

THE MESSENGER

Published by the Swedenborgian Church of North America

December 2006

In Memoriam

Army PFC Keith Jesse Moore, 28, died on October 14, 2006 while serving his country in Iraq. Keith enlisted around the time of his birthday in January, 2006, and after Basic and Advanced Infantry Training was assigned to the 10th Mountain Division at Fort Drum, New York. In August, Keith was assigned at his own request to the 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, which was being deployed to Iraq. Keith was one of fourteen US military casualties in Iraq the weekend of October 14.

Keith was born on January 7, 1978 in Newton, Massachusetts the only child of Clifford J. Moore, Jr. and the Reverend Susan G. Turley. He spent his first year of life at the Swedenborg School of Religion, where Sue finished seminary and graduate studies from Suffolk University to become ordained in 1980. At this time the family moved to Portland, Maine, where Sue worked as a parish minister in the Portland, Swedenborgian Community Church and Cliff completed studies in law at the University of Maine. Keith attended elementary school in Portland up through the third grade. At that time, the family moved to San Pedro, California for three years. Moving to Sacramento, Keith attended Rescue

Elementary School until the family settled in San Francisco. Keith graduated from Woodside International High School as a National Merit Scholar semi-finalist at sixteen. He studied Latin, loved music, especially the Blues and Rock and Roll and pursued math and physics in undergraduate studies.

Keith was a giving and loyal friend. He continued his friendships from high school throughout his adult years, several of whom spoke about their friendship at his service. Keith was intelligent, academic and passionate about justice, human dignity and rights. He was proud of our country and at the same time critical. He knew the historical implications of our Constitution and the Bill of Rights. As an American he felt committed to serve his country and contribute in a significant way toward the liberation of all peoples. Keith was also passionate about the environment and the space industry. He dreamed of working some day in the area of astrophysics to make a positive contribution. Even during his younger years, Keith talked about joining the military as a way to serve according to the will of the citizenry. Although he understood the complexity of the Iraqi situation, he believed in helping to improve the lives of the Iraqi

people, especially the children. It was for this, that Keith was willing and did make the ultimate sacrifice.

He is survived by his parents, Susan Turley and Cliff Moore, his grandmothers, Marilyn Turley and Peggy Moore, and many uncles, aunts, and cousins.

A Tribute to the Life and Memory of PFC Keith Jesse Moore

PFC Keith Jesse Moore died while serving our country in Iraq on October 14, 2006. On October 20th SFC Gene Siler, Keith's platoon sergeant at Ft. Drum, volunteered to accompany Keith



home to San Francisco. SFC Siler shared with Keith's family that it was Keith's commitment, maturity and work ethic that set him apart from the other soldiers and made an impression on him. Not only did they enjoy collegiality, SFC Siler and Keith became friends and as such, SFC Siler wanted to be there with Keith's family and to show honor and respect for his comrade.

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Dear Friends,

It is Tuesday morning and I am in the office after taking the "red-eye" back from San Francisco. My nephew Keith's memorial service was Friday afternoon and after spending two more days with my sister and brother-in-law decompressing from an intensely active and emotionally draining two weeks, I am now back home and it is business as usual. Only it is not business as usual and it never will be again. As a minister, I have been through countless burials, funerals and memorial services of all kinds, some were a melancholy but blessed relief as the person had lived a long and full life and was now released from a lingering state of physical decline; others have left people reeling in pain and grief from the sudden passing of one too young; others have been unexplainable accidents, sudden illnesses; others slow but inevitable circumstances that no matter how hard we prayed could not be reversed. Each one of these deaths has touched me in some way, some more and some less, of course, and nothing in comparison to what the immediate family and friends have experienced. But the passing of my nephew Keith is different.

It is not just that he is closer in family, although not since my father twenty-three years ago have I been through the death of anyone this closely related to me; and it is not just that he was too young, although he was far too young; and it is not just that he died in the service, although the loss of our young people who have the courage and the sense of appreciation and loyalty to our country to volunteer for military duty carries

a special poignancy; it was all of these things, but it was something more. Keith was the only child of my sister Sue and Cliff, and the first of my mother's grandchildren to pass on. The depth of the grief and loss of parents for their child, and a grandmother for her grandson, was simply heart wrenching. And knowing that my children will never get to know their cousin and exchange stories about their parents, and that from here on any family gathering, whatever the reason for being together may be, whatever merry-making may be going on, will have, even though it may remain unspoken, an underlying current of loss and sadness.

As human beings, unless we live in the denial that our culture so relentlessly encourages, we know that all of us die at some point. And as people of faith, we believe that while the body dies, the spirit—the real person—lives on in a heavenly society created and maintained by a loving Lord. Today, with all of this swirling through my head and resonating through my heart, and as I precariously balance between the edge of bursting into tears and laughing inappropriately at the silliest of things, today I know more than ever before just how precious life is. Today, I know how desperately important it is that we make the absolute most of every opportunity to cultivate within us and to share outwardly in both word and action the love we feel inside. *There is nothing more important than this!* For whatever we may accomplish while in the world, whatever money and possessions we may accrue, whatever monuments we may build to our existence here on earth, when it is our turn to die

and we enter into the spiritual world, our worth will be measured in terms of what we did with the love that God has given us. Every moment is precious, every person is precious, every opportunity is precious. And it can all be gone in a heartbeat. It is not given us to understand the deeper purpose of Divine Providence. But we are given the opportunity to make our contribution. And however small and seemingly insignificant our contribution may seem to us, it is of inestimable value in the lives of those around us, and precious in the sight of God. Today, I know this to be true in a way that, even after nearly sixty years of life, I have never known before. Keith, while I mourn your death, and my heart aches for my family, I thank you for that lesson.

—Rev. Ken Turley
Fryeburg, Maine

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In Memoriam

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After gathering at the San Francisco Airport to be there for his arrival, Keith's father, Clifford Moore and mother, Susan Turley, as well as other family members, officers of the SFPD, the Honor Guard and other military representatives and the Patriot Guard Riders, escorted Keith to the McAvoy and O'Hara Mortuary in San Francisco. As the sun set, transforming the sky into twilight over Ocean Beach, the procession made its way to the city. Silhouetted all along the top of the dunes and on the walking path by the Great Highway were groups of people of all ages and backgrounds saluting as the fallen soldier slowly made his way home. The light from the night sky found its way through the windows and illuminated the American Flag draped over his casket. Friends, family and members of the community came to honor Keith and say their farewells on October 26th.

