very satisfying cycle. In one of his plays Shakespeare talks about being sensitive to the “ripeness of things.” How true and important this is.

(Continued on page 36)

(Continued on page 34)

NCC Report

(Continued from page 33)

the voice of the voiceless as it calls a people and a nation of faith to support for children within the church and beyond." This is an active step in fulfilling the Policy Statement: **The Church and Children: Vision and Goals for the 21st Century.**

We are Called

The Swedenborgian Church is unique in all of Christendom for a most important theological perspective. We believe in universal salvation. Many Christian churches are struggling between a heart that invites all home to the presence of God and the statement of Jesus that says, "I am the way." Most Christians understand that "the way" to salvation is through belief in the Divinity of Jesus. Believing that this is the only path to heaven raises difficulty in respecting other faiths.

For the next four years the Faith and Order Commission of the NCCC will focus on this important question: "How can we remain both identifiably individual Christian Churches and at the same time honor the path to salvation trod by others?"

Swedenborgians have a unique position in the ecumenical discussion regarding pluralism and radical unity. We can stand firmly within our theological view, which recognizes both our faith in the salvation and redemption through Jesus, and acceptance that another path may also lead to the presence of the Holy. By accepting what we believe and honoring another religious path we provide tempered and strong threads for weaving a colorful and harmonious future on this diverse and shrinking world.

Answering this Call

The Swedenborgian Church' participation in ecumenical (intra-Christian) and interfaith dialogues is one of the greatest uses that our denomination can now perform. We know that our God must be worshiped in spirit and truth and that the truth is being written upon the hearts of all.

Like many of our churches, Wayfarers Chapel is now actively engaged in local, regional and state ecumenical and interfaith organizations. Active membership in the World Parliament of Religions, the NCCC and local ecumenical and interfaith groups is our call from God in this dynamic world of fear and faith, good and evil, hope and despair.

We understand that the Holy Spirit is now the living Divine among us. In the midst of great trauma throughout the world, we recognize this spiritual influx and therefore ours is an important voice of love and welcome. The Gathering of Leaves, a conference of Swedenborgian women from all over the world, taking place at Temenos this spring, certainly reflects our recognition of the need for healing among all the faiths of all the nations. We pray for heaven to come upon earth, and this is powerful, but we can also act as members of the body of Christ, and as emissaries of faith, hope and compassion.


One method of being useful is through supporting the resolutions passed by the NCCC. The Emancipation Proclamation was signed by Abraham Lincoln generations ago. Generations of Americans have lost a sense of personal contact with the reality of slavery in America. Unfortunately the reality of enslavement continues in the picking fields of Florida. The NCCC has passed a resolution calling for a boycott of Taco Bell. Taco Bell is the major buyer of the tomatoes picked by the people who have, at risk of their life, formed the Coalition of Immokalee Workers. These people are enslaved by debt-bondage, held at gunpoint in the fields, and stacked seven and twelve deep in small rooms which are locked at night. They're Hispanic migrants, but they can't migrate; they are indentured to the farm at which they work. *Sixty Minutes* photographers were threatened at gunpoint in the open fields in daylight when reporting on this situation. Our National Labor Relations Act has never covered farm workers, and they have no legal redress. Their only hope is the economic power of Christians who with heart, voice and wallet say in outrage "This cannot continue!"

It was the power of the Christian church in the 1950s and 60s that forced the end of legal segregation and our job is not complete. Each of us needs to be telling others, finding ways to let other churches know, recommending reference to www.ncccusa.org/news/03news19.html, and to the article "Nobodies," by John Bowe (April 21-28, 2003 *New Yorker* magazine).

In addition to the Taco Bell boycott, NCCC calls for a boycott of the products of the Mt. Olive Company of North Carolina. This resolution also concerns the deplorable treatment of farm workers who pick cucumbers for this company.

Another important resolution concerns preserving the United States Pharmaceutical Sales to Canada. This will allow lower-cost prescription drugs to remain available to those within the USA. Many people who use medications imported from Canada are low-income and elderly who must choose between medication or food, utilities and shelter.

You may choose to engage yourself, your local church or churches, in the many important projects originating from NCCC's mission. Simply explore their website, www.ncccusa.org and/or the Church World Service website, www.churchworldservice.org. Choose an area of loving action and become engaged in this project.

The Rev. Marlene Laughlin is a Swedenborgian delegate to the NCCC, along with the Rev. Dr. Dorothea Harvey and Mary Ann Fischer. She is a Chapel minister at the Wayfarers Chapel in Rancho Palos Verdes, California. 

Sower Notes Wanted

I'm looking for a used set of the *Sower Notes*, a set of six volumes written by William Worcester, published by ANCSSA sometime in the thirties. I'm also looking for a copy of *A Year's Lessons from the Psalms*, written by John Worcester.

If you have copies of these books that you are willing to send me, please let me know how much you want for them.

Gwen Billings
4501 Barnhouse Rd.
Rescue, CA 95672
(530) 672-2392
email: gwenbillings@directcon.net 

Editors Note: The Rev. Dr. Robert Kirven entered the spiritual world January 9, 2004. Reminiscences were published in the February Messenger, but Lorraine's came in later, and we are pleased to publish it now.

Contributions in Bob's memory may be sent to the Swedenborgian House of Studies' Scholarship Fund, 1798 Scenic Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94709.

