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Church

No. 200

THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH UNITED STATES AND CANADA

INCORPORATED 1861

THE GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE NEW
JERUSALEM IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

ANNUAL SESSION

**“THE TREE OF LIFE:
INTO THE GARDEN”**

JUNE 25 - JUNE 28, 2022

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY LONG BEACH,
LONG BEACH, CA

ANNUAL THEME

THE YEAR OF PROVIDENCE

SEPTEMBER 1, 2021-SEPTEMBER 1, 2022

RECORDING SECRETARY

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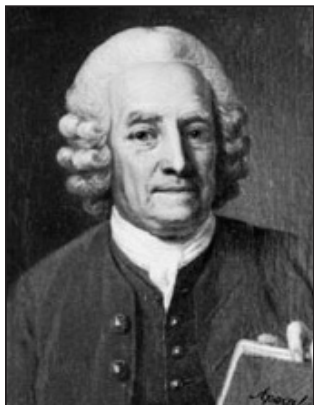
CENTRAL OFFICE

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THE FAITH AND AIMS OF OUR CHURCH

The Swedenborgian Church believes that a new epoch is opening in the spiritual life of mankind. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, as he promised to do, has come again, not indeed in a physical reappearance, but in spirit and truth; not in a single event only, but in a progressive manifestation of his presence among people.

Our Church regards as tokens of his coming the burst of scientific de-



velopment, the rise of the spirit of inquiry, the progress toward political and intellectual freedoms, and the deepening sense of a national and international responsibility which have characterized the last few centuries. These are more remote signs, however, of epochal religious change. More directly denoting a movement of the spirit of God on the human spirit are the stirrings in world faiths, the revisions of thought and outlook in them, the searching after standards and spiritual power adequate to the needs and problems of the times, and

this notably in the Christian faith. The Lord is everywhere at work, moving to the reestablishment of his kingdom, and specifically to the renewing of Christianity with the power and understanding to serve and speed his kingdom.

In any coming of the Lord, he brings about many things which people are slow to see. Our unseen, spiritual environment is made over as well as our visible world. A greater awareness of the good that there has been, a fuller justice and truer peace offer themselves for us to realize. Today, in a world that has contracted into a neighborhood, the responsibility to the neighbor makes its demands on all people of good will. Evils that have been long established begin to look as though they could be conquered. We believe that the Lord in his second coming has "reordered the heavens and subjugated the hells" as he did at his first coming.

This coming of the Son of man, "as the lightning comes out of the east, and shines even unto the west," making the salvation of all people possible, is the direct and sole work of the Lord—a redemption of the world by the Redeemer of persons.

Our Church is also convinced that the Lord has given his followers word of all this, and done so by means of a servant from among them. We

believe that Emanuel Swedenborg thus served the Lord. A person's destiny beyond the earthly life needed to be placed in fuller light; the Scriptures needed to be reestablished as the Word of God; and the Christian message was in need of renewed and contemporary expression. To supply these needs Swedenborg devoted half a lifetime, and an insight born of a regenerating experience. He was enabled "by the Lord's mercy" to inform the Christian hope of immortality with knowledge of the world of the spirit; in Old and New Testament he set forth a meaning which speaks timelessly of the spiritual life and can nourish it now; and he freed Christian teaching from many crippling errors and formulated it anew from the Word of God.

In the theological works of Swedenborg the message of Christianity is restated to inspire the spiritual life of all anew. Its truths present themselves as truths of life here and hereafter. They invite inquiry and ask understanding. They open the door to spiritual renewal and urge upon everyone the personal responsibility to participate in this renewal. The Lord has taken initiative in his coming. We have our response to make. In that response three essentials are urged: that we acknowledge God in the Lord, and that he alone can bring about our redemption and regeneration; that we acknowledge the holiness of the Word and the inspiration which the Word gives us to seek and promote his kingdom; and that we live the life of charity, the exercising in all our relationships, large and small, the neighborliness enjoined by his commandments.

The Swedenborgian Church believes, then, that under Providence the world has received, through the instrumentality of a man, a revelation which confronts it with the universally valid truth of the spiritual life of all human beings. It believes that the Lord Jesus Christ, availing himself of human agency to give us this explicit guidance, has done a sweeping if hidden work of redemption, and created a new heaven and a new earth about us. He is ushering in the epoch, if we will, which he foresaw and which he promised at his first coming. In John's vision on Patmos, the Risen Christ once more promised the dawn of this epoch in the descent of the Holy City, New Jerusalem, to earth. To signalize our conviction that the Lord is fulfilling his promise, we originally organized under the name the Church of the New Jerusalem. The spirit and the humanity which longs to be united to the Lord alike cry, "Come." We lift our voice and pray, "Come. Even so, come Lord Jesus."

THE OFFICERS OF THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH

Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence, President

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E-mail: president@swedenborg.org

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Karen Conger, Recording Secretary

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Phone: (760) 872-3392
E-mail: secretary@swedenborg.org

Jennifer Lindsay, Treasurer

601 Carolina Street
San Francisco, CA 94107

Phone: (415) 706-6155
E-mail: treasurer@swedenborg.org

GENERAL COUNCIL

The General Council consists of the Officers of the Swedenborgian Church and the elected members listed below. (Constitution, Article II, Section 2.) The chair of the Council of Ministers is also an ex officio member with vote on the General Council (Constitution, Article II, Section 3).

Numbers in parentheses are the terms currently being served for the positions so indicated, persons are limited to two consecutive three-year terms. Those fulfilling unexpired terms are indicated by ().*

Term Expires 2023

Rev. Betsy Coffman (2)

(937) 631-0899
bcoffman45@gmail.com

Term Expires 2024

Barbara Halle (2)

(219) 363-0528
halle310@comcast.net

Term Expires 2025

Rev. Sage Cole (1)

(617) 435-5262
revsagecole@gmail.com

Kelly Kennedy (*)

(780) 298-3684
kellykennedy40@gmail.com

Rev. Thom Muller (1)

(267) 363-0528
tmuller@ses.psr.edu

Pastor Paul Deming (1)

(314) 803-6519
paul.deming@icloud.com

Tom Murphy (*)

(415) 515-9348
tom@tommurphy.com

Herbert Ziegler (1)

(617) 388-0252
hziegler@icloud.com

Dr. Emily Woofenden (1)

(413) 464-2123
emily.woofenden@gmail.com

Rev. Susannah Currie, Chair, Council of Ministers

100 Silver Street
Riverside, RI 02915

Phone: (207) 443-1688
E-mail: comchair@swedenborg.org

STANDING COMMITTEES

(Constitution, Article II, Section 4 and Bylaws, Article X.) The President of the Swedenborgian Church serves ex officio without vote on all Standing Committees.

STANDING COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION:

Chair:	Tara Conkling	2024	(1)
	Holly Bauer	2023	(*)
	Rev. Kevin Baxter	2025	(1)

ex officio (without vote): Beki Greenwood, Editor, *The Messenger*
Rev. Thom Muller, Editor, *Our Daily Bread*
Rev. Cory Coberforward, Minister, *Spiritual Sunshine*
Dr. Rebecca Esterson, Dean, Center for Swedenborgian Studies
Brittany Price, Operations Manager, Central Office

STANDING COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION AND RESOURCES FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY:

Chair:	Dr. Rebecca Esterson, Representative of Center for Swedenborgian Studies, appointed by the CSS Board of Trustees		
	Rev. Shada Sullivan	2024	(1)
	Rev. Julie Conaron	2025	(2)
	Rev. Junchol Lee	2025	(1)

ex officio (without vote): Kurt Fekete, Youth Director, SCNA

STANDING COMMITTEE FOR FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY:

<i>Chair:</i>	Jennifer Lindsay, Treasurer, SCNA		
	Bill Coffman	2023	(1)
	Stan Conger	2023	(1)
	Kurt Fekete	2024	(1)
	Tom Neuenfeldt	2024	(1)
	Rev. Rachel Madjerac	2025	(1)
	Rev. Lisa Solwold	2025	(2)

ex officio (without vote): Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence, President, SCNA

STANDING COMMITTEE FOR NOMINATIONS:

Convention Bylaws, Article X. Sec. 4. "...There shall be a Standing Committee for Nominations of five members to serve for five years each; one member to be elected each year, but not from any Association from which his or her predecessor or any other member of the Committee is a member. The unexpired term of any member may be filled from the same Association. A member moving to another Association shall continue to serve and shall be regarded as coming from his or her former Association; but no retiring member shall be eligible for immediate reelection. Whenever possible, the Standing Committee for Nominations shall propose slates representative of the Swedenborgian Church's overall constituency.

It shall be the duty of this Standing Committee to present, at each session of the Swedenborgian Church, nominees for the Swedenborgian Church officers (where applicable), vacancies in the elective members of the General Council and all other Boards and Committees, unless otherwise appointed. Each year the member whose term is next to expire shall act as Chair of the Committee.

<i>Chair:</i>	Bill Coffman	OH Assoc.	2023
	Dr. Rebecca Esterson	PCA	2024
	B.J. Neuenfeldt	MI Assoc.	2025
	Pastor Paul Deming	IL Assoc.	2026
	Nancy Little	ME Assoc.	2027

COMMITTEES

CENTRAL OFFICE REVIEW COMMITTEE:

Standing Resolution 11, June 29, 1983: "...it is the responsibility of the Vice President, together with a committee he may appoint, to conduct an annual review of the Central Office, covering staff, employees, organization, etc."

Chair: Kurt Fekete, Vice-President, SCNA
Stan Conger

COMMITTEE ON AMENDMENTS:

Chair: Rev. Kevin Baxter
Stan Conger

COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY:

The General Council, at the request of the Council of Ministers, voted to form the Committee of Inquiry at its June 26, 1996 meeting. It was voted "that the Committee of Inquiry be under the auspices of General Council and that the committee consist of five (5) members to be appointed by the President of Convention in consultation with the Chair of the Council of Ministers of the Swedenborgian Church."

Chair: Stan Conger
Barbara Cullen
Pastor Karen Feil
Rev. Paul Martin
Rev. Rich Tafel
ex officio (without vote): Rev. Susannah Currie, Chair, Council of Ministers

COMMITTEE ON LIBRARY AND DOCUMENTS:

“Resolved, That a Committee of three on Library and Documents, one of which shall be the President of the Theological School, shall be appointed by the President of the Convention to see to the collecting, depositing and cataloging of books, manuscripts and other documents which may have been donated to or otherwise procured by the Convention; the Chairman of this Committee shall report to the Convention annually.” (1911 Journal, Minute 90)

The archives of the Swedenborgian Church are held in two places: histories of societies and committees at the Central Office, and sermons/personal papers and Center for Swedenborgian Studies (CSS)-related documents at the library of the CSS at the Graduate Theological Union.

<i>Chair:</i>	Sue Ditmire
	Pastor Robbin Ferriman
	Dr. Rebecca Esterson, Dean, Center for Swedenborgian Studies
<i>ex officio (without vote):</i>	Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence, President, SCNA
	Brittany Price, Operations Manager, Central Office

INVESTMENT COMMITTEE:

“The General Council, at its first meeting following each annual session of the Swedenborgian Church, shall appoint an Investment Committee of not less than three members, one of whom may be the Treasurer of the Convention, which shall be charged with the general oversight and care of the investments and securities of the Swedenborgian Church Common Fund, with full power to purchase and sell and to invest and reinvest as in their judgment and discretion may seem advisable.” (By-laws, Article XVIII)

<i>Chair:</i>	Jennifer Lindsay, Treasurer, SCNA
	Herb Ziegler* 2023
	Holly Gottschalk 2024
	Drew Siebert* 2025
	Rev. Paul Martin 2026
	Pete Toot 2027
<i>ex officio (without vote):</i>	Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence, President, SCNA

RETIREMENT COMMITTEE:

Its duties are to administer the proceeds of Convention’s Permanent Pension Fund (1975 Journal, Fund 37) in accordance with the stated purpose of the Fund.

- Chair:
- Rev. Dan Burchett
John McIntosh
Meredith Conant Piotti

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE:

The Social Justice Committee is an ad hoc committee created by General Council as a forum to address social concerns for the purpose of bringing information to the body of Convention through the Messenger and other vehicles, and to offer resources for ways to be involved.

- Chair
- Rev. Dr. Amanda Riley
Alex Gayheart
Olivia Hackett
Dru Johnson
Dr. Page Morahan
Rev. Shada Sullivan
Rev. Dr. Wilma Wake

**SPIRITUAL SUNSHINE: A SWEDENBORGIAN COMMUNITY
ONLINE CENTRAL COMMITTEE:**

- Chair
- Kurt Fekete, Vice-President, SCNA
Rev. Thom Muller (2023)
Dr. Emily Woofenden (2024)
Mauleek Bhat (2025)
- ex officio (without vote):
- Rev. Cory Coberforward, Minister, *Spiritual
Sunshine*

STRUCTURE REVIEW COMMITTEE:

“Design, adopt and maintain an organizational structure that is directly responsive to Convention’s Purpose and needs, and that includes provisions for its own self-evaluation and growth.” (Standing Resolution 1, Objective 9, July 3, 1986)

<i>Chair:</i>	Rev. Lisa Solwold
	Bill Coffman
	Rev. Susannah Currie
	Kurt Fekete
	Alice Henderson
	Rev. Rachel Madjerac

SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH YOUTH LEAGUE (SCYL):

<i>Youth Director:</i>	Kurt Fekete
<i>President:</i>	Molly Moore
<i>East Coast Fundraising and Finance Officer:</i>	Trent Carson
<i>Midwest, Public Relations and</i>	
<i>Communication Officer:</i>	Oliver Hamilton
<i>West Coast, Activities Officer:</i>	Wyatt Steinhiser
<i>Canada Officer:</i>	Open
<i><u>Clear Blue Sky</u> Co-Editor:</i>	Julien Billings
<i><u>Clear Blue Sky</u> Co-Editor:</i>	Zsa Zsa Dolley
<i>League Chaplain:</i>	Rev. Renee Machiniak

BOARDS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE WAYFARERS CHAPEL:

*(In 1983 the General Council set the number of appointed members of the Board at six (6). Three (3) must be from the Pacific Coast Association [indicated by *].) Numbers in parentheses are the terms currently being served for the positions so indicated, persons are limited to two consecutive three-year terms. Those fulfilling unexpired terms are indicated by (*).*

	Stan Conger	2022	*(*)
	Rev. H. Tafel	2022	*(*)
Chair	Peter Gottschalk	2023	*(2)
Treasurer	Robert Carr	2023	*(1)
Secretary	John Booth	2024	*(1)
	Katharine Carr	2024	*(1)
ex officio (with vote):	Michael Robbins, Representative of the PCA		
	Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence, President, SCNA		
ex officio (without vote):	Rev. Dan Burchett, Executive Director		
	Rev. Dr. David Brown, Chapel Minister		

BOARD OF MEDIATION:

Consists of five members. “Two such members shall be lay persons appointed by the President, and two shall be ministers appointed by the Chair of the Council of Ministers, and their terms of office shall be the same as that of the President of the Swedenborgian Church. The fifth member shall be the Vice President of Convention who shall serve as chair” (Bylaws, Article XVI).

Chair:	Kurt Fekete, Vice President, SCNA
	Matthew Fleming
	Bet Giddings
	Rev. Kit Billings
	Rev. Kathy Speas

BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE NATIONAL CHURCH:

“The Board of Trustees of the National Church, now holding the title to and having control of the Church property in Washington, D.C., shall continue to consist of fifteen members who shall be citizens of any part of the United States and of whom a majority shall be chosen from some other place than the city of Washington, DC, and shall not be selected from any one association, and vacancies in their number shall be filled by the Board with approval of the President and the Secretaries of the Convention, having in mind the restrictions stated above, and five members shall constitute a quorum” (Bylaws, Article XX).

<i>Chair:</i> Karen Conger	CA		
Polly Baxter	MA	Rev. Randall Laakko	DE
Rev. Jenny Caughman	TN	Tom Neuenfeldt	MI
Rev. Betsy Coffman	OH	Dr. Malcolm Peck	VA
Stan Conger	CA	Rev. Ken Turley	ME
Alex Gayheart	IN	Susan Weiss	FL
Barb Halle	IN	Herb Ziegler	MA
Carl Helm	KS	Annabel Park	WV

TRUSTEES OF THE BUILDING FUND:

The Board of Trustees of the Building Fund shall consist of three trustees who shall be appointed by the General Council...to serve each for three years. (Bylaws, Article XIX) The purposes of this Fund were broadened in 1946 “to aid New Church societies in purchasing, remodeling, or erecting places of worship, Sunday School Quarters and Parish Halls in America.” (1946 Journal, Minute 42 and 1947 Journal, Minute 38)

<i>Chair:</i>	Mark Careaga	2024	(1)
	Bob Perry	2023	(*)
	Rev. Dan Burchett	2025	(1)
<i>ex officio (without vote):</i>	Jennifer Lindsay, Treasurer, SCNA		
	Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence, President, SCNA		

TRUSTEES OF THE TAFEL FUND:

The Tafel Fund, established in 2011 to advance the mission and purpose of the Swedenborgian Church, is a permanent fund restricted to the use of income only. It is administered by a Board of Trustees: three appointed by General Council and those who are seated by virtue of having donated a minimum of \$25,000. The fund was established to honor the service to the General Convention of past and present Tafel ministers.

<i>Chair:</i>	Rev. Richard L. Tafel (aka Rich Tafel)
	Linda Tafel
	Rev. Dr. Gard Perry
	Karen Conger (Appointed)
	Lon Elmer (Appointed)
	Jennifer Lindsay (Appointed)

REPRESENTATIVES

DELEGATES TO THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES:

The President of the Swedenborgian Church, with the counsel and advice of the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers, shall make the various appointments of the delegation to the National Council of Churches, and then they shall be confirmed by the General Council.

<i>Head of Communion:</i>	Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence, President, SCNA
<i>Delegates:</i>	Rev. Dr. David Fekete
	Rev. Richard L. Tafel

COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

*All ministers of the Swedenborgian Church, twelve constituting a quorum
(Bylaws of the Council of Ministers, Article III)*

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

<i>Chair:</i>	Rev. Susannah Currie	2023	(1)
<i>Secretary:</i>	Rev. Julie Conaron	2025	(1)
	Rev. Dr. Donna Keane	2023	(*)
	Rev. Gabriella Cahaley	2024	(1)
	Rev. Kevin Baxter	2025	(1)

ADVISORY PLACEMENT COMMITTEE:

This is the sole proper channel of communication for churches or groups seeking to employ a minister, and for ministers seeking employment.

<i>Chair:</i>	Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence, President, SCNA
	Rev. Susannah Currie, Chair of the Council of Ministers
	Dr. Rebecca Esterson, Dean of the Center for Swedenborgian Studies

COMMITTEE ON ADMISSION INTO THE MINISTRY:

(Bylaws of the Council of Ministers, Article IV, Section 7)

<i>Chair:</i>	Rev. Junchol Lee	2025	(1)
	Rev. Rich Tafel	2025	(1)
	Rev. Alison Lane-Olsen	2023	+(1)
	BJ Neuenfeldt	2024	+(1)
<i>ex officio (with vote)</i>	Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence, President, SCNA		

COMMITTEE ON PROGRAM:

(Bylaws of the Council of Ministers, Article IV, Section 5)

Rev. Susannah Currie, Chair of the Council of Ministers
Rev. Julie Conaron, Secretary of the Council of Ministers
Dr. Rebecca Esterson, Dean of the Center for Swedenborgian Studies [†]

* Filling an unexpired term

+ Elected by Convention

† The dba of the Swedenborgian House of Studies changed to Center for Swedenborgian Studies on July 1, 2015. The bylaws of the Council of Ministers were not amended to reflect this prior to publication.

COMMITTEE ON REVISION OF THE ROLL:*(Bylaws of the Council of Ministers, Article IV, Section 8)*

Karen Conger, Secretary, SCNA

Rev. Julie Conaron, Secretary of the Council of Ministers

Brittany Price, Operations Manager, Central Office

COMMITTEE ON WORSHIP:*(Bylaws of the Council of Ministers, Article IV, Section 4)**Chair:**Open*

Rev. Roslyn Taylor

Pastor Paul Deming

ETHICS COMMITTEE:*(Bylaws of the Council of Ministers, Article IV, Section 6)**Chair:*

Rev. Catherine Lauber

Rev. Betsy Coffman

Rev. Solomon Youngmin Kim

MINISTERS' TRAVEL FUND:*Chair:*

Rev. Susannah Currie, Chair of the Council of Ministers

Rev. Julie Conaron, Secretary of the Council of Ministers

Brittany Price, Operations Manager, Central Office

MISCONDUCT DETERMINATION BOARD:*(Bylaws of the Council of Ministers, Article IV, Section 9)**Chair:*

Rev. Catherine Lauber

Rev. Kevin Baxter

Rev. Julie Conaron

Rev. Dr. Donna Keane

Rev. Solomon Youngmin Kim

NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

(Bylaws of the Council of Ministers, Article IV, Section 1)

<i>Chair:</i>	Rev. Kevin Baxter	2023
	Rev. Nancy Piorkowski	2024
	Rev. Dr. David Brown	2025

CHAPLAIN ON YOUTH AND THE MILITARY:

Rev. Andy Stinson

ENDORSER OF MILITARY CHAPLAINS:

Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence

AUXILIARY AND ASSOCIATED BODIES

The following organizations are legally independent bodies in which the Swedenborgian Church has an interest.

AMERICAN NEW CHURCH SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION D/B/A SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH CHILDREN’S MINISTRIES (SCCM):

<i>Chair/President:</i>	Rev. Kit Billings
<i>Vice-President:</i>	Pastor Kelly Milne
<i>Secretary:</i>	Rev. Carla Friedrich
<i>Treasurer:</i>	Beverly Titus

TRUSTEES OF THE GRAY LEGACY:

Wesley N. Gray Fund - Legacy held by three Trustees appointed by the Probate Court of Middlesex County, MA, on joint recommendation of the Massachusetts New Church Union and the General Convention. The Trustees are instructed to expend the net income for “*such church and missionary uses, preferably in Massachusetts first, then in the United States of America, and then in the whole world, as shall seem to them most deserving and most useful towards the growth of the New Jerusalem Church,*” and to render “*a report of said fund and of the proceedings under it...each year to the said General Convention*” for printing in its *Journal*.

<i>Secretary:</i>	Dr. Rebecca Esterson
<i>Treasurer:</i>	Herbert Ziegler
<i>Trustee:</i>	Nancy Little

**CENTER FOR SWEDENBORGIAN STUDIES (CSS), FORMERLY
SWEDENBORGIAN HOUSE OF STUDIES:**

(Incorporated under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts on May 17, 1881, as the New Church Theological School)

BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

<i>Chair:</i>	Tom Neuenfeldt
<i>Vice Chair:</i>	Pastor Tassy Farwell
<i>Clerk:</i>	Karen Conger
<i>Treasurer:</i>	Jennifer Lindsay
<i>Ex officio with vote:</i>	Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence, President, SCNA Dr. Rebecca Esterson, Dean, CSS
<i>Liaison (without vote):</i>	President, Graduate Theological Union

ELECTED MEMBERS:

<i>Term Expires 2023:</i>	Robert Carr*	(0)
	Tom Neuenfeldt***	(0)
<i>Term Expires 2024:</i>	Rev. Dr. Gard Perry*	(1)
	Pastor Tassy Farwell***	(0)
<i>Term Expires 2025:</i>	Jennifer Lindsay*	(1)
	Rev. Kathy Speas***	(0)
<i>Term Expires 2026:</i>	Lewis Shaw*	(1)
	Karen Conger**	(1)

**Trustees elected by Representative Class*

***Trustees elected by At-Large Class*

†To complete an unexpired term

**GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE NEW JERUSALEM IN THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, INC.**

d/b/a The Swedenborgian Church of North America

**MINUTES
FROM THE ONE HUNDRED NINETY-EIGHTH SESSION**

2022 HYBRID CONVENTION
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY AT LONG BEACH, CA

Sunday, June 26, 2022 to Tuesday, June 28, 2022

**Sunday, June 26, 2022 9:00 AM PDT
BUSINESS SESSION I**

1. **Opening** – Rev. Jane Siebert, President of the Swedenborgian Church in North America, opened the first hybrid convention in the history of the denomination by welcoming all, those attending in person, and those attending virtually. Jane announced that two people had tested positive for COVID and had been isolated. Vice President Kurt Fekete read from the book of Psalms and led us in a prayer.
2. **As stipulated by Article II. Sec. 2 of the Bylaws**, Article IV. Sec.1 of the Constitution and Article II Sec. 2 of the Bylaws were read by Recording Secretary Karen Conger.
3. **Proceedings Relative to Elections** – Jane appointed the Credentials Committee, Brittany Price & Pastor Robin Ferriman; and appointed Head Tellers, Peter & Holly Gottschalk; and appointed Parliamentarian, Stan Conger.
4. **4. Reports of the Officers** – President Rev. Jane Siebert referred to the trauma that we've all experienced during the last two years due to COVID and mentioned her doodle for the cover of the convention program, with the dove and its reference to Heavenly Secrets, where the flooded earth = fallacies. The first bird to leave the Ark is a raven, with no success; the second is a dove which flies back and forth, representing vacillation between

faith and falsity. The dove “gets her footing” through the combination of faith and love together = regeneration; kindness and compassion need to be dominant as we wait for the land to dry out. How appropriate that with this convention session we are entering the Year of Regeneration.

Vice President Kurt Fekete advised that meetings are still mostly taking place virtually; he spoke of how wonderful Operations Manager Brittany and Accountant Gina Peracchi are to work with, and also of his recent work with the Board Of Mediation as well as his continuing work with Spiritual Sunshine.

Recording Secretary Karen Conger reported that the General Council met yesterday morning for the prescribed pre-convention meeting. Amongst those issues discussed were the National Church in D.C. and the Washington society; and the New York New Church, with a presentation by Rev. Rich Tafel on both as pastor of the Washington society and consultant with New York. The General Council members continue to stay in contact with their liaisons; this is a very valuable program. They voted to accept an amended version of Standing Resolution 12 to clarify its basic tenants; if you have any questions about that or want further clarification, please see Stan Conger. Also discussed was the LGBTQA+ statement that will be brought to the Floor later today.

Treasurer Jennifer Lindsay advised that due to COVID-19 the 2021 expenditures were lower than budgeted because of the reduction of in-person meetings and retreats. Overall, in 2021 there was an operating surplus of approximately \$85K. The Central Office lease has been renegotiated to only include storage space as both Central Office employees currently work remotely, however we are still using the Cambridge Chapel as the denomination’s business address. The Common Fund return was 7.9% in 2021 and 11.2% over the past three calendar years. This is the 100th anniversary of the CF; we are grateful for the wisdom and foresight of our predecessors in creating this investment fund. The total corpus is now at \$65M aggregated across the participating ministries of the denomination. The denomination was pleased and touched to receive a generous gift from the Keith and Marian Mull Trust of \$25K.