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The following day family and friends, as well as, police officers from every town from San Francisco to Pacifica, the Honor Guard, the Patriot Guard Riders and the military officers escorted Keith from the city to St. Peter's Catholic Church of Pacifica where about 400 people gathered to mourn and celebrate the life of PFC Keith Moore. VA Chaplains Jack and Mary Hyatt (Lakota) provided a sage ritual as Keith was brought into the church. The Reverend Andy Stinson officiated at both the service and interment. The Reverend Ken Turley and his son, Ethan provided music and his wife, Laurie Turley sang the Lord's Prayer. VA Chaplain Virginia Jackson sang *His Eye is on the Sparrow* and Buddhist Priest, Julie Hanada-Lee took the mourners to a holy place as she chanted Shishinrad: The Obeisance of a Sincere Mind.

SFC Gene Siler spoke passionately about Keith's commitment and devotion to the Army and how he lived by the Soldier's Creed. Alan Thomsen, friend of the family, shared a beautiful and elegant testimony to his love for Keith and the friendship they developed over the years. Keith's four friends from high school Casey, Chris, Gary and Sam shared touching memories and affection for their beloved friend. The eulogy was delivered by his parents, Cliff and Sue. They shared stories of Keith's early life, his talents and accomplishments, dreams and aspirations for the future. Military awards were given to his family by the Major General Gidley, Commander of the Army National Guard, including the Gold Star, War on Terrorism Service Medal, Iraqi Campaign, and For Good Conduct and Military Merit. At the end of the service, Keith was

ceremonially escorted by the Honor Guard pall bearers followed by his friends, as honorary pall bearers.

The service was followed by an interment at the Golden Gate National Cemetery, which has military personnel buried there from 1884. The procession from the church to the cemetery was far back as the eye could see. All throughout Pacifica were flags at half mast, the Fire Department hung their flag at the end of an extended ladder and stood at attention, according to military tradition, and children from the local school stood at the side of the road waving flags and putting their hands at their hearts as the procession passed by. Others demonstrated their respect and honor toward Keith as they stood at the side of the road, hands over their hearts. The American flag hung with pride at every business and home throughout the town. The silence was gripping and the tears flowed freely.

As we gathered around the gravesite, the Patriot Guard Riders formed a protective circle around us. Rev. Andy opened the service with words of comfort and unity. After the flags were folded in military fashion by the Honor Guard, SFC Siler gave Cliff and Sue each an American flag. The twenty-one gun salute was completed followed by Taps and the bagpipes. Upon leaving, close friends and family placed a white rose on the casket saying quietly their parting words to their beloved son, grandson, cousin, nephew, and friend.

The reception, given by the Pacifica Blue Star Military Moms, held at the American Legion Hall, was a time to share stories, view a visual tribute of Keith's life, to

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In Memoriam

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listen to his friends and family play Keith's favorite songs, to support one another as we grieve the loss of a wonderful young man who died far too young.

The day of tribute ended as we gathered outside to release a blossom of red balloons, part of the center piece for the reception that Ross Fish, friend of the family, made in Keith's memory. It was a spectacular display of gold and red roses with a 49er's football imbedded in the flowers to commemorate Keith's love and passion for football. Under a beautiful blue sky, the balloons were released unintentionally directly under several electrical wires. Miraculously, the balloons slowly and gracefully eased their way up into the sky without touching a single wire. We watched in awe as the balloons silently and gradually floated away, becoming tiny red dots in the vast sky. One of Keith's favorite predators, the hawk, circled silently above, wings catching the wind's current as it glided across the mountainside. With hugs and tears and promises to see one another soon, we parted company to find our way back home.

The death of PFC Moore brought the community together all across the Peninsula. Complete strangers shared that his death brought the Iraqi war home, it became personal to them. They came to pay their respects and to honor Keith, to offer condolences and compassionate support. Surfers caught waves for Keith, their form of prayer. Other grieving military parents sent cards and shared their story of loss. Chaplains from the Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers and Clinical

Pastoral Education, Supervisors and students from all over the country and some from other countries sent cards, flowers, plants, food and called to offer support and hear our grief. The Reverends Doug Moss and Eric Allison provided support to the family and attended the service.

The Bay Area came together as they collectively and individually grieved the death of the second soldier from San Francisco. Local and national news and radio stations, newspapers reported the story. His face appeared on the morning and evening news over and over again. One can write his name in any search engine and find stories and tributes, letters of condolences from all over the world and discussion about the life and death of this soldier and the meaning of yet, another causality of war. The death of PFC Keith Jesse Moore impacted the larger community as we all came together to grieve his loss, to grieve the loss of one of San Francisco's own, who in some way represented our loss of all the hundreds of other American soldiers and Iraqi citizens. There were no protesters or intrusive media as was anticipated that day, only those who came to honor and show respect for a life ending too soon and to offer love and support to one another.

This day, a tribute to PFC Keith Jesse Moore, will forever remain in memorial as a day that family and friends came forward to honor Keith and to gather around one another in a circle of love, compassion and unity. It was a day that stood still, and for a moment the community bonded as one in honor of our fallen hero.

—Rev. Susan Turley ☸

~ READERS WRITE ~

Contributing to a Remembrance of Muff Worden

My first recollection of Muff was when she arrived for Convention in Brockton, Mass. I remember her driving her '55 Chevy, and it was full of things she needed, and "uses": books, music, autoharp—books, books, and more books. I thought she had brought the Philadelphia library on Swedenborg with her.

That was close to 40 years ago—we all were much younger and belonged to the ANCL. If you are not our age, that equals to American New Church League.

I had been very active in the Elmwood church and, since the convention was in Brockton—ten miles away—had helped in the planning of that, too. One of our meetings of ANCL had to deal with rewriting the ANCL constitution. What were we thinking?? We took up all our time making sure every item was in place. And there was Muff—giving us the encouragement we needed to get this task behind us. And, since I was without transportation—I didn't own a car—Muff let me drive hers. What a deal! A friend comes to town and I can use her car and she pays for the gas!

After that I ran for the presidency of ANCL and served in that capacity for three years, plus a year on general council after Rev. Bob Young passed away. As ANCL President, I went to Philadelphia and interviewed Rev. Richard Tafel, Sr., President of Convention at that time. Muff led me around Philadelphia. She was always there with her smile or a song from her heart.

I and many others have been privileged to have known the real Muff—and I know, through the writings that Swedenborg has left us—that I will hear her voice again.

Ernie Ekberg,
Montana, Texas

Editor's Note: *Ethelwyn (Muff) Worden entered the spiritual world August 25, 2006. See October 2006 Messenger, Passages.* ☸

There is Swedenborgian Community on the Web!

It is plain that the church of the Lord is not here, nor there, but that it is everywhere...where people live according to the precepts of charity.

Emanuel Swedenborg, Arcana Coelestia 8152.