Memories of Bob Kirven

Lorraine Sando

I met Bob back in the 1960s when he came to Bellevue Washington to study the happenings of Project Link, the innovative, controversial project of the General Convention at that time. The question as I saw it that was being explored was, if people looked inward and explored themselves, would they discover their God? To that end, the leaders, Revs. David Johnson, Calvin Turley, Owen Turley, and John King (John died before the project began) studied with the National Training Labs and came out for the adventure that was to foretell dramatic changes in the church and in people's lives. The ministers, upon arriving in Bellevue, Washington, met weekly with their wives with two different psychiatrists. Each began weekly groups with parishioners. I was in a group with David and Elizabeth Johnson. There were around ten people in each group. All members took the MMPI, (Minnesota Multi Phasic Personality Inventory) and each week were given a small slip of paper with something from that inventory to work on in and out of group. We were Yokefellow Groups in the beginning. The group became close like a family. Some, not all, came to church meetings. I did, and have become very much involved with the church locally and nationally to this day, through many changes and moves and ministers.


Those days built for me a foundation of faith and unconditional love, and a wonderful church family. When Bob came out, he was very taken with the experiment. He interviewed many of us individually and wrote the paper "Ordinary People" which is available at the Swedenborgian House of Studies. He spoke at our extraordinary church that had won architectural awards. It cantilevered over a bank, was diamond-shaped and had walkways around to its point that was suspended in the air, with a view toward the wonderful foothills of our Cascade Mountains. On the street below was Don and Pat Lovell's home, (Don had been involved in LEI and Fryeburg, and Don and Pat's daughter Diana Permatai continues as our oldest member of our Swedenborgian Church of Puget Sound). Cal and Marilyn Turley also lived on that street. Owen and Eleanor Turley and their two sons also lived close by—many wonderful memories.

Bob's message was about his favorite poem "The Hound of Heaven" and how he was caught by the hound of heaven. I saw Bob at our conventions every year beginning in 1973. His warm hugs, sparkly Irish wit and

twinkling eyes, were always there. He even came to one post-convention conference that I led in Fryeburg, Maine in the late 1980s.

I was very fortunate to be able to see Bob on December 7, 2003, in person. My brother lives in Tempe, Arizona, and I was going to a conference with Gregg Braden called The God Code on December 12th and 13th in Tucson. (Bob was familiar with Gregg and later asked me to send him the tapes of The Isaiah Effect but he was unable to concentrate to listen to them) So I arrived on the 7th, and my brother took me straight from the airport to visit with Bob for an hour. I met Diana Stickney, his daughter who took such good care of him. Bob showed me his beautiful wood carving he had done many years ago, hanging on the wall opposite his chair. It was of a monk that he had met in a visionary experience where he was told that he was to be a writer. Later he said that he'd had one chemotherapy treatment and would have two more and then he would use hospice. He was ready to move on to the spiritual world and felt comfortable doing this. He did not have the energy to concentrate and focus to read and write. I said, Well, Bob, you've had the challenge throughout your life of the stuttering and I've had the challenge of the big body. We smiled, he reached forward and squeezed my hand, and we said goodbye. I knew I would not see him again. I called him each week to check on him. I talked to Diana the day before he died; she said that he was weak, still walking, drinking but not eating, and asked if I'd like to speak to him. I said "Yes." We spoke briefly. I said, "Bob, the veil is very thin between the worlds, would you give me a sign?" He said, "Yes." I said, "Love you," and said "Goodbye." I knew he was going very soon. On Friday, a lot of spontaneous tears came and I thought to myself, Bob's going. Saturday morning I called and got a mechanical machine message, where always before it had been a person. I thought, He's gone. Monday evening I found that he'd died on Friday late afternoon.

But Bob did give me a sign. On Sunday, I was at my granddaughter's 5th birthday party. I was taking pictures with my camera, one of my sons was taking pictures with my camera, and a friend took three pictures of me, one of them with my granddaughter. After those three pictures of me were taken, I took another picture at church and finished the roll and dropped it for developing and picked it up the next morning. All three of the pictures with me in it were totally blank. I checked with my favorite camera shop, he looked at the negatives, and he said, "There should have been pictures there." He'd tried to take pictures of ghosts before, but they weren't like that. Later that evening, I got word that Bob had died and it clicked. Bob had sent me a sign. The message was this: He wiped out my big body in the pictures and was saying to me, "Lorraine, it's what's inside that counts."

Lorraine Sando is a member of the Puget Sound Church in Washington, and is a retired psychotherapist. 

Condolences from General Church

Editor's Note: The following letter was sent to our denomination's president, the Rev. Ron Brugler. It is reprinted here with the Rev. Mike Gladish's permission.

Dear Ron,

I would like to express for myself and on behalf of the General Church in Canada our sincere condolences to the members of Convention on the passing of the Rev. Dr. Robert Kirven into the spiritual world.

I must say that I did not know him at all, and I don't think we ever met, but I appreciated the generous write-up about him in the current *Messenger* and I also want you to know that two G.C. ministers quite independently have written to our clergy e-mail list-serve with very complimentary remarks about him.

Of course his writing has served and will serve the church well. Just tonight I was talking with a man in Edmonton who was very impressed with the book about dying and plans to use it in conjunction with an outreach about life after death. And I myself have just bought *The Concise Overview* which I intend to read soon and use as well.

It is clear that Convention and the worldwide New Church on this earth have lost a faithful and talented leader. One can only hope and trust that he will find his place in leadership among the angels of the New Heaven—perhaps ideally among those who are just entering the spiritual world and are most eager to learn! So the influence of the New Church from there will continue to strengthen the church here.

Rev. Mike Gladish
Calgary, Alberta



Spiritual Renewal in Parish Life

Wilma Wake

I was honored to be invited to teach an interim course at Pacific School of Religion this year. These courses run from a Monday to Friday, four hours each day, in January between semesters. I facilitated an experiential/seminar class on "Spiritual Renewal in Parish Life," and thoroughly enjoyed the time spent with ministers-in-training and parish ministers from a large variety of denominations. We explored the meaning of spirituality from a variety of religious perspectives, including the traditions that we all represented. We took time to experience various meditations, chanting, spiritual friendship, spiritual companioning, group sharing, and silent retreat time. In between experiences we processed with each other how our own spiritual life impacted our parish leadership and how we could bring more active spirituality into our community of faith. Students brought in a range of ideas they were using, including Non-Violent Communication programs in church.