5. Report of the Credentials Committee – Pastor Robbin Ferriman

The Swedenborgian Church Statistics – As of December 31, 2021										
Association (Conference)	Churches		Ordained Ministers		Licensed Pastors		Members	Number of Potential Delegates	Number of Actual 2022 Delegates	
	Active	Inactive	Active	Retired	Active	Retired				
Eastern Canada (ECC)	1	0	2	1	0	0	60	8	4	
Illinois Association	4	1	1	1	2	1	70	9	4	
Kansas	2	0	1	0	0	0	56	8	5	
Maine	3	0	5	1	1	0	122	14	10	
Massachusetts New Church Union (MNCU)*	3	1	7	1	1	0	73	9	6	
Michigan	1	0	3	1	0	0	56	8	8	
Middle Atlantic	3	0	6	2	0	0	99	12	9	
New York	2	0	1	0	0	0	21	4	0	
Ohio	3	0	2	3	1	0	51	7	7	
Pacific Coast (PCA)	7	0	18	3	4	0	224	24	18	
Western Canada (WCC)*	2	0	1	1	0	0	82	10	0	
SCVL	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	0	2	0	
At Large	n/a	n/a	1	0	0	0	2	2	0	
Unknown Affiliation	n/a	n/a	10	9	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	0	
Sub-Total	31	2	58	23	9	1	916	117	71	
Association/Co ference Total	31	2	n/a	n/a	9	10	916	117	71	
COM	n/a	n/a	58	23	n/a	n/a	n/a	81	29	
General Council (lay officers and members)										
Total Possible Delegates	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	8	8	
								206	108	

*Did not submit information for 2021, using 2020 instead

6. **Reports of the Council of Ministers (COM):** – Rev. Julie Conaran, newly elected Secretary of COM, delivered the report instead of Chair Rev. Susannah Currie because of the latter's isolation due to illness.

a. Motion #1: At their own request, supported by their Plan of Ministry, and on the recommendation of the Committee on Admission into the Ministry, the Council of Ministers recommends to the General Convention, that COLIN AMATO, who has completed a full course of study at the Center for Swedenborgian Studies, be ordained into our ministry, and that the service of ordination be held at this session of Convention, their name, after ordination, to be placed on our Roll of Ministers. Rev. Thom Muller rose to second the motion. Introduction and questions for ordinand:

Q. Colin, in requesting ordination into the Christian ministry for service in the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America and in Canada, do you, in the presence of this Convention, affirm your love to the Lord, your faith in the Lord's divine Word and your allegiance to the heavenly doctrines as unfolded in the theological works of Emanuel Swedenborg?

A. Yes, I affirm this as my love, my faith and my allegiance.

Q. To this end, do you faithfully promise to uphold the Constitution of the General Convention and to abide by the Bylaws and practices of its Council of Ministers?

A. I do promise this, and I ask the prayers of Convention to guide and sustain me in my ministry.

b. Motion #2: At their own request, supported by their Vision of Ministry, and on the recommendation of the Committee on Admission into the Ministry, the Council of Ministers recommends to the General Convention, that the REV. JAMES BARRY be granted the status of Authorized Candidate for one year, at the end of which he may be presented to the Council of Ministers by the Committee on Admission into the Ministry, for consideration to receive induction into the ministry of the General Convention. Rev. Shada Sullivan rose to second the motion. At Jane's invitation Jay gave a short statement about his current work as a board certified chaplain with Thomas Jefferson University Hospitals in Philadelphia, PA, and his hope that he will soon be received as a member of the Church of the Holy City in Wilmington. Jay shared

his belief that a year’s thoughtful process will be helpful to him as leaves the priesthood in the General Church to be inducted into the ministry of the General Convention.

7. **Explanation of the NemoVote process** – Jennifer explained the process, which is the same as that of last year, with all delegates, whether virtual or in person, voting on whatever device they choose (smart phone, tablet, laptop). Beki was available with Jennifer on site, and Emily Woofenden was available by phone for virtual folks’ questions. Since this process is still a bit new the vote for the Ordinand and Authorized Candidate was to stay open until 1:00p PT. Social Justice Committee (SJC) – Rev. Robert McCluskey, announced his retirement as chair of the SJC, along with his hope that he might remain active as a member of the committee. New joint-chairpersons Rev. Dr. Jonathan Mitchell & Rev. Dr. Amanda Riley were unable to attend due to a schedule conflict regarding The Garden Church’s activities.
8. **Report of the Standing Committee for Nominations** – Bill Coffman reported the following as candidates for office in the coming election:

Vice-President:	Kurt Fekete
Recording Secretary:	Karen Conger
Treasurer:	Jennifer Lindsay
General Council Lay Person:	Pastor Paul Deming (1st term)
General Council Lay Person:	Emily Woofenden (1st term)
General Council Lay Person:	Kelly Kennedy (to fill an unexpired 2nd term, ’23)
General Council Minister:	Rev. Sage Cole (1st term)
Standing Committee for Education & Spiritual Resources:	Rev. Julie Conaron (2nd term)
Standing Committee for Education & Spiritual Resources:	Rev. Junchol Lee (1st term)
Standing Committee for Communication & Information:	Rev. Kevin Baxter (1st term)
Standing Committee for Financial Accountability:	Rev. Rachel Madjerac (1st term)
Standing Committee for Financial Accountability:	Rev. Lisa Solwold (2nd term)

Standing Committee for

Nominations:

Tammara Mounce

CSS Board of Trustees,

representative class:

Dr. Lewis Shaw (1st term)

9. **Jane called for Nominations From the Floor**; there being none, the elections were closed.

10. **Business Session I recess** at 10:08am.

Sunday, June 26, 2022 1:30 PM PDT

BUSINESS SESSION II

11. **Convention was Reconvened** by Jane at approximately 1:35p. Treasurer Jennifer Lindsay read from the book of Psalms and led the assembled in prayer.
12. **Report on Ordinand & Authorized Candidate Voting** – For Ordinand Colin Amato, 66 votes were placed with two abstentions; 64 votes in favor, and all cheered happily! For Authorized Candidate as to whether Rev. James Barry should be granted the status of an authorized candidate 66 votes, 66 in favor. More happy cheering! President Jane Siebert declared the election valid.
13. **LGBTQA+ statement** – Jane read several comments received around the process of the Focus Group that was established to consider this resolution. It was emphasized that this resolution is being considered on behalf of the denomination and each church/ministry in the denomination is encouraged to consider this resolution when processing through their own church's /ministry's plans. Rev. Dr. Jonathan Mitchell rose to say a few words about his own journey as a gay person in the United States, for many years closeted in a homophobic world, and how his heart lifts whenever he passes a place of worship that's flying the rainbow flag. Though we know that we, as a denomination, are open to all, it's important that the rest of the world know. It was Moved, Seconded, and

Carried (MSC) {Rev. Paul Martin/Ralph Kearns} that the statement be voted on as to whether it should become Standing Resolution 16. Rev. Robert McCluskey stated his surprise that input was not being sought from all the delegates, since it is his understanding that when convention is in session, they constitute the Church. Jane spoke her acceptance of the comment. Several real time and virtual attendees commented in the affirmative, including one from Spain.

14. Reports:

- a. the Messenger – Editor Beki Greenwood spoke of her love for the job. Ten issues per year are currently published to support information to the constituents from the Church, including news, updates, convention information, theology, and members. There are 162 physical copies, approximately, with several hundred digital copies as well. Special thanks to several good folks who volunteer, especially to the Editorial Committee without whom Beki believes she wouldn’t be able to do the job effectively.
- b. Website (swedenborg.org) – In the absence of Holly Bauer, Beki spoke about the website and displayed a view of it up on screen to show how various of the functions work. Wonderful production value and good work!
- c. Wayfarers Chapel restoration project – Board of Directors member Robert Carr presented a power point presentation on the history of the Chapel and the needs facing the property as the time is long past that restoration work should have begun. Rev. Dan Burchett and Peter Gottschalk were on hand as well.
- d. Our National Church in Washington, D.C. – Rev. Rich Tafel reported that the average age of the church committee is 32, contrasted with the situation when he became pastor with four or five people, all over 65. They continue in building bridges in a city that is very divided. They are looking for a new premises in D.C., possibly a “Swedenborg House” type of space. Rich was pleased to introduce Sholanda Ingram and Annabel Park of the Washington society.

15. Business Session II recess at approximately 2:30pm PDT.

Monday, June 27, 2022 1:30 PM PDT

BUSINESS SESSION III

16. **Jane Reconvened convention** and Karen Conger read from the book of John and led the assembled in prayer.
17. **Peter Gottschalk Reported on Standing Resolution Vote** advising that the motion as presented in the May 2022 Messenger, amended by the COM, and as presented to the Floor of convention passed with a total of 73 votes cast, 71 in favor and two opposed. Jane pointed out that with the passing of Standing Resolution 16 the journey is just beginning, as the education and discussion continue.
18. **Vote on candidates** as presented by the Standing Committee for Nominations – Jennifer once again explained the voting procedure with NemoVote. Write-ins will be handled by selecting write-in on the site and sending an email with the person of your choice; these are being monitored by Beki Greenwood and will be sent on.
19. **Rev. Roslyn Taylor rose to announce that Gathering Leaves**, the international group for New Church women, will be held in Bryn Athyn, PA, at the end of August 2023.
20. **Additional Reports –**
 - a. Our Daily Bread – Rev. Thom Muller reported a few significant changes over the last few years, with a new website available now that has received 38K visits to the future programming page; the average pages get 200-300 views with 270+ likes. Eleanor Schnarr did some great graphics design, and the consulting board is: Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence, Eleanor, and Rev. Cory Coberforward. Thom envisions Our Daily Bread as a public window into our thought-community, with an intentional way of being present to not only our community but the world at large. He is looking for more lay and scholarly voices to be published in future.
 - b. Swedenborgian Online Community (Spiritual Sunshine) – Rev. Cory Coberforward joined the meeting virtually from Kitchener, ONT, CN, and began with a very short meditation reminding us of our mutual

connection to each other and the Divine. Cory shared the home page of Spiritual Sunshine and brought us up to date with activities. The wonderful devotionals available by email are enjoyed by many and those who have not yet signed up for these were invited to do so.

c. Social Justice Committee – Rev. Dr. Amanda Riley reported on the Faith In Action sessions that are held on Monday evenings, and also spotlighted the mini course on the LGBTQA+ community. And she and her crew have been very active as volunteers at this year’s convention. Great Cookies!

d. Swedenborgians in Action Against Racism – Camp programming was provided last year on social issues, including a protest song sing along at Fryeburg New Church Camp. Convention’s Black history will be covered this year in a mini course conducted by Sue Ditmire. Deep thanks to Terrie Crenshaw who stepped down last year as chair. There is a newsletter available; contact Rev. Shada Sullivan for more information.

e. Swedenborg Foundation – Carl Godlove, who discovered Swedenborg through “Off the Left Eye (OLE),” was the interim CEO of the Foundation and is now the CEO. Carl began by congratulating the denomination on our passage of the LGBTQA+ Standing Resolution 16 and continued with news of a recent reimaging of the Board’s future. Publishing efforts have been made a peer with OLE (well over 30M views with thousands of videos; 130 new viewers per day). Fifty per cent of the current Board are new to the Foundation. There are multiple new printings coming out as well as multiple reprints.

- 21. **MSC to receive the reports** (Rev. Kevin Baxter/Rev. Kit Billings).
- 22. **Jane listed** the many people who participated in the very successful (and fun) silent auction.
- 23. **Business Session III Recessed at 2:36pmPDT.**

Monday, June 27, 2022 1:30 PM PDT

BUSINESS SESSION IV

24. Jane Reconvened convention with a Scripture reading and led the assembled in Prayer.

25. Announcement election results – Jane read the report of the tellers, reminding the assembled that there were 118 delegates in attendance, and therefore each candidate would have to accrue at least 60 votes in order to be elected to office: (* denotes elected):

Vice-President - (1 yr. term)	Kurt Fekete*	69
Recording Secretary - (1 yr. term)	Karen Conger*	70
Treasurer (3 yr. term)	Jennifer Lindsay*	70
General Council (Lay Person) - (2 to be elected – 3yr term ‘25)	Pastor Paul Deming*	63
General Council (Lay Person) - (to complete an unexp. term ‘23)	Dr. Emily Woofenden *65	68
General Council (Minister) - (3 yr. term ‘25)	Kelly Kennedy*	71
Standing Committee for Communication & Information - Rev. Kevin Baxter*	Rev. Sage Cole*	71
Standing Committee for Education & Spiritual Resources - Rev. Julie Conaron*		63
Standing Committee for Education & Spiritual Resources - Rev. Junchol Lee*		66
Standing Committee for Financial Accountability - (2 to be elected, 3 yr. term ‘25)	Rev. Rachel Madjerac*	63
Nominating Committee - (5 yr. term ‘27)	Rev. Lisa Solwold*	65
	Tammara Mounce	62 ¹

¹In the post-convention meeting of the General Council it was reported that an oversight had occurred with the election of Tammara Mounce to the Nominations Committee. The bylaws specify that no two members from the same Association shall be on the committee at the same time. Both Tammara Mounce and Pastor Paul Deming are both in the Illinois Association. Tammara Mounce graciously relinquished her elected seat, and Nancy Little of the Maine Association accepted appointment to the Nominations Committee until the next election when the appointment will be nominated for confirmation to continue throughout the remainder of the term.

CSS BOT representative class	Dr. Lewis Shaw	67
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(4 yr. term '26)

Vote to amend the Constitution and Bylaws as described above (see minute 10):

Ballots cast	86	Needed to pass:	44
		Affirmative:	86

- 26. Rev. Kevin Baxter delivered a further COM Report** advising the following:
- a. It was noted that Rev. Anna Woofenden has asked to be severed from the Roll of Ministers having accepted induction into the priesthood of The Episcopal Church.
 - b. It was noted that Rev. Tomas Aquino entered the spiritual world during the past year.
 - c. It was noted that Rev. Dr. George F. Dole entered the spiritual world during the past year.
 - d. It was noted that Rev. F. Robert Tafel entered the spiritual world during the past year.
 - e. It was noted that Rev. David Sonmor entered the spiritual world during the past year. As each name was read the assembled stood and observed a moment of silence. The COM recommends to the Swedenborgian Church that their names be removed from the Roll of Ministers and added to the Roll of Former Ministers.
- 27. The Chair of Feed and Be Fed**, Peter Rothe rose to speak a little about Feed and Be Fed, noting that he had original been assigned the responsibility of maintaining the garden itself, an activity so very important, especially when you don't have a building. A lovely tribute to Rev. Dr. Jonathan Mitchell as he retires, was enjoyed by all.
- 28. John Titus rose to announce** that Urbana, Ohio, has been named the 145th International City of Peace. John shared that this program seeks to promote a culture of peace, offering non-violent communication classes and other activities. International City of Peace goal is to 1000 by 2035. Bev Titus is the contact for more information about this program.
- 29. Recognition and Certificates of Appreciation – Jane**
- a. Rev. Kit Billings for seven years on the Committee on Admission into the Ministry
 - b. Rev. Kathy Speas for seven years on the Committee on Admission into the Ministry
 - c. Rev. Jenny Caughman for three years on the General Council
 - d. Stan Conger for seven years on the General Council
 - e. Beki Greenwood for three years on the General Council
 - f. Susan Hulcher for three years on the General Council
 - g. Rev. Betsy Coffman for seven years on the Trustees of the Building

Fund

h. Debbie Dolley for three years on the Trustees of the Building Fund

i. Polly Baxter for two years on the Committee for Library and Documents

j. Rev. Robert McCluskey for three years on the Standing Committee for Spiritual Education & Resources

k. Linda Kraus for five years on the Standing Committee for Nominations

l. Val Brugler for seven years on the Information Management Support Unit & the Standing Committee for Communication & Information

m. Bob Perry for five years on the Investment Committee

n. William Rotella for seven years on Spiritual Sunshine

o. Rev. Jane Siebert for six years as president of the denomination

30. New president Rev. Dr. James F. Lawrence was consecrated into his role in a moving ceremony devised and conducted by Jane. All of the officers, Council members, and Committee members were duly installed.

31. In light of recent events involving decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States, Dru Johnson rose to remind the assembled of Standing Resolution 5 supporting the legalization of abortion “in cases where it is responsibly applied for the physical and emotional welfare of those involved.” (August 3, 1960)

32. Peter Rothe and his wife were recognized for their amazing volunteer work at The Garden Church.

33. The next convention will be held in Bridgewater, Massachusetts. Invitation from the MNCU on 6/28 – 7/5. Pastor Kelly Milne rose to cordially invite all to New England next year! Wonderful 4th of July celebrations in Bridgewater are part of the plan.

34. Close Business Sessions – at approximately noon PT the Bible was closed and the 198th Session of the General Convention was brought to a close with prayers and applause!

*Respectfully Submitted,
Karen Conger, Secretary*

CONVENTION PREACHERS SINCE 1959

1959	Ernest O. Martin	Asilomar Conference Grounds, CA
1960	Owen Turley	Lake Forest, IL
1961	Calvin Turley	Washington, DC
1962	Richard Tafel	Pawnee Rock, KS
1963	Paul Zacharias	Miami Beach, FL
1964	Rollo Billings	Philadelphia, PA
1965	Brian Kingslake	Brockton-Bridgewater-Elmwood, MA
1966	Galen Unruh	Urbana, OH
1967	Eric Zacharias	Kitchener, Ontario, Canada
1968	George F. Dole	Windsor, Ontario, Canada
1969	Randall Laakko	Claremont, CA
1971	Erwin Reddekopp	Urbana, OH
1972	Ernest L. Frederick	Boston, MA
1973	Robert H. Kirven	Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
1974	Andre Diaconoff	Urbana, OH
1975	George McCurdy	Urbana, OH
1976	Richard H. Tafel, Jr.	Philadelphia, PA
1977	Dorothea Harvey	San Francisco, CA
1978	Ernest O. Martin	Kitchener, Ontario, Canada
1979	Friedemann Horn	Urbana, OH
1980	Edwin G. Capon	Wellesley, MA
1981	Eric Allison	Urbana, OH
1982	Andre Diaconoff	Irvine, CA
1983	F. Robert Tafel	Wilmington, OH
1984	Ronald P. Brugler	Center Harbor, NH
1985	F. Gardiner Perry III	Windsor, Ontario, Canada
1986	Gladys Wheaton	Boone, NC
1987	Jaikoo E. Lee	Tacoma, WA
1988	David L. Rienstra	Newton, MA
1989	David P. Johnson	Urbana, OH
1990	Jerome A. Poole	Olds, Alberta, Canada
1991	Robert E. McCluskey	Kitchener, Ontario, Canada
1992	Stephen J. Pults	St. Louis, MO
1993	Richard M. Baxter	Wenham, MA
1994	George F. Dole	Arlington, VA
1995	Carl Yenetchi	San Francisco, CA
1996	Horand K. Gutfeldt	Urbana, OH

1997	Robert H. Kirven	Hutchinson, KS
1998	James F. Lawrence	Leesburg, FL
1999	J. Theodore Klein	Malibu, CA
2000	Paul Martin	Urbana, OH
2001	Renée Billings Machiniak	St. Paul, MN
2002	Paul Zacharias	Gorham, ME
2003	Ken Turley	Geneva, NY
2004	Wilma Wake	Kitchener, Ontario, Canada
2005	Marlene Laughlin	Berkeley, CA
2006	John Billings	Urbana, OH
2007	Eric Hoffman	Holland, MI
2008	Sarah Buteux	Bridgewater, MA
2009	Junchol Lee	Seattle, WA
2010	John Maine	St. Paul, MN
2011	Jonathan Mitchell	Cincinnati, OH
2012	Andrew Stinson	Bridgewater, MA
2013	Jane Siebert	Urbana, OH
2014	Alison Lane-Olsen	St. Louis, MO
2015	David Fekete	Bridgewater, MA
2016	Solomon Youngmin Kim	Urbana, OH
2017	Susannah Currie	West Chester, PA
2018	Kit Billings	San Jose, CA
2019	Kathy Speas	Valparaiso, IN
2020	Paul Deming	Virtual
2021	Sage Cole	Virtual
2022	Anna Woofenden	Long Beach, CA

MEMORIAL

REV. TOMAS AQUINO

Rev. Tomas C. Aquino served faithfully as a Swedenborgian minister in the Philippines for many years. The National Convention of the Swedenborgian Churches (Philippines) was incorporated in 1952 as part of Convention and at one time consisted of nine congregations with approximately 500 members, with Rev. Aquino serving as General Pastor. Word has reached us that Rev. Aquino passed away some years ago. With gratitude we honor Rev. Aquino for his vision, organization, and affection for the work of the New Church in the Philippines.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence

REV. JEROME ALDEN POOLE

Reverend Jerome Alden Poole (Jerry) passed away while sleeping peacefully in his home on September 24th, 2022, at the age of 83. Born in 1939 in Wilmington, Delaware into a multigenerational New Church family, he grew up in the Wilmington church and graduated from Friends School in Wilmington before attending West Point Academy followed by Colby College in Waterville, Maine, from which he received his undergraduate degree. He proceeded to graduate seminary work at the Swedenborg School of Religion and Andover Newton Theological Seminary and was ordained into the ministry of the General Convention in 1965.

He initially served for three years on a ministry team at the Church of the Holy City in Wilmington and the Church of the New Jerusalem in Philadelphia, as well as a youth minister for the New Church Youth League. His ministry years were additionally marked by his leadership in retreats for young people. After a few years in full time ministry, however, he decided to pursue a career in financial services and creative enterprise. Over the ensuing six decades he started many businesses while also managing a successful financial services business. Yet he never left active work in the church and served at a high level in the affairs of his local church, filling the pulpit countless times, serving on the board, and overseeing many ministry and outreach projects at the church. He also remained active at the denominational level especially by serving in leadership for many years on the Board of Trustees of the Swedenborg School of Religion. He notably chaired the most successful fundraising campaign in the school's history.

Jerry and his wife, Susan Flagg Poole, in 1976 bought a seaside cottage in Friendship, Maine, where they always summered thereafter. He loved long drives and long walks with Susan, playing guitar, painting with watercolors, swimming, picking berries, and spending time with his five children, ten grandchildren, and countless friends..

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence

ELDON SMITH (CONSECRATED LAY LEADER)

Eldon Smith, 95, passed peacefully into the spiritual world on January 2, 2022. Eldon and his late wife Annella will be remembered by members of Convention as the Consecrated Lay Leader (Eldon) and Administrator (Annella) of the San Diego Society of the New Jerusalem, roles in which they faithfully served for many years. Eldon was a life-long member of the church in San Diego and was thoroughly dedicated to Swedenborgian teachings. In retirement he remained a warm, welcoming presence at the church. His gentle spirit will be missed. Well done good and faithful servant.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Dr. Jonathan Mitchell

REV. DAVID SONMOR

Rev. David Sonmor was ordained in 1986 and served the Swedenborgian church for many years in Western Canada. Educated at the Saskatchewan Hospital, he earned a diploma in Psychiatric Nursing and received a BA in Religious Studies at the University of Saskatchewan. He was a kind and loving person which was reflected in his career helping others. His work included psychiatric nursing, social work, community and economic development, crisis intervention and the ministry. His work as an ordained minister with the Swedenborgian Church was very important to him and he loved sharing his knowledge and spiritual beliefs with those who welcomed it. It was David's belief that after his death, his spirit would immediately enter the spiritual world where he would eternally dwell with like-minded spirits.

He was a man of kindness and compassion who served the Lord and his ministry with true faithfulness of purpose.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Betsy Coffman

REV. F. ROBERT TAFEL

Rev. F. Bob Tafel passed into the spiritual world in February having completed a long and eventful ministry for the Swedenborgian Church.

He graduated from Illinois Tech, New Church Theological School, and Andover Newton Theological Seminary. He served the Swedenborgian Church for fifty-four years. After Washington D.C., he came to Swedenborg Chapel in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and was the current pastor at Church of the Open Word in Newtonville, Massachusetts. His unpublished writings reconcile the Old and New Testaments with Swedenborgian theology in a worship and teaching group participation format. His kindness and sense of humor helped to brighten many tense moments; he was a friend to us all; we can carry on what he brought to the world. Rev. F. Bob Tafel served several churches in his long and dedicated career with the Swedenborgian Church. He was one of the officers of the Massachusetts New church Union over the years as well.

His dedication to the church, the Union, the General Convention, and the greater church of Christians is only surpassed by his love of humor, and his ability to engage in erudite discussions of Swedenborg's writings. He will be sorely missed.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Dr. Donna Keane

REV. JON SKULI THORHALLSSEN

Jon Skúli Thorhallssen, son of Lisbet Jonsdóttir and Thorhallur Skulasen, was born in Reykjavik, Iceland on October 9th, 1950. He came to the U.S. at the age of eight, not knowing one word of English! He resided in Sanford, Florida for his formative years. He has two sisters and one brother who still reside in Iceland. He has two sisters, Bekki and Sara, who live in Florida.

In the early 70's, Skúli hitchhiked from Sicily to Iceland to reconnect with his father and siblings. While in Reykjavik, he went to a library where he encountered books by Emanuel Swedenborg. He recounted later that he was so affected by what he read, that upon his return to Florida, he went to visit Rev. Friedrich, the Swedenborgian minister of the Deland church. He learned that Urbana College in Urbana Ohio was affiliated with the Swedenborgian Church. He enrolled there, where he attended numerous religion classes taught by Rev. Dr. Dorothea Harvey, who became a strong influence on his growing interest in Swedenborg and involvement in the local church.

During his tenure at Urbana College, he met his first wife, Deborah Winter and they were married while students, by Rev. Harvey. Upon their graduations, they

both enrolled in the Swedenborg School of Religion in Cambridge MA and were both ordained in 1988.

After ordination Skuli and Deborah moved to Deland Florida, where they led the church where Skuli had met his first Swedenborgian, Rev. Ernest Frederick. Skuli followed him soon after Ernie's retirement. When Skuli had the opportunity to serve in the Deland ministry his vision was to transform what had originally been a rural retirement community center ministry into a spiritual growth center for the surrounding communities, and that led to a vision for a rebranding into the Chrysalis Center that focused on spiritual retreats and programs in addition to regular services. It was there that their daughter, was born on October 28th , 1990.

He met his second wife Maryann in 1993. Skuli remained the minister in Deland where he had an active ministry until his Parkinson's Syndrome made it impossible to hold services. So many local families and friends were blessed to have him perform their weddings, baptisms, and celebrations of life. He loved family above all and lived a full and rich life. He loved music, nature, traveling, reading, food, and followed various mystical journeys.

He will be greatly missed by all who knew him and loved him.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Betsy Coffman

REV. JUDITH VANDERGRIFT

Rev. Judith Vandergrift of Santa Rosa, California entered the fullness of the spiritual world in late July 2022. She was ordained into the Christian ministry of the Swedenborgian Church of North America on July 5, 2008, in a service at the Swedenborg Chapel in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Ministry was a late in life new career aspiration for her, and she began seminary at what would be a retirement age for most people. A member of the Disciples of Christ denomination when beginning at Pacific School of Religion, she converted to the Swedenborgian faith while on campus through engagement with the Swedenborgian students and faculty. After receiving a call to serve the Church of the New Jerusalem in Pawnee Rock, Kansas, a sudden downturn in health prevented her from beginning in that ministry, a condition from which she never recovered sufficiently to candidate for another call. However, she treasured serving as the prayer support leader for the Swedenborgian Online Community on a volunteer basis for several years and found joy in providing spiritual support to many people through the phone and online.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence

REPORTS OF OFFICERS, BOARDS, COMMITTEES, AND ASSOCIATED BODIES

PRESIDENT

Dear Friends –

Saying goodbye to serving as your president brings feelings of sadness, inspiration, and hope. While I am ready for a respite, I will miss the friendships, connections, and service that this position has offered me. Thank you for your unending support. I find hope and inspiration in all that we have accomplished and the groundwork for the future.

The inspiration and hope starts with the 98 people signed up for in-person convention and the 48 (to date) virtual attendees and the 100 plus members willing to serve as delegates of their association. Our slate of nominees for election '22 is complete, with one third new faces that have not served on national offices and committees before. Thank you to our nominating committee. When I read the vitae of our nominees and long list of accomplishments, I know we are in good hands for the future.