As Swedenborg describes above, the church is everywhere and now it's online!

www.SwedenborgianCommunity.org has been steadily growing since its June 23rd, 2006 debut. For six months we have been providing spiritual food to isolated Swedenborgians, spiritual seekers interested in learning about our church, and members of other Swedenborgian churches who enjoy our evening chat format. Our users come from all over the 50 states, and the globe! College students, young parents, retirees and many more; our community consists of a wide range of people who offer a great variety of perspectives to our spiritual discussions. We have, at this writing, 94 registered users and an average attendance of 7 to 17 at our Thursday and Sunday evening chats. In addition, Rev. Sage maintains email correspondence with a handful of seekers who have questions about the Church and Swedenborgian teachings.

In addition to these uses, as many churches allow other groups to meet in their space, we have opened up our sanctuary chat space to the women of Gathering Leaves and we welcome other requests from national Swedenborgian groups who would like to hold online discussions. Just contact Rev. Sage.

(RevSage@SwedenborgianCommunity.org)

This website is truly becoming a spiritual community!

Hear from some of our members:

"I am so thankful for this new community! I had felt isolated for so long. I was reading books and old sermons online, but I was just missing church and the community. I had commented to my mother how frustrating it was to have no way of knowing if there were even any Swedenborgians in my city. She told me that this new website was under construction and I waited patiently for it to get started.

"Well it's here! It feels so good to wake up every Sunday morning, turn on the computer, and there it is, Rev. Sage's sermon to us, the congregation. Reading that brand new sermon, knowing that everyone else is reading it too and that we'll all be discussing it together later is exciting. Being

connected with this group fills me up spiritually in a way that just reading on my own is unable to do.

"In the chats on Sunday and Thursday evenings I get to hear different viewpoints and great ideas, from some folks who possess great knowledge and wisdom about the Bible, Swedenborg's teachings, and life in general. These people (I hope to meet them all someday) are my new church family. They came just in time, as I had just given up once again after another church search in another new city and I was so discouraged.

"Everyone should drop in occasionally to see what's going on, we're having a great time! And pass the word on to others who are also living away from their church."

—*Rachael Sbrocco*
Houston, Texas

"Swedenborgiancommunity.org provides a place for me to go twice a week to ground, de-stress, and reevaluate what's going on in my life and whether I'm being the person I want to be. It provides a great opportunity to connect with Swedenborgians all over the United States, and, in some cases, in other areas of the world, especially for those of us in isolated areas. It has also made it much easier for me, as a college student constantly invited to other churches to attend that I don't really want to go to, to say "No, I already have a church I'm happy with, thanks." Swedenborgiancommunity.org has given me more information on Swedenborgianism, as well as a great place to refer people who know less about the religion. I'm overall extremely happy with the site."

—*Karen Degi*
Fort Collins, Colorado

"I went to the Detroit church as a child until our family moved to Washington state. In 1997 my daughter, Alice, and I visited Almont Summer School and reconnected with my Swedenborgian roots. We started coming to Almont every other year and I started looking for opportunities to learn more about Swedenborg's teachings. A month ago I was looking at www.swedenborg.org and learned about the online community. I joined and started participating in the Sunday and Thursday chats. The people were very friendly and welcoming. It

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There is Swedenborgian Community on the Web!

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has been great to take an hour or two a week to focus on a particular aspect of faith with people from all over the US."

—Tory Clarke Henderson
Olympia, Washington

Since we first launched at the end of June we've changed and grown to fit the needs of our community. Rev. Sage has begun posting her sermons in audio format so that you can listen instead of just read. We also now have the ability to post other music and video files on the site. We've begun sharing hymns on Sundays before our evening chats. We have also renamed our chat rooms "The Sanctuary" and "The Fellowship Hall" providing the Fellowship Hall as a space where users can meet and socialize with each other. This is where you will most often find people fifteen minutes before any scheduled chats, and often afterwards for an informal Coffee Hour (for those who can stay awake!). We do hope that as we grow, and particularly become more financially solvent, that we will be able to offer chats at different times to suit different time zones as it can get a bit late for people on the East Coast.

And speaking of becoming financially solvent, we welcome donations in our online Collection Plate, serviced through PayPal. If you see the use in the mission of this ministry to make Swedenborgian Community available to people everywhere, then you may consider making a donation.

Rev. Sage posts a weekly spiritual message on Sunday mornings and each message is archived and available on the site if you miss a week. We've informally begun to

pray together as a community at the end of chat sessions and one of our members has created a virtual Lighting of the Candles, and Opening of the Word that we have instituted as a regular practice at the beginning of each Sunday Evening chat. In this way our Chats are really becoming Church for many people who would not be able to attend a Swedenborgian service otherwise.

We invite you to join us at www.SwedenborgianCommunity.org and participate in our growing community.

What's coming up?

We would like to begin an online book group discussion of George Dole's *Sorting Things Out: Swedenborgian Concepts to Help Untangle Life's Issues* to begin in the New Year. This group will be held on Tuesday evenings at 6pm Pacific Time/9pm Eastern Time and begin January 9th, 2006. This will be a great way to deepen your understanding of Swedenborg, and to meet new people! Please contact Rev. Sage if you plan to participate. We need a commitment of at least ten to hold the group.

Remember you can always come and read or listen to our spiritual messages each Sunday and as a registered user you can join us for an hour of spiritual discussion and community at 6 pm Pacific Time/9 pm Eastern Time on Thursdays and Sundays. And drop into the Fellowship Hall a little early for informal chat!

Many blessings,

Rev. Sage Currie and our founding
Committee members Beth Harvie, Sue
Ditmire and Susan Wood-Ashton. ☪

"Sweet Night" for Christmas



Beth Bolwerk recently became the soprano soloist at the San Diego

Swedenborgian Church. Her CD, "La Noche Dulce" would make a lovely Christmas present for families with young children, or for adults to lull them into tranquility.

La Noche Dulce means "Sweet Night" - the perfect title for this collection of nurturing songs so lovingly sung by Beth Bolwerk. A unique and thoughtful gift for children and adults alike!

Beth fell in love with world music while studying opera and international music in Seattle and San Francisco. Her interest in the healing aspect of music led her to world lullabies. She carefully selected these songs for their beauty and positive message and arranged the tracks in order, from faster tempo to slower songs to assist the listener in relaxing and falling into a peaceful sleep.

You can listen to and buy this album at

<http://cdbaby.com/bolwerk> ☪

House for Rent Adjacent to Almont New Church Assem- bly & Retreat Center Allenton, Michigan

Three-bedroom/two-bath house with den and walk-out basement. Includes a new deck & furnace. Has a beautiful view and much privacy on a quiet country road. \$900/month. Contact Joy Zimmer (586-336-0558) or Don Craig (810-459-6931) if interested. ☪

Christmas Doesn't Just Happen

Jim Erickson



On a 2006 calendar I was given, the month of December has a small artistic device. The little rectangles that represent days are numbered, as usual, except for the last Monday of the month in which there appears simply a small picture of an angel. I'm not sure what the intent of the Calendar designer was in doing this, but I like the subtle reminder this little angel represents.