We also utilized a variety of recent publications about spirituality in a parish context. I personally found it helpful to compare the spiritual life one takes on in private versus that of a community of faith living a shared tradition.

I was delighted with the opportunity to share in the ecumenical PSR atmosphere with 15 students and to see how easily our students are learning to converse and be at home in the inter-

faith world of today. I was especially pleased that the class offered a supportive week to our graduating Swedenborgian, Kathy Speas. She was in a difficult period of discernment about her ministry. At the end of the week she was offered, and decided to accept, a position as Chaplain at Valley of the Moon Hospice in Sonoma, part of Hospice of Marin, one of the earliest hospice organizations in the country, and a groundbreaker in end-of-life care. I'm excited that this summer we plan to ordain our first group of graduates from SHS, including Kathy.

The proof of the effectiveness of our spiritual experiences was that I was able to fully engage in the spiritual focus of the class, despite the fact that most of my free time was spent on the phone from Berkeley to Portland, Maine, trying to figure out how to fix my frozen and burst pipes in a huge cold snap in the Northeast. (Cold snap? What cold snap? It was in the 60s and 70s in Berkeley!) In addition I was on the phone to my bank and credit card companies back home as I tried to figure out how to deal with my purse disappearing and my identity being stolen. Somehow it all got sorted out, and I was back on the plane a week later, with a free night's stay in Chicago's O'Hare airport due to bad weather. It's great to have our solid Swedenborgian theology in the midst of the crazy things one deals with in life!

Back in the cold Northeast now, it still warms my heart to remember the excitement and closeness of our inter-faith sharing about spirituality in faith communities.



Paul Zacharias Retires on Thanksgiving *(Continued from page 33)*

Since my ordination, I have preached about 2000 sermons, attended at least 3000 church meetings, officiated at 222 baptisms, 503 weddings, and 173 memorial services.

I was intentional about choosing Thanksgiving for my final service. As I look back over almost half a century of service in the church, the dominant feeling, by far, is that of gratitude for the incredible privilege of having been a parish minister in

the Swedenborgian Church. I can't imagine any finer, better quality of life than helping to spread the good news of the Swedenborgian faith. So my final message is one of Thanksgiving to the good Lord for making all of this possible, and for walking with me throughout the journey. And of course, this note of thanksgiving goes out to all of you for your unfailing, wonderful support over these many years...



Discontinued SMC Funding a Loss to our Church

Dear Editor,

As an ordained minister of Convention since 1943, former president, participant on many boards and committees throughout those sixty years, I want to express my disappointment in the General Council's decision to cease funding the position of Spiritual Ministries Consultant. Learning about and growing in the spiritual life is the very reason for the existence of the Swedenborgian Church. All its teachings are specifically directed to that purpose.

While it is comparatively easy to talk about the spiritual life, actually developing it, and experiencing it, feeling a personal relationship to our Lord Jesus Christ, being aware of his presence with us and feeling our living in the spiritual realm is something that takes place through many experiences—uplifting, as well as struggles through our trials throughout our lives. My experience is that we often need help on this wonderful journey in order to move into its depths and know the ongoing presence of the Lord in our lives. To discontinue this position is a great loss to our church, the spiritual being the central essence of our existence. I am all too familiar with the struggles of the General Council to meet the many financial needs of maintaining and extending the uses of our Church. It is my sincere hope that they may shortly find the means to again finance the position, recognizing its essential place in our organization.

From reading Wilma Wake's book, *Crystals Crosses and Chakras*, and my personal acquaintance with her, she is eminently experienced in her own life and in her ability to share the meaning of the depth of spirituality. With the move of the Swedenborg School of Religion she has been lost as one of the most qualified of our professors. We need her unique contribution to the Church. Can General Council find its way to finance her part-time salary, though it may not feel it possible to provide travel for visits to our

TO THE EDITOR

churches? Much can be done through print and various other means of consultation.

In His Name,

*Rev. David P. Johnson
Bellevue, Washington*

In Response

Dear Editor:

I am deeply touched and moved by David Johnson's letter of support for the Spiritual Ministries Consultant position of MINSU. David is such a mentor to us all on the spiritual richness of Swedenborg's writing, and I am honored that he so strongly supports our efforts in this area.

Some years ago, I attended a workshop for Swedenborgians with a gifted leader [Roy Oswald] from the well-respected Alban Institute for church consultations. He praised our uniqueness and our gifts for the world. Someone asked him why we weren't growing, and he suggested perhaps it's because we're not articulating who we are and what we can offer to the world. He said in trying to increase membership, we may end up sounding rather generic and trying to meet all needs. He said the world is thirsting for what we can offer in the area of spirituality, and by defining our unique gifts in this area, we will likely draw much more interest to our work.

I have carried these words in my heart, through the years, as I've delved more deeply into the wisdom in spirituality programs, such as the Shalem Institute. I'm convinced that we can more effectively explore our own personal and corporate relationships with the Divine, share them with others, and share our gifts with the larger community.

I am thrilled that we were able to develop a well-thought-out program for parish spirituality support and outreach through a half-time Spiritual Ministries Consultant position. Unfortunately, it turned out that we could only fund one of the three intended years. That first year primarily involved development of materials and programs. The second year would involve focused work in the parishes, and the third year would be one of supporting our parishes in spirituality outreach in their communities.