My hope also comes from reading our April and May MESSENGERS. Thank you, Beki, for your outstanding and passionate service as editor. While I did not start my 6 years when elected for this position with a set agenda, the things I am passionate about are rising and are holding our denomination up to the light of service, increased unity of spirit, appreciation for our inclusive theology, focus on our youth, and a virtual expansion of our church walls.

One of my objectives was to offer a well-staffed and exciting CHILDREN'S PROGRAM to our annual convention. My thanks go out to Kurt Fekete and the many energetic people he has recruited to run these programs, when we could meet in person. This year the theme is The Secret Life of Seeds, and participants will follow the journey of a seed with Swedenborgian imagery and correspondences. We are looking forward to the children and SCYL leading us in worship. I thank the many individuals, churches and associations that have donated to children and teens. We keep expanding the scholarships and travel subsidies for both groups.

SOCIAL JUSTICE is a passion that is growing in our denomination and ministries. The minicourses at this year's convention are going to make it hard to choose which to attend. They are overflowing with useful information, deep thought, and how to share the love of our God. Social justice issues of climate care, gender and sexual equality, racial justice, and how to speak out as Swedenborgian peace mak-

ers in today's world, will be highlighted. Topics such as sharing youth wisdom, utilizing music and video, visioning a new way through a New Church Jubilee, and a deep dive into Swedenborgian cultural history, will inform and help us move into the unknown future with more tools, ideas, and resources. Thank you to the Education and Spiritual Resources Standing Committee. Just reading the variety of options fuels my inspiration.

A need that had been discussed before, and the pandemic forced, was the offering of a HYBRID CONVENTION. Hybrid is more difficult than an in-person gathering or a totally virtual meeting, as many of our churches and camps are experiencing. Meeting the needs of people that are unable to attend the convention in person as well as creating a space for connection and renewal for those that can attend is a challenge. A team has been working on this for 6 months, led by our office manager Brittany Price. With help from Beki Greenwood, Rev. Kevin Baxter, and hired consultant Alex Dyer, the team has combed through the different venues and equipment needed to bring you this year's HYBRID CONVENTION. Beki and Jennifer Lindsay are organizing the special voting process combining online and virtual voting,

Blessings and hope for the future of the Swedenborgian Church of North America.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Jane Siebert, President

VICE-PRESIDENT

This is my first full reporting year in the position of Vice President. I've been very busy in service to our church community and it has been a rewarding and sometimes challenging experience. Due to the continuing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic nearly all of our church business has been conducted electronically and many of our church services and camps have also been virtual. We have started resuming in-person and hybrid events in the late summer of 2021. Central Office manager, Brittany Price, and Accounting manager, Gina Peracchi, continue to do an exceptional job running the duties of Central Office from their homes.

Here are the Vice President highlights of year 2021-2022:

- Chaired the Board of Mediation committee investigating society concerns with the pastoral call process.
- Participated in monthly Swedenborgian Community Online (aka, Spiritual Sunshine) committee calls with Chair William Rotella, Rev. Cory Bradford-Watts, Rev. Thom Muller, and Emily Woofenden. Under the

leadership and direction of Cory, Spiritual Sunshine has a beautiful and ever evolving website. Cory is producing great content, including a video series on Divine Providence and monthly meditations, along with his usual Sunday worship services. Spiritual Sunshine is actively using social media to reach out to denomination members and new spiritual seekers across the globe.

- Attended monthly Executive Committee (ExCom) meetings to conduct the ongoing business of the General Council and addressed ExCom issues throughout the year. It's been a joy to work with President, Rev. Jane Siebert, Secretary, Karen Conger, and Treasurer, Jennifer Lindsay. They are doing wonderful work for the denomination and I am blessed to serve with them.
- Attended four General Council meetings (May, June, Nov 2021 and Feb 2022) and presented a VP report along with other assigned duties.
- Active in interviewing and hiring our new website facilitator, Holly Bauer, and A/V Convention tech person, Alex Dyer.
- Working with Swedenborgians Active Against Racism attending bi-weekly calls and assisting with events.

Respectfully submitted,

Kurt Fekete, Vice President

SECRETARY

Per the duties outlined in the Journal, I have taken minutes at all meetings of the General Council and Executive Committee. I have sent correspondence to organizations and individuals on behalf of the General Council as directed, as well as working closely with the president to create and manage the agenda for the above meetings. We are in the process of planning for this year's hybrid convention meetings at California State University at Long Beach, which will include voting, both for virtual attendees and those attending in person. In order to determine accurate delegate numbers, the Credentials Committee, consisting of Licensed Pastor Robbin Ferriman, Operations Manager Brittany Price, and myself, have collected and compiled statistics from churches, associations, and conferences throughout the denomination in North America. Later this year I will be assisting the Central Office in compiling and editing the 2022 Journal.

In addition, I have continued to be active on the Board of Directors of the New York New Church (NYNC), their numbers having fallen below the required membership as outlined in their bylaws. Under the leadership of Rev. Rich Tafel, who

was hired by the denomination in 2020 to facilitate all of the above, the NYNC property has been placed on the market and things are going very well.

I am also the Chair of the Board of Trustees of the National Church at 1611 16th St. NW, in Washington, D.C. The D.C. Church Committee continues to do a very good job of stewardship of the property. With funds granted by the denomination's Trustees of the Building Fund the Society was able to begin some much needed repairs to the Tower and the roof.

It continues to be a pleasure to work with Brittany Price, the Operations Manager of the Central Office. I continue to be impressed with her work as well as very grateful for her helpful and cheerful attitude. As always, Accountant Gina Peracchi is an asset to the denomination and a pleasure to interact with. I feel blessed to be a part of an executive committee that includes people of the caliber of President Rev. Jane Siebert, Vice President Kurt Fekete, and Treasurer Jennifer Lindsay. May the Lord be with us all

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Conger, Recording Secretary

TREASURER

The Office of Treasurer is busy throughout the year – even during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and the lack of travel. Gina Peracchi, Accounting Manager, and I work closely on a weekly basis to manage the checking and saving accounts, bookkeeping, payables, and other financial reporting. We also interact directly with the independent financial auditors who perform the annual financial review. Gina and I are in touch most weekdays through either email or telephone.

Financial Results

The independent financial auditors completed their professional review of the 2021 financial statements during July 2022. Due to the continuing reduction in travel for in-person meetings and retreats, General Convention experienced an operating surplus of approximately \$85K. In addition to the operating surplus, General Convention benefited from two extraordinary items. One, the Tiffany Windows were sold by Temenos. General Convention received part of the proceeds in the amount of \$174K. Two, the Payroll Protection Program provided by the federal government during 2020 and 2021 resulted in a forgiven loan received by General Convention in the amount of \$47K.

The Common Fund generated an annual investment return of 7.9% during 2021 and 11.2% over the past three years. 2022 is the 100th anniversary of the

Common Fund. We are grateful for the wisdom and foresight of our predecessors in creating this investment fund. At the end of 2021, the total corpus reached \$65M aggregated across all the participating ministries of the denomination.

Finally, General Convention receives many financial gifts during the year. We are grateful for each and every one. The denomination was touched to receive a generous \$25K gift from the Keith and Marian Mull Trust as part of a planned estate gift.

Pandemic Relief Funds

Due to the lack of meeting and retreat expenses driven by the pandemic, General Convention experienced a significant operational surplus in both 2020 and 2021. During 2020, General Council approved the funding of Pandemic Relief Fund for Ministries due to the budget surplus. In 2021, General Council approved funding additional temporary programs to assist individuals, churches, and ministries during this extraordinary time.

Due to the difficulties created by the pandemic, I recommended and General Council approved the creation of a Pandemic Relief Fund for Individuals. These funds were a mixture of individual donations and a budget reallocation from the 2021 General Convention budget. During 2021, at least 25 individuals each received grants to assist with various hardships created by or experienced during the pandemic. A total of \$31,750 was distributed through this fund.

Another pandemic relief program was created by General Council and was administered by the Standing Committee for Communication and Information. This program was funded through a budget reallocation from the 2021 General Convention budget. It provided consulting advice and grants to churches and camps for equipment purchases to enhance capabilities in providing services and programs in an on-line, hybrid, and/or on-demand streaming environment.

General Council approved the reallocation of \$10,000 from the 2021 General Convention budget in addition to directing the \$8,050 in donations received during the 2021 Virtual Convention. These funds were split evenly into thirds and given to our three camps: Almont, Fryeburg, and Paulhaven to assist with expenses during the pandemic when in person activities and related revenues were severely curtailed.

Central Office

The office lease with the Cambridge Chapel expired as of April 1, 2022. Fortunately, Gina and Brittany Price, Operations Manager, both prefer to work from home. Thus, the need for office space has reduced significantly during Covid-19

and will continue. I worked with Jane Siebert to negotiate a new three-year lease with the Cambridge Chapel for a reduced amount of space that only includes document storage and postal mail collection. This change in our physical footprint will create a significant monthly cost savings for the foreseeable future.

Other

Besides chairing the SCFA and Investment Committee (see separate SCFA and Investment Committee reports), I also serve as a member of the Building Fund Committee and the Tafel Fund Trustees.

Due to the virtual elections in 2021 and the hybrid elections in 2022, the Office of the Treasurer has been tasked with leading the virtual voting process by interacting with the vendor NemoVote, creating the virtual ballots, and assisting delegates with accessing the NemoVote website for voting purposes.

It is a privilege to serve General Convention as Treasurer and an honor to be entrusted with this responsibility. I look forward to seeing everyone in person and virtually at the 2022 Convention Session.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Lindsay, Treasurer

GENERAL COUNCIL

The General Council met virtually a total of six times from May of 2021 through to a late winter meeting in February of 2022. During the May 2021 meeting via Zoom, for the first time as a Council we were able to vote virtually. That procedure was adopted for use at the virtual 2021 convention meetings that were held later that summer, and it worked out very well.

Chairs and leaders from various ministries were able to report in person during the Spring '21 meeting, which continues to be one of the benefits of virtual meetings. Those committees and ministries reported on included, The Swedenborgian Community Online, Spiritual Sunshine, represented by Rev. Cory Bradford-Watts; The Standing Committee for Communication & Information, represented by Holly Bauer; the Center for Swedenborgian Studies, represented by Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence; Swedenborgians in Action Against Racism, represented by Terrie Crenshaw; and the Social Justice Committee, represented by Rev. Robert McCluskey.

All of the members of the General Council continue to report on their contacts as liaisons with the ministries and churches of the denomination. The original concept of this outreach on the part of the GC was to provide the churches and ministries of the Swedenborgian Church with an avenue of communication and opportunity for aid and a listening ear in the hopes that the denomination might be a first resort when needed instead of a last resort. The GC remains hopeful that this is having a positive effect.

Amongst the many items of business undertaken by the General Council during the past year have included appointments of personnel to various standing committees and boards; the continued development of the new denominational website (swedenborg.org); reports from the standing committees; continuing development of the Lay Pastor program; and etc.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Conger, Recording Secretary

COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

ON-GOING ZOOM SUPPORT GROUPS

- Chaplain Support Group facilitated by Susannah Currie
- Licensed Pastors Support group facilitated by Susannah Currie
- Ministers in Transition Support group facilitated by Susannah Currie
- Ministers with Elderly Parents Support group facilitated by Susannah Currie
- Human Services Professionals Support Group facilitated by Betsy Coffman
- Mentors Support Group facilitated by Susannah Currie

PEER SUPERVISION

Virtual Peer Supervision was held Oct 8-9, 2021 on the topic “What will 21st Century Spirituality Look Like?” with Devin Zuber & Rebecca Esterson presenting. 28 ministers and licensed pastors attended.

East Coast Peer Supervision met April 24-27, 2022 in-person with Revs Susannah Currie and Donna Keane facilitating. The group of seven participated in sessions on Decompressing about the Pandemic; challenges, lessons and blessings received, then moved on to what we are ‘bringing forth’ from the experience. We shared prayer and communion and drafted a question for COM about the purpose of our educational system. Seven ministers & LPs attended

Midwest Peer Supervision was held May 2-4 via zoom with Rev. Kit Billings facilitating.

COM COMMUNICATION

ALL-COM emails were sent monthly with suggested links offered by COM members, links to ZOOM Support Groups and info from COM committee chairs.

COM MEETINGS 2022

The COM meetings June 23 & 24 will start with an education day on TRANSFORMATIONS OF GROWTH IN GOD; we will look at the life of seeds and plants as a guide to our various ministries as we learn to embrace the cycles of life and the value of each stage of development.

Business Meetings will include voting on the status of Licensed Pastors and discussion of the future of the education, church growth training and marketing possibilities for our churches.

Respectfully Submitted :

Rev. Susannah Currie, M.Div, BCC, Chair of COM)

STANDING COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

For the past year we have been working with a website design agency to completely renovate swedenborg.org. The new site went live at the end of December. Site visitors can now find anything from Virtual Services to History of the Movement to Membership Information. We want to make sure the site is up-to-date with current events and is useful for both current members and potential new members. We will continue adapting and improving the site.

2021 marked our first use of our new convention site. This year we added on-line registration functions for both virtual and in-person.

Our [Facebook page](#) is very active with a variety of content and many followers. Thanks Brittany!

Ben Phinney worked as the A/V Consultant through 2021 to help local churches set up streaming capabilities. In addition to making recommendations to churches who reached out with questions, he set up a monthly user group to help churches communicate with each other about best practices.

Val Brugler's second term on SCCI is expiring and she will be greatly missed. Her knowledge and passion for the site has been invaluable. Thank you, Val.

Respectfully submitted,

Holly Bauer, Chair

THE MESSENGER

The Messenger is an official publication of the Swedenborgian Church of North America (ten issues, including combined January/February and July/August issues plus occasional digital specials), had a successful year of supporting and serving its readers. *The Messenger* publishes information that the Church wishes to communicate to the membership, such as church membership statistics, reports from meetings of the General Council and the Board of Trustees of the Center for Swedenborgian Studies, nomination information, news about ministries of the church, updates from committees, and information about the upcoming Annual Convention. In addition to news articles and announcements, *the Messenger* published articles on theology; Swedenborg and Swedenborgian related issues; articles by and about churches, church members, clergy, and other ministries; and personal reflections from members and clergy. We print 162 physical copies and email out almost 1400 copies each issue.

Over the past year (May 2021 – April 2022), *the Messenger* published articles from 38 individual writers. We had submissions from 22 female writers, and 16 male writers—ages ranging between 18 and 90. 16 of those writers were clergy from around our denomination. There were also 10 letters to the editor in this time frame. People are reading, and responding to the Messenger, which keeps us relevant and an important communication tool for our worldwide readership.

This year we worked hard at updating swedenborg.org and integrating Messenger articles as posts and content on the website. Several articles from each issue get pulled out and featured become live content on the website. In addition to our Facebook page, we have also started an Instagram with hope to maintain connection with our younger generation of readers.

The Messenger would not be possible without the volunteer editorial support from a variety of people: Holly Bauer, Jennifer Darcy, Jason Greenwood, Robert Leith, Rev. Rachel Madjerac, Brittany Price, Dr. Emily Woofenden, Trevor Woofenden, with special thanks to the Editorial Advisory Committee—Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence, Rev. Jane Siebert, and Herb Ziegler.

Respectfully submitted,
Beki Greenwood, Editor

OUR DAILY BREAD

Our Daily Bread at spiritualquesters.org is doing well as we continue to modernize and expand our ministry. Since we began recording the number of visits via a new WordPress plug-in in the Summer of 2020, we have had just over 38,000 visits to our Featured Programming page, which we are extremely pleased with.

The average piece/article/sermon receives between 200 and 300 views. A total of 771 people are subscribed to our Facebook page and thus receive ODB post on their Facebook wall daily. I attribute these exciting numbers to our increased outreach efforts, including familiarizing ourselves with advertising possibilities as well as search engine optimization, and our monthly newsletter.

In 2021/22, our ministry has seen some change due to two unexpected resignations. Rev. David Fekete, contributing editor, resigned from his position at ODB, and Tyler Bockler, whom we had hired to modernize the website (a project we're very happy with). The latter has had some impact, since we had hoped Tyler would guide us into the next stage of website maintenance and development, now that we have the new page up. Tyler had to move on to a different work project, and won't be available for projects in the near future. I do not expect Rev. Fekete's

absence to impact our operations, and we found a replacement for Tyler Bockler, Lukas Thao, who has picked up the tech assistance, in late April.

During these transitions, ODB has continued its ministry in its established format, with regular posts of both submitted and original content, collaboration with other public Swedenborgian outlets, such as *the Messenger* and *Spiritual Sunshine*, whose board Rev. Thom continues to serve on, in addition to SCCI and the website committee, which has enabled a very steady exchange of ideas and projects between these different organs of our denomination. I believe our newly established “consulting team”, made up of volunteers who are passionate about our work and the direction it is heading, and have valuable input, namely Rev. Jim Lawrence, Kurt Fekete, Eleanor Schnarr, and Rev. Cory Bradford-Watts, will continue to be a source of insight, innovation, and accountability.

Our next, post-website-modernization stage has begun, as the personnel challenges have been addressed and resolved. Within this coming year, we expect to have expanded our production of original A/V content significantly, as well as continuing to expand our outreach capabilities. ODB will be covering this year’s Convention, including through original interviews and reports, and continue to be innovative while we both maintain our established modus operandi in terms of providing folks with high quality “traditional” content, while at the same time continuing to proactively lean into the new opportunities of the information age.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Thom Muller, Managing Editor

STANDING COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION AND RESOURCES FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY

1. SCER did all its work on e-mail this year.
2. Two projects have been given attention:
 - A. Mini-Courses for 2022: We worked with the group planning the virtual convention and went with the request to limit and feature eight mini-courses with some attention to a couple of new voices. We continued to hone the framework that is working for hybrid conventions. This year we framed three time sessions that had the same formula of two fully in-person, one fully virtual on Zoom, and one in-person but streamed live in the big auditorium. In addition, we shaped a featured mini-course that was in its own time slot that was live-streamed in the main auditorium. Very good comments and feedback were received for both the structure and the overall excellence and diversity of mini-courses.

B. Seven Themes Support: A plan to run regular small articles in The Messenger under a series carrying a banner for the current theme was accomplished “The Year of Divine Providence” and a number of small articles have run using a variety of authors. The upcoming theme is “The Year of Regeneration.”

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Dr. James Lawrence, Chair

STANDING COMMITTEE FOR FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

In September 2021, the SCFA met virtually via Zoom. During this meeting the SCFA reviewed, discussed, and modified the initial draft 2022 General Convention budget and recommended that it be forwarded to General Council for approval; appointed itself to also serve as the Augmentation Fund Committee; and made granting decisions for applications related to the Augmentation Fund, Missions Fund, and Iungerich Fund.

The Augmentation Fund Committee established the on-going expectation that any minister whose compensation is supported by an Augmentation Fund grant will attend COM meetings and Convention during the year of the grant.

The SCFA continued to utilize the following five priorities in its grant decision making and assessment that were confirmed during the November 2018 General Council meeting.

- Focus on the promotion of a General Convention based Swedenborgian perspective to the broader world and community.
- Impact on people and the potential for growth in the number of people served. Ability to attract people to participate in the ministry or project.
- Expressed commitment to the ministry or project, including buy-in from the local Swedenborgian religious leaders and donations of time and money from the local community.
- Effort toward becoming sustainable and self-funded with other sources of financial support.
- Accountability to the General Convention denomination including a willingness to accept and incorporate constructive feedback.

The ministries and projects supported through the SCFA grant decisions for calendar year 2022 are:

Augmentation Fund

- Edmonton
- Garden Church (San Pedro)
- General Convention – Committee on Admission to the Ministry
- General Convention – Office of the President
- Hillside (El Cerrito)
- Korean New Church (New York City)
- St. Paul (automatic per donor requirement)
- Southwest Desert (Silver City)
- Spiritual Sunshine (f.k.a. Swedenborgian On-Line Community)
- Washington, DC
- Wilmington

Missions Fund (Including New Directions Grants)

- Garden Church (San Pedro)
- Korean New Church (New York City)
- Southwest Desert (Silver City)
- Spiritual Sunshine (f.k.a. Swedenborgian On-Line Community)
- Washington, DC

Iungerich Fund

- San Francisco
- Spiritual Sunshine (f.k.a. Swedenborgian On-Line Community)
- Swedenborg Foundation

Each Missions and Iungerich grant recipient is expected to submit both a mid-year and year-end report on the use of the grant and how it supported the ministry or project. The Committee also requested that each grant recipient submit an article for publication in *The Messenger* to provide additional awareness of each ministry or project.

The SCFA plans to meet in person during September 2022 at a retreat center near St. Louis, MO.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Lindsay, Chair

CENTRAL OFFICE REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Central Office Review Committee is chaired by the Vice President of the Swedenborgian Church. Central Office still has its physical presence in the basement of the Swedenborgian Chapel in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Daily duties of both the Operations Manager and Accounting Manager continue to be accomplished remotely throughout the entire reporting period, with the Accounting Manager visiting the physical location twice a week to conduct any necessary on-site business. This has worked well and it is anticipated that Central Office personnel will continue to work remotely.

Records Storage: After pulling over 100 boxes from Iron Mountain by clear content listings and sending them directly to the shredder, there are still over 240 boxes at Iron Mountain. A team spent three days cleaning, reviewing, and organizing boxes and files in the newly updated Cambridge Church basement records storage cage. A new lease was signed with the Cambridge Church. Beginning on April 1, 2022, and for the succeeding three years, the denomination will pay a fixed amount of \$500 a month, plus we can use the office space for an additional fee if needed.

Personnel: Brittany Price continues as Operations Manager. Brittany works from her home 30 hours per week. Brittany has been an extraordinary Operations Manager. Over the last year, she has organized, scheduled, and attended myriad Zoom committee meetings, fielded all sorts of questions, managed virtual Convention, and ran everything in Central Office smoothly and capably. She has spent much of her time this past year working on the new denomination website and organizing her first in-person Convention. Brittany is accommodating, flexible with her hours, friendly, and efficient. We are blessed to have her working with us.

Accounting Manager, Gina Peracchi, continues her excellent work. Gina can conduct the business of both the Operations Manager and Accounting Manager whenever there are vacancies in the Operations Manager position or when Brittany is away. Gina is exceptional, wonderful to work with, and is extremely reliable and consistent. She works closely with the Treasurer on financial accounting, administers payroll efficiently, handles the distribution of payment and reimbursement quickly and accurately, and oversees projects skillfully. Gina is a real asset to our organization and I greatly enjoy working with her.

Respectfully submitted,

Kurt Fekete, Vice President

COMMITTEE ON AMENDMENTS

As an appointed committee of General Council, we officially meet to review amendments at their direction. This year, there have been no amendments referred to the committee for consideration

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Kevin Baxter

COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY

The Committee of Inquiry reviews complaints against clergy to determine if the basic requirements for further action have been met. It is not the decision-making body. The committee does have the power to hire an investigator if the need arises, but it does not receive the investigator's report. Any such report would be forwarded directly to the chair of the Misconduct Determination Board of the Council of Ministers. The Committee of Inquiry would simply send a report to the Misconduct Determination Board for further action should the facts support that the issue is an actionable complaint.

The Committee of Inquiry considered two complaints during the past year and referred one of the two for review by the Misconduct Determination Board.

Recommendation:

The entire misconduct review and determination process needs significant change. The issues needing discussion and revision include all the following areas:

- **Clarification of position of Licensed Pastors in the misconduct process**
- **General policy guidelines**
- **Inclusion of non-clergy for misconduct allegations and process for such allegations**
- **Investigative process**
- **Purpose and functioning of the Committee of Inquiry**
- **Recusal Procedures**
- **Revision of complaint process (how and to whom a complaint is made)**

Notes:

The current process only covers clergy. Any action against an individual society lay member (such as a president or treasurer), would require action by that society, absent some incident at a General Convention meeting. If the society took no action, then General Convention would have no authority to act, and the accused lay member would remain a member of the General Convention in

good standing. Allegations of sexual misconduct, malfeasance or other serious misconduct could then not be addressed by the General Convention. This is an important set of issues, given that a member in good standing would be seen as a representative of the General Convention either in an official or unofficial capacity. A process for action in the case of inaction or insufficient action by the local society is a necessity.

There is a process in Robert's Rules of Order for sanctioning individual members, but it involves issues that develop at a meeting. It is covered in more than 30 pages of text and does not adequately cover our needs. It also requires a trial that would have to take place at a General Convention meeting, with the delegates voting to convict or exonerate

Respectfully submitted,

Stan Conger, Chair

COMMITTEE ON LIBRARY AND DOCUMENTS

Two new members were appointed to the committee: Sue Ditmire, and Robbin Ferriman. Their extensive knowledge about our church history is a welcome addition to the committee.

For the past year, the committee focused their efforts on three projects: 1.) New York New Church library; 2.) reducing the denomination's inventory in the remote storage facility Iron Mountain; 3.) future possible locations for the denomination's historical records.

New York New Church Library: With the impending sale of the New York New Church, local booksellers in New York City were contacted who might want to resell the books. There was no interest in the collection. Sue Ditmire made a couple of trips to the church to organize the church files. A decision has not been made about the New York New Church files.

Iron Mountain Inventory Reduction: the inventory spreadsheet (maintained by Brittany Price) was reviewed by committee members. Following the Document Retention Policy, and in consultation with the denomination treasurer and Central Office manager, the committee identified approximately 140 boxes that could be destroyed due to their contents (mainly older financial documents). We have reduced our inventory to about half, with roughly 250 boxes remaining in Iron Mountain. The committee will continue to work on reducing our inventory in Iron Mountain in the coming year.

Church Historical Records Future Locations: we meet regularly to discuss options for a long-term climate controlled, accessible location, for the denomina-

tion's historical records that will make the collection available to historians and genealogists. This is a big project and will need to be thoughtfully and carefully planned out.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Little, MSLIS, Chair

INVESTMENT COMMITTEE

At the end of both October 2021 and April 2022, the Investment Committee convened for its regularly scheduled semi-annual meetings. One meeting was held in Cambridge, MA and the other convened via Zoom. Our current investment advisor from Marquette Associates, Lauren Cellucci, joined both meetings to provide updates regarding the overall economic market, reports on the performance of the Common Fund portfolio, and recommendations on potential changes to investments in the Common Fund portfolio. At the October meeting, the Investment Committee had the wonderful experience of celebrating Michael Shone's retirement who served as a consultant / investment advisor to the Investment Committee for over 30 years.

There are over 30 participants in the Common Fund that represent many of our churches, camps, and associations – as well as the General Convention and our theological school, the Center for Swedenborgian Studies. The Common Fund reached its highest portfolio asset value and its highest unit value ever as of December 31, 2022. The Common Fund earned a negative return of 3.6% during Q1 2022 due to the war in Ukraine and the subsequent increase in oil and gas prices.

The Investment Committee aims for the Common Fund to earn at least a 6% targeted annual rate of return on average which is provided to Participants in the form of the payout plus the increase in the value of the underlying units owned by the Participants. Due to the strategy of the Investment Committee to not provide Participants the entire rate of return in the form of the payout during bull market years, the Common Fund has proven able to withstand the turmoil of the markets during the on-going Covid-19 pandemic with its supply chain disruptions and the more recent market volatility due to the war in Ukraine.

As of March 31, 2022, the Common Fund generated the following annualized returns (payout rate plus unit price increase):

- 7.9% over 1 year
- 11.2% over 3 years
- 8.3% over 7 years
- 9.1% over 10 years

During its October 2021 meeting, the Investment Committee voted to increase the 2022 quarterly payout rate from \$0.32 per unit to \$0.3275 per unit.

Bob Perry will complete his current five-year term on the Investment Committee as of July 2022. We thank Bob for his wise counsel and dedication to the important work of the committee.

*Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Lindsay, Chair*

RETIREMENT COMMITTEE

In 2021, Rev. Dan Burchett joined the RETCO board of directors as Rev. Rich Tafel (Chairperson) stepped down after years of service.

In recent years, RETCO moved away from providing grants to individual retirees and implemented a retirement program through MMBB (Ministers and Mission Benefit Board), an organization serving all faiths in the area of retirement and disability services to our ministers. This retirement system is maintained by individual ministers and the churches they serve. Another benefit to this program is the ability to continue using this income as housing allowance as it is received in retirement (a helpful tax savings when pre-tax ministerial funds are received in retirement).

The majority of our ministers are participating in the MMBB retirement program and we are currently assisting two remaining individuals with grants.

RETCO continues to research options for providing support to ministers in our denomination who do not hold compensated ministerial positions serving congregations.

As a reminder, MMBB “Benefits for Life” includes a 403(b)-retirement account, disability insurance, and term life insurance. Health insurance is not included, however, it does offer the opportunity to join a group plan under Cigna health insurance.

The denomination’s Central Office and the Retirement Committee interface with MMBB to ensure a continuity of care for ministers and other employees in the benefits arena. “Benefits for Life” requires churches who employ ministers to pay 10% of their minister’s salary to MMBB. Fortunately, the Swedenborgian denomination reimburses 3% of that amount back to churches, leaving local churches with the responsibility for the remaining 7%. Churches are required to

pay the entire 10% to MMBB each month and the denomination will send them a reimbursement of 3%.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Dan Burchett Chair

Committee Members: John McIntosh and Meredith Conant Piotti

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Rev. Dr. Jonathan Mitchell and Rev. Dr. Amanda Adams Riley became co-chairs of the Social Justice Committee. The committee meets monthly (save for July and December). This year the Social justice Committee has focused on communication, education, engagement and policy. SJC has submitted articles to the Messenger frequently over the course of the year. In the early part of 2022 SJC conducted a denominational wide survey. The survey allowed us to better understand priorities and interest for our denomination. In the Spring SJC partnered with Faith in Action to conduct a spring series of courses.

At Annual Convention SJC offered a course on Earth Care and proposed a standing resolution on the welcome and support of LGBTQ+ persons. Also this summer SJC called together a group of people interested in Earth Care with the hopes of beginning a new group working on environmental concerns. Looking to the next year SJC is ready to continue the social justice work in the denomination and in service of the Lord.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Dr. Amanda Riley, Co-Chair

SWEDENBORGIANS IN ACTION AGAINST RACISM

Swedenborgians in Action Against Racism was formed in response to the increase in awareness and action around racial justice during the summer of 2020, and out of a desire to be able to learn and act together in community within the Swedenborgian tradition. An ecumenical leadership team of clergy and lay people from around the country formed in order to create educational and formational programming to offer to the denomination (and beyond).

Newsletter: The SAAR newsletter has been published (mostly) biweekly since June 2020, and provides various resources for learning and action. One issue per month is more informational, focusing each time on a particular topic, and the other issue per month is more devotional, aiming to provide reflection and stamina-building for the work of racial justice long-term.

Camp programming: In the summer of 2021, for Almont, SAAR organized a young adult focused discussion aimed at communicating to the wider church how young adults view the church's responsibility towards social issues. For Fryeburg, SAAR orchestrated a "protest song" sing-along.

Fall Programs 2021: SAAR ran a Movie and Discussion Series, featuring the movies Get Out, Miss Evers Boys and The Long Walk Home. In addition, a Black History Month discussion group was held around the documentary I Am Not Your Negro, in February 2022.

Winter/Spring Programs 2022: In conjunction with the Center for Swedenborgian Studies, The SCNA Social Justice Committee, and the Friends Committee on National Legislation, SAAR orchestrated a five-part program on civic engagement entitled: Spirit in Action: Civic Engagement and Religious Life, which explored the principles and practices of faith-based advocacy.

For Convention, SAAR leadership team members offered a mini-course on Convention's Black Church history, as well as a continuation of the conversation on civic engagement.

Financials: SAAR is a volunteer-led initiative, and many people from both from the leadership team and beyond donated their time to these programs. In 2020, SAAR received a grant from the Grey Fund, which continues to support programming. From May 2021-May 2022 SAAR used \$671 for movie streaming expenses, and \$400 for tech support.

Leadership: In the spring of 2022, our chair since inception, Terrie Crenshaw, stepped down from the position, and we offer our deep thanks for her leadership. The SAAR leadership team decided to go forward with a rotating chair on a quarterly basis.

We welcome new members! Please feel free to reach out to a member of our working group: Terrie Crenshaw, Sue Ditmire, Rebecca Esterson, Kurt Fekete, Esther Fyk, Lori Gayheart, Elise Genzlinger, Shalonda Ingram, Jim Lawrence, Robert McCluskey, Page Morahan, E. Kent Rogers, Jane Siebert, Shada Sullivan, Rich Tafel.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Shada Sullivan, Chair

SPIRITUAL SUNSHINE: A SWEDENBORGIAN COMMUNITY ONLINE

Spiritual Sunshine has continued to connect and reach out to people across the globe, through our site SwedenborgianCommunity.org and especially through our content on platforms like Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and various podcasting apps like Spotify. On Instagram alone we currently have well over 3,750 subscribers from around the world. We've loved supporting each other's healthy spirituality through our talks, sermons, meditations, and book discussions.

I believe that each person, in fact, all being, has at its heart spiritual sunshine from a God of infinite love, compassion, and wisdom, empowering embodiments of healthy religiosity and living across the cosmos in seemingly infinite ways. Even our challenges serve to help us awaken to our true nature in unity with God and all things. Many traditions point to this, our intrinsic connection to Divinity, the source of the light of love and wisdom. As an interfaith community, inspired by Swedenborgianism, we celebrate and reflect on this together, inviting our greater embodiment of this fundamental truth.

To do this, we leverage technology in many ways: broadcasting live, recording, editing, promoting, showcasing, and connecting through many means. Thank you for your support and connection in support of these efforts! This year, in particular, has been an important year to share our best attempts at reminding people of their higher nature as angels, Buddhas, and yogis, with all the distractions and voices telling us we are less. This is the type of message we've shared this year, exploring everything from Swedenborg's book, Divine Providence, to the nature of our own being through meditation and the active practice of remembrance and turning inward, as we explore in our written and recorded messages.

Spiritual Sunshine's Central Committee has been a great gift to our work and ministry this year, providing guidance, insight, ideas, and support in many ways. We've greeted new members into the Committee and have said farewell to long-time leaders due to term limits, celebrating both the new and the expert alike as we explore ways to empower others' shine. Many thanks go to those who serve in this way, and if you're interested in one day possibly joining their ranks, please reach out to me at SwedenborgianCommunity@gmail.com! And feel free just to connect at any time.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Cory Coberforward, Minister

STRUCTURE REVIEW COMMITTEE

No activity to report.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Lisa Solwold, Chair

YOUTH DIRECTOR

My twentieth year as your Youth Director has been challenging but it appears that better days are ahead. I continue to work primarily with youth ages 10 – 18, however, I also organize the children's program at Convention and assist with the young adult, 18 – 30 year-old, Transitions group. I look forward to doing more work with this group in the coming years. Our preteen program is called SPLATz (Super Powered Lovable Almost Teens). Our teen program is the SCYL (Swedenborgian Church Youth League). The COVID pandemic has limited my ability to meet in person. We started to gather together again in the fall of 2021 only to be forced back to virtual when the COVID numbers spiked again in the winter. I've been doing my best to connect with youth via phone/text, social media and video conferencing. The youth are doing their best to stay connected and communicate during these troubled times. We are all trying to support each other and maintain our community while being largely physically apart. It hasn't been easy, but the SCYL and SPLATz are still together, learning, growing and trying to be patient until we can regularly meet together in-person again. Those days appear to be coming very soon and for that I am enormously grateful.

Here are the Youth Director highlights for 2021-2022:

- Fryeburg New Church Assembly 2021 – Fryeburg was the only church camp to hold an in-person event in 2021 and quite a few teens joyfully attended. Twelve youth had a great outing day into Old Port in Portland, Maine. It was wonderful to be able to join back together after being apart for so long.
- October 2021 Fall SCYL Retreat – Our first in-person retreat since December 2019. Theme: Foundations. 10 teens attended from 6 different states. 3 afternoons video/discussion sessions and 3 game nights. We even got to go on a bowling outing! So good to be with everyone.
- December 2021 Winter SCYL Retreat – Back to virtual, but we held our 2022 Officer elections.

In this difficult year I'm extremely grateful to all of you who generously give time and money to our denomination youth program. Without your support there

would be no youth program. I look forward to the coming year and am praying that we can begin gathering in-person again with our youth so as to provide the learning experience and loving and caring environment that our youth desperately need.

Respectfully submitted,

Kurt Fekete, Youth Director

YOUTH LEAGUE

The SCYL is going strong, despite everything we've been through in the last two years! Due to Covid restrictions, The SCYL only had the opportunity to have one in-person SCYL retreat. The retreat took place in October during Indigenous People's Day weekend located at the Cedar Hill Retreat Center in South Duxbury, MA. Even in these unprecedented times, ten teenagers were able to attend, coming from Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Maine, and one teen from Quebec, Canada who joined us virtually for discussions. While at the retreat we dived into the theme of "Foundations." From this theme, we discussed values, core truths and loves, living in a worldly and spiritual community, the Swedenborgian concept of vastness and remains, and how the and how the divine flows through all of these concepts. In short, The SCYL talked about the things that we trust or (perhaps should trust) in order to discover, establish, and maintain the core foundational principles that help guide and support our life journeys.

Despite our inability to have more in-person get-togethers, we still have fun communicating through our virtual events! The SCYL held two virtual youth events: Memorial Day weekend, and SCYL winter break. For Memorial and Winter retreat, we were able to host Zoom meetings in which we played virtual games, and hosted the 2022 SCYL elections. A few teens were even fortunate enough to host a mini Winter retreat together in-person! Many teens also continued to stay in touch through social media when there was nothing going on. SCYL members also had the opportunity to attend Fryeburg New Church Assembly to see each other in person with the lack of Almont last year. Along with an amazing attendance from SCYL members at FNCA, one teen, Ava Dolley, sang in a sing-a-long at an Swedenborgian in Action Against Racism protest evening activity. Even with our few opportunities to come together physically as a group because of Covid restrictions, the SCYL is continuing to find ways to form bonds and discuss our spirituality across the country!

Respectfully Submitted,

Molly Moore, President, SCYL

BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE WAYFARERS CHAPEL

“Pause for a moment, Wayfarer, on Life’s Journey. Let the beauty of holiness restore your soul. May the harmony of sky, water, leaf and rock nourish the creation and growth of your inner being as you fare through this life and on into the life beyond.”

Wayfarers Chapel remains an active center drawing multiplied thousands to the iconic structure that is the National Monument to Emanuel Swedenborg. Wayfarers’ Board of Directors continues the ministry of the Chapel with virtual and in-person meetings. It is a critical time in our history as we resume the vital work of fundraising for our Restoration project.

Total revenue for 2021 was \$1,943,959 which includes \$1,508,505 in wedding income and we are on track to increase ceremonies and income in 2022. By comparison, 2019 (pre-pandemic) total revenue was \$2,127,330 and wedding income was \$1,551,400. 2021 ceremonies and income reflect a more normal year compared to 2020 with activities at Wayfarers drastically reduced due to Covid-19. Our Net Current Assets as of February 2022 is \$2,340,759 which has more than doubled from February 2021 at \$1,157,603. We applied for and received two PPP loans, May 2020 and February 2021 totaling \$307,574, both of which have been fully forgiven.

Through 2019 into March of 2020 Wayfarers had 29 employees. As the Chapel was closed in April of 2020 our employee numbers were reduced to 13. Our current employees number 21.

The Chapel’s worshipping community under the direction of Rev. Dr. David Brown continues to recover from being closed, holding online services from April, 2020 through June, 2021. Returning to in-person worship services has been very important for our local community and especially for those who have been living in isolation throughout the pandemic.

New wayfarers, in addition to those who have been attending our Sunday Worship and Wednesday Prayer Services, have enjoyed the fellowship time and our numbers continue to increase. We look forward to returning to pre-pandemic attendance numbers in the very near future.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Dan Burchett, Executive Director

BOARD OF MEDIATION

The Board of Mediation is chaired by the Vice President of Convention. The Board of Mediation met once during the past year. The board was activated by the President of Convention after she received concerns by members of a society about the pastoral call process, a possible conflict of interest, and the governance process of the society. It may be important to mention that the Board did not view this as a traditional mediation where two parties have concerns to be resolved and agree on a mediated process to resolve their differences. In this situation, some members raised concerns that potentially warranted involvement of the denomination, as provided for in the bylaws of the denomination. The board has completed its work on this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

Kurt Fekete, Chair

BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE NATIONAL CHURCH

The Board of Trustees (BOT) of the National Church was established by language in the deed of trust from Mr. Job Barnard in 1889 giving a gift of land on 16th St. in Washington, D.C., to the denomination on which to erect a church that would serve as the denomination's presence in the nation's capital city. Mr. Barnard's wishes were that the denomination would establish a board of trustees whose primary purpose would be to oversee the property which ultimately included the land and the church which was built in 1896 identified as the denomination's National Church and given the name Church of the Holy City. Early in the 20th century the attached office/chapel/parish hall was finished, and the for the past century and more the Board of Trustees has served the uses outlined in the "Job Barnard deed."

Early this spring it was finally possible bring in an enormous boom with platform that would allow an examination of the Tower to take place. It was also possible to utilize the talents and skills of a Master Mason to remove a few of the pinnacles that had degraded to the point that they were a danger to those in/on or near the building. It took some time to find a company that was willing to do the work in a manner with which Rev. Rich Tafel and others were satisfied, and the estimate for the inspection came in at \$31,400, which will come out of an amount allocated earlier from the Building Fund, underwritten by the denomination. Happily, a member of the Cambridge Church, Mark Careaga, is an architect, and he was most useful in using his contacts to find the company that did the work.

In other news, the Washington Society had the good fortune to receive a donation of kitchen equipment from attendees of the church who, sadly, had to close their restaurant during the COVID shutdown. In addition, the Society was the recipient of a bequest from the estate of Helen Sioris, former Vice President, half of which went into the Common Fund and the other half for advertising.

The Trustees are currently functioning with one person less than mandated due to the untimely death of Helen Sioris. Those interested in serving are encouraged to contact Karen Conger (due to the stipulation in the original deed only United States citizens may serve as trustees).

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Conger, Chair

TRUSTEES OF THE BUILDING FUND

Convention's Building Fund Committee considers loan requests from churches and camps for building repairs, improvements, and purchases. The Building Fund Committee meets by conference call as needed, typically a few times during the year. In addition, the committee may conduct business by e-mail, providing necessary information to its members on various items of business. In the past year loans were issued to the Washington D.C. Society for repairs and improvements to their building, particularly their tower (Convention owns the D.C. Church), and to the St. Louis Church of the Open Word for roof repairs. The committee is presently considering at least one other request by a Convention church.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Betsy Coffman, Chair

TRUSTEES OF THE TAFEL FUND

The Tafel Fund is the creation of Rev. Dick and Linda Tafel. Their vision is to fund ministries using "out of the box" approaches to sharing Swedenborg's insights. This year the committee funded partial internet costs for Almont and a new web initiative for the Church of the Holy City, Washington D.C.

The committee meets three times a year. To be considered, grant requests must be received by the 15th of January, May, or September.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Richard L. Tafel, Chair

DELEGATES TO THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

The NCC continued its Governing Board meetings online this past year. However, in May 2020 the National Council of Churches held their governing board retreat in Montgomery, Alabama in May followed a by a board meeting the following week. This meeting was planned with a focus on addressing racism. The Swedenborgian Church was well represented both in the retreat and board meeting.

A tour of the Equal Justice Legacy Museum and memorial to victims of lynching were part of the event. The museum is both outstanding in its use of cutting-edge technology and presentation to tell the story of slavery through mass incarceration. At the same time, it is overwhelming sad and, at times, deeply depressing. As our faith teaches, sin needs to be fully seen to be addressed, the museum provides an excellent space to focus on that. I would highly recommend a visit as one of the best museums of history I've been to.

The board retreat was well facilitated and focused on racism in the church and on the council. It was probably one of the most honest discussions I've experienced on my nine years representing our denomination. As a board we've developed great fellowship and I particularly enjoyed our worship time together. The sermons by our board chair and new president were high points in the time together.

The following week, the NCC gather in a business meeting to make some major changes that we've been working for some time.

The NCC is proud to announce that is has hired a new President, General Secretary in the person of Bishop Vashti McKenzie who had recently retired from the AME church. She has agreed to take on this interim role for two years. I had a chance to get to know her better and I'm very excited by her combination of business acumen and spiritual compassion-love and truth. You can learn more details about her [HERE](#).

Last year, the NCC elected its first all-female executive board, and the new board chair is Board Chair, Bishop Teresa Jefferson-Snorton, who is also the Presiding Bishop of the Fifth Episcopal District of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. She has inherited a host of administrative challenges that appear to facing all faith communities and she's navigated through them impressively. Keep her in your prayers. She praised the hire of the new President saying:

"The National Council of Churches is blessed to have Bishop McKenzie in this key leadership role. She brings the necessary insight, expertise, and ecumenical

commitment to the Council” said Board Chair, Bishop Teresa Jefferson-Snorton, who is also the Presiding Bishop of the Fifth Episcopal District of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.”

It’s quite a statement that the NCC now has two African American women leaders. You can only imagine what these two women have done to attain their leadership positions and the NCC is blessed to have them on board.

There isn’t a meeting where someone doesn’t ask about our church and what we believe and do. We are far below in membership compared to our partners, but we are deeply involved and participatory. In my nine years we’ve never missed a meeting.

As NCC moves forward, I’ve been asked to chair the bylaws committee and draft up a new document that better represents our current time and needs. I’m grateful that our church has asked me to represent us and I believe the time invested in this type of ecumenical work is important and our denomination uniquely can play a leadership role in respecting all faith paths.

If any churches have questions about the business or work to combat racism at the NCC, please contact me for more details.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Richard L. Tafel, Denominational Representative to the NCC Governing Board

AUXILIARY AND RELATED BODIES

SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH CHILDREN’S MINISTRIES

The Swedenborgian Church Children’s Ministry (SCCM) Executive Committee is looking forward to a good and productive year ahead. Our current officers are President Rev. Kit Billings, Vice President Pastor Kelly Milne (of Bridgewater), Beverly Titus to serve as Treasurer and for the Rev. Carla Friedrich to serve as Secretary. In the coming year we will be focused on three goals: 1) Having several of us (and perhaps others) do mindfulness and meditation practices for children, working closely with Sarah Vallyely, who is an online teacher of such skills for both children and adults; the goal being for Sarah to teach adult parents and children’s ministry leaders in our denomination the skills and knowledge we need to foster mindfulness and mediation in our children’s lives. Sarah Vallyely offers Zoom based tutorials for adults, several books and YouTube videos as resources. She has nine such videos posted in YouTube at no cost. Kit met with

Sarah in a Zoom meeting following convention in Long Beach and he found her to be an excellent, open-minded teacher who he feels will be enjoyable to learn from in the months ahead. 2) Continue working with the Central Office in creating a children's ministry web page within our denominational website, which will offer resources and links for parents and teachers seeking a biblical and New Church theological spiritual foundation in life to help them find meaning and joy in their years ahead. Our primary goal as the SCCM remains the same, to fulfill our mandate stated in our SCCM Constitution, Article 3.

ARTICLE III. Purpose

The purpose of SCCM shall be to encourage, support and promote awareness of, and creative responses to, the needs of children and their families for spiritual health and regeneration, according to the life and Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ as these are revealed in their deeper meaning by the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. To fulfill its purpose, SCCM will work in collaboration with the Swedenborgian Church Youth League (SCYL) and EDSU with the aim of helping to prepare children (and their families) for the eventual transition into youth, young adult and finally adult levels of participation within the Church. It is integral to the purpose of SCCM that it seek to build the foundation for life-long commitment to the goals of building the New Jerusalem in hearts and minds, and in the world.

Examples of online resources we plan on offering online are the Anita Dole Bible Study Notes (available at the Swedenborg Foundation for free in PDF format), *Five Smooth Stones* created by Joyce Fekete and Betty Hill, the *Sower Notes* located at www.swedenborgdigitallibrary.org and the General Church's *New Church Vineyard* online Sunday School resources located at www.newchurchvineyard.org. We also plan to have a link in our web page for the free online Bible research site at www.biblegateway.com. And our 3rd goal for the year to come is to cooperate with Pastor Karen Feil of the Chicago Swedenborg Library, to further research and hopefully use the online www.powtoons.com simple cartoon video production platform to create ten introductory animated lessons on core Swedenborgian beliefs and teachings, suitable for both children and adults, to engage the modern world's interest in learning by way of simple animation. The delegates of Convention who attended our SCCM Annual Meeting offered the idea that it would be more manageable to produce two such videos to begin with and evaluate their effectiveness and if deemed of use to then plan on creating eight more such videos as a goal for the coming year. There are both free or monthly charges options for using the Powtoons online video production website, with the basic fee option beginning at \$20/month. The delegates voted to support either approach deemed most useful to our officers after further research is completed. The SCCM

officers will report on the outcome of all three of these goals at next summer's convention in Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

Kit also shared two other goals for the coming year. One is for the SCCM to share grief and bereavement resources and links within the SCCM web page(s) for parents and children, due to the ongoing need for such resources and to express our compassion for those dealing with child loss, especially given the serious, ongoing societal problem of mass shootings of children going on in America. A final goal is for us to express our support for including education about Convention's meaningful history regarding African-American clergy ordained by Convention, mostly in the late 1800s and early 1900s, as well as for us to express our support for the LGBTQ+ community active in our world today.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Kit Billings

TRUSTEES OF THE GRAY LEGACY

Any Convention-recognized organization can request financial aid from the Gray Fund. Typically the grants do not exceed \$3,000, and are limited to single-year requests. Copies of the request should be mailed to each of the Trustees and accompanied by a detailed description of the proposed programs for which the requested funds will be utilized including a budget. We request this background information because proper stewardship of a will trust such as the Gray legacy should not be used by organizations as a "reserve fund" to be tapped in order to protect current assets.

The following is a list of grants for the year 2021-2022. These grants were made under the Trustees' interpretation of the will of Wesley N. Gray to fulfill programs and forms of ministry in Massachusetts, the United States, and the world.

Grants 2021-2022

- Church of South Africa \$3,000
- Fryeburg New Church Assembly \$3,000
- Portland New Church \$480
- San Francisco Swedenborgian \$2,940
- Swedenborg Chapel, Cambridge \$3,000

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca K. Esterson, Secretary

CENTER FOR SWEDENBORGIAN STUDIES

CENTER FOR SWEDENBORGIAN STUDIES (CSS)

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

- The planning for the transition of the departure of Jim Lawrence, Dean of the school since 2001, was completed with the designation of Dr. Rebecca Esterson as the next Dean effective July 1, 2022.
- Devin Zuber was awarded this spring with the 2022 GTU Excellence in Teaching Award given annually to a member of the GTU core doctoral faculty who “embodies in an exemplary manner the values of interreligious sensitivity and commitment, interdisciplinary approach and content in teaching, sensitivity to ethnic and cultural diversity, and creative and effective classroom pedagogical methods and performance.”
- The CSS board met on Zoom nearly monthly during the year and concluded in May with an in-person board meeting at the Mercy Retreat Center near the San Francisco airport.

CURRENT SWEDENBORGIAN STUDENTS

CSS has been worked in one fashion or another with fifteen students this year, though several of these Pastors (Tassy Farwell, Karen Feil, Helen Barler, Linda Browning Callander, Paul Deming, Kelly Milne, Robbin Ferriman, Jae Hyon Chung) did “continuing education” requirements for consecrated Licensed Pastor leadership. Two degree-based Swedenborgian journeys this year included Rev. Dr. David Brown completing during the spring 2022 semester his Doctor of Ministry degree program and Eleanor Schnarr (a fifth-semester M.A. student) continuing her work. Connie McOsker (Garden Church, San Pedro, CA) continued in her student training in the Licensed Pastor program. Additionally, CSS has been working with two ministers in sub-Saharan Africa for education support (Pastor Robert Hagan, a Swedenborgian student pastor in Accra, Ghana) and Bishop M.E.J. Montsho, the president of Mooki College in Soweto, and with a seminary graduate in Nova Scotia, Roxanne Sperry, in the Swedenborgian studies certificate journey.

STAFF UPDATE

A new part time administrative assistant, Paola Pruett-Vergara (a master’s student at the Dominican seminary in the GTU), began in May. Longtime part time staff members Michael Yockey (librarian) and Alan Thomsen (financial manager) both continue in good stead.

CSS WEBSITE

The new website is fully established and working well. CSS faculty have been involved with our on-call IT support person and current web master, Thomas Crawford, proprietor of Nine Dot Digital.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence, Dean

FINANCIALS

At the time of publication of The 2022 Journal the reviewed 2021 year-end financials for CSS were not yet available. We anticipate that the reviewed financials will be available sometime in December 2022. Please reach out to the Treasurer or Accounting Manager of General Convention with any questions or requests for additional information.

CHURCH STATISTICS **THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH STATISTICS — AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2021**

<u>Association</u>	<u>Churches</u>		<u>Ordained Ministers</u>		<u>Licensed Pastors</u>	<u>Active Members</u>	<u>Number of Delegates</u>
	<u>Active</u>	<u>Inactive</u>	<u>Active</u>	<u>Retired</u>			
Eastern Canada Conference	1	0	2	1	0	60	8
Illinois Association	4	1	1	1	3	70	9
Kansas Association	2	0	1	0	0	56	8
Maine Association	3	0	5	1	1	122	14
Massachusetts New Church Union*	3	1	7	1	0	73	9
Michigan Association	1	0	3	1	0	56	8
Middle Atlantic Association	3	0	6	2	0	99	12
New York Association	2	0	1	0	0	21	4
Ohio Association	3	0	2	3	1	51	7
Pacific Coast Association	7	0	18	3	4	224	24
Western Canada Conference*	2	0	1	1	0	82	10
SCYL	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2	2
At Large	n/a	n/a	1	0	0	2	2
Unknown	n/a	n/a	10	9	n/a	n/a	n/a
Totals	31	2	58	23	9	918	117

*Did not submit information for 2021, using 2020 information instead

REPORTS OF ASSOCIATIONS AND CHURCHES

EASTERN CANADA CONFERENCE

Annual Report May 2021 – May 2022

Constituted as The Association of the New Jerusalem Church in Canada

Our mandate is to maintain and encourage the establishment of congregations and other groups within Eastern Canada that adhere to the Holy Scripture and to the doctrines of Emmanuel Swedenborg, to promote the theology of the church, and encourage outreach to members at large. There is one congregation/group in the Eastern Canada Conference : The Church of the Good Shepherd (a charter member) which is located in Kitchener Ontario.

Respectfully submitted,

John McIntosh, President

CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Kitchener, Ontario

The summer months in Canada in 2021 were less restricted from Covid-19 measures in Canada, so Church of the Good Shepherd took advantage of the opportunity to do fundraising and allow renters back inside the building.

We were fortunate to get involved with a group of other churches hosting food trucks on their property. Only one at a time and member supervision was required. The license fee was shared among partner churches.

Along with fundraising we also found that the natural outcome was for members to come out and socialize mid week as part of their support for the events. We had food trucks for 4 months roughly, raising about \$1500.00. We cannot do this again, the local purveyors of food trucks have reorganized themselves to recover income, not fundraise for charities.

We resumed outdoor services on the lawn once the weather was favorable. To accomplish this we purchased a dozen camping chairs and invited members to bring their own as well. Our Praise team brought sound and broadcast equipment outdoors.