Simply numbering that space on the calendar might mislead us a bit about the nature of the holiday. If there had been a "25" in that space, it may seem to us that the coming of Christmas Day is inevitable—that on December 24th at the stroke of midnight, it will just be Christmas. My point here is that Christmas doesn't just happen as a result of the movement of the hands on the clock. We need to make Christmas happen.

I'm not talking about having to go out and buy gifts, wrap them and place them under the tree. That doesn't make Christmas happen either. We need to make Christmas happen on the inside, consciously assuming the Christmas spirit and opening ourselves up to the love and genuine concern that marks this holiday. We need to approach the Christ child in our own way, reflecting on what that event means for us instead of simply setting out a Nativity in some corner of the room. If we do not prepare ourselves for Christmas, then that last Monday of the month is going to be December the 25th. Just a number.

I am struck by the story of Joseph's preparation for the big event that was about to occur in his life. We hear quite often about Mary's preparation—about how the angel visited her and how she gave her approval for this child to be born with her. I find Joseph's story to be equally moving. I'm certain that he had some very different ideas about how his family would come about, and because he was a man of stern principle he was ready to break his engagement with Mary when she was found to be with child. But in a divine moment of rationality he is moved to put his stern principles aside and accept Mary into his household, knowing that the baby she carried had an indispensable destiny and needed his protection. He is able to put his own principles aside in favor of something he knows to be right, even though these unfolding circumstances do not conform to his expectations.

We face a similar challenge of character in this season of the year. Christmas may not happen in the way we expect it to happen—that is always a possibility. Many of us may not be spending Christmas with those we wish to spend it with. Many of us may not be able to put "enough" presents under the tree, however much "enough" is for us. But if we can open ourselves to receive Christmas as it is instead of what we think it should be—if we can allow ourselves to get caught up in the thrill of the season and pay homage to the Christ child as that love unfolds in us—then I guarantee December the 25th won't be just December the 25th. Christmas will have been born in us again.

I encourage you to be active participants in the Christmas experience this year, because a truly spiritual Christmas is not a passive exercise. Make conscious and deliberate efforts to reach out to others. Strain to hear new insights in all the familiar carols you sing. If commercialism seems to have taken some of the joy of Christmas away from you, then take it back, because what Christmas means for us, historically, philosophically, and emotionally, is worth celebrating.

All our best to you and yours this season.

*Reprinted from the Virginia Street Swedenborgian Church newsletter, December 2005.
Jim Erickson is the vice-president of our denomination.*

2006 Youth Worker Conference

Nine excited and optimistic youth workers gathered at Blairhaven Conference & Retreat Center at Howlands Landing in South Duxbury, Massachusetts to attend the Youth Worker Conference



Kurt Fekete, Youth Director

in late September 2006. The group, led by Swedenborgian Youth Director Kurt Fekete and City Mission Society Boston Urban Outreach Director Carl McDonald, included four ministers (the Revs. Kevin Baxter, Lee Woofenden, Carla Friedrich and Hunter Roberts) along with active church youth leaders from Maine (Linda Krieger), Michigan (Lisa Lucka) and California (Samantha Durella).

The comprehensive three-day workshop was filled with sessions covering many relevant aspects of working with adolescents today. The meetings were extremely energetic as participants presented challenging questions and engaged in lively debate. For our three days together, we listened, learned, played and prayed together with a pervasive focus on bettering our youth programming, cultural awareness and spiritual message.

Each morning and evening, a different youth worship experience

was offered. Here, prayer, reflection and opening up to the presence of God were active and applied. Crafts and nature walks were woven together with responsive queries and interactive dialogue. Effective youth worship often takes on a more concrete form than what is encountered during traditional Sunday church worship and each participant was able to discover this through short practical devotionals (e.g. labyrinth, painting, etc.). All attendees also received a binder filled with useful youth materials, activities and resources.

Once we settled into Blairhaven on Friday (air travel from the West did not go particularly smoothly, with one attendee stranded in a Texas hotel overnight) we launched into a morning session rediscovering our purpose as we discussed "why youth ministry?" A wonderful list was generated in response to this question and it is worth reprinting here.

Why Youth Ministry?

- To build a loving environment
- To experience gifts of grace – God's love and forgiveness
- To create a place of belonging
- To recharge spiritual energy
- To provide balance

- To find soul – find your real self
- To balance preservation and protection of innocence with leadership challenges to prepare youth for the world
- To establish a sense of community – an alternative to competitiveness
- To discover safe sanctuary
- To present tools to find God
- To allow children to reach their own conclusions – in their own freedom.

We then closed the first session by exploring three critical elements in developing a youth

ministry: vision, mission statement (purpose, action and values), and key program building blocks.

The next two sessions covered youth ministry leadership, organization and safety. These sessions focused on the "nuts and bolts" of youth work, covering both the struc-

ture and requirements of an effective youth program as well as the procedures and policies that should be put in place to create a safe environment for the youth and youth workers.

The three sessions offered the following day all dealt specifically with youth ministry activities and practices. In summary, we discussed ministry with younger youth (here defined as preteens or preadolescents, aged 9 – 12). This age group is absolutely essential to

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Youth worker conference attendees engage in a morning youth spiritual craft devotional. From left around table: Rev. Lee Woofenden, Lisa Lucka, Carl McDonald, Rev. Hunter Roberts, Rev. Carla Friedrich, Samantha Durella, and Linda Krieger



Hunter, Lisa, Carla, and Linda

the church, yet it is often the group that is most overlooked and feels most disconnected. Our afternoon session was titled "Where's God? Developing Spiritual Practices with Youth." In this meeting, we considered how to bring God to youth using engaging topics, innovative activities, fun celebrations and creative worship. This informative session was filled with useful material and program advice. The closing session concerned social justice, service and advocacy. We discussed the right and wrong ways to do mission trips, how to appropriately and correctly do service work for those in need, and how to make sure you don't make your needs the needs of the people you are serving.

We departed early on the following day, eager to put all of the information we shared into practice. Although exhausted from the long nights of conversation, the group left with new enthusiasm and excitement for youth work. As Youth Director, I continue to travel and offer all churches and groups youth leader training modules on a variety of topics. If you would like a list of workshop topics to review or would like to schedule a visit, please contact me at kfekete@hotmail.com or 866-333-7295. We intend to hold this comprehensive youth conference again on a bi-annual basis or as soon as enough interested people request this event. Please let me know how and what you are doing with your church youth and always feel free to ask me for assistance with any aspect related to youth work.