We are in a good position to "hit the ground running" if funding can be found to continue this program sometime in the future. In the meantime, there is much that individuals and centers can do to deepen and share the Swedenborgian experience of spirituality in our community of faith. I hope to do all that I can to find the opportunities to share further the resources and programs that were developed last year, so that its benefit can have the maximum "use" for us all. Please see my article in this issue on that subject.

Thanks, David, for speaking so articulately about the need for the sharing of our lived spirituality, and our need to be in the world for who we are, offering the world the gifts that have been given to us. I'm very grateful for the one year I was able to devote half-time to this position, and am deeply gratified by the positive responses it received. I am committed to doing all that I can to continue to support the goals in other formats of Convention.

*Rev. Dr. Wilma Wake
Kennebunk, Maine*




IMPORTANT CHURCH DATES

**March 26-29, 2004—SHS Board
Berkeley, CA**

**July 7-14—General Convention
Kitchener, Ontario Canada**

**August 26-29, 2004—MINSU
St. Louis, MO**

**Nov 4-7, 2004—General Council
Wayfarers Chapel** 

SMC: Unfunded But Not Defunct

Wilma Wake

General Council has made the decision that the church cannot fund the SMC position in 2004. There is a loss for our programs in this decision, yet there are also many options for the work to continue in other ways. I am currently retaining the title, Spiritual Ministries Consultant, even though it is unfunded, and am still attending MINSU meetings.

Here are some options for ways in which our centers can continue their work in the area of spirituality:

- I hope that the Swedenborgian BiMonthly Book Club will continue for the groups that have already begun and others who are interested. Arrangements can be made directly with the Swedenborg Foundation for discount book shipments. Groups can develop their own discussion questions and share them with each other—perhaps in *The Messenger* or on the Internet.
- The Women's Retreat at Temenos this spring will offer many opportunities for spiritual discussion from all branches of our churches. [sorry, men. This one's for women only!]
- Convention will offer opportunities for mini-courses and sharing in the area of spirituality.
- Perhaps someone with good web skills to help us set up a format to have regular discussions on our experience of our spirituality.
- The Swedenborg Foundation and J. Appleseed continue publishing a superb array of materials relevant to our centers and in the larger world of spirituality.

Some things I plan to do in the coming months to help foster our spirituality goals:

- I will do my best to continue contributing to *The Messenger* on this subject, and will make available bibliographies and resources in spirituality. Perhaps others will contribute more in these arenas as well, and more discussion can take place.
- When time allows, I am happy to come to parishes to offer weekend programs. However, I will need all of my expenses covered as well as an honorarium.
- I will offer a workshop at the Women's Retreat on spirituality friendship and companionship.
- I will have a mini-course at our convention in July on spiritual friendship and companionship. As I work on my convention sermon, I will look for ways to share more on this topic. I will, of course, be available at any time at convention to chat.
- I'm as available as I can be via phone and email to anyone in the denomination to chat about our spirituality goals.

Phone: (207) 985-8776
Email: wakewil@aol.com



OPEN LETTER FROM THE TURLEYS

Dear Friends within Convention,

We are seeking financial help to accept an invitation we have received to travel to England this July to attend the British Conference annual "convention" in London. As a family (Ken: guitar and bass; Laurie, piano and guitar; Emily, bass, flute, violin; Ethan, guitar and trumpet and all of us singing), we would present some of our original compositions, examples of contemporary and traditional music in many styles, and creative ideas for using all types of music in a large scale lecture/performance on Worship and Music. We would also present a small workshop for music and worship leaders, lead a worship service or two and visit some of the local churches. It is our hope that by doing this we can share the kinds of things we have been doing around music and worship within Convention and return home with new ideas and resources that have been happening in the British Conference. It would also be our hope to further strengthen the growing relationship between our two denominations by reaching younger and older generations of Swedenborgians.

The British Conference will cover our room and board and travel within England. We estimate that our remaining expenses would include:

Airline tickets and travel expenses for:

Rev. Ken Turley	\$800.00
(Requested from Fund for Ministers Travel to Europe)	
Laurie Turley	\$800.00
Emily Turley	\$800.00
Ethan Turley	\$800.00
Rental Instruments	\$500.00
Shipping Materials	\$100.00
CDs, Scripts and Scores	
Total Expenses	\$3800.00

If you would like to make a contribution to help make this wonderful opportunity for musical and spiritual exchange between General Convention and the British Conference become a reality, please make your contribution care of the Fryeburg New Church, 4 Oxford Street, Fryeburg, ME 04037. This will be a tax deductible donation to the church, which will put that money toward the expenses of the trip. If by some chance it does not happen, your contribution would be returned to you.

By the way, we would welcome an invitation to share our ideas, resources, talents and experience in music, worship and spiritual regeneration with any group within Convention. So if this is something you would be interested in, please contact us. We are not looking to make a lot of money doing this, but we are not in a position financially to lose money in order to make it happen. Many thanks for your thoughtful consideration.

The Turleys (Rev. Ken, Laurie and children Emily and Ethan)



2004 SCYL Officers

2004 Swedenborgian Church Youth League (SCYL) Officer and Chaplin elections took place at the Winter Retreat this past December. The results are:

President:

Ben Currie
283 Macintosh Rd
West Chester, PA 19382
(610) 430-7069
email: benjamin_sanborn@yahoo.com

East Coast and Activities Officer:

Miles Stroh
94 Shaker Rd
Harvard, MA 01451
(978) 772-6482
email: miniselim@charter.net

Central States and Public Relations Officer:

Erika Penabaker
21545 Curie
Warren, MI 48091
(586) 755-4993
email: ihaveacomfyouch@hotmail.com

West Coast and Fundraising/Finance Officer:

Karen Degi
8258 Weld Co. Rd 86
Ft. Collins, CO 80524
(970) 686-6208
email: nerdessnproud@yahoo.com

Canada and Service Officer:

Brittany Fleming
604 Laurier Dr
LaSalle, ON N9J 1M5
-or-
123 Tillson St
Romeo, MI 48065
email: foreva_green@hotmail.com

Editor, *Clear Blue Sky*:

Gabe Lipski
56 Lake Ridge
Olds, AB Canada T4H 1W6
(403) 556-6901
email: cherub_chick@hotmail.com

League Chaplin:

Rev. Junchol Lee
1703 Merl Ave
Cleveland, OH 44109
email: revjcleee@msn.com

We say goodbye to 2003 president Craig Carson and thank him for his guidance and active participation in many league activities. The SCYL is now under the very capable leadership of Ben Currie. Ben has been attending retreats for several years and is also a member of the Temenos youth group. He was previously the editor of *Clear Blue Sky*, the youth newsletter. Gabe Lipski, previous West Coast Officer has taken over Ben's duties on *Clear Blue Sky*. We say hello to new SCYL Officers Karen Degi, Brittany Fleming

and Miles Stroh as they begin their year of service in our youth league. They take over for exiting SCYL Officers Jessie Brugler, Craig Carson and Farren Maille. Please join me in saying farewell to the 2003 Officers no longer serving in the SCYL. We welcome and congratulate all of our 2004 Officers. I hope that you get the chance to meet one or more of them. They are a great bunch of teens, and I certainly look forward to listening and working with them this year.

Kurt Fekete
Youth Director



2004 SCYL Officers (top l - r) Brittany Fleming, Miles Stroh, Karen Degi and Erika Penabaker. (bottom l - r) Ben Currie, Gabe Lipski.



Wine, Cheese, and Checkbook Party

Dick Tafel

Saturday evening, January 10, was the date of The New Church of Southwest Florida's big wine, cheese, and checkbook party. This event kicked off our year-long campaign to raise additional funds for leasing or purchasing facilities to expand the church's programs.

Hosted by Rev. Dick and Linda at their home, some forty guests heard about the challenges facing their community and the need for the community to respond. Six prominent community leaders had agreed to act as sponsors. These were the current mayor of Fort Myers Beach, a former Town Council member and mayor, the head of the Ostego Bay Foundation, two well known business leaders on

the Beach, and the Chair of the Lee County Commissioners.

It is of interest to note that none of these sponsors is a member of our church. However, they know about our commitment to serve this community and are aware of our ministry's effectiveness. You may remember that we already receive a Community Development Block Grant jointly from the county and town for our Kids' VIP Programs. As we expand our programs, we continue to look to the community for financial support as well as for volunteers.

Our current programs, plus requests from the community for new ones, mandate that we acquire more space. We need more space for the thrift store

operations and for our emergency food pantry. We also need more space for the church office and financial center. We have no suitable space for counseling. And we do not have our own worship space, using borrowed facilities on Sunday morning.

Because "We walk amongst the people" we have been challenged by the community to develop a program for seniors and a center/canteen for middle school-aged kids. With the aging of America and more seniors moving here because of the good weather, we need to reach out to these people. Many seniors who come for the winter season know few local people, don't want to drive at night, and have no place to go. Most weeks, dozens of seniors wander into the thrift store/church office and

(Continued on page 40)

Wine, Cheese, and Checkbook Party

(Continued from page 39)

just want to visit and talk. They are lonely. We are challenged to minister to these people.

Our new pamphlet for our fundraising campaign describes the need for the middle school program: "Kids get into trouble when they have nothing to do; when there is no adult supervision; when they have no one to answer questions or solve problems; when no one really seems to care." We have direct impact programs for elementary and high school students, but little for middle schoolers. This will change with a center/canteen for middle school-age kids.

Knowing that real estate is costly, we began fundraising for our own facilities almost from the beginning of our new ministry here. Over the last seven years, with your help and that of local church members and the community, we have raised approximately \$87,000. While this is a commendable sum, it still is not nearly enough for a down payment on a suitable space in our local real estate market. Therefore we have to get serious about raising this additional \$100,000.

Rev. Nadine, minister and director of the Kids' VIP Programs, summed up the challenge facing us with these words: "Kids are our community's most important asset, and we need to provide them with mentoring and guidance. Extra space is needed to maximize our efforts and a year-long fund raiser seemed the best way to meet our goal."

Ray Judah, Chair of the Lee County Commissioners, says of the kickoff gathering: "Church, community, and government need to work hand in hand to guarantee our kids get the very best care and direction. Local efforts need to be congratulated and supported. I was glad to be a part of this kickoff campaign and will do my best to see that local governments support these kinds of initiatives."

With support like this, it is no wonder that more than \$2800 was raised

(Continued on page 43)

Days Between

Robert McCluskey

The time of Lent, like the time of Advent, is a time of waiting and preparing. After the work of the world is done, and before it begins again, we are called to reflection, confession, and renewal. This is appropriate and good for these "days between." Days between death and life, darkness and light, the past and the future. We ourselves also seem to be caught in the middle: between ignorance and wisdom, between indifference and compassion, between the press of the world and the grace of God. Between the high, spiritual demands of compassion, justice and truth, on the one hand, and the demands and limitations of our natural existence on the other hand. Lent, the season of repentance, is a time to consider new ways of bridging the gaps that separate us from God and each other.

Lent is also a time of reconciliation, a time to rekindle and re-focus our efforts toward unity, both within ourselves individually and among ourselves in our social relationships. A time to practice what we preach

more intentionally, to risk ourselves for the sake of justice; or perhaps to preach with less fervor, and allow ourselves to be open to new perspectives. Lent is a time to find that balance within us that sustains and nourishes us, that guides and protects us, that challenges and strengthens us.