We added a new Music Director to our Praise team, Caleb deGroot-Maggetti. Caleb comes to us from Wilfrid Laurier University with a postgraduate degree in sacred music.

Early in the summer we were approached by a local branch of the Pentecostal church; Jesus Is Lord to use space Saturday evening and Sunday morning. This association has continued to the present.

In the fall of 2021 we resumed holding church services inside the sanctuary. We held a Rally Sunday barbecue as a kick off.

We continued the online worship services as we had a number of people following it. Aside from masking and maintaining distancing it was close to being back to normal. We were able to hold a Shepherds Christmas Market in November. It was smaller than usual to maintain mandated occupancy limits.

Early in December we held a modified version of the annual Christmas party, then the fourth wave of COVID-19 (Omicron) hit.

Out of an abundance of caution we suspended in person worship for a few weeks, then cautiously resumed, masked and with social distancing.

We held a hybrid Zoom and In Person annual meeting. It made it easy to have a quorum!

We held a new member confirmation service on Easter Sunday. Two adults joined us. Both had been attending for several years.

During the year we lost one member to death and one family moved away.

We performed 4 weddings including one where a much beloved Pastor Cory and his lovely bride Alyssa were wed in the church garden by our former interim pastor.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean McDermott, President

ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION

From May 1, 2021 to May 1st, 2022, the Illinois Association continued to meet its operational goals of providing support and encouragement to member churches including LaPorte New Church, LaPorte, Indiana, Virginia Street Church in St. Paul, MN, the Chicago Society c/o the Swedenborg Library office in Chicago, the Church of the Open Word in St. Louis, MO, and the Lenox Township Church of Norway, Iowa. LaPorte New Church, Virginia Street Church, and Church of the Open Word receive financial support as well. Hosted by board member, Pastor Karen Feil, panel discussions were provided online featuring guest speakers such as Rev. Robert McCluskey, Rev. Dave Fekete, Rev. Eric Hoffman, Rev. Kit Billings, Pastor Karen Feil, Pastor Paul Deming and others covering a number of topics including the Swedenborgian approach to Pentecost, Bible Studies on the Book of John, and historical perspectives on both Hebrew and Greek Bibles.

These online programs were advertised in a special Illinois Association newsletter provided by the Chicago Society / Swedenborg Library and made available to members and guests and were frequented by attendees from both coasts.

In May, 2021, the Illinois Association held its first ever Virtual Annual Meeting and was attended by all member churches except for Iowa. The executive committee continued to meet virtually throughout the fall to review and update the bylaws. The Illinois Association participated in and contributed to Central Office fundraising efforts for the individual pandemic relief fund as well as for the Rev. Eric Allison Angel fund.

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor Paul Deming, Secretary

CHICAGO SOCIETY OF THE NEW JERUSALEM/THE SWEDENBORG LIBRARY AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH CENTER

Chicago, Illinois

While the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in City of Chicago “stay at home” orders in January 2021, the Swedenborg Library was able to maintain operations during most of the year. The Library was open 94 afternoons during 2021. We fielded inquiry calls from Alabama to Scotland during the year. Due to the lack of people visiting the central business district during the year, our book circulation was down to a mere 25 volumes in 2021. A few regulars continued to visit the Library for coffee and spiritual conversation weekly regardless of the eerily quiet center-city streets.

The Library hosted two Zoom-based programs on behalf of its members and the Illinois Association in 2021. Association members Rev. Kit Billings, Rev. Eric Hoffman and others participated in a March 2021 panel discussion about the meaning of Easter, followed by an May program on the meaning of the Pentecost. In September the Library hosted an 8-week Zoom-based program with Rev. Dr. David Fekete on “The Gospel of John” to which more than a dozen Illinois Association and Michigan-area members regularly participated. The Library showed a few films during the year, including “The Last Days of Jesus” and “All Things Cease to Appear” (which features a Swedenborgian character.)

In November, Karen Feil addressed the Huguenot Society, which was meeting at the Kenilworth Union Church; the organization had requested that she attend and explain why the Union Church has a stained glass window dedicated to

Swedenborg and another for Helen Keller. Kenilworth was founded and built by Swedenborgian Joseph Sears.

Likewise, the Norwood Park Historical Society in Chicago contacted the Swedenborg Library for information about Swedenborgians instrumental in its development, Thomas Hartley and Harriet Weeks Seymour. The Seymour family were members of the New York and Chicago New Jerusalem churches. Harriet Weeks and her sister, Elizabeth Weeks (mother of architect Daniel Burnham) were daughters of Rev. Holland Weeks, a Swedenborgian minister in upstate New York.

On a denominational level, director and licensed pastor Karen Feil attended the January 2021 Center for Swedenborg Studies Winter Intensive program on “Rites & Sacraments” via Zoom, Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence’s class on sermon writing in March 2021, and Dr. Devin Zuber’s class “Flow, Influx and Efflux” in December. She also participated in the denomination’s Committee of Inquiry in 2021.

With traffic to downtown Chicago still substantially below normal levels, our plans in 2022 are to continue with Zoom-based meetings and local distribution of publications.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Feil, Secretary/Treasurer, Swedenborg Library

LAPORTE NEW CHURCH

LaPorte, Indiana

From May 2021 to April 2022, LaPorte New Church continued to offer concurrent in-person and virtual worship services. We were pleased to be able to safely maintain our in-person worship as well as hold virtual services online for those who chose to worship from home and/or who live a distance from the church. In addition to regular local virtual attendees, we have gained new friends from around the country: Oregon, Illinois, and Nebraska.

In 2021 and through February 2022, we required masking and observed safe distancing due to the continuing Covid pandemic. In April we cautiously resumed coffee hours a few times a month, offering light refreshments rather than full luncheons.

We worked many months to improve our website (www.laportenewchurch.org) with the incredible gratis tech help by a congregant’s family member.

We report with sadness our deep loss in the passing of two faithful, longtime church members, Judy Freeman and Gordon Johanson.

Events were monthly executive board meetings, the Isamu Noguchi mural and history presentation in conjunction with the LaPorte County Public Library, a

blood drive, an online book group discussing “The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World” (Desmond Tutu, the Dalai Lama, Douglas Abrams), County-wide Clean-up Day on May 2, a church picnic, six rummage sales, and a community prayer vigil for peace in Ukraine. Rev. Kit initiated contact and helped form a ministerial alliance with five other progressive local ministries that are accepting of all faith traditions, named Faith and Community United. This ministerial alliance is planning a community-wide hymn sing in the fall and environmental service projects.

With an increase in Wedding Ministry requests, we are asking younger church members to become more involved in that program.

Unfortunate incidents have occurred due to vagrancy and vandalism in our garden and around our buildings, including an attempted break-in at Manna House. This problem has increased since the homeless shelter next door to the church closed last spring. We have installed outdoor security cameras and the local police department is supportive.

Overall, although with limited activities, the church ministry has fared well throughout the Covid pandemic. We are grateful for the big and small blessings we receive through our friendships, our challenges, our faith, and in feeling God’s love in and among us all.

Respectfully submitted,
LPNC Executive Board

LENOX TOWNSHIP CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM

Norway, Iowa

The annual meeting of the Lenox Township Church took place August 28, 2022. The reunion was well attended, with a group of 70 people meeting at the historic church. The church had some major upgrades to the bell tower and spire areas, after some structural damage was found in recent inspections. The traditional wooden spire was replaced with a vinyl spire. The bell tower was reinforced and reframed. New vinyl siding was also added.

Although regular church services have ceased for many years, the church still draws people from throughout the country. It is common to find a group of bicyclists eating lunch in the yard, or a group of kids playing catch on a summer day enjoying the location of the church in the countryside. The historic cemetery is also an attraction for family genealogy enthusiasts in recent history. We are truly thankful for this church and congregation.

Respectfully submitted,
Jordan Uthoff, President

VIRGINIA STREET SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH

St. Paul, Minnesota

This year has seen the return of the Virginia Street Church to more normal operations. The VSC has continued to function through COVID during the year as an active church by utilizing Zoom to provide weekly services to the congregation. In August 2021 we returned to having services in the sanctuary with Zoom reaching those who were unable to attend. Sunday morning Bible Study and discussion groups also continued in person and via Zoom.

Pastor Gordon Meyer retired for a time and Rev. Eric Hoffman and Jeremy Rose stepped in to fill the void. Gordon continued to provide a discussion group and Eric provided the Sunday Bible Study throughout the year. Pastor Meyer decided to return as an active pastor, but services are provided by lay leaders as needed. Melissa Chaple is working with Jim Lawrence with the goal of becoming a licensed minister.

Pastor Meyer serves as our Librarian and is also sorting and cataloging the extensive collection of historic and new books with the goal of allowing people access to study the materials. More discussions are pending on how such access will work.

Community use of the building resumed in late summer with the church hosting both an AA and ALANON groups, as well as the Fall St. Paul Art Crawl event. The Art Crawl event brings in over two hundred people through the church. While normally held spring and fall, the spring event was not held due to Covid restrictions. In addition, ministers officiated two weddings and one baptism. The church also hosted a book signing and talk by Garrison Keillor in December 2021 and April 2022.

The church was also open on Thursdays from noon to eight in the evening which allowed people to come in for meditation and/or discussions with the hosts.

Paul and Melissa Chapel function as hosts, as well as Pastor Meyer, when he is available. So far there has been a positive response from people attending.

We look forward to the coming year to officially celebrate the 100th performance of our Christmas Pageant of the Nativity.

Respectfully submitted,

Carla Abler-Erikson, Secretary

CHURCH OF THE OPEN WORD

St. Louis, Missouri

The Church of the Open Word / Garden Chapel in St. Louis continued to offer online and in-person services throughout the pandemic as allowed by County Health regulations and mandates. From May 1, 2021, to May 1, 2022, the Garden Chapel offered Sunday morning services hosted online by Pastor Paul Deming and provided in-person services for most of this period. Wedding services were provided during this time by Pastor Paul and Suzy Holper, Wedding Coordinator. Suzy also serves as Church Secretary and Building Event Coordinator. Music for Sunday morning services was provided by volunteers, Joan McNair O'Neal (keyboardist), Simon Wacker (bass guitar), Koda Trujillo (lead guitar) and Pastor Paul (guitar). Jason Wacker provided sound and video expertise by running our sound board and video camera. The board continued to meet on the second Sunday of each month. In March the church had an Annual Meeting where board members were elected and asked to serve (or continue serving). The church has managed to stay financially solvent through the generous contributions of the Illinois Association, board members, and congregational giving. Numerous volunteers were also recognized for ongoing services behind the scenes (providing refreshments for coffee hour, watering plants, etc.).

While some extra-curricular activities were suspended due to the pandemic (Concerts, Karate Classes, Guitar lessons, etc.), they are expected to resume during the current calendar year.

Three new members joined during this period. One of which was quoted as saying, "I love this open-minded (non-judgmental) theology and I want my children to grow up in this church!"

The church has also retained the services of Katina Truman who is currently updating our website and Facebook page for both the church and our wed-

ding services. Our church recently lost a valued friend and board member Dave Baumgartner who will be warmly regarded in our memories.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie O'Reilly, President, and Pastor Paul Deming

KANSAS ASSOCIATION

The Kansas Association met in Pretty Prairie, Kansas on Sunday, May 1, 2022. The morning worship service along with communion was led by Rev. Jane Siebert. Afterwards, dinner along with much good visiting was enjoyed.

The President of the Association, Carl Helm, opened the meeting at 1:30 p.m. The Minutes of the last annual meeting and the Treasurer's report were read and approved.

Reports from both Pawnee Rock and Pretty Prairie were given. Both societies have remained active in their communities. Sunday school and church have continued throughout the past year. During Sunday school, the Pretty Prairie church has studied other religious traditions with guidance from the book, *Holy Envy*, by Barbara Brown Taylor. Also at the Pretty Prairie church, a rose garden was planted in honor of Rev. Eric Zacharias as well as turning his old office into a church library in his memory. Several weeks before Christmas, members from both churches met at the home of Connie Helm for what has become an annual Christmas luncheon. It's always so nice to get together during this special time of year. Pawnee Rock had a beautiful Christmas Service with over 20 people on stage and over 100 viewing the program. They enjoyed having such a large crowd. Both churches are grateful for all of the help from members in keeping their church schedule going as well as maintaining the church buildings and grounds. It takes the work, commitment and love of everyone.

The passing of Keith Mull in January, 2022 at the age of 97 was noted. He was one of Pawnee Rock's dear, longtime members. For many years he and his wife, Marian, were tireless, staunch supporters of the Pawnee Rock church and they'll be forever missed.

The dates for Camp Mennoscah are October 8th and 9th. It will begin Saturday morning around 9:30 and conclude Sunday after a morning worship service and dinner. We haven't been able to meet for several years due to Covid so all are looking forward to this gathering.

It was voted that several donations be made. One to the ongoing war in Ukraine and the second one to a nearby community that sustained much damage due to a

recent tornado. It was also voted that financial help be given to any member wanting to attend this year's convention in Los Angeles.

In Elections, Connie Helm and Megan Alexander were re-elected to another three-year term as trustees. The present slate of officers was re-elected for another year.

As there was no further business to discuss, the president brought the meeting to a close.

Respectfully submitted,

Veneta Lane, Secretary

CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM

Pawnee Rock, Kansas

No report submitted.

NEW JERUSALEM CHURCH

Pretty Prairie, Kansas

During 2021, Pastor Billie led our Sunday services two Sundays each month in person or via Zoom depending on Covid numbers in our county. Rev. Jane also led our congregation on occasional Sundays this year. Thanks to both of our pastors as well as to Veneta Lane & Debbie Siebert who play piano for our services. Sunday School lessons continued to be shared by several member volunteers, again at the church or via Zoom (hosted by President Joyce Barker – thanks, Joyce!). Joyce also provided the Zoom link for Rev. Alison's services at the Fryeburg Church for those interested in attending their weekly zoom services.

Yearly events were also held either in person or via zoom as the year progressed. Instead of a birthday "bash", we did "celebrate" Reverend Eric Zacharias' 101st birthday in February with a birthday card shower.

Our NJC Annual Meeting was held via Zoom this year on Sunday, March 14, but we shared Maundy Thursday on April 1 together in person with members of the Pretty Prairie Methodist Church at their church - safety protocols in place, including mask wearing and social distancing. We were joyful to be able to celebrate Easter Sunday services in person at the New Jerusalem church with Rev-

erend Jane. The Annual Meeting of Kansas Association was held in person at Pawnee Rock in August.

Several traditional gatherings were “Covid” canceled again this year including Memorial Day services typically shared with the Methodists, our shared Sterling Lake services with the Pawnee Rock congregation in September and our Pretty Prairie/Pawnee Rock camp weekend at Camp Mennoscah in October.

Community involvement this year included providing funds to the Food Pantry via funding donations instead of actual food donations and supplies were provided to the Food Pantry for food baskets delivered during the Thanksgiving & Christmas season. We also helped provide funds and cookies to the Hope for the Journey Conference as organized by the Calvary Chapel Church as well as providing donations to the General Council for Pandemic Relief Grants to help with giving a boost to some of our fellow Swedenborgians having financial trouble during the pandemic. Donations were also sent to community members for medical or hardship relief, to the Mennonite Relief Fund- designated for Haiti disaster relief, and we safely supported our Christmas family again via gift cards.

In June, Congregation members were pleased with the services and presentations provided during the 2021 Swedenborgian Annual Convention, “Navigating the Rapids in the Stream of Providence”, another virtual convention this year.

Rev Jane continued to share articles of interest to read to nourish us...including Richard Rohr’s Daily Meditation - Learning How to See, Daily Meditations with Matthew Fox - Palm Sunday, and Rev. Cory Bradford Watts’ - What is the Afterlife? <https://youtu.be/6ahoa9UzmJU>

Sunday School was actively led by members present. During these trying times, we discussed the book “God Help Me! These People Are Driving Me Nuts! - Making Peace with Difficult People by Dr. Gregory K. Popcak, celebrated Lent & studied the Holy week in depth, covered a variety of topics from Swedenborg’s view on Usefulness to Seven Sacred Pauses by Macrina Wiederkehr. Summer workday projects included updating our white hymnal binders as well as clearing out, cleaning up, reorganizing & renovating the clergy’s office into the Eric Zacharias Memorial Library as well as planting seven rose bushes in front of the church in memory of Rev. Zacharias.

We also explored World Religions highlighted in Holy Envy by Barbara Brown Taylor - Hinduism (with Sue Harris arranging a delightful & informative visit to the Greater Wichita Hindu Temple in September including an ethnic foods luncheon) and Buddhism beliefs and practices (including experiences with meditation & singing bowls). We are looking forward to studies about the other 3 world religions covered in Holy Envy. Advent lessons from different perspectives were

studied, including the New Christian Bible Study site (Rev. Emily Jane Lemole), as well as other sites which explored the different perspectives as presented by Matthew and Luke.

Guild gatherings allowed us opportunities to plan/complete church events & needs and business matters – including this year’s in-person Christmas Eve service during which Rev. Jane shared stories of Jesus’ birth as recorded in Matthew and Luke and how our nativity set (made by Florence Steward over 50 years ago) brings the two stories together. Using Florence’s nativity, Rev. Jane shared with the children about why the different people were there at Jesus’ birth - how the shepherds came quickly and the wise men took a long journey. As the service continued, a dulcimer duet, Joy to the World, was shared by Jean & Tara Conkling, followed by our traditional candle-lighting as we sang Silent Night together before the surprise visit by Santa Claus who handed out gifts and treat bags from under the Christmas tree.

Finally, throughout this year, we offered prayers to family members who were ill and for those family members who have passed on – in our congregation as well in our sister Kansas congregation at Pawnee Rock. In February, Curt Graber entered hospice and passed away on Feb 25. His services included burial in the Lone Star Cemetery, Pretty Prairie, with military honors conducted by the Fort Riley Honor Guard and playing of ceremonial bagpipes.

On April 8, Veneta Lane shared that her father, Rev Eric Zacharias had passed away. Veneta shared - “My brother Dick and I were able to be with him these last days. He was kept comfortable and would give us big smiles. What a wonderful dad he has been and he surely set all the best examples of how to live this life. He will definitely be missed.” Friends and family gathered together at the New Jerusalem Church on May 1 to remember and celebrate Eric’s well-lived and quite memorable life at services led by Rev. Jane. Memories were shared by daughter Lynn Charlesworth and granddaughter Alison Lane-Olsen (as read by granddaughter Tenley Hannah). Much of Eric’s memorial service was chosen by Eric himself as written down by Veneta while at his side during his later years. Rev. Jane remarked “This memorial service is really his gift to you, with words to live by, songs to keep in your heart, and the reminder to find joy in life, wherever you are.”

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Conkling, Secretary

MAINE ASSOCIATION

The Maine Association last met on 10/24/21. The annual division of shares was voted and at-large member Susannah Currie reported there have been discussions surrounding the need for viability of Associations on the denomination level. Susan McCormick agreed to distribute a letter of inquiry to the members of the Bath, Fryeburg, and Portland churches to explore merger interest and options. Maine association will invite the members of the Massachusetts New Church Union to the next annual meeting to discuss the possibility of merging.

Elections results were:

President: Lorraine Kardash

Vice-President: Martha Richardson

Secretary: Susan B. McCormick

Treasurer: Robin Thurston

Fryeburg Representative: Debbie Dolley

Portland Representative: Dan Wood

In February 2022, there was a positive email vote for at-large member Susannah Currie to fill the unexpired term of Secretary Susan B. McCormick who resigned on Feb. 18, 2022

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Susannah Currie, Secretary.

BATH NEW CHURCH

Bath, Maine

No report submitted.

FRYEBURG NEW CHURCH

Fryeburg, Maine

The Fryeburg New Church journeyed along as best we knew how this last year. It was about a year ago now that we opened our doors once more after our Zoom-only experience of Worship; what a joy to see one another in person and hear voices singing together again!

Though church was happening in-person once more at 12 Oxford Street, we continued to work on the quality of our hybrid service. While this is yet in process, we are so grateful that we continue to welcome a steady community of zoom worshippers, and that we were able to receive two grants from within the denomination to help with our technology upgrades.

Towards the end of summer (2021), the FNC hosted a local Craft Fair, and began preparations for the Fryeburg Fair in the fall. With our amazing Board Chair, Leone Dyer, at the helm, and willing church community by her side, we were able to navigate operating our Fair Booth in a safe and successful manner.

At our annual business meetings, we joyfully welcomed six new members!

In the Spring (2022), we celebrated our first Easter at FNC in two years!

Throughout the year, In addition to our Sunday Services, and Sunday School, we were able to offer other activities/programs, including a weekly meditation night, book group, walking group, and host a Tai Chi group at the church.

With Covid precautions still in place, certain community/interdenominational services were yet postponed (no joint Thanksgiving or Christmas services this last year).

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Alison Lane-Olsen, Minister

FRYEBURG NEW CHURCH ASSEMBLY

Fryeburg, Maine

The Fryeburg New Church Assembly (www.fryeburg.org) held its annual summer session this year from July 30 – August 14, 2022. Our themes were “The Second Coming: Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How” week one, and “Angels, Dreams, and Visions in the Bible” week two. We were thrilled to welcome Dr. Rebecca Esterson, and her family, as our Everett K. Bray Visiting Lecturer. With rising travel costs and continued COVID-19 concerns, our numbers were lower than usual with a low of 33 and a high of 52. However, we offered our religious programing virtually with hybrid interaction with those who were at camp for the second year, with continued success. We had a vibrant group of tweens, and created the group “Senior Sparks” to continue to facilitate the bond of being at the FNCA together and growing up with a special camp experience.

The Ninth Annual Dole Three Miler Road Race (www.dole3miler.com) was well attended with both in-person and virtual racers. The winner of the men’s race won with the fastest time recorded in our race! This event continues to be one of

our biggest fundraisers and are very much looking forward to celebrating a decade of the Dole Three miler next year on Saturday, August 12, 2023.

The Buildings and Grounds committee once again spent countless hours on the facility updates, including necessary electric and septic issues that had to be addressed. We continued our deep cleaning of spaces, replacing of old mattresses with new vinyl ones, and purging of clutter to help mitigate the off-season draw of rodents and other unwanted guests. The intent is to make it easier and easier each year as we continue to care for our aging facility. We successfully hosted a wedding for 120 guests at the end of our season on Labor Day weekend. Many hours of volunteer work go into making the FNCA property usable for both in-session and off-session, we are deeply thankful to all who give their time up for our continued success.

The FNCA had a few changes on the Board of Directors during the 2022 session. Jesse White chose to not be reelected to the FNCA Board after serving for 20 years, though she will remain the Assistant Treasurer. Rev. Kevin Baxter was elected to the Board of directors by the membership, Colgate Searle, Jr. was re-elected for another term on the Board, and Beki Greenwood was reelected camp director by the membership.

We are looking forward to the 2023 session of the FNCA—July 29 through August 13—and will continue to offer hybrid options for anyone, anywhere, to be able to join us.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebekah Greenwood, FNCA Camp Director

PORTLAND NEW CHURCH

Portland, Maine

Portland New Church continued to hold services on zoom until June 2021 when we met in-person through the summer and fall, then back on zoom. Council meetings were held generally once a month. All new officers were elected at our annual meeting in October. We are feeling strongly connected, especially after the arson fire was set on the front porch and wall under our Black Lives Matter sign. The community of building users, neighbors, and church members gathered together for a peace picnic as the building was repaired and looks better than ever. We have 4 new large painted mandalas hung inside the church. We continue with

devotion to value the wisdom of Emmanuel Swedenborg and the truth and beauty in all faith traditions.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pastor Lorraine Kardash

MASSACHUSETTS NEW CHURCH UNION

The Massachusetts New Church Union was active throughout the 2021-2022 year. We held our Annual meeting on June 18th 2021 at the Elmwood New Church and the MNCU Governing Board met November 21st 2021, January 9th 2022, March 13th 2022 and May 15th.

At our November meeting a motion was made to commit \$2 million dollars of MNCU funds to the Helen Keller Center project in Cambridge, contingent on the remaining funds needed being raised from other sources.

Mark Careaga, representative from Cambridge, helped greatly throughout the year as a liaison with the New Arts Center that is undergoing a feasibility study regarding the purchase of the Newtonville Church of the Open Word as their new facility. We hope to have a final decision about whether they are prepared to move forward with the sale by October 2022.

In February the Rev. F. Bob Tafel, pastor of the Church of the Open Word, and long time member of the MNCU entered into the fullness of the Spiritual World. His memorial service was held at the Cambridge Swedenborg Chapel, where he served for nearly two decades, on Saturday May 14th.

In the early Spring of 2022, Rev. Susannah Currie stepped down as Treasurer, and Mark Careaga agreed to step in.

The MNCU looks forward to hosting Convention 2023 at Bridgewater State University.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Sage Cole, Secretary

NEW JERUSALEM CHURCH

Bridgewater, Massachusetts

This has been a year of change as we prepared for the retirement of Rev. Susannah Currie. In July, along with family, church family, and friends, we joined together with food and fellowship honoring Rev. Susannah, and celebrating her

twelve years with us. She is a phenomenal woman and saying good-bye to her was deeply felt.

Beginning September 1, Pastor Kelly Milne has been our leader in worship and congregational life. On Halloween Rev. Jane Siebert lead us in a special service of Consecration for Pastor Kelly, with over 80 in attendance. We have been able to meet most weeks inside our building for worship, offering all our services live via Facebook. We are fortunate to have Daniel Pappas, a talented musician, as our pianist. His music fills our sanctuary and adds so much to each service. On Thanksgiving Sunday the Elmwood New Church joined us for a Thanksgiving Dinner in our large meeting room. We all enjoyed great food and being together. During the year a discussion group meets in the church parlor twice a month, and a craft group meets monthly.

Pilgrim Area Collaborative (PAC) continues renting our building. Using our parlor, office, kitchen and meeting room, they are part of an educational arm that serves the Plymouth area for cognitively challenged young adults ages 18-22. They are good tenants.

Challenges and changes have been part of this past year. We are moving ahead with love, respect and hope for a good future, wishing all a healthy, calm and good year ahead.

Respectfully submitted,

Merrilee Phinney, Treasurer

CAMBRIDGE SOCIETY OF THE NEW JERUSALEM D/B/A SWEDENBORG CHAPEL

Cambridge, Massachusetts

This past year was full of challenges and gifts for Swedenborg Chapel. The process of “coming out of the pandemic,” which began in fits and starts in May of 2021, stirred up a lot of questions about how we would emerge differently after all of the forced changes that began in 2020.

As vaccinations became more widely available and people began engaging with each other again, the Chapel became more popular than ever before as a wedding destination. During this period we hosted a variety of ceremonies with a range of different Covid protocols as things constantly shifted and changed.

We also sought to continue to serve those who had become engaged with our community virtually during the pandemic, through hybrid services, in-person and streamed live. This produced both gifts and challenges. It has been helpful to have

flexibility in ways to participate, though in-person attendance has not returned to pre-Covid levels.

In honor of the changes and challenges brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic, in March of this year we declared a New Church Jubilee Year. In this year we hold the intention of reflecting on and being present in the chaos that Covid-19 has stirred up, with hope in the possibility of seeing more clearly how we can embody a New Church, which in turn can help us to move through the immense changes that continue to unfold in our world.