—Kurt Fekete 

Correspondences: The Puzzle Pieces of Life

Introductory Note from Rev. Carla Friedrich: The "Language of Correspondences" or "Science of Sciences" as it is often referred to, is laid out here by Rev. Kevin Baxter as it relates to the narrative of our lives; unfixed, organic, personal, prayerful, and process-oriented with practical, concrete examples to get its useful meaning across.

Kevin Baxter

Imagine if you will, a puzzle scattered about a table. Easy puzzles have obviously differently-shaped big pieces with distinctive colors, while harder puzzles have smaller pieces with less detail and unclear color differentiations. This difficulty creates both fun and frustration.

Now imagine that you get a puzzle that is the size of the earth with all the variations of color and shape. You open the box lid and spill the pieces on to your incredibly large table, but instead of sorting out the corner pieces and lining up gradients of color and shape you instantly know where each piece belongs.

This analogy might, to some degree, tell us what life was like for the members of what Swedenborg called the Most Ancient Church, and also what heaven is like for the angels. In this state of true vision, a person is not fooled by the masks, gradients, or distortions of perception or deception. Over time, humanity has fallen away from its original understanding of the pieces of this physical puzzle—that is, of course, until Swedenborg opened the Word by unlocking the forgotten science of correspondences.

What are correspondences? Are they more than arbitrary allegory

and symbolism? While some debate the issue, the New Church says yes. A very clear example is the face. A face corresponds to the affections (will) or thoughts of the mind (understanding). A happy face is generally worn by a happy person. The face is not the happiness itself, rather, it is the vessel that embodies the happiness of our soul.

As we all know, people learn to "keep a stiff upper lip" by "putting on a happy face," even when they don't feel like it. This means that the face no longer corresponds to the internal state the person is feeling. Does this example, then, disprove the concept of correspondences? No. Correspondences are not static, but rather contextual and dynamic. So, as the true intent of the face changes, so does the correspondence that goes along with it. The smiling face takes on a meaning of deception and falsity.

I will be using the science/art of correspondences to illustrate a technique one can apply in understanding Swedenborg's approach. All too often, we Swedenborgians apply correspondences as if they were strict definitions or mathematical formulas, when in fact they are much, much more. The more one learns how correspondences are used, the more the Bible and existence itself open up to a dynamic, complex, and amazing world.

Correspondences are dynamic. The meaning of a correspondence is not static, nor is it a simple game of "substitute this for that" that unlocks the deeper meaning of an appearance. Correspondences change depending on their role in a biblical story. They are more art than science.

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Correspondences: the Puzzle Pieces of Life

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Consider a paraphrased version of the story of David and Goliath (1 Samuel 17) as an example. The story goes like this:

The army of Israel was facing the army of the Philistines. Rather than have the two armies battle it out, Goliath, a huge, well armed champion of the Philistines challenged the army of Saul to send out its best warrior to fight him one-on-one. The stakes were simple and high: to the victor would go the spoils, which in this case would be the servitude of the losing nation's people. The people of Israel were afraid. It just so happened that, on that day, the shepherd boy David was dropping off some supplies for his brothers in the Israelite army when he heard the announcement. He asked why nobody had risen to the challenge, and was chastised for it.

After telling Saul that defeating Goliath was no more difficult than defeating the bears or the lions that attacked him in the field, David, refusing any armor, picked up his staff "and chose five smooth stones from the wadi (river bed), and put them in his shepherd's bag, in the pouch; his sling was in his hand, and he drew near the Philistine." (1 Sam 17:40) After some witty banter, the two charged at each other. David slung one of his stones right into Goliath's forehead, killing him, and became the victor.

Swedenborg tells us that the Philistines correspond to a belief in God, but without loving the neighbor. Armies, in general, correspond to the doctrines or teachings of the church—those troops assembled to engage in spiritual struggle. The armies of Israel represent the true teachings of the church, whereas the armies

of the Philistines are false teachings of a church.

These correspondences reveal that the inner sense of the passage is about the conflict between real truth and empty or false truth. The Israelite soldiers (true teachings) are frightened of the well-practiced Goliath (one who is in truths without good, which is falsity). In other words, Goliath knows his facts about religious doctrines and can use them six ways from Sunday, but he does not actually love the Lord or the neighbor. David represents the love and the wisdom of the Lord—goodness and truth conjoined. And David's five smooth stones, with their hard edges washed away, represent the literal biblical truth that has been cleansed and refined by the living, spiritual truth which flows from the Word (the water in the river bed).

I like the David and Goliath story because it provides us with several examples of the way in which correspondences are dynamic, both responding to and revealing the meaning of a story. One example of this lively quality of correspondences is found in the two armies which face off at the start of the story. We can see how the specific correspondence of an "army" changes, depending on exactly whose army it is. In biblical correspondences, whatever aids the people of Israel has a good correspondence, while anything that opposes the good of Israel receives a negative correspondence.

The correspondential significance of the stones/rocks in this story is, like the armies, also defined by their context. Generally, rocks correspond to biblical teachings, but the quality of truth or falsity of the teachings can vary depending on how they are used. Compare the rocks meant for the punishment of the adulterous woman (John 8: 1-5) to the stones

in the David and Goliath story. The stones in these two stories signify opposite things: the stones in the former case signify falsity, and in the latter, truth. In both cases, the stones serve as weapons—implements that kill or harm. In each case, however, the character and the intentions of the stone-throwers shift the meaning.

We saw above that, in the David and Goliath story, the stones are cleansed by water (spiritual truth) and are used to defend Israel (truth), so that they signify purified truths against falsities. The stones intended for the woman caught in adultery, on the other hand, would have been used for misguided punishment (note that the Lord, in this story, does not question the woman's guilt, but also does not condemn her). These stones, then, signify the misuse of the truths of the church to condemn and/or hurt someone.

I hope that this little exploration has shown that the artful science of correspondences is far from cut and dried – that, in fact, correspondences both give and receive meaning depending on their place in a story or situation.

Now we will use this system to examine the correspondences outside of a biblical source, how they work in our own lives.

Life, as we all know, is different from a written story. Stories and narratives have the interpretive advantage of being, usually, already complete: they have a beginning, a middle, and an end which the reader can discover. While our life's journey may have a beginning, middle, and end, we do not know what or when or why that end will be—in fact, we do not even know precisely where we are in our own life narrative. We are in the middle of our own stories, and we have only a general and

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Correspondences: the Puzzle Pieces of Life

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occasional sense of the particularities of God's providence. We cannot simply apply given correspondences to any situation outside of a completed narrative, because we do not fully understand the circumstances or the relationship a particular thing might truly have to the ultimate story of one's life. Correspondences are not a prescriptive model for us to follow or a magic key to the meaning of particular objects and events. Rather, they are an exercise in the prayerful examination of one's life.