The church offers the supreme image of this balance in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. A balance between love and wisdom, goodness and truth, and between the Divine and the human, the inner and outer dimensions of our lives. We invite you to use this time of Lent to share in the stories and teachings, the worship and fellowship of the church, to reflect more deeply, and perhaps in new ways, on our response to God's call to unity, and to open ourselves to the power for spiritual growth that is available to each of us, a "power greater than ourselves." May this time of Lent be for you a time when you move a bit closer toward unity with God and neighbor, to the harmony of the Divine Humanity reflected in your own life as a spiritual being, a child of God.

The Rev. Robert McCluskey is a Swedenborgian minister and former pastor of the New York Swedenborgian Church. He currently resides in Boston.



All Roads Lead to Convention 2004

☞ Sunday July 10 to Wednesday July 14 ☜

It's not too early to think about planning for your trip to Kitchener Ontario for Convention 2004. Visit our Web site <http://churchofthegoodshepherd.ca/index.shtml> Additional information with helpful travel hints for the Kitchener area can also be found at <http://www.kw-visitor.on.ca/>

Stay tuned next month for more information on your Convention 2004 program.



Gathering Leaves

(Continued from back page)

In the Rose Garden

Some women carry hurts from partial teachings from Swedenborg's book *Conjugial Love*. Healing can begin from discovering the broader context of what is actually in the book. Gray Glenn has made a lifetime study of *Conjugial Love* for practical application. The moral guidance and spiritual reasoning in this work have provided the pavement for her spiritual path. Join her in this discussion and workshop if you have wounds and/or questions about *Conjugial Love*. Questions sent in along with your registration form will be forwarded to Grey and used to enrich the experience for everyone.

Gray Glenn is a mother, grandmother and teacher. Her calling is to help women find inspiration for their work as wives.

Where Am I Now? Where Have I Been? Where Am I Going?

This workshop in feminine spirituality will include brief readings from the Scriptures with insight from the Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, about Eve, Mary the mother of Jesus, and the Woman Clothed with the Sun. Key ideas will be shared in the way the presenter relates these concepts to her own life. For the presenter, feminine wisdom comes from reflection on how truth from the Word relates to human experience; a woman's spiritual development is linked to her innate and God-given creativity. Women attending this workshop will be asked to take part in one or more creative activities such as drawing, journaling or other forms of writing, in response to a poetic or written religious work of art. Each woman will be encouraged to share her creativity with the group.

Being creative is to take a love and give it form: as in procreation, gestation and birth of a child – a natural child or a brainchild.

Vera P. Glenn is a mother, grandmother, and a long-time teacher. She

has also authored several Swedenborgian books and articles, her article in "Rooted in Spirit" leading to the idea for this workshop.

Yoga Workshop: Experiencing Physiological Correspondences

"The states of spirits and angels, with all their varieties, can in no wise be understood without a knowledge of the human body; for the Lord's kingdom is like a human being." (Spiritual Diary, paragraph 1145.5)

This workshop is a gentle approach to the divinity of the body through the intelligence of the whole body. Every cell of the body is permeated with divine mind, techniques for listening to the heavens within are explored in this safe body-centered class. Gentle movements and breathing, which come from the Yoga traditions, are linked to some of Swedenborg's insights into our physiology.

Students will be safely led in classic Yoga poses, breath and relaxation techniques which foster an expansive prayerful openness. Woven into the structure of the class are threads of Swedenborg's wisdom aimed at bringing the deeper arcanum inherent in the body into our awareness. No prior experience with Yoga is necessary.

Doreen Hardy, M.Ed., R.Y.T., has been teaching Yoga at Temenos Retreat Center for many years.

Please dress in comfortable clothing with no restricting belt, etc.

Story Telling and the Arcana

A lot of the Lord's communication with us has been through stories. Let's look at the power of stories, tell some stories of our own, and explore how we relate to His grand explanation of "The moral of this fable is . . ." in the *Arcana Coelestia*. Are you reluctant to try reading the *Arcana*? Have you started several times and gotten no further than the sixth day? Do you love it? How does our affinity for stories fit with trying to understand the spiritual story under the natural one?

I see this workshop involving the

participants as much as, or more than, the presenter, hopefully with some tactile as well as cerebral experiences. Let's talk.

Nina Dunlap Kline was born and raised in Bryn Athyn. She and her husband Tom have four children, all grown, and three grandchildren, all very grand. She is now retired from teaching mathematics at the high school and college level, which she loved.

Living a Life of Religion: Rules and Spiritual Practice

"All religion is a matter of life, and the life of religion is to do good.." (Doctrine of Life)

I was inspired by the book *Living Faith Day by Day* by Debra Farrington. I would like to use this as well as other sources to see how each one of us can become more aware of the daily rules by which we live now—perhaps unconsciously—and create new ones that better serve our spiritual growth. We will examine the background of "rules" from the Commandments to St. Benedict to Swedenborg. How can we add classic areas of spiritual practice to our lives? What rules did Jesus live by? How does reading Swedenborg's Writings change how we behave, not just what we believe? Part of what we will consider will be structure, time constraints, laziness, apathy, etc. How do we weave our rules into the fabric of our lives—not relegated to an add-on at the end of the day?

Emily Jane Lemole

Raising Our Children

Women from the Cincinnati General Church and Convention congregations would like to offer a sharing time where we would explore how each of us brought our children to a knowledge and love of the Lord and His truths as found in the Old Testament, New Testament, and the Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. Gillian Mayer and panel



(Continued on page 42)

Gathering Leaves

(Continued from page 41)

Creative Conflict

How is conflict a healthy and healing part of our lives and relationships? Can we reframe how we see our differences, as a blessing intended to enrich our lives? In this workshop we will explore the positive aspects of conflict. Please reflect on some of the difficulties in your life, including people you have not always agreed with, and lift your awareness to ways that have served you spiritually. Bring a favorite story from the Word and any comments about the conflict it involves. Please read *Arcana Coelestia*, paragraph 1799 three times. It will be participatory.