We chose the date March 3rd to begin this New Church Jubilee in honor of Helen Keller, who celebrated that date as her spiritual birthday (the day she met her teacher and lifelong friend Annie Sullivan for the first time in 1887). As we seek to be faithful stewards to our Chapel and imagine its future uses in the world, we remain excited by and committed to our vision to build a Center in Helen Keller's honor, to carry forward and expand on her spiritual legacy. This New Church Jubilee Year is a time to consider her example as a devout Swedenborgian and person of faith, who did not actively participate in a church community. By taking time to consider how the New Church was present in Helen's life we are excited to see what possibilities may exist for Swedenborg Chapel to be the New Church in a more expansive way.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Sage Cole, Minister and Director of Swedenborg Chapel

ELMWOOD NEW CHURCH

Elmwood, Massachusetts

The Elmwood New Church has been busy for the last year noted above with Sunday Services in the sanctuary when possible. We re-entered the Sanctuary in June of 2021 with hopes of not encountering any cases of COVID-19 when we worshipped together with music and prayer and coffee hours. The over arching attitude we brought to our church was one of hope and prayers for those who were and are dealing with this disease for their swift and complete recovery.

Our Sunday school has been periodically attended and we have several children who are aging to the point of wanting to be in the service rather than the Sunday school, which we all think is a good transition for them.

We have received three new members in the past year and have a new couple who expressed an interest in joining in the Fall.

Our beautiful building continues to inspire fellowship and prayerful attendance at all gatherings.

We have invited and are pleased to offer a place for two local community concerns to use the space once a month for each of their meetings, opening the fellowship hall to members of the community who would not normally be able to see our church.

We have put together an agreement with a small local church to use our sanctuary for their church services and any gatherings they may have. They are a lively and active group and their pastor is a blessing with her energy and enthusiasm for the works of the church. We are trying to start some joint offerings that will bring both groups together to do the Lord's work in this space.

We anticipate an active and busy coming year with many exciting happenings as we continue to spread the good news of the Lord's word as seen through the teachings of Swedenborg.

"All things, even the least, are directed by the Providence of the Lord."-AC 4302.3

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Dr. Donna Keane, Minister

CHURCH OF THE OPEN WORD

Newtonville, Massachusetts

No report submitted.

MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION

Meeting at Almont New Church Assembly and Retreat Center, Pfister Lounge

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 am by President Barbara Barber.

Opening prayer and devotional, "Nehemiah Rebuilding", was offered by Rev. Renee

There were 12 members and 1 guest in attendance:

President Barbara Barber, Rev. Renee Machiniak, Secretary Ian Barber, Treasurer B. J. Neuenfeldt, Chris Laitner, Sharon Billings, Barb Boxwell, Lori Patana, Mary Lou Jerrett, Tom Neuenfeldt, Dorie Litchfield, Jeanine Keller, Glenn Litchfield (Guest)

Secretary's Report

Minutes from October 3, 2020 were distributed and read in silence.

Barb Boxwell made a motion to approve the minutes as presented and Sharon Billings seconded the motion.

Minutes were passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

B. J. Neuenfeldt presented both the Financial Report and Proposed Budget. Reports are on file.

B. J. presented the 2022 Budget:

Johnny Appleseed Museum asked for financial assistance, Ian motioned to send \$500 and Dorie seconded the motion.

Reception help for Convention, Dorie motioned to send \$250, and Ian second the motion, both motions passed unanimously.

Barb Boxwell made a motion to approve the treasurer's reports and Budget as presented and Dorie Litchfield seconded the motion. Treasurer's report was passed unanimously.

Almont Retreat Center Facility Report

Lori Patana gave 2020/2021 Report. Report is on File

Disc Golf Event, Jeffrey Soup expressed interest in making this an annual event.

Whiskey Event, for Support Animals for the Vets.

Repair work in the Rec Hall.

Living Room will be repainted and will have new furniture.

Building a Shed to store equipment.

Motown Soup's.

Ministerial Reports

Rev. Dagmar Bollinger – Report was read by Rev. Renee

Rev. Dagmar is starting up a new ministry around her neighborhood that will be called “Soul Food” now that she has officially retired from hospital chaplaincy.

Rev. Renee Machiniak – Rev. Renee read her report and copies were distributed to those present. Report is on file.

Old Business

Convention Virtual 2021

A lot of excitement from those who participated.

Discussion was held, and 2022 will be held in the L.A. area and available online.

Satellite Gatherings/Outreach Ministries

B. J. asked those in attendance on how to promote these gatherings more.

Lori mentioned using Facebook and sending individual emails to those who would like to attend.

Rev. Renee did a remarkable job leading the gatherings. Thank you B. J. and Tom for hosting!

New Business

Woman Retreat 2022 will be held in Almont on April 22-24

Joint Meeting

Barb Barber discussed meeting in 2022; we will know more after the Ohio Annual Meeting.

Slate of Officers for 2022 Year

Barbara Barber – President

Marjie Leas – Vice-President

Ian Barber – Secretary

B. J. Neuenfeldt – Treasurer

Sharon Billings – Trustee

Chris Laitner – Trustee

Lori Patana – Trustee

Tom motioned to cast unanimous ballot for the Slate of Officers as presented, Chris second the motion. Passed unanimously.

Dorie and Glenn encouraged everyone to watch Dave Fekete's online class on Wednesday's from 8:30-9:30pm.

B. J. motioned to adjourn, Ian seconded the motion, passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 11:23am.

Respectfully submitted,

Ian Barber, Secretary

ALMONT NEW CHURCH ASSEMBLY AND RETREAT CENTER***Allenton, Michigan***

This year the Almont Summer School was back in-session! In addition to our long awaited return to in-person camp, the retreat center has been busy with retreats and outside rentals returning to their pre-pandemic normal. Lori Patana has continued to work hard keeping the grounds in shape, and maintaining a positive presence in the community through both outreach and service. In addition to re-learning how to hold a camp session while maintaining a reasonable level of COVID-19 safety, we celebrated the 40th anniversary of the Survivors teen group! The celebration included a reflection on the history of the Survivors, an auction fundraiser for the upcoming Rec Hall renovation, and the initiation of the

“Pandemic Generation” of teens, many of whom had to wait an extra year or two to join.

With great respect and gratitude, we also accepted the resignation of Rev. Kevin Baxter from his 18 year long position as Camp Director. He will still be an active member of the Assembly and plans to be of great service during the camp sessions. I was selected as our next Camp Director, and we are now searching for a Spiritual Program Coordinator to work alongside the Director to lead the religious aspects of the camp session. We are all looking forward to developing this new model of camp leadership. In addition to continuing to improve our website and registration process, Almont hopes to leverage the physical spaces that we have to cultivate new and exciting partnerships that can help to grow the Retreat Center portion of our ministry.

Respectfully submitted,

Craig Carson, President and Camp Director ANCA

CHURCH OF THE HOLY CITY

Royal Oak, Michigan

Throughout the year, the ministry of the Church of the Holy City has been actively reaching out to our members and friends throughout the Michigan Association in new and creative ways to help us stay connected and supported since the COVID-19 pandemic began.

We immediately adjusted our Sunday services to the Zoom format in mid-March 2020, offering ongoing zoom services throughout the pandemic. We also met in person outdoors at a park pavilion, and at our minister’s home in the backyard, as weather permitted. We reached out to our home-bound and isolated people in a variety of ways. We drove our vehicles in a “Visit a Friend Parade” in neighboring cities and we offer weekly online Zoom Wednesday Meditations and an “Afterlife” winter series to help build inner peace, to deepen spiritual growth and to share experiences. Weekly church email and Facebook updates are sent out to help keep us informed, supported and encouraged.

Our minister, Rev. Renee Machiniak, is our denomination’s Youth Chaplain and participated in the youth/adult Swedenborgians Actively Against Racism (SAAR) online programs in March and April 2021, as well as offered a virtual Convention mini-course on “The Relevance of the Swedenborgian Perspective for Two Troubling Modern Issues.” She retired from part-time chaplaincy in Au-

gust 2020 and remains a volunteer oncology chaplain with Beaumont Health, as well as a volunteer Royal Oak police chaplain.

With the generous financial support of Convention's COVID Relief Grant, we put together and delivered Harvest Blessing Baskets to active and local church members and friends. Additionally, we continued with our church program, "Love Always Finds a Way," meeting in the outdoor garden/parking lot of the Women's Club throughout the year for fellowship and providing homemade soup bag lunches. Church members, Nancy Gehringer and Sharon Billings, participated in the Faith and Blue Police Department event in October 2021, helping to build community relations with our police department.

We held memorial services for our life-long church members, Robert Locke and Irma Guest, as well as for beloved church friend, Jerry Jerrett, outdoors near our Almont Retreat Center Chapel. Rev. Machiniak officiated at the wedding of church member Ian Barber and Natalie Griffin and offered a live online lecture during our Almont Camp Virtual session in July 2020. Our Michigan Association members and friends met outdoors in June 2020 for our annual Almont Flower Fest and, again, met for our annual Almont Work Weekend to renovate Pfister Lounge & Teen Storage. A new Royal Oak Church program, "God's Garden," as well as bingo, was offered at Nancy's home to share devotionals and fellowship fun.

Our ministry continues to reach out to our isolated members and friends. We plan to continue to offer both In-person and Zoom worship services as we have returned to the Royal Oak Women's Club. We welcomed two new church members, Charlie Beckhoff, and Sue Fabian.

A Satellite Meeting was held in July 2021 at the home of Tom and BJ Neuenfeldt in Mount Pleasant. We had 13 adults and 11 children. We plan to offer Satellite meetings in the future.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Renee Machiniak, Minister

MIDDLE ATLANTIC ASSOCIATION

The Mid-Atlantic Association met on Zoom in January 2022 in order to welcome Rev. Cairn.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Rich Tafel, President, Rev. Shada Sullivan, Secretary, Robin Tafel, Treasurer

CHURCH OF THE HOLY CITY*Wilmington, Delaware*

The year of 2021 began with the congregation still in Covid Protocol, masks and social distancing. Our service and coffee hour as well as all meetings were conducted on Zoom. Reverend Shada Sullivan successfully set up our Live Streaming System so our service can be viewed on YouTube and Facebook.

Sunday, May 16, 2021 we began worshiping in person, as Covid cases in Wilmington began to drop. We have continued to host the Copeland String Quartet and returned to hosting the Art Loop, a city of Wilmington event for local artists. The Fall began the preparation for our December Wreath and baked goods sale. Due to a surge in Covid cases, our Christmas Eve service was live streamed with a skeleton crew and in-person attendance was suspended for January, with the church reopening in February, 2022. A Blue Christmas service was offered for the first time during the 2021 Christmas season.

The Swedenborg Chat discussion group continues monthly on Zoom as does our monthly coffee hour for those who cannot attend our service in person. We have continued offering our monthly lunch at the Emanuel Dining Room and contributing to the local Food Pantry, as well as other local causes, such as a drive to support Afghan refugees. The urgent restoration of our building is an ongoing process! Our goal right now is to schedule necessary work to begin in 2023. The focus will be fundraising within the parameters of a Feasibility Study being formulated now. We continue to apply for Grants. In addition, we are continuing to explore offering the church's beautiful spaces for rent and hired a rentals coordinator to further this ministry.

Our congregation is a loving, dedicated group that has maintained the continuity of purpose and fellowship through the difficulties of the Covid Closures. We are ready to move forward into 2022-2023, under the guidance of Reverend Shada and a common love for this church and its possibilities.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Dougherty, President

CHURCH OF THE HOLY CITY***Washington, District of Columbia***

The Church of the Holy City, Washington, DC (CHC DC) experienced an unprecedented time of engagement and growth in the 2021-2022 year. We are deeply committed to community, spiritual dialogue, and supporting spiritual entrepreneurs. Our board is vibrant with a diversity of ages, genders, ethnicity, and perspective. The board meets faithfully once per month and had our first in person retreat since the pandemic in April 2022 with all board members and guests in attendance. The retreat was graciously hosted by Board President Annabel Park, in her lovely home at Lost River, WV. At the retreat we envisioned a future that allows us to play a part in re-imagining the future of church, something that the Swedenborgian denomination is poised to do with progressive ideals, rich relevant content, and inclusive faith statements.

The board engaged church member Kateryna Pyatybratova to create a marketing campaign to reach a greater audience by leveraging social media, podcasts, and storytelling. The campaign focuses on community engagement with our church members acting as “ambassadors.” The content of our community engagement focus’ on political and social issues, emphasizing the importance of an ethical life. We aim to produce more video content and showcase what we can offer at the next meeting of the Swedenborgian Council of Ministers. Our marketing efforts are funded in part from denomination grants as well as a portion of the generous gift from Helen Sioris who departed this realm early in 2021.

Under the leadership of Shalonda Ingram, the church building had a thriving and impactful rental business despite challenges from the pandemic. The church hosted many events in the past year, two of which I’d like to highlight in this report. On February 27, 2022, we hosted an interfaith prayer and meditation for the Ukraine. Members of the Jewish, Muslim, Christian, and Buddhist faiths offered prayers and short sermons. Over 75 people were in attendance and the event live streamed on Facebook. In April, we partnered with a local Islamic organization, the Rumi Forum, to host a Ramadan Iftar breaking the fast event. The event was a nurturing way to dialogue with those of other faiths, honor the fasting traditions from the Qur’an, and connect heart to heart.

The CHC DC board is excited that spiritual entrepreneurship is being realized in the church and in our community. We are looking forward to the following year and to partnering with the denomination in creating a model for a new church in the 21st century!

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Rich Tafel, Minister

TEMENOS

West Chester, Pennsylvania

The times certainly have changed. Perhaps faster than any of us could, or wanted to, realize. Rolling back to life, just one year ago, March 18, our community was devastated by the loss of its pastor, sage, mentor, friend, sister, and of course, mother; Rev. Christine Campbell. Rest in peace sweet sister.

Rolling forward, we hold steadfast to the preservation of Temenos. Guided by the energy we each bring combined with the sacred energies of our Temenos trees, grass, and forest friends we have been graced with so much love from our surroundings.

Temenos is very blessed to have had so many willing guest-ministers this past year who have shared their precious Sunday mornings with our grieving hearts. We have many volunteers who tend quietly to “their task at hand.” Ian, Hope and Rachel keep everything running smoothly as far as church/retreat center operations, guest services and facilities. The community garden continues to grow under the leadership of Dhami-Boo.

Temenos Council has been meeting monthly on the second Sunday after service.

Rev. Cairn Neely has been our part-time interim pastor since November 15, 2021. We are so grateful for everything they do for Temenos. Recently, Rev. Cairn has been offering an outdoor meditation on Sundays at 8am called “Wild Church” which is a 30-45 minute quiet service immersed in and walking in nature. Our regular Sunday service is held at 10am, followed by coffee hour and social time.

We as a Council of Peers, as I like to refer, would not be here without our community, locally and at-large. The loving reach, growth, sustainability, and resilience of Temenos is dependent on all of us as a community.

Respectfully submitted,
Meg Maurer, President.

NEW YORK ASSOCIATION

No report submitted.

KOREAN NEW CHURCH

New York, New York

We thank the Lord that all church members and their families are safe during the pandemic.

From July 2021, we decided to have Sunday worship service in the church sanctuary and by using zoom service alternately but faithfully.

The church outreach, Taekwondo Leadership Program(TLP), has been running continuously since last October. Another program we planned, Korean traditional music and instrument class, is still recruiting participants. We look forward to new ways to accomplish our mission for the Lord's kingdom.

Though we are in a Pandemic, Ukraine war, and economic difficulties, we have hope for the future because of our faith.

We praise the Lord who gives us every new day!

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Youngmin Kim

NEW YORK NEW CHURCH

New York, New York

New York New Church Report (2019-2022)

In the summer of 2019, the president of the New York New Church, Anna Martinian, reached out to denomination President Jane Siebert to discuss strategies for the future of the New York New Church. During the discussion, the New York New Church requested support in thinking through options about the future of their church where membership had dropped to six people. At that time, services were held on an irregular basis and the work of maintaining the church was weighing on the remaining members.

President Siebert suggested that Rev. Rich Tafel, pastor of the Church of the Holy City in Washington DC, visit with the New York board at their upcoming meeting on November 25, 2019. At that meeting Rev. Tafel shared potential pathways for the local congregation. Following this successful first meeting, the

denomination agreed to engage Rev. Tafel on a consulting basis to facilitate strategy for the New York New Church. This was agreed to by the local congregation.

Over the early months of 2020, a new board was created augmented by members serving in the denomination. They combined with five remaining New York members to fill out a board. This included from New York: Anna Martinian, President, Will Linden, Secretary, Cheryl Bryant, bookkeeper, Richard Bryant, and Rev. Young Min Kim. After a few months a final slate of national board members joined the local members, these included: Barb Halle (IN), Karen Conger (CA), and Kathy Speas (WA). The new board proceeded to meet monthly and imagine a new future. They've continued these meetings each month for two years.

After several facilitated discussions, the New York New Church board agreed it was time to sell the building and create a trusteeship where funds would be available first to new Swedenborgian endeavors in New York City, second priority to efforts in the New York region and, finally, to programs of a national interest.

The new board engaged legal advice from New York's leading church firm to prepare their documents for dissolution and sale with the new trusteeship being set up to replace the former entity. The board also engaged legal counsel to settle a fifteen-year-old lawsuit with a neighboring property the church had sold.

The group engaged a leading real estate agent and made plans to sell the building in the spring of 2020. In the fall of 2021, the church accepted an offer from a buyer after a competitive bidding period. In 2022, denomination treasurer, Jennifer Lindsay, joined the board of the church as their treasurer.

At this time, the church is finalizing the steps to have the building sold and the new trusteeship established.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Rich Tafel

OHIO ASSOCIATION

No report submitted.

NEW CHURCH OF MONTGOMERY

Cincinnati, Ohio

The congregation continued to meet online the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sundays of each month. In May we got audio/video equipment and introduced hybrid services. That has been a learning experience, and we are gradually fixing all the

bugs. These have been very well attended. Worship leaders from around the US and Canada lead several services, and we fill in an occasional lay-led service. In this period, we enjoyed sermons from Rev. Rich Tafel, Rev. Catherine Lauber, Rev. Dr. Jonathan Mitchell, Pastor Robbin Ferriman, Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence, Rev. Julie Conaron, Rev. Renée Machiniak, Rev. Dagmar Bollinger, Rev. Betsy Coffman, Rev. Dr. Sherrie Connelly, and Rev. Ron Brugler. We had Palm Sunday and Easter services with the Glendale New Church congregation. Our big happening was the sale of the last lot on the Kemper Road property, a task started in 2010! In May we held a Strategic Planning Workshop where we brain-stormed future program opportunities, and discussed priorities and long range objectives. Rev. Brugler has organized Swedenborgian Road Angels and is now holding in-person worship gatherings in Florida several times a year.

We participated in several community support projects. We prepared meals for 48 clients several times for Bethany House Family Shelter and took part in their Adopt-A-Family last Christmas. We have made three work visits to Matthew 25 Ministries (an international disaster relief organization.). In other community work, we had a special collection to help a handicapped student at a local school get conversion work done on a donated van, we provided reusable water bottles for our local chapter of “Girls On The Run,” and initiated a program for a school in a much-depressed area to supply the teacher team with material and student incentive rewards that the teachers would otherwise have to pay out their own pockets.

In other activities our Friday evening Coffee & Conversation took a break during the winter but is up and running again. The Swedenborg Study Group continues to meet online, finishing up the 10 Commandments study, and moving on to When Tragedy Strikes.

New Church of Montgomery members comprise three of the five board members of the Trillium Small Group Experiences non-profit which runs small group 6-7 weeks events, has periodic single-evening story telling events, and topical series of video presentations with a follow-up live online conversation. Members of the church participated in several Trillium events including Virtual Cornucopia of Gratitude: Stories of Blessings and a What Would Love Do small group.

Respectfully submitted,

Pete Toot

CLEVELAND SWEDENBORG CHAPEL*Cleveland, Ohio*

The Cleveland group is meeting on Sundays as a Bible Study group. We have four active members at this time. We meet at Panera's when the weather is cold and in different parks in the warmer weather. Steve Dzeba leads our Bible Study group. He prepares a small luncheon for all when we meet in the parks. When we use the Panera's we have lunch together afterwards, sometimes treating each other.

We get inquiries from time to time about attending our group, but usually nobody follows through on attending.

Norman Bestor is going to be 104 on July 1st. His health makes him not able to attend or want visitors now.

We are a close group and often see each other outside the Bible Study group.

Respectfully submitted,

Janie Dzeba, Secretary

URBANA SOCIETY OF THE NEW CHURCH*Urbana, Ohio***Worship & Related Activities:**

Worship Services resumed in the church in July of 2021, and we added the option of Zoom for distance members or others who chose it. Robbin Ferriman was consecrated by President, Rev. Jane Siebert in a special service in October 2021. We resumed our annual Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve Candlelight, and Easter services, and joined in special meals together. Our Seder was again held in the home of Rev. Betsy and Bill Coffman. It has been wonderful to be back together in person to share in worship and other special events. We continue with a reading & discussion instead of a sermon, except for special services.

Meditation Group: One of our members leads a weekly meditation group.

Denominational Activities/Programs:

Convention 2021— Our members were able to “attend” many Convention offerings through the virtual options. This has been a great benefit to those who often are unable to attend in person. We are expecting 6 adults and 1 teen to attend in person in 2022 a Long Beach CA, while those at home still have the “virtual” option.

Ohio Association 2021: Urbana hosted the weekend event in-person for the first time since 2019 on the first weekend of October. Robbin Ferriman led a presentation on church history; we enjoyed tours of several interesting local sites and ended with Worship and Communion Service on Sunday.

Community Outreach & Connections:

Most of our members volunteered and/or participated in the final “**Alicia Titus Memorial Run for Peace**” in September 2022. The Alicia’s Peace Fund will continue offering programs and scholarships.

The **Wedding outreach ministry** has resumed scheduling and conducting weddings.

The church continues to provide space for **12-step meetings**.

Donations were made to our local “**Caring Kitchen**” and **Community Christmas** program, as well as a special donation to Ukraine this spring.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Betsy Coffman, Minister

PACIFIC COAST ASSOCIATION

In the second year of the pandemic the PCA continued to conduct its business virtually. The board met by video-conference several times over the course of the year. Our annual business meeting was held by Zoom video-conference on November 6, 2021.

With monies saved by not meeting in person, we were able to make COVID relief grants to our member congregations. We made a \$2,000 donation in support of the 2022 Annual Convention in Southern California.

We are looking forward to holding our 2022 Annual Retreat and Business in person in San Francisco, October 7-9.

Our Southern California ministries look forward to seeing you -- Whether in person or virtually -- at our Annual Convention this at California State University Long Beach.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Dr. Jonathan Mitchell, President, Pacific Coast Association

AGAPAO CHURCH*Orange County, California*

We have in-person worship/bible study/fellowship every other week at a member's house or my work office.

Agapao Church has a YouTube channel named 'Agapao ComeUnity' for Korean Swedenborg's teaching with Bible Study Notes Series and various books.

Rev. Jane visited Agapao Church in November and had a special Licensed Pastor Installation Service for Jae and met church members and family.

Agapao Church members contributed to the San Pedro Garden Church for Feed & Be Fed Farm on 21' Year-end-fundraising and support 2022 CA Convention as Hospitality member.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jae Chung, President

THE GARDEN CHURCH*San Pedro, California*

The pandemic continued to be the uninvited guest to all the activities at The Garden Church during the past year. Fortunately, we were able to hold our outdoor worship services in the Garden for the entirety of the year. We worked hard to be flexible to the needs of those that call The Garden Church their home, as well as those that joined us for a walk around the garden or an occasional worship service. As is said every Sunday, "all are welcome."

We still have not fully resumed our pre-pandemic Sunday rhythm of working together, worshipping together, and eating together, yet it is our hearts desire to be able to do so soon. On Holy Thursday we were able to share a meal that resembled our old style of eating together, using real plates and napkins. It was a beautiful and warm reminder of how, "it used to be." As cases continue to improve in our region, we are eager to look at ways to re-imagine this aspect of our weekly worship experience.

In lieu of meals in the Garden, "Grab and Go" meals, as well as non-perishable meal replacement bags along with blankets, socks, and miscellaneous clothes have been shared with those in need every Sunday after the worship service this past year.

The announcement in November that Rev. Jonathan Mitchell will be retiring in June 2022 moved us into action to try to find a replacement. He has been one of the acting co-pastors for the last five years and will be missed! We all wish him well.

The other big news with respect to clergy changes is the announcement that Connie McOsker is in the Licensed Pastor Program. She has taken on duties in regular Sunday services, including preaching. Her sunny disposition and servant's heart has endeared her to one and all. We are so fortunate to have her join the Pastoral Staff.

Together with The Wayfarers Chapel and the Agapao Church we will be hosting Convention 2022 in the Greater Los Angeles area. We hope many of you will be able to experience our ministry in person!

Respectfully Submitted,

Elizabeth Sala, Board Chair

SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH OF SAN FRANCISCO

San Francisco, California

This has been a busy and productive year for our church despite dealing with the uncertainties of this unpredictable pandemic.

After a year postponement and a complete rethinking of our 125th Anniversary Celebration, the seven-week virtual symposium Nature and Spirit began on May 5th and offered a diverse array of presentations providing insights into our evolving and essential relationships with ourselves, each other, and the natural world. We are grateful for the financial support from both The Tafel Fund and The Gray Fund for this event.

On June 20th we were able to resume in-person services following very strict guidelines for gathering. Several favorite congregational and community events were held in the fall and winter: the Animal Blessing outdoor worship service, our Halloween pumpkin carving event, and on December 5th, our beloved Christmas concert with festive caroling.

In October, after our music director Jonathan Dimmock accepted a full-time position elsewhere, the church used the opportunity to reassess our music program, determine our current and future needs, and move forward thoughtfully. In the interim we have been blessed to have a song leader, Heather Garland, and talented guest singers and musicians.

Late in December Covid cases were rising significantly and we made the difficult decision to cancel in-person services beginning with Christmas Eve. Though this was a tremendous disappointment to many, we were able to offer a virtual Christmas Eve Service and virtual Sunday services through January. On February 18th, we resumed in-person services and activities in conjunction with virtual offerings. In March we held our 84th Annual Celebration of Marriage attended by 20 couples. We are looking forward to the church's first Art Showcase on May 22 as well as resuming our annual West Coast Swedenborgian Retreat over Memorial Day weekend. We are thankful for support from The Gray Fund to assist with scholarships for this popular event.

We wish to express our deep gratitude for those who provided leadership, encouragement and support during these challenging times.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie Carlson, Secretary

HILLSIDE, AN URBAN SANCTUARY

El Cerrito, California

Hillside Swedenborgian Community Church has emerged from the pandemic to once again serve as a hub of local community activity, hosting numerous music events, recitals, master classes, rehearsals and dance performances. Our Licensed Pastor, Tassy Farwell, was recently unanimously affirmed by our congregation in recognition of the many hats she wears working as an administrator, delivering sermons, providing frequent piano accompaniment during worship, and for her efforts to expand the wedding program in particular.

Our Minister, Rev. Thom Muller has been busy hosting a growing list of study groups this year including the Swedenborgian Book Group, Hillside Dream Group, A Course in Miracles and the Observing Spirit Group. Classes have been well attended and stimulate discussion on a range of topics concerning the challenges of engaging the familiar chaos of the material world with an ordered spiritual practice. In addition to serving as principal worship leader, Rev. Thom continues to forego a number of his normal sleeping hours each week to address the needs of less fortunate local folks through his ongoing involvement with the San Francisco Night Ministry.

Our proximity to the Center for Swedenborgian Studies has rewarded us with occasional worship services led by Dr. Reverend Jim Lawrence and Dr. Rebecca Esterson. Dean Esterson recently lead a four-week on-line course which connect-

ed Dr. Dole's translation of Divine Love and Wisdom with 21st century concepts and values.