Consider the correspondence of light. We generally say that light corresponds to truth, except when the light overpowers us (meaning there is more truth than good)—then it is falsity. Recently, I was walking around town and realized how many different types of lights there are in our world: flashlights, street lights, stop lights, house lights, festive holiday lights, party lights, etc.

Flashlights or torches (as many other English-speaking countries refer to them) have a fairly straightforward correspondence. Like other lights, their function is to dispel darkness, but in contrast to an overhead light or lamplight, the beam from a flashlight is focused light. With a flashlight, we illuminate only the darkness we want to illuminate. While they light the path before us, flashlights also leave much that is not illuminated. Correspondentially speaking, flashlights might denote the selection, and thus the control, of truth, and the possibility of our focusing the light of that truth in an incomplete way. The focused light from a flashlight is similar to studying in a way that compartmentalizes and categorizes knowledge—useful for identifying things, but also vulner-

able to error because of its narrow focus. So, we could say that a flashlight, or the light from it, corresponds to the truths and falsities derived from human systematic approaches to knowledge, depending on how we utilize them.

Streetlights may be compared to the biblical notion of stars. Stars in ancient and even in modern times are used for navigation. This is why they correspond to doctrines, rules we live by to navigate through our lives. Street lights function in a similar way, but with a pretty significant difference. Unlike stars, street lights do not orient you to your direction or your place in the world; instead, they light an already constructed path. They keep you on a course you have already designated. Street lights may correspond to rules and guiding principles that are more natural than spiritual.

Stoplights, as well as other warning lights, serve a very different purpose from the lights to which we normally ascribe the concept of truth. Strictly speaking, these lights do not exist to dispel darkness. What, then, could their correspondence be? Stop lights are communication tools that we mutually agree upon as a society, which help people get where they are going without running into someone else. Stop lights might be the priorities or principles that help us consider who has right-of-way when journeys intersect.

House lights come in several different forms. We have lights that help us see street addresses or monitor our property, but we also have the lights that illuminate our rooms. Houses or dwellings can correspond to the truths and goods by which the homeowner lives, as well as the perpetual presence of the Lord or the hells. Since we are talking about our home, and not

the Lord's house, we will use the prior definition. These lights might be the truths or falsities we use to understand the truths and goods we have adopted. Possibly, these room lights might correspond to our understandings or rationalizations of our spiritual state—our soul's dwelling-place. House lights that illuminate our addresses could be the truths or falsities we illuminate about ourselves for passersby and the people who are trying to know us better.

Festive holiday lights are very interesting as well. Like stop lights, these lights do not exist primarily for the purpose of dispelling darkness. These are generally "ornamental" lights. Holiday lights easily fall into the same category as jewelry and other decorations. To better understand the possible correspondence of holiday lights, we need to know the purpose of the decorations. If I decorate my house to show superiority over my neighbors, the lights' correspondence might be about the Lord existing in my externals, yet not being present in my internals (truths of the church without love). On the other hand, holiday lights that are displayed out of pleasure and joy in the season might correspond to truths of the church that are particularly special—illuminating—to us.

Party lights are some of the most peculiar lights one can examine correspondentially. When I talk about party lights, I refer to lights used intentionally to distort our perceptions, such as black lights, strobe lights, colored lights, etc. While these lights focus on unusual spectra or frequencies of light, I do not believe that they are inherently malicious or fallacious in their correspondence. Black lights and other alternative spectrum lights are used by police to collect

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To the Members and Friends of the General Convention:

Over the next several months, the *Messenger* will be carrying short, descriptive articles about the work of several of the various groups that carry out denominational programs. Because our churches are scattered throughout North America, and because governance is local, many people throughout the denomination are unaware of the variety of projects, assistance, and programming that is handled or supported by people who are elected, hired, or appointed to denominational positions. So, with this series of articles, we hope to acquaint readers with the “denominational-level” processes. It is sometimes difficult, in a decentralized system such as we have, to identify just what one’s financial gift-giving is used for. We hope that this series

of monthly articles will provide some useful and interesting information and that these articles might also better describe the uses of your financial gifts to the work of the denomination.

With sincere thanks,
Christine Laitner, President

*Contributing to the financial support
of the Denomination: Number two
in a series*

The Ministries Support Unit “MINSU”

If you are looking for a reason to support our denomination financially and if you like the idea of your money going to a grass roots level, look no further than the Ministries Support Unit

(MINSU). Our bylaws state that we have a unit which focuses on facilitating activities that increase groups and individuals committed to the realization of the Swedenborgian Church’s purpose. MINSU does this in a variety of ways.

This unit supports new ideas. As recently configured, MINSU is the unit responsible for financially supporting exciting new kinds of programs and outreach initiatives at the local level, which will grow our church. The unit supports a variety of programs and activities both through the use of the denomination’s Mission Fund and through the use of its specialty line items such as “New Directions in Church Growth” and “Congregational Consulting Services.”

MINSU can assist in supporting
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Correspondences: the Puzzle Pieces of Life

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evidence, as well as for fun—in bowling alleys, for example, black lights and strobe lights can create a spooky or zany environment for special bowling events. Party lights might correspond to truths that can help us see the world in a different way. While not suited for illuminating the basic tasks of daily life, they can aid us in seeing things we would not ordinarily see. On the more hellish side, these lights can intentionally distort our reality for the sole purpose of our self-aggrandizement or selfishness, or they can be used to confuse or dominate other people.

These examples are just the tip of the iceberg when we think about all the different types of lights that surround us. Just for

fun, try picking a type of light that I have not talked about here. Ask yourself:

What is the primary purpose of this light?

How does it help or hurt a person on the spiritual journey?

What are both the positive and negative uses of the light?

How could this light be used to honor the Lord or express love of the neighbor?

How could it be used to increase a person’s selfishness or inhibit one’s growth?

All light dispels darkness; however, that is not the primary purpose of all the lights in our lives. As we contemplate the various spiritual forces shaping us, we must remember that we really cannot definitively know the correspondential meaning of

objects and people around us. Nor can we use correspondences to diagnose another person’s spiritual state or the state of their regenerative journey. We can, however, take heart, for anything that helps us live a life in which love of the Lord or love of the neighbor is our primary focus or goal has us facing in the right direction.

Please feel free to send questions, contemplations, or comments to kevin@baxtonia.com. Or, you may mail them to Rev. Kevin Baxter, c/o Swedenborg Chapel, 50 Quincy Street, Cambridge, MA 02138.