Lori Odhner has been experiencing creative conflict with her husband and nine children for over 20 years, and growing considerably from it. She loves to take life's challenges and turn them into stories that bring a smile and a tear.

Doorways: Sacred Circle Dance

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in and dine."

Sacred circle dance can be a tool to experience healing, growing, community and celebration. It is a wonderful way to worship the Lord by connecting with Him through movement. We will celebrate our spiritual sisterhood in an atmosphere of healing and goodwill as it crosses the divide between different branches of our Swedenborgian organizations.

The workshop is suitable for both beginners and experienced dancers. We will be learning dances together and using the circle, the dances, and the music to explore the theme. The dances should help us to open doorways within ourselves to deeper levels of awareness of the influx of the Divine into every part of our lives.

Rev. Rita Russell, has loved circle dancing for 20 years, taught workshops at the Conference Retreat Centre for 9 of these, and leads a monthly group. She uses sacred dance in her ministry to facilitate a greater connection with

the Divine Source. *Please wear comfortable clothing.*

Staying Married

I will tell the story of my struggle while in Ecuador to stay married, and the even harder road of finding a happy marriage. This story will be followed by a discussion focusing on the social need to support marriages. How can Swedenborg's Writings be best taught to prepare young women for strong marriages? What role do the teachings on Chastity in *Conjugal Love* play in marriages? Do these teachings on Chastity help or hinder strong marriages? 4-16 participants.

Michelle Morey Synnestvedt

Women's Voices: A Chronology of Women's Roles in the Swedenborgian Denominations

In this workshop, we will hear from a panel of women from various branches of the Swedenborgian denomination as they tell the story of women's voices and roles in their respective organizations. The panel presentation will be followed by questions and discussion. We will end with processing and prayer time in response to any feelings or prayer focuses that come up for the panel and participants.

Roslyn Taylor earned her MA in Religious Studies from the Academy of the New Church in 1999, and is an adjunct staff chaplain at the University of Pennsylvania Medical Center, Philadelphia, PA. As the chair of the Caritas Study Group, she is currently editing a volume about wholeness theology.

Living Spiritual Community

We can learn to be spiritual companions to each other on our life's journey. This workshop will be an opportunity to experience both one-on-one spiritual friendship and a peer group for spiritual companionship. I will be utilizing material from the field of spiritual direction and showing how it can be adapted to our Swedenborgian theology.

Rev. Dr. Wilma Wake, minister at Portland [Maine] Swedenborgian

Church and spiritual director.

Infinite Variety in Religious Practices

This participatory workshop is open to women from any religious background. After a short presentation we will enter into discussions of the amazing variety of ways that people practice their religious faith. We will focus more on the individual's psychological experience rather than doctrinal details. This workshop is inspired by the works of William James, father of American Psychology, and son of Swedenborgian Henry James. WJ states: "Religion—the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men/women in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the Divine." (Did you know William James's writing was the inspiration for Bill W to create the 12-step program for spiritual recovery?) Join the discussion about the beauty in the infinite variety of the ways people worship their Higher Power.

Dr. Soni Werner, is Assistant Professor of Psychology at Bryn Athyn College of the New Church. She is a married mom of two daughters, who recently did a summer research project analyzing Swedenborgian influences on William James, and William James' influence on the whole field of Psychology.

Feisty Women in Swedenborgian Publishing

The Swedenborg Foundation, only fifteen minutes from Temenos, is offering a workshop, a tour, and a tea. Over afternoon tea, Carol Lawson, editor of the CHRYSLIS READER and chair of the Education and Outreach Committee, will discuss the role and purpose of the READER, as well as how to submit poetry and prose for publication. Alice B. Skinner, who served for ten years as the Foundation's president and is currently serving as chair of the Publications Committee, will talk about the publication process of *Rooted in Spirit: A Harvest of Women's Wisdom*, which she edited.

(Continued on page 43)

Wine, Cheese, and Checkbook Party

(Continued from page 40)

that evening. Added to \$13,500 already raised and pledged recently by church members, friends, and other community groups, well over \$16,000 of the \$100,000 goal has already been met. But we still have a long way to go.

Rev. Nadine invites you to become part of this new and growing ministry in Southwest Florida. If you would like to help with this endeavor, you may send your check, made payable to the New Church of Southwest Florida New Facilities Fund, to the church at 2801 Estero Blvd., Unit N, Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931. As our formal invitation said, "This may be the most expensive glass of wine you ever had, but the future of our community is worth it."

For more information and updates on our program development, contact Rev. Nadine at the above address or at 239-765-8483. "Seek, and you shall find; ask and it shall be given to you; knock, and the door will be opened."



Gathering Leaves

(Continued from page 42)

You will meet the almost all-female staff of the Foundation, its publisher, editor, financial/facility administrator, marketing assistant, and customer service representative (in addition to its male administrative assistant,) who will lead you on a brief tour of the headquarters located in West Chester's oldest building, dating from 1773.

Note: If you would like to attend, but have financial restrictions, contact Jane Siebert, 620-459-6504 sieberts@southwind.net

For registration materials and further information, contact information@temenosretreat.org

Phone: (610) 696-8145



PASSAGES

Confirmations

Castillo, Danz, Frostestad, Gottschalk, Jepsen, Peterlin, Santimauro, Schuster—Juan Jose Castillo, Katie Teresa Danz, Lena Hagen Frostestad, Kelsey Mae Gottschalk, Samantha Maria Jepsen, Sebastian Bogomir Peterlin; Giovanna Lanelle Santimauro; Rachel Elizabeth Schuster were confirmed into the faith and life of the Swedenborgian Church May 4, 2003, the Rev. Rachel Rivers officiating.