Sunday services have also been well attended, with Easter numbers in excess of forty individuals. The tone and setting are informal, with lively congregational discussion as a regular feature of the worship service immediately following the spiritual message. Recently, volunteer members and friends have provided musical accompaniment to guide and support the singing of hymns. Our congregation continues to grow and add new members, particularly among the younger demographic. Our weddings, memorials and baptisms remain steady, matching last year's rate.

Hillside's new anchor tenant, Bay Area Kinderstube, is an after-school German immersion program which meets weekday afternoons in the rooms beneath our sanctuary. March marked our one-year anniversary with BAKS, and relations continue to be mutually beneficial. To date they have been reliable partners and exert a relatively light touch on the use of the facility.

Volunteers regularly meet once a week to spend several hours making improvements to the physical plant, and currently are working to remove large quantities of poison oak and to trim back hazardous vegetation well in advance of this year's anticipated wildfire season.

A recent Statement of Activity points toward increasing financial stability that has not been seen in many years, as revenues have exceeded those of last year by 78%, with congregational giving up 17% over last year. With profound gratitude for on-going support, the Swedenborgian Community Church at Hillside has been truly blessed.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Gottschalk, President

WAYFARERS CHAPEL*Rancho Palos Verdes, California*

(Please see page 88 for annual report)

NEW CHURCH OF THE SOUTHWEST DESERT*Silver City, New Mexico*

It is with some pride and enormous gratitude to the Lord, our members, friends and the Silver City community that we can say, though it's been a turbulent journey this past year we weathered the storms and are poised to enter a new phase in the life of NCSWD and Oasis.

Some of our challenges have been daunting: frozen pipes & subsequent water damages to the walls & ceiling in Oasis; most recently a break in that included the theft of our cash register, musical instruments & speakers, an electric assist bike, space heaters, folding tables and even our supplies of bathroom tissue, trash bags and paper towels. To add insult to injury offices were ransacked and plants dumped and broken.

But like the beautiful jade tree we thought was lost forever, we have rallied and are putting out strong roots and new growth.

Rev. Carla and Pastor Linda Callander have had and are continuing to deal with personal crises & challenges while continuing their efforts for and commitment to the church.

Many thanks to everyone who have rallied to us with their prayers, time, talents and treasure.

Notable among those are our Artistic Director in residence, Wendy Spurgeon, who stepped up twice to deliver the Sunday message in Carla's absence. Xander Toth who obtained and installed motion sensor security cameras also delivered a well-received Sunday message. Chandra Visser continues to lift our hearts with her voice and guitar on Sundays. She has written several songs that have become part of our Sunday repertoire.

Wendy also planned, promoted, and directed a 3 day fund raising event we called Shaking the Tree. It included music from Chandra, original skits from Wendy's drama students at Aldo Leopold Middle School, a reading from Joan Didion's "The Year of Magical Thinking" by Linda Callander and a brilliant production of "Talking With," a series of 10 monologues from women of varying

ages, backgrounds, and ethnicities. Dinner was donated and served to audience members, cast, and crew.

The considerable proceeds from this wonderful event, coupled with other significant donations, have enabled us to hire a contractor to make repairs and improvements including the long planned doors to the side garden.

Future events include a staged reading of the full play “Year of Magical Thinking” by Pastor Linda Callander, Open Mic nights hosted by Chandra, poetry readings and game nights. We will also strive to be present and open during Silver City’s many weekend Festivals. Oasis Coffee and Tea is evolving into a meeting and events-based venue only that also sells refreshments.

As many of you know, Rev. Carla has announced her retirement at the end of this year. We are engaged in a search for a minister, grounded in Swedenborgian theology, with the energy and vision to expand our presence and ministry to all of the Silver City community.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Carla Friedrich, Minister

**SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH OF THE PUGET SOUND D/B/A
SWEDENBORGIAN SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY OF THE PUGET
SOUND**

Seattle, Washington

The Swedenborgian Spiritual Community of Puget Sound continues to offer a unique brand of mystical Christianity to the “Spiritual but not Religious” people of western Washington, as well as to Christians seeking a deeper and more inclusive spiritual understanding of sacred scripture.

As the pandemic has continued through 2021-2022 we have continued to meet at least monthly for virtual services, including our traditional Christmas Eve-Eve service on December 23. In April 2022 our virtual Resurrection service on Easter was preceded by a Maundy Thursday service where we discussed the Passover and celebrated the Holy Supper. While our local spiritual community is small, our services usually include the participation of Swedenborgians in other areas of the country who find our virtual events, which always include lively discussion, to be convenient and relevant. Retired ministers Rev. Eric Allison and Paul Martin continue to be part of our church family.

Our members continue to be active in virtual learning opportunities and workshops and we are looking forward to meeting again in person, with plans to in-

crease and share our knowledge of Swedenborg and Sacred Scripture and to become more involved in community gardening and other uses. To commence these efforts we planted a tree on April 30 as a part of a memorial service for Douglas Howard, a dear member of our spiritual community who passed fully into the spiritual world on January 29.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Barler, Licensed Pastor

WESTERN CANADA CONFERENCE

No report submitted.

CALGARY NEW CHURCH SOCIETY

Calgary, Alberta

Greetings from the Calgary New Church Society!

We have continued our monthly virtual gatherings to check in on each other, visit, and participate in our worship services. We take turns sharing readings from the Bible and Swedenborg, prayers, and sermons from various pastors. Lorrie Lipski leads hymns with her guitar while others use recorded music.

We are pleased to welcome other Western Canada Conference members from British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba to our virtual services.

At our 2021 AGM the following officers were elected:

President:	Hartmut Lipski
Vice President:	Laurie Slough
Secretary:	Sharon Williams
Treasurer:	Dianne Roesinger
Board Members:	Pat Ravenhill
	Lorrie Lipski
	Susan Hulcher

Respectfully submitted,

Hartmut Lipski, President

CHURCH OF THE HOLY CITY***Edmonton, Alberta***

It was another year of Covid, lock downs, protests and a war to contend with. It feels like forty years in the wilderness all in two years, but we survived. With spring expected soon comes new beginnings.

In April of 2021, Telus installed a new fiber optic system. The flowers beds were cleaned up and the Spruce trees out front were also trimmed, thanks to Linda and Barry, also Guy Spencer, Mitchell Sawatzky, Kurtis Schreiber, Leah Francis and Clinton Francis for your participation.

In May, the Western Canada Conference held their AGM virtually at the church.

Starting in June, and continuing all summer was a outdoor concert series, which was a great success. We hope to continue again this summer.

In October we purchased a used carpet cleaner, thanks to Randy and John for taking on this responsibility. We also applied for a Provincial grant, and received \$6,000. Guy and Pastor Dave worked on a land based acknowledgement for the church, which we believe is a start for reconciliation to our indigenous brothers and sisters.

In November we planned a Sunday Christmas decorating event, which was attended by Miss Charlie Sawatzky and Miss Natalie Runka, the girls enjoyed being part of the Christmas decorating. We are still renting space to Gamblers Anonymous Narcotics Anonymous and the African Presbyterian Congregation.

In January Carol presented the finished picture of the crocheted Last Supper which will hang in the Sanctuary. Thank you Carol, the finished picture is spectacular.

In February we were able to deliver 11 Bibles to Pastor Gibson in Africa, thank you Pastor Dave for making this happen.

On March 26th a celebration of life was held for Mrs. Lisa Reddekopp, the celebration was well attended and she will be truly missed. Memorial plaques for Alf Tabler, Anne Almond and Lisa Reddekopp will be ordered soon.

We also have a wedding booked for May 21st, hopefully it's the start of a busy season.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Runka, President

ACT OF INCORPORATION

An act to incorporate the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America. Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois represented in the General Assembly.

Section 1. That Rev. Thomas Worcester, D.D. of Boston, Massachusetts; Rev. J.R. Hibbard of Chicago, Illinois; Rev. T.B. Hayward of Brookline, Massachusetts; Robert L. Smith, Esq. of Jamaica, Long Island, New York; J. Young Scammon, Esq. of Chicago and I.S. Britton, Esq. of Springfield, Illinois; Hon. Jno. B. Niles of LaPorte, Indiana; Dr. Charles Shepherd of Grand Rapids, Michigan; Rev. Chauncey Giles of Cincinnati, Ohio; David Snyder, Esq. of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; N.F. Cabell, Esq. of Warminster, Virginia; Hon. Jno. H. Wilkins and Sampson Reed of Boston, Massachusetts; Oliver Gerish of Portland and Henry B. Hoskins of Gardiner, Maine; their associates and successors, be, and they are hereby constituted a body Corporate under the name of the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America; under which name they shall have perpetual succession, with power to receive, take by gift, purchase, devise or otherwise, property and real estate, real, personal or mixed, for educational or religious purposes, and to hold, lease, and sell or convey the same at pleasure.

Section 2. The business Affairs of said Convention shall be managed and controlled by its Executive Committee, (or General Council) subject to the direction of the Convention, when in session. Said Committee (or Council) shall be chosen or appointed from time to time, in such manner as the Constitution of said Convention may direct, and act in conformity to its votes. Said Committee (or Council) may create such offices, and appoint such Officers as they may see fit, and remove the same at pleasure; and may change its business affairs in such a manner as a majority of said Committee (or Council) may determine, subject to the control of the Convention.

Section 3. Said Convention may sue and be sued, plead and be impleaded, prosecute and defend, in all courts and places, in its corporate name, by Attorney or otherwise. All deeds, conveyances, or leases of the property held by said Convention, for the purpose of leasing or conveying such property, shall be made under the hands of the President and Recording Secretary, and under such seal as said Executive Committee (or General Council) may adopt; but all such deeds must be approved by a majority of said Committee (or Council).

Section 4(a). The purposes for which this Convention exists are: religious, charitable and educational as follows:

1. The specific and primary religious purpose is to aid the teachings of Christianity as taught by Emanuel Swedenborg.
2. The specific and primary charitable purpose is to aid the poor and unfortunate by collection and disbursement of funds, food, clothing and shelter.
3. The specific and primary educational purposes are to distribute funds for scholarships, to help organizations present education programs of general public interest and to disseminate educational material in the public interest.
4. The general purposes and powers are to have and exercise all of the rights and powers conferred on Convention under special charters under the laws of Illinois. However, this Convention shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the primary purposes of this Convention.
5. No substantial part of the activities of this Convention shall consist of the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, nor shall this Convention participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements), any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office or perform any act that will disqualify the Convention for tax exempt status conferred by any local, state or federal government which has jurisdiction over the Convention.
6. This Convention is incorporated and exists not for pecuniary profit and no part of any net earnings shall inure to the benefit of any person, private shareholder or individual.

Section 4(b). The property of this Convention is irrevocably dedicated to religious, charitable and educational purposes and no part of the net income or assets of the organization shall ever inure to the benefit of any director, officer or member thereof or to the benefit of any private persons. On the dissolution or winding up of the Convention, its assets remaining after payment of, or provision for payment of, all debts and liabilities of this Convention, shall be distributed to a nonprofit fund, foundation, or corporation which is organized and operated ex-

clusively for religious or charitable or educational purposes and which has established its tax exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and/or any future provisions amending, succeeding, supplementing or replacing this section.

If this Convention holds any assets in trust, or the Convention is formed for charitable purposes, such assets shall be disposed in such a manner as may be directed by decree of a court with jurisdiction over such trust, its assets or the Convention, on petition therefrom by the Attorney General or by any person concerned in the liquidation, in a proceeding to which such Attorney General is a party.

Section 4(c). All the property of the Convention held or located in the State of California is irrevocably dedicated to religious or charitable or educational purposes meeting the requirements for exemption provided by Section 214 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, and/or any future provisions that amend, supplement, succeed or replace such section, and upon dissolution or winding up of the Convention such property shall be distributed to a nonprofit fund, foundation, or corporation with religious or charitable or educational purposes meeting the requirements for exemption provided by Section 214 of the Revenue and Taxation Code. In all other respects, property in the State of California shall be subject to Section 4(b) above.

Section 5. Nothing in this Act contained, shall be so constructed as to interfere with the right of said Convention to alter, amend or abolish its Constitution, or to form a new one whenever it shall see fit to do so.

Approved January 29, 1861

The original Act of Incorporation is on file in the Office of the Secretary of the State, Springfield, Illinois; and it has also been recorded on page 1 of Record 48 in that Office.

By vote of a number of members of the New Church from various parts of the United States, assembled in Philadelphia on January 1st, 1817, a call was issued for a convention of the receivers of the doctrines of the New Jerusalem Church to be held in Philadelphia on May 15th of that year, “for the purpose of consulting upon the general concerns of the Church.”

The first meeting of the General Convention occurred as planned on May 15-17, 1817.

The General Convention was incorporated, under the laws of Illinois, on January 29, 1861. Its legal office is at the rooms of the Chicago Society of the New Jerusalem, 77 W. Washington Street, Room 1700, Chicago, IL 60602-2901.

CONSTITUTION
of the General Convention of the New Jerusalem
in the United States of America, Inc.

Article I.

Name, Purpose and Membership

Section 1. This body shall be called the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America, Inc., commonly known as the Swedenborgian Church.

Section 2. The Swedenborgian Church exists to help people be open to the Lord's presence and leading, especially by fostering personal and ordained ministries which facilitate the spiritual well-being of people, and which have in common a working for the Lord in bringing in the New Age, the descent of the Holy City, New Jerusalem.

The light in which we seek to walk shines from the Lord Jesus Christ in His second coming, available to us through the divine presence in our hearts and minds, and through revelation in the Holy Scripture and in the life and teaching of the Lord's servant, Emanuel Swedenborg.

This section shall hereinafter be referred to as the PURPOSE of the Swedenborgian Church.

Section 3. Constituent bodies of the Swedenborgian Church shall be those collective bodies which subscribe to this Purpose and which unite with the Swedenborgian Church in performing the distinctive uses of a church. All bodies entitled to voting delegates at the time of adoption of this article shall be considered to be constituent bodies. Additional bodies may be admitted to membership on recommendation of General Council and vote of the Swedenborgian Church.

The members of the Swedenborgian Church shall be those persons who are adult active members of a constituent body or who have been accepted as members at large through Rite of Confirmation and by vote of the Swedenborgian Church.

For membership in the Swedenborgian Church, an adult active member is

one who is at least eighteen years of age and who has been accepted by a constituent body through confirmation or by transfer, and who within the calendar year immediately preceding a session of the Swedenborgian Church has shown an active interest in his or her membership by joining in programs of worship and work or by contributing physically or financially.

Article II.

Officers, Councils and Administrative Functions

Section 1. The officers of the Swedenborgian Church shall be a President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, and Treasurer, all elected by ballot. The President and Treasurer shall each be elected for three-year terms, and the Vice President and Recording Secretary shall each be elected for one-year terms. The President and Treasurer shall assume the duties of their offices at the close of the next annual meeting after their election and the other officers shall assume the duties of their offices at the close of the annual meetings at which they are elected.

The election for President and Treasurer shall be held at the annual meetings of the Swedenborgian Church in the year prior to the beginning of each such term. In the absence of such session the term of office of the President shall be extended for one year following the succeeding session in order that the succeeding President may be elected one year prior to taking office. In the event of the death, resignation or incapacity of the incumbent President and/or Treasurer, the successor shall be installed for a full term immediately after the successor's election. A President who served for two successive terms shall not be eligible for election to the next succeeding term. The other officers shall be eligible for re-election without limitation.

The newly elected Treasurer shall be the Treasurer-elect and participate as a non-voting member of Standing Committees and other committees with the current Treasurer, including but not limited to, the Investment Committee and other funding committees. In the absence of such annual meeting of the Swedenborgian Church, the term of office of the Treasurer shall be extended for one year, in order for a new Treasurer to be elected one year prior to the expiration of the outgoing Treasurer's term.

Section 2. There shall be a General Council consisting of the President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer ex-officiis, together with three ministers and six laypersons to be elected by ballot by the Swedenborgian Church,

one minister and two laypersons to be elected annually for terms of three years. Members who have served for two consecutive three year terms shall not be eligible for immediate re-election.

Section 3. There shall be a Council of Ministers consisting of all the ministers of the Swedenborgian Church, of whom twelve shall constitute a quorum. This Council shall select a Chair who shall be an ex-officio member, with vote, of General Council.

Section 4. There shall be Standing Committees as specified in the Bylaws. Standing Committees shall consist of three members, one to be elected annually for a three-year term, or of six members, two to be elected annually for three-year terms, together with such ex-officio members as the Bylaws shall require. Members who have served two consecutive three-year terms shall not be eligible for immediate re-election. Each Standing Committee shall have specific focus as defined in the Bylaws and unless otherwise provided in the Bylaws shall elect a chair.

Section 5. *Left blank for future use.*

Section 6. All elected persons shall hold office for the respective terms for which they are elected, or until their respective successors shall have been elected or qualified, provided, however, that the terms of all such elected persons shall be automatically extended for one year for each year in which because of national emergency or other compelling reason no annual meetings of the Swedenborgian Church are held.

Section 7. The term ‘year’ or ‘years’ as used in the Article shall mean, unless otherwise specified, the periods between elections at succeeding annual sessions of the Swedenborgian Church.

Article III.

Duties and Powers

Section 1. The President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer shall perform the duties implied by the names of their several offices, the duties listed in the Bylaws and such other duties as the Swedenborgian Church may require of them.

Section 2. The General Council shall serve as the Executive Committee of the Swedenborgian Church, shall have superintendence of the business of the Swedenborgian Church, and shall exercise the powers of the Swedenborgian Church in the interim of its sessions. It shall be responsible for all corporate, legal and financial functions of the Swedenborgian Church and shall act as a Court of Appeals as defined in the Bylaws. The President, the Vice President and the Recording Secretary of the Swedenborgian Church shall be ex-officio Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary, respectively, of the General Council. The General Council may fill any vacancy in the General Council or in any office or position regularly elected by the delegates; provided, however, that any such appointment to fill a vacancy shall last only until the next session of the Swedenborgian Church.

The General Council shall annually review all committee and Standing Committee reports and shall recommend to the Church any necessary revisions or clarifications of fundamental principle or priority. It shall receive budget recommendations, revise them as its wisdom shall indicate, and adopt a budget.

Section 3. The Council of Ministers shall have as its central focus the facilitating of ordained ministries serving the Swedenborgian Church's PURPOSE. It shall have primary responsibility in matters pertaining to doctrine and worship of the church and shall have charge of the ministry. This council shall oversee the pastoral, teaching, liturgical and administrative dimensions of the ordained ministry; it shall practice and support disciplined and creative theological research and reflection, and it shall oversee the provision of ordained ministry of the Swedenborgian Church and its collective bodies. It also bears responsibility for the pastoral support of all ministries and for providing them with clear ethical standards. It shall exercise such disciplinary functions over the ordained clergy as it may in its collective wisdom adopt, subject to the provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws.

Section 4. *Left blank for future use.*

Section 5. The primary duties of each Standing Committee shall be to facilitate, initiate and evaluate activities relevant to its focus. Its primary means shall be the provision of supportive supervision for the planning, realization and evaluation of such activities, such supervision to function under criteria approved by the Swedenborgian Church. It shall be responsible for annual review of its efforts with explicit reference to the Swedenborgian Church's Purpose, Objectives

and Strategies as listed in the Standing Resolutions.

Persons or groups desiring denomination support for new or existing activities shall communicate their desire to the President, who shall refer the request to an appropriate Standing Committee. The Standing Committee shall then appoint a supervisor acceptable to the requesting persons or groups to assist in the planning and the evaluation of the activity.

Within the limits of its budget, each Standing Committee shall meet at least semi-annually, either in person or electronically, as provided in the Bylaws. They shall submit written reports, at least annually, to General Council via the Recording Secretary.

Within the limits of its budget, each Standing Committee shall enlist the services of resource persons as supervisors, make decisions concerning the funding of activities in its care and receive and evaluate reports therefrom, submitting to the General Council at least annually a report of its decisions and the activities in its care.

The Chair of each committee shall bear primary responsibility for coordinating these activities with those of other Committees.

Article IV.

Representation and Voting

Section 1. All members of the Swedenborgian Church shall have the right to be present at its meetings and to take part in its deliberations. They may be eligible for election or appointment to any office or position in the Swedenborgian Church as the Constitution and Bylaws shall provide. But the right to vote shall be limited to the members of the Council of Ministers, to the lay officers of the Swedenborgian Church, to members of the General Council during their terms of office and to the delegates of constituent bodies entitled to representation at the annual meetings. No member shall be entitled to more than one vote.

Section 2. Every constituent body of the Swedenborgian Church shall be entitled to two delegates and an additional delegate for every ten members, such delegates to be members of the body which they represent.

Membership is to be determined as of the 31st day of December of the calendar year immediately preceding the date of the Swedenborgian Church annual meetings. For this purpose, only adult active members as defined in Article I, Section 3 shall be counted. It shall be the joint responsibility of the members and the bodies involved to ensure that no member is counted by more than one body for delegate strength.

Section 3. In determining delegate strength and in selecting delegates, only those bodies shall be included which are in good standing with the Swedenborgian Church.

Good standing of constituent bodies shall be forfeited if such body, without express consent of the Council of Ministers, employs a minister on an annual basis who is not on the Roll of Ministers as defined in Article XII, Section 1 of the Bylaws.

Article V. The Ministry

Section 1. The Swedenborgian Church shall at its discretion, on recommendation of the Council of Ministers, and subject to the provisions in Article XII of the Bylaws, authorize the ordination and induction of qualified individuals to serve as its ministers. Such ordination and induction shall confer the privileges and responsibilities of leading in worship, administering the rites and sacraments, teaching, and pastoral care, together with those of full membership in the Council of Ministers.

Section 2. The Swedenborgian Church's interest in education for its ministers shall be exercised through the General Council in its role as the representative class of members of the Corporation of the New Church Theological School. It is the denomination's interest that such education focus on the spiritual growth of its participants by development in understanding of our theology, sensitivity in human relations, appreciation of other traditions and the technical skills required for effective ministry.

Article VI.**Meetings of the Swedenborgian Church**

Section 1. Sessions of the Swedenborgian Church shall be held at least triennially, at such times and places as it may determine. Meetings of the Swedenborgian Church must be called with 90 days' notice published in The Messenger or through a mailing to the members.

Section 2. A quorum to hold a convention shall consist of twenty percent of the number of persons qualified to vote as defined in Article IV, Representation and Voting.

Section 3. A quorum to conduct business at the convention shall be a majority of the registered voters at the convention, as defined in Article IV, Section 1, Representation and Voting.

Section 4. Virtual conventions and annual or special meetings of the Swedenborgian Church may be held when authorized by the General Council and may include electronic voting. The General Council may authorize hybrid, virtual, and in-person meetings to allow greater participation, which may include electronic voting or a combination of in-person and electronic voting. All such meetings and voting must comply with all other existing constitution and bylaw sections.

Article VII.**Amendments**

This Constitution may be amended at any session of the Swedenborgian Church by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting, provided that the proposed amendment shall first have been referred to the General Council, and public notice of the substance thereof shall have been given at least three months before the time of such meeting. Such notice may be dispensed with for any special occasion by a three-fourths vote of those present and voting.

Revised June 28, 1996.

Adopted as Amended June 27, 2021.

BYLAWS OF THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH

Article I.

Religious Observances of the Annual Meeting

Section 1. The annual business meeting of the Swedenborgian Church shall include each day a reading from the Word and prayer.

Section 2. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall be administered at an appropriate time during the annual meetings of the Swedenborgian Church.

Article II.

Enrollment of the Swedenborgian Church

Section 1. A Committee on Credentials, to consist of three persons, shall be appointed prior to the opening of each session of the Swedenborgian Church, to examine the credentials of the delegates, and to make up the Roll of the Swedenborgian Church; said Committee to sit during the whole of that session and to add to and correct the Roll, as may be proper.

Section 2. Friends of the Swedenborgian Church, who are in attendance at any session of the Swedenborgian Church, are invited to inscribe their names and residences in a register to be kept for that purpose and to take seats in the meetings. Such registry shall entitle them, without vote, to participate in its deliberations by addressing the Chair for permission to speak from the floor.

Article IV, Section 1 of the Constitution and Article II, Section 2 of the Bylaws shall be read by the Recording Secretary immediately after the opening of the session of the Swedenborgian Church.

Article III.

Order of Business

Reports and Communications shall be presented in the following order:

1. Reports of the Officers of the Swedenborgian Church
2. Report of the General Council
3. Report of the Council of Ministers
4. Reports of the Committees
5. Reports of the Associations
6. Reports of Churches not affiliated with Associations
7. Reports of Trustees
8. Reports of Auxiliary Bodies
9. Special Reports

10. Unfinished Business
11. New Business

When any report called for is not ready, its presentation shall be postponed until all other reports have been presented in their order. This rule shall not apply to the reports of the Council of Ministers or of the General Council, which may be presented as soon as prepared.

No debate shall be allowed on any of the above reports until all of them have been presented; but a motion to refer, or to adopt a recommendation without debate, shall be in order.

The above Order of Business may be suspended at any time by a two-thirds vote.

Article IV.

Annual Meeting Planning and Operation

Section 1. Planning for Sessions of the Swedenborgian Church.

The President shall appoint a committee representing the Swedenborgian Church body for each year's session for the purpose of planning the overall program, including selection of theme, specific programs, allocation of times for these programs and development of the published program.

Section 2. Local Arrangements.

The President may appoint a committee representing the local church or association where the sessions are to be convened for the purpose of planning and coordinating with the Central Office and the host institution such matters as transportation, housing, meals, meeting room requirements, audio-visual equipment, special event requirements, and any other arrangements appropriate for the planned program.

Section 3. The Swedenborgian Church Business.

The Executive Committee of the General Council shall serve as the Committee on Business for each year's session. It shall be the duty of this committee to assign the order under which different subjects shall be presented and the time allotted to each subject, and to prepare and print the program for that session; but such program may be changed at any time by majority vote of the delegates. Any item of new business wished to be placed on the floor for the session must be submitted in writing to the Recording Secretary of the Swedenborgian Church. To ensure an agenda position in the Order of Business, the items must be submitted in advance.

Article V.**Parliamentary Procedures**

Section 1. The provisions of Robert's Rules of Order, so far as they are consistent with the Bylaws, shall govern the proceedings of the sessions. The President shall at the beginning of each session appoint an advisor on parliamentary matters.

Section 2. The yeas and nays shall be taken whenever they are called for by one-fifth of the persons voting.

Section 3. No member shall speak more than five minutes at one time, nor more than twice upon any subject, without affirmative vote of the delegates present.

Article VI.**Duties of the President**

Section 1. The President shall perform the duties required by the Act of Incorporation, the Constitution and these Bylaws. The President shall preside over sessions of the Swedenborgian Church, and shall address the Swedenborgian Church setting forth the state of the Church. In the absence of the President, the Vice-President shall fulfill these duties.

Section 2. All Committees shall be appointed by the President of the Swedenborgian Church, unless otherwise ordered by the Swedenborgian Church, or provided in the Constitution or Bylaws; and vacancies in Committees so appointed shall be filled by the President. Vacancies in Standing Committees shall be filled by the President of the Swedenborgian Church should they occur between annual meetings of the Church, with such appointed members remaining in their positions until elections are held as provided in the Bylaws.

Section 3. The President shall have the privilege of participating, ex-officio without vote, in the meetings of all Standing Committees and committees.

Article VII.**Duties of the Recording Secretary**

Section 1. The Recording Secretary shall perform the duties required by the Act of Incorporation, including the execution of deeds, conveyances or leases, provided by the Act of Incorporation; and any duties that may be prescribed by the Constitution, the Bylaws, the Swedenborgian Church or by the General Council.