The Rev. Kevin Baxter is the pastor of Swedenborg Chapel in Cambridge. The above article first appeared as a four-part series in the Cambridge Church newsletter. ☛

2006 PCA Meeting

Embraces Fellowship, Food, Music, Inspiration, Business, and Fun

The Pacific Coast Association of Swedenborgian Churches spent the weekend of September 22-24

Blenkin took place at the Double Tree Hotel in San Pedro.

Rev. Dr. Jonathan Mitchell

organized a wonderful time for everyone beginning Saturday morning, with Rev. Doug Moss of the El Cerrito church leading opening worship.

An inspirational Mandala Art and Healing Workshop was led by one of the Wayfarers congregation, Mare' (pronounced Marie) Schurian. All of us were able to focus on using art to transform our thoughts and emotions. Awesome!

change and tax status issues, some dating from the 1970s and earlier, just recently uncovered while he was compiling financial reports for the meeting. His efforts are much appreciated. Harvey maintained his usual calm leadership concluding the business session (also much appreciated).

Then our fourteen PCA ministers in attendance met to discuss peer supervision. Dinner was followed by an evening dessert reception and variety show at the Wayfarers Chapel Visitors Center directed by Unni DePresno, Chapel ministry coordinator. The entertainment was emceed by jokester Dave Brown, (MC Rev.



Sunday Chapel service, organist Wendy Waring recognized for her 20 years of service. (L-R) Denomination President Chris Laitner, Wendy Waring, and Rev. Dave Brown.

enjoying the fantastic warm and sunny weather in Southern California. Wayfarers Chapel played host to 70-some enthusiastic members and friends, including honored guest Chris Laitner, the denomination's president.

Visitors from out of town were housed at local hotels in San Pedro. On Friday the PCA board of directors met at Wayfarers Center West. Registration, dinner and an evening get-to-know-you session led by Mareta Tafel and Carl

After lunch our PCA President, Harvey Tafel, held the business session during which bylaws and finances were dissected and discussed, and elections held. Lon Elmer related his unbelievably frustrating saga dealing with the IRS, various investment companies and banks to resolve some name-



Mandala Healing workshop leader Mare Schurian comments on mandalas produced by workshop participants.

D.) and included stories and music from Sharon Williams, Harvey

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The Ministries Support Unit

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the process of visioning and implementing the possibilities for creating new ministries and revitalizing old ones.

The Ministries Support Unit utilizes the Mission Fund Grant Application program to support a variety of programs currently, including the work of the Church of the Little Grain centered in Brooklyn, and the New Church of

Southwest Florida in Ft. Myers Beach. Several other churches receive some assistance for specific projects. Potential programs and activities could be youth and family outreach programs, media-based ministries, the establishment of house-churches, and social-justice oriented ministries.

A fairly recent program that MINSU supports is to assist in underwriting church and association visits of Rev. Rich Tafel, a highly skilled coach and facilitator, who gives his expertise to the

creation of strategies – setting goals and action plans – to those bodies in need of fresh vision so that they can move forward. This is but one tangible way in which the work of the Ministries Support Unit truly does support the work of the larger Church.

It's hard to find a better reason to give our charitable dollars to our denomination!

—Barbara Cullen, General Council Member ☪

Swedenborgian Church Websites, as of December 2006

Denomination's website: www.swedenborg.org • PCA: www.swedenborgpca.org

Fryeburg New Church Assembly: www.fryeburg.org • Almont New Church Assembly: www.ancarc.com

Swedenborgian House of Studies (SHS): www.SHS.PSR.edu • Urbana University: www.urbana.edu

Swedenborgian Spiritual Growth Center dba Stonehouse Book Room: www.stonehouse.org

The North American Society: www.swedenborgiancommunity.com

Pacific Coast

CA: San Francisco www.sfswedenborgian.org

CA: Wayfarers www.wayfarerschapel.org

WA: Puget Sound www.heavenonearth4u.org

Middle Atlantic

DC: Washington www.holycitydc.org

PA: Temenos www.temenosretreat.org

Illinois

IL: Chicago www.swedenborglib.org

IN: LaPorte www.laportenewchurch.org

MO: St. Louis www.openwordchurch.org

MN: St. Paul www.virginiastreetchurch.org

Maine

ME: Fryeburg www.fryeburgnewchurch.org

ME: Portland www.theportlandchurch.org

Massachusetts

MA: Bridgewater www.bridgewaternewchurch.org

MA: Cambridge www.swedenborgchapel.org

Michigan

MI: Royal Oak www.churchholycity.com

New York

NY: Bayside www.baysidechurch.org

NY: New York/New Church www.newyorknewchurch.org

Ohio

OH: Cincinnati www.newchurchofmontgomery.net

Canada

Kitchener, ON www.churchofthegoodsheperd.com

Edmonton www.edmontonholycity.com

Editor's Note: If your church or association has completed a website that is up and running that isn't mentioned here, please send the info to Central Office and *The Messenger*. We will be running an updated list in *The Messenger* every month. ☩

2006 PCA Meeting

(Continued from previous page)



Gabriella Cabaley, a member-at-large confirmed at Wayfarers Chapel, with Rev. Jonathan Mitchell and Carl Blenkin. San Diego member Barbara Taylor in background (r), former treasurer Merle Lundberg (back to camera).

Tafel, Jim Lawrence, Barbara Pieper, Chris Laitner, Lisa Allison, David Stern, Unni DePresno, and David Edelstein.

Saturday ended beautifully with a candlelight vesper communion

service in the Chapel led by Jeff and Stelli Munnis from San Francisco. Jeff is a student at the Swedenborgian House of Studies; Stelli is the secretary at the San Francisco church.

The weekend concluded with another nature-filled worship service on Sunday led by Rev. Dave Brown. Before the benediction Wendy Waring, Chapel organist, was honored for her 20 years of service at Wayfarers Chapel. The service was standing room only. Then fond farewells were exchanged after the coffee time in the Visitor Center's Serenity Garden.

We look forward to next year's sessions to be held in the San Francisco Bay Area. We also thank Rev. Harvey Tafel for being our major planner this year. Also,

thanks to all his helpers for making our 2006 meeting a resounding success!

Current elected PCA Board Members:

President:

Rev. Harvey Tafel, Rancho Palos Verdes, California

Vice-President:

Ron Frotestad, San Francisco

Secretary:

Patte LeVan, Julian, California

Treasurer:

Lon Elmer, Seattle, Washington;
Lisa Allison, Sammamash, Washington; Nancy Apple, Lynwood, Washington;
Rev. Carla Friedrich, San Diego, California

—Mareta Tafel ☩

Marriage

Rice and Madjerac—Lisa Rice, member of the Portland New Church in Portland, Maine, was united in marriage to Joseph Madjerac October 7, 2006, in a beautiful outdoor ceremony at Spring Point, South Portland. They were attended by Susan Chard and Bob Beane and by their daughters, Emily and Lexi Rice and Kristina and Rachel Madjerac, Eli Dale officiating.