New Members Welcomed

David, Denny, Hanson, Kornhauser, McNiff, Moss, Peck, Pico, Saeger, Stratton—Robert David, David Denny, Julie Hanson, John Kornhauser, Kevin McNiff, Doug Moss, Kathy Peck, Jerry Pico, Sally Saeger, and James Stratton were welcomed into membership November 17, 2002, at the San Francisco church, the Rev. Rachel Rivers officiating.

Francis, Fraser, Page, Moran, Sandahl, Willoughby—Cynthia and Michele Francis, Marcy Fraser, Hope Page, Judy Palmer Moran, Lana Sandahl, and Lisa Willoughby were welcomed into membership March 23, 2003, at the San Francisco church, the Rev. Rachel Rivers officiating.

Deaths

Goff—Audrey May Goff, age 89, longtime member of the Fryeburg church, entered the spiritual world January 30, 2004. A memorial service was conducted February 4, at the Wood Funeral Home, Fryeburg, Maine, the Rev. Ken Turley officiating. She is survived by one son, Richard J. Goff.

Kann—Asela Gutierrez Kann entered the spiritual world in late summer 2003, with memorial services held for her September 5 at the Hollywood Forevermore Cemetery in Hollywood, California. Ms. Kann obtained her doctoral degree from the University of Havana, Cuba, and was for many years a college professor, both in the U.S. and in South America. She became fascinated with Emanuel Swedenborg later in life, and translated the biogra-

phy of his most famous devotee, Helen Keller, into Spanish for the Swedenborg Foundation. She also translated many of Swedenborg's books into Spanish. She wrote many articles about Swedenborg for the Spanish-language newspapers of the U.S., including *La Opinion* and *Diario de las Americas*.



Locke—Johanna Locke, longtime member of the Church of the Holy City in Royal Oak, Michigan, entered the spiritual world at the Port Huron Hospital July 11th, 2003. A memorial service was conducted July 14 at the Smith Funeral Home in Port Huron, Michigan, the Rev. Renee Machiniak officiating. Johanna was the wife of Wilfred Locke, who died in October (see December 2003 *Messenger*). She served as president of the Detroit church for several years and attended many national conventions. She is survived by her two children, Bob Locke and Carol Ricca.

Whyte—Verna Whyte, age 96, longtime member of the church of the Holy City in Edmonton, Alberta, entered the spiritual world December 19, 2003. A memorial service was conducted December 22, the Rev. John Maine officiating. Verna was the mother of Doreen Van Rooijen and her brother Ron. She is also survived by eight grandchildren and eighteen great-grandchildren.



Change of Address

The Virginia Street Swedenborgian Church in St. Paul has a new e-mail address: VSSC@msn.com.

Also, we have recently posted a very nice website at www.virginiastreetchurch.org. Even though some people have had trouble accessing the site, it can be seen through the link on the denomination's page, www.swedenborg.org

Correction

The email address published in the February *Messenger* for Margaret Culver, J. Appleseed & Co. was wrong. The correct address is: margaretculver@sbcglobal.net

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.

Gathering Leaves

A Swedenborgian
Women's Retreat
Temenos

Conference & Retreat Center
May 7-9, 2004



Gathering Leaves Beginnings:

The idea for Gathering Leaves had its beginning in the spring of 2002. Women from the General Convention of North America approached women in the General Church of the New Jerusalem, the Lord's New Church, and the General Conference of the New Church, extending an invitation to join together and make connections with each other. This seed of an idea has been germinating, sprouting, growing, and looks ready to burst forth in May of this year. I have felt specially fortunate and blessed to have a part in the organization of this happening. The wonder and joy I have experienced thus far in meeting and working with these women has already worked changes in my life. It is surprising to realize that they have been so close to me all this time and yet so far. Come join us in expanding our horizons, our relationships, our lives. *Jody Hyatt, Steering Committee Chair*

Mission Statement: We are gathering to promote harmony among women who are associated with the various Swedenborgian organizations around the world. We are coming together to acknowledge our common beliefs, explore our differences, develop a respect for one another's contributions, create an atmosphere for healing, and celebrate our spiritual sisterhood. It is our intention to promote a sense of charity and goodwill so that we might say, "No matter what form her doctrine and her external form of worship take, this is my sister; I observe that she worships the Lord and is a good woman."

Opening Plenary Panel: We will begin our event with a panel of women sharing perspectives from the different Swedenborgian denominations. Jane Siebert will moderate the discussion. This will be followed by small break-out groups to reflect and respond to the panel.

Closing Plenary Speakers: We will close our event with reflections on how we can go forth from this gathering bringing our experience into our faith communities and our lives. *Louise Barry Rose, Alice Skinner*

Steering Committee: *Lisa Hyatt Cooper, Rev. Susannah Currie, Liz Waters Heinrichs, Siri Hurst, Jody Cooper Hyatt, Emily Jane Lemole, Dawn Potts, Jane Siebert, Star Silverman, Lynne Smith, Rev. Dr. Wilma Wake*

Descriptions of Workshop Offerings

Sisters in Light ~ Exploring The Power of "AND"

In this workshop, after a brief presentation, we will spend time together in several fun exercises (groups of two) getting to know our spiritual sisters in light. By being a non-judgmental, listening presence we will hold place in our heart for the stories of the other. The exercises are designed to be fun, light-hearted and informative. We will share as much or as little as is comfortable for us. There is no coercion, only freedom. The hope of this workshop is to be transformed by friendship, by the grace of participation in the sacredness of the life of another.

"And" is a place where good can happen. Carla Friedrich is a student at the Swedenborgian House Of Studies at Pacific School of Religion, California.

(Continued on page 41)

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of North America
The Messenger
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