Deaths

Flood—Nathan B. Flood, 72, of Mattapoisett, Mass., died unexpectedly on September 21, 2006. He was the son of the late Harold and Dorothea (Benson) Flood. Survivors include his wife, Marilyn J. (Jester) Flood; a son, Kenneth S. Flood; a brother, H. William Flood; and two sisters, Judith Siegfried and Merrilee Phinney. He also leaves many cousins, nieces and nephews, great nieces and nephews and great-great nephews. He was the father of the late Richard A. Flood. He was a member of the New Jerusalem Church in Bridgewater, Mass., and the First Unitarian Church in New Bedford, Mass.

Moore—Keith Jesse Moore, 28, beloved son of the Rev. Susan Turley and Clifford Moore, grandson of Peggy Moore and Marilyn Turley, entered the spiritual world October 14, 2006, in Iraq. Keith was a casualty of the war. Funeral services were held October 27th at Saint Peter's Catholic Church in Pacifica,

California, the Rev. Andy Stinson officiating. Music was provided by Keith's uncle, the Rev. Kenneth Turley, and his wife Laurie. Immediately following the service, Keith's interment was conducted at Golden Gate National Cemetery. A Reception, provided by the Pacifica Blue Star Moms, was held at the American Legion Hall in Pacifica.

Contributions may be made in Keith's honor and memory to the Pacifica Blue Star Moms at: Pacifica Military Moms, P.O. Box 1764 Pacifica, CA 94044.

Nielsen—Anne Elizabeth Mateer Nielsen, 94, entered the spiritual world October 12, 2006, in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. She met the late Dan Nielsen at Urbana College in 1930; they married in 1934, and she joined the church at that time. They were active in the D.C. Society from 1934 through 1967, where she was active in Alliance and played the piano for Sunday School for several years. When the family moved to California, she sang in the choir at the Wayfarers Chapel from 1967 through 1970, and following a move to Urbana, was then active in the Urbana Society until she and Dan moved to Frederick, Maryland around 1990 and declining health made the drive into D.C. unfeasible. A resurrection service was conducted November 11, 2006, at the Urbana church by Betsy Coffman, consecrated lay leader. Anne is survived by three children; Karen Nielsen Conger, Marilyn Nielsen Worsham, and Daniel Nielsen; and 8 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. ☩

Call for *Messenger* Editor Candidates

At Convention, it was announced that Patte LeVan—your unflappable, tireless, wonderful editor—wants to retire! It is, therefore, the Communications Support Unit's sad duty to search for a new *Messenger* editor.

We are looking for individuals interested in becoming *The Messenger* editor. The editorship is a half-time position, with commensurate pay, and the editor can live anywhere in North America. The selected candidate would assist and be trained by Patte, who came to the job as a professional journalist. After the probationary period, the candidate would assume full responsibility for the editorship, with Patte remaining on call to help. *The Messenger* editor reports to the Communications Support Unit.

Job Qualifications

- A demonstrated ability to write well
- Editorial skills
- Basic computer skills
- General knowledge of our theology
- Conversant with structure and workings of the denomination
- Basic photography skills
- Ability and willingness to attend and participate in annual conventions (paid for from COMSU's budget)
- A commitment to provide a forum for all viewpoints to be expressed
- Good communication skills and willingness to work cooperatively as a team player
- Ability and willingness to meet regular deadlines

For additional details, please contact the COMSU Chair, Carol Lawson, 1745 Gravel Hill Road, Dillwyn, Virginia 23936. chrysalis@hovac.com ☩

Important Church Dates 2006-2007

January 25-27, 2007
Board Meeting at Wayfarers,
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA

March 17, 2007 12:00 p.m. EST
General Council conferene call

April 13-14, 2007
SHS Boarch of Trustees,
Berkeley, CA

April 24-26, 2007
Committee on Admission into

the Ministry (CAM), PSR/SHS,
Berkeley, CA

May 5, 2007
Investment Committee.
Central Office, Newton, MA

May 18-20, 2007
Swedenborg Foundation Board
meeting, West Chester, PA

June 24-July 2, 2007
Convention 2007, Hope College,
Holland, Michigan ☩

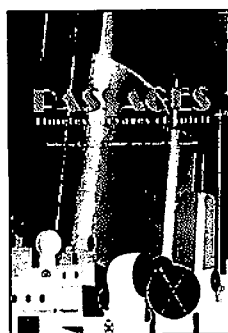
Emanuel Swedenborg was born January 29, 1688, in Stockholm, Sweden. Although he never intended a church denomination to be founded or named after him, a society was formed in London 15 years after his death. This 1787 organization eventually spawned the present General Convention of Swedenborgian Churches. 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.

Passages: Timeless Voyages of Spirit

Searching for an Inspiring Christmas Gift?

New from the Swedenborg Foundation

Chrysalis Reader 2006, 160 pp; \$15.95 Chrysalis Books



Passages: Timeless Voyages of Spirit, an anthology featuring original short stories, poems, and essays enhanced by artwork, offers an insightful literary perspective on the theme of journey as a universal path of discovery and adventure. It is the most recent release in the CHRYSLIS READER series. Carol S. Lawson and Robert F. Lawson, editors of the CHRYSLIS READER, present a new spiritual theme in each annual publication.

"Spiritual depth and literary mastery are beautifully combined in this newest offering of the Chrysalis Reader. For me, spiritual writings are valuable if they help awaken me to wise and compassionate living. This collection is a treasury of such pointers."

—Larry Rosenberg, founder, Cambridge Insight Meditation Center; author of *Breath by Breath* and *Living in the Light of Death*.

To order, call 1-800-355-3222 ☒

From the Swedenborg Foundation: Film Ideas Wanted

In view of the positive reception and impact of our latest film, *Shining Soul: Helen Keller's Spiritual Life and Legacy*, the Swedenborg Foundation is considering another video project. During this exploratory stage we invite a preliminary contact from members of the Swedenborgian communities and unaffiliated individuals interested in Swedenborg's ideas, who have expertise in any aspect of film-making and who may want to participate in a consultative session or in an actual production; or who want to contribute a concept they feel would make a powerful film that would fulfill the Swedenborg Foundation's mission statement:

To foster an affirmative, informed, and increasingly broad engagement with the spiritual experiences and theological message disclosed by Emanuel Swedenborg.

Please email to Deborah Forman at director@swedenborg.com a letter introducing yourself, your background, where you reside, and, what ways you would expect to be able to make a contribution to this endeavor. After the film/video committee has a chance to review the letters we receive and to plan for the next step, we will be back in touch with you. Thank you. ☒

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