Section 2. The Recording Secretary shall be responsible for securing reports from the bodies below named, to be received at least four weeks prior to each annual session of the Swedenborgian Church, or if any such session is not

held in any one year, not later than June 30th of such year. The Recording Secretary shall see that copies of such reports, so prepared, are mailed to each minister and association of the Swedenborgian Church, and to such officers or interested persons as may be deemed desirable at least ten days prior to each session, and distribute them to members at the annual session. Reports received after the deadline may be presented to the Swedenborgian Church orally or in print, in full or in summary.

Such reports are to be requested from: Officers, General Council, Council of Ministers, Support Units, Committees, Associations, Trustees, Auxiliary Bodies and Churches not affiliated with Associations.

Section 3. The Recording Secretary shall be responsible for providing the Committee on Credentials with a list of the number of delegates to which each constituent body is entitled, as defined in Article IV, Section 2 of the Constitution. The necessary information shall be solicited from the constituent bodies in the January preceding the session. Any constituent body failing to comply with this requirement by April 1 shall forfeit the right of its additional delegates (as defined in Article IV, Section 2 of the Constitution) to vote at that session. Should such body submit the necessary information after the deadline, this forfeiture may be waived by a three-fifths vote of the Swedenborgian Church. A numerical table of the maximum delegation shall be published in *The Messenger* not less than one month before each annual session.

Section 4. The Recording Secretary, with such persons as may be appointed by the General Council, shall constitute a Committee on the *Journal*, to procure each year the publication of the *Journal of the Swedenborgian Church*. Said *Journal* shall include the Act of Incorporation, the Constitution and Bylaws, the minutes of the session of the Swedenborgian Church held during the current year; the names of the officers, General Council members, administrative bodies and members of committees of the Swedenborgian Church, current membership statistics, and any other matter that is required by the Constitution or Bylaws to be included; together with any reports presented to the Swedenborgian Church as provided by these Bylaws in such forms as such committee shall deem proper, together with any additional information which the Committee shall deem appropriate. Such Committee shall cause to be printed such number of copies of the *Journal* as it may deem necessary, and arrange for the distribution thereof.

Section 5. The Committee on the *Journal* shall publish in a supplemental or special *Journal* every five years such matters of information of a permanent nature, not required to be published in each *Journal*, as it may deem suitable; and

shall distribute such supplemental or special *Journals* in the same manner as the *Journals*.

Article VIII.

The General Council

Section 1. The General Council shall meet without notice within forty-eight hours after the final adjournment of the Business Session of the Swedenborgian Church. The Council shall also hold two other regular meetings, an interim meeting and a meeting just before the convening of a session of the Swedenborgian Church. Twenty days' notice of these meetings and of any special meetings called by the Chair or by any five members of the Council, shall be given by letter to all members of the Council at their last known address, the time to be computed from the mailing of the letter. The notices of special meetings shall contain brief statements of the purpose of the meetings. At all meetings of the Council seven shall constitute a quorum.

Section 2. There shall be an Executive Committee of the General Council consisting of the President, Vice President and the Secretary of the General Council, and the Treasurer of the Swedenborgian Church, which shall deal with any matters referred to it by the General Council. In routine matters not involving policy decisions, the Executive Committee may act for the General Council between General Council sessions, all such actions to be reported to the next meeting of the General Council.

Section 3. Any action required or permitted to be taken at a regular meeting of the Council may be taken without a meeting if two-thirds of the members of the Council consent to the action in writing and the written consents are filed with the records of the General Council's meetings; provided further that if any member entitled to vote on such action shall so request, the Secretary shall notify all members of the General Council in writing of any objections to the action and allow two weeks from the date of such notice before the count of the vote is finally made.

Section 4. The General Council may, in its discretion, appoint such officers or employees not otherwise provided for, as it may deem necessary or desirable; and it shall define the duties of such officers and employees, and such officers and employees shall hold office at the pleasure of the General Council.

Section 5. The General Council shall serve ex-officio as the representative class of members of the Corporation of the New Church Theological School, and in accord with the provisions of the Bylaws of said Corporation shall represent the denomination's interest.

Section 6. Any member of General Council, of any committee appointed by General Council, or of any Support Unit who fails to attend at least one duly called meeting during a calendar year may be deemed by General Council to have submitted his or her resignation, and shall be so informed by the Secretary. If no good and sufficient reason for said absence is offered, General Council may appoint a qualified individual to serve until the next meeting of Convention.

Article IX.

Article X.

Standing Committees

(Established by Article II, Section 4 of the Constitution)

Section 1. The Standing Committee For Financial Accountability.

There shall be a Standing Committee for Financial Accountability whose central focus shall be on the wise use and development of such resources as are directly under the Swedenborgian Church's control, and the provision of advice and counsel in such matters to the Swedenborgian Church's collective bodies. It shall oversee the management of the Swedenborgian Church's properties and investments, shall seek new sources of material support and shall provide consultants for the Swedenborgian Church's collective bodies toward the best coordinated and wisest use and development of their financial and physical resources. This Standing Committee shall work in close cooperation with the Common Fund Investment Committee. It shall consist of six (6) members, two of whom are to be Swedenborgian ministers or pastors, four of whom are to be lay members of the Swedenborgian Church, plus the Treasurer of the Swedenborgian Church, ex-officio with vote, who shall serve as its Chair.

Based on its assessment of the overall needs of the denomination, the Standing Committee for Financial Accountability shall make recommendations to General Council as to how best to manage its funds and properties. It shall administer all funds, including but not restricted to, the Augmentation Fund, the Mission Fund, and the Iungerich Fund. It shall oversee the distribution of all restricted and unrestricted funds of the denomination and their application process, if any. It shall receive all preliminary budget requests, including but not restricted to, those from General Council, the Council of Ministers and all Standing Committees and committees, and shall prepare therefrom a preliminary budget for submission to the General Council.

Section 2. The Standing Committee For Education and Resources for Spiritual Community.

There shall be a Standing Committee of Education and Resources for Spiritual Community, whose central focus shall be the development and dissemination of resources for worship, small groups, church growth, stewardship, and board development and outreach. It shall be concerned with resources, personnel and programming, and will strive to provide materials for the development of ministries and seek to anticipate and develop programs and resources for local communities' needs for worship, programming and outreach. It shall consist of three (3) members, including at least one minister with five or more years of pastoral experience, plus a representative appointed by the Center for Swedenborgian Studies Board of Trustees.

Section 3. The Standing Committee For Communications and Information.

There shall be a Standing Committee for Communication and Information consisting of three to six members, the number to be determined annually by the President of the Swedenborgian Church based upon the needs of the church at that time. The Standing Committee's central focus shall be on coordinating, initiating and promoting communication both within and across the boundaries of the denomination in all variety of media. It will seek to foster coordination among the Swedenborgian Church's publishing and information and technology activities. This Standing Committee will be alert to the climate of opinion both within and beyond the boundaries of the Swedenborgian Church and will also be alert to developments in communication technology. The official organ of the denomination, *The Messenger*, and the denomination's WEB presence shall be under the supervision of this Standing Committee.

Section 4. The Standing Committee For Nominations (moved from Article XVII to this article).

There shall be a Standing Committee for Nominations of five members to serve for five years each; one member to be elected each year, but not from any Association from which his or her predecessor or any other member of the Committee is a member. The unexpired term of any member may be filled from the same Association. A member moving to another Association shall continue to serve and shall be regarded as coming from his or her former Association; but no retiring member shall be eligible for immediate reelection. Whenever possible,

the Standing Committee for Nominations shall propose slates representative of the Swedenborgian Church's overall constituency.

It shall be the duty of this Standing Committee to present, at each session of the Swedenborgian Church, nominees for the Swedenborgian Church officers (where applicable), vacancies in the elective members of the General Council and all other Boards and Committees, unless otherwise appointed. Each year the member whose term is next to expire shall act as Chair of the Committee.

Section 5. It is recommended that no individual serve on more than two administrative bodies or more than two committees of the Swedenborgian Church, the Standing Committee for Nominations and the Chair being similarly instructed. This does not apply to persons serving ex-officio as provided by the Constitution and Bylaws.

Article XI.

Electronic Meeting Guidelines

Section 1. Virtual conventions and annual or special meetings of the Swedenborgian Church; General Council, Cabinet, and other boards and committees, of the Swedenborgian Church may use telephone conferencing and electronic communication to conduct business when not in regular session, or when face-to-face meeting is impractical. Such communication must follow procedures adopted by the denomination to ensure an orderly deliberative process is honored.

Section 2. It is critical to the deliberative process that all members of a body participate in discussion and votes at the same time (synchronous meetings). Thus, business requiring voting must be done by phone conferencing or "real-time" electronic conferencing (e.g., instant messaging or chat).

Section 3. All deliberations conducted by telephone or electronic means shall be duly recorded and filed with other records of the body. These minutes shall be reviewed and approved at the next meeting of the body.

Section 4. Procedures for using phone conferencing and electronic communications will be the responsibility of a standing committee, appointed by the President. Such committee will present to the General Council proposed procedures for the General Council's approval. This committee shall also be responsible for proposing to General Council from time to time revisions that may be desirable for the efficient and orderly operation of the church's business.

Section 5. The procedures approved by General Council under this Article shall be communicated by the Central Office to all members of all boards, and committees of the Swedenborgian Church at least once a year, following the close

of annual convention sessions. They shall also be published in the annual Journal of the Swedenborgian Church.

Section 6. Nothing in this Article is meant to prohibit the use of e-mails, faxes, or other electronic media for communication and information sharing purposes.

Section 7. Virtual conventions and annual or special meetings of the Swedenborgian Church shall follow the policies listed below, along with any additional procedures adopted by the General Council whether temporary or via a standing resolution. General Council may call a virtual convention with electronic voting whenever an in-person convention is deemed by it to be impractical, too costly, or at any time when a virtual convention is desirable. It shall establish a Committee on Virtual Conventions to organize any such meeting. The committee must ensure that the meeting structure complies with all then existing articles of the constitution and bylaws.

A suitable outside vendor shall be chosen to handle electronic voting. The General Council or the Executive Committee of General Council shall select the vendor.

Only delegates eligible to vote shall be provided access to the voting system and shall be limited to one vote for each eligible position or issue being considered. All members and friends shall be afforded the opportunity to participate in the meeting. A quorum for such a meeting shall be the same as described in Article VI of the constitution.

Due and timely notice and publication of such notice shall be the same as the then current constitution and bylaw sections state.

The Committee on Credentials, in consultation with the Recording Secretary, shall submit a list of eligible voters to the General Council committee organizing the meeting, by a date established by the President of Convention. The General Council's Committee on Virtual Conventions shall consult with the election vendor to establish election access protocols, in consultation with the credentials committee.

Hybrid meetings are those meetings allowing any combination of in-person participation and voting, and electronic participation and voting. Hybrid meetings will be treated in the same way as any virtual meeting with electronic voting. Any delegate voting virtually must be able to both participate in the meeting concurrent with other meeting attendees and vote at the same time voting opens for all other delegates.

Article XII.**The Council of Ministers**

Section 1. Application for ordination or other matters relating to the office of the ministry shall first be received and considered by the Council of Ministers. Its report on such matters as require immediate action shall be privileged at any session of the Swedenborgian Church.

Section 2. The Council of Ministers shall revise the denomination's Roll of Ministers annually, and shall report such revision to the Swedenborgian Church for its actions.

Section 3. Every minister ordained or inducted by authority of the Swedenborgian Church, and not serving any church, ministry, or other collective body acting under the rules of the Swedenborgian Church, shall report his or her official acts to the Council of Ministers. If the minister shall have performed no official acts, he or she shall report that fact, and shall signify whether he or she desires to be retained on the denomination's Roll of Ministers.

Article XIII.**The Ordained Ministry**

Preamble: Jesus said unto his disciples, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." (John 15:16)

The ordained ministry exists to facilitate the spiritual well-being of people, helping them to be open to the Lord's leading and enabling them to live useful lives. Resources for the ordained ministry in serving the church include the Holy Word, the doctrines of the church, the rites and sacraments, experiences of worship, and growth-oriented skills insofar as they promote the process of regeneration.

Section 1. A member of the Swedenborgian Church shall be ordained into or inducted into its ministry by recommendation of the Council of Ministers and by affirmative vote of the Swedenborgian Church. The Council of Ministers shall have first received a written vision of ministry from the applicant, and determined that one of the following requirements has been met;

1. He or she shall have earned a Master of Divinity Degree from the Pacific School of Religion, the Certificate in Swedenborgian Theology from Pacific School of Religion, and passing evaluations on all denominational requirements.
2. He or she shall have earned a Master of Divinity Degree or equivalent degree from an accredited institution, the Certificate in Swedenborgian The-

ology from Pacific School of Religion, and passing evaluations on all denominational requirements.

3. After preparation recognized by the Council of Ministers as adequate, and he or she shall have served as an Authorized Candidate for the Ministry for one year.
4. After preparation recognized by the Council of Ministers as adequate, a minister ordained in another communion who accepts the doctrines of the Swedenborgian Church and expresses allegiance to the Constitution and Bylaws of the Swedenborgian Church may be inducted into our ministry.

Those persons applying for ordination or induction shall also have a request for employment from a church or other employing body of the Swedenborgian Church, or shall have a proposal for ministry approved by the Council of Ministers. Upon recommendation by the Council of Ministers, and affirmative vote of the Swedenborgian Church, upon ordination or induction his or her name shall be added to the Roll of Ordained Ministers.

Section 2. The Ordaining Minister.

(a) A Minister who is elected President of the Swedenborgian Church shall be invested with the office of Ordaining Minister during his or her term as President. The Ordaining Minister shall be empowered to ordain duly qualified candidates for the ministry (cf. Section 1), to authorize for one year Candidates for the Ministry (cf. Section 3), to confer upon suitable persons, at the request of the church to be served and in accordance with the provisions of Article XIII (below), the title Lay Leader, and to consecrate as Worship Leaders persons selected by their congregation or group to provide leadership for public worship (cf. Article XIII, Section 2).

b) In the event that a lay person is elected as President of the Swedenborgian Church, then the Chair of the Council of Ministers shall be invested with the office of Ordaining Minister, during his or her term as chair.

(c) When the President is the Swedenborgian Church's Ordaining Minister and is adjudged by the General Council to be incapacitated, the Chair of the Council of Ministers shall be invested with the office of Ordaining Minister until such time as the President is recovered. In the event of resignation of the President, the investiture of the Chair of the Council of Ministers shall be for the duration of his or her term of office, until such times as the Swedenborgian Church shall again have a minister as its President.

(d) In the event that subsequent to the invoking of the provisions of section 2(c), or when the President of the Swedenborgian Church is a lay person, the Chair of the Council of Ministers should resign, or become incapacitated or

die, the Secretary of the Council of Ministers shall be invested with the office of Ordaining Minister, such investiture to terminate upon the recovery of the chair, or in the case of the chair's death or resignation, upon the election of a new chair of the Council of Ministers, or on the election of a minister as President of the Swedenborgian Church.

(e) In the event that it is not possible for the Ordaining Minister to travel to a suitable place for the ordination of candidates for the ministry, he or she may appoint an ordained minister to act as the Ordaining Minister pro tem for a specific ordination.

Section 3. The Authorized Candidate for the Ministry.

(a) A member of the Swedenborgian Church, after preparation recognized by the Council of Ministers as adequate, may upon recommendation of the Council of Ministers, and after affirmative vote of the Swedenborgian Church, be authorized by the Ordaining Minister as an authorized candidate for the ministry and for one (1) year. He or she may lead in worship, teach the doctrine of the Church and officiate at resurrection services. Such persons shall be known as Authorized Candidates for the Ministry. Where authorization does not lead to ordination at the end of one year, the candidacy may be reviewed by the Council of Ministers.

(b) The Ordaining Minister of the Swedenborgian Church may empower an Authorized Candidate for the Ministry or a Swedenborg School of Religion student intern to perform a marriage where the laws of the state or province permit and in specific instances may empower him or her to administer the Sacrament of Baptism and/or the Holy Supper.

Section 4. Special Circumstances.

The Swedenborgian Church by a three-quarters vote may, in individual cases, dispense with limiting requirements, outlined in Article XIII, upon the recommendation of the Council of Ministers showing the need or desirability thereof, such recommendation to be made only on the agreement of at least three-fourths of the members of the Council of Ministers present and voting at the Council Session.

Section 5. The Swedenborgian Church's Roll of Ordained Ministers is the record of all those who have been ordained or inducted into the ministry of the Swedenborgian Church.

Article XIV.**The Ministry of Lay Persons**

Preamble: Every Christian is called to minister. Jesus said that inasmuch as we minister to one another, we minister unto Him. “I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.” (Matthew 25:35-36)

The Apostle Paul declared that “there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one. To teach is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.” (I Corinthians 12:4-7)

The church encourages all members to exercise their unique talents and gifts in assimilating the spiritual and well-being of people. Some are called to ordained ministry within the framework of the Swedenborgian Church. Others are called to specific, part-time service in the church and are recognized and consecrated as Lay Leaders and Worship Leaders. Other men and women are called to minister to the world and around them, in their homes, and in their chosen vocations. In addition, some wish to offer their gifts through programs and services in the church. The Swedenborgian Church encourages these ministries and recognizes them as manifestations of the Spirit of God.

Section 1. Lay Leader.

- (a) The Swedenborgian Church commends the efforts of lay people throughout our church who have served in many ways and ministered to the needs of local churches. Out of this experience, the Swedenborgian Church sees the potential for even greater service to the church by trained qualified lay persons to augment the work of its ordained ministry.
- (b) In order to meet ongoing needs of local churches, suitable persons may be consecrated as Lay Leaders to serve particular congregations or to serve within clearly defined geographical areas. For such consecration, the following requirements must be met.
 - (1) The candidate must apply to the Swedenborgian House of Studies for enrollment in its Lay Leadership Education program. This application must be supported by the endorsement of the individual’s congregation or appropriate supervisory body, granted on the basis of leadership ability, knowledge of the Church’s teachings, character, and devotion to the Church. Neither acceptance into the program nor completion of the program guarantees approval by the Council of Ministers.

- (2) On satisfactory completion of the first year of this program, duly certified by the School, the individual must request of the Ordaining Minister and be granted status as a Probationary Lay Leader, this request to be supported by the recommendation of the Council of Ministers. With this status, the candidate is authorized to lead in worship, teach the doctrines of the Church, and officiate at resurrection services. The expected duration of this status shall be two years. The Committee on Admission Into the Ministry or other committee recommended by the Council of Ministers will be responsible for monitoring the progress of Probationary Lay Leaders. The Ordaining Minister may rescind the status of Probationary Lay Leader if the candidate fails to keep pace with the educational requirements, if the congregation or appropriate supervisory body requests such rescission, or for other due and weighty cause. If for good and sufficient reasons the person is unable to complete the prescribed training within the normal period, the Ordaining Minister may extend the authorization for one year. Extensions of more than one year will require review by the Council of Ministers.
- (3) Consecration as a Lay Leader, administered by the Ordaining Minister, shall take place when the following conditions have been met.
- a) The Swedenborgian House of Studies shall certify to the Council of Ministers that the educational program has been satisfactorily completed.
 - b) The congregation of the candidate shall reaffirm to the Council of Ministers its desire for such consecration.
 - c) The Council of Ministers shall recommend the consecration to the Swedenborgian Church.
 - d) Said Church shall authorize the consecration. The consecration itself shall take place in a public service held in the congregation or area to be served.
 - (c) Henceforth, the title "Lay Leader" shall be reserved for individuals so consecrated.
 - (d) Following consecration, the Lay Leader may administer all the rites and sacraments to the congregation or in the area served. This authorization shall include the right to perform marriages where the laws of the state or province permit. Lay leaders are expected to comply with the guidelines for ministerial conduct.

- (e) Lay leaders shall be accountable to the Ordaining Minister of the Swedenborgian Church, who shall be responsible for providing appropriate supervision. If the Lay Leader serves a congregation which employs an ordained minister, said minister shall act as the immediate supervisor and the Lay Leader shall not offer pastoral or liturgical services without the knowledge and consent of this minister. The local congregation or other supervisory body shall have the right to terminate the services of the lay leader. A lay leader may not serve in another congregation or geographical area without a request from the new congregation or other supervisory body, and the approval of the Council of Ministers.
- (f) Administrative details of the above procedure shall be available in writing from the Swedenborgian House of Studies and the Council of Ministers.

Section 2. Worship Leader.

Nothing in this Article shall in any way be interpreted to place restrictions on those lay persons selected by their congregation or group to provide leadership for public worship. Indeed, an appropriate service of consecration for such persons functioning as worship leaders is recommended. Following consecration, such persons shall be known as Worship Leaders.

Section 3. Special Circumstances.

The Swedenborgian Church by three-quarters vote may, in individual cases, dispense with limiting requirements, outlined in Article XIV upon the recommendation of the Council of Ministers showing the need or desirability thereof, such recommendation to be made only on the agreement of at least three-fourths of the members of the Council of Ministers present and voting at the Council session.

Section 4. The Roll of Lay Leaders.

Any person consecrated as a Lay leader shall have his or her name listed on the Roll of Lay Leaders with indication of the church or area which each serves. The names shall appear on the Roll so long as the persons continue actively to serve the church or area for which they were consecrated.

Section 5. Licensed Pastors

Upon application by a member of the Swedenborgian Church and an eligible and recognized body of the Swedenborgian Church of North America, and with preparation recognized by the Council of Ministers as adequate, the candidate upon recommendation of the Council of Ministers, and after affirmative vote of the Swedenborgian Church, may be given license to pastor a society by the Or-

daining Minister for two (2) years. Said license empowers the bearer to provide all sacerdotal duties and to fulfill the pastoral role. Such persons shall be known as “Licensed Pastors.” The license may be renewed by vote of the Council of Ministers upon recommendation of the Committee on Admission to the Ministry. A Licensed Pastor must maintain a mentor relationship with an Ordained Minister of the Swedenborgian Church and follow the Guidelines for Ministerial Conduct. The two year license period will have educational objectives that will prepare the “Licensed Pastor” for Ordination over an extended period of time if the licensee wishes to apply to the Committee on Admission to the Ministry for Authorized Candidacy for Ordination. A licensee may make application to the ordaining minister to become a “Lay-Leader” if they wish to not renew a license.

Article XV.

Theological School

Section 1. The Swedenborgian Church shall by majority vote nominate annually the number of nominees for election by the Board of Trustees of the New Church Theological School, commonly known as the Swedenborgian House of Studies, as provided for, or allowed, by the Bylaws of the Corporation of the New Church Theological School, and shall forward these nominations to the General Council, in its role as the representative class of the Corporation of the New Church Theological School, for consideration for election to the Board of Trustees.

Article XVI.

Board of Mediation

There shall be a Board of Mediation consisting of five members. Two such members shall be lay persons appointed by the President, and two shall be ministers appointed by the Chair of the Council of Ministers, and their terms of office shall be the same as that of the President of the Swedenborgian Church. The fifth member shall be the Vice President of Convention who shall serve as Chair.

Whenever any dispute or irregularity shall arise which affects the fulfillment of the PURPOSE of the Swedenborgian Church or any of its constituent or subsidiary bodies, if the efforts of the ministers or officers immediately concerned have not proved effective, the President or the General Council shall refer the situation to the Board of Mediation; or any member, collective body, or subsidiary body may apply to said Board for relief or determination. The Board shall then use its best endeavors to resolve the matter through the voluntary agreement of

those concerned, or failing to effect such resolution shall render a judgment as to the disposition thereof, after hearing the complaints and considering the facts.

Should the Board be unable to effect a resolution or settlement, it shall render its report or judgment to the General Council, together with such recommendations as it may deem appropriate. The General Council as the Executive Committee of the Swedenborgian Church shall then take such actions and issue such directions as it shall deem suitable. Anyone aggrieved by said report or judgment shall have the right of appeal to the General Council, as a final resort to seek reconsideration by the delegates at the annual session of the Swedenborgian Church.

Any member of the Board of Mediation may decline to participate in the consideration of a specified situation due to conflict of interest. In this case, the President of the General Convention or the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, as may be appropriate, shall appoint a substitute, who shall serve as a full member of the Board during its consideration of that issue only.

Article XVII.

(Moved to Article X and Article XVII blank for future use).

Article XVIII.

Common Fund Investment Committee

The General Council, at its first meeting following each annual session of the Swedenborgian Church, shall appoint an Investment Committee of not less than three members, one of whom may be the Treasurer of General Convention, which shall be charged with the general oversight and care of the investments and securities of the Swedenborgian Church Common fund, with full power to purchase and sell and to invest and reinvest as in their judgment and discretion may seem advisable. Any members constituting a majority of said Committee may exercise all of the authority and powers hereby granted to or conferred upon said Committee. This Committee is authorized to make investments and reinvestments in such bonds, notes, debentures, corporate stocks and other securities and such real estate, real estate mortgages, interests in real estate mortgages, and other property as the Committee, in the exercise of reasonable intelligence and caution, shall deem best. This Committee shall work in close cooperation with the Standing Committee for Financial Accountability.

Article XIX.**Board of Trustees of the Building Fund**

Section 1. The Board of Trustees of the Building Fund shall consist of the Treasurer plus three trustees who shall be appointed by the General Council, to serve three years. One of the trustees, including the Treasurer, shall be a member of the General Council.

Section 2. The Board of Trustees shall review Building Fund loan applications. Loans of up to \$50,000 may be funded by the Board of Trustees of the Building Fund. Loans over \$50,000, but less than \$100,000, shall be reviewed by the Trustees, with a recommendation referred to the Executive Committee of General Council for final approval. Loans in excess of \$100,000 shall be reviewed by the Trustees, with a recommendation referred to the full General Council for final approval.

Section 3. General Council may periodically adjust the dollar amounts based on governance oversight.

Article XX.**The National Church**

The Board of Trustees of the National Church, now holding the title to and having control of the Church property in Washington, D.C., shall continue to consist of fifteen members who shall be citizens of any part of the United States and of whom a majority shall be chosen from some other place than the city of Washington, DC, and shall not be selected from any one association, and vacancies in their number shall be filled by the Board with approval of the President and the Secretaries of the Convention, having in mind the restrictions stated above, and five members shall constitute a quorum.

Revised June 30, 2007.

Article XXI.**Application for Admission as a Constituent Body**

The application of an Association, Church or other body of the Church to be received by this body and represented in the Swedenborgian Church, may be made through the General Council, and upon their recommendation shall come before the annual session. When the session has voted to receive such Association or other body, the President shall announce the names of its delegates, and invite them to come forward. The President shall then inform them of the vote, and all rising, shall give the new delegates the right hand of fellowship, and welcome them to all the privileges enjoyed by other delegates.

Article XXII.**Indemnification**

To the extent now or hereafter permitted by the laws of the State of Illinois, the corporation shall indemnify its officers and directors against all costs and expenses reasonably incurred by him or her in connection with or arising out of any claim, action, suit or proceeding of whatever nature in which he or she may be involved as a party or otherwise or with which he or she may be threatened by reason of his or her having served as an officer or director of the corporation or by reason of any action alleged to have been taken or omitted by him or her as such officer or director, whether or not he or she be such officer or director at the time of incurring such cost or expense, including amounts paid or incurred in connection with reasonable settlements (other than amounts paid to the corporation itself) made with the approval of the General Council and with a view to curtailment of costs of litigation.

Article XXIII.**Amendments**

These Bylaws may be amended at any session of the Swedenborgian Church by a three-fifths vote of those present and voting, provided that the proposed amendment shall have been first referred to the General Council, and public notice of the substance thereof shall have been given at least three months before the time of said meeting. Such notice may be dispensed with for any special occasion by a three-fourths vote of those present and voting.

Dated May 3, 1985

Typed July 2, 1985

Revised July 10, 1985

Delegate Version

Revised October 31, 1985

Revised December 7, 1985

Revised General Council, February 1, 1986

Revised May 27, 1986

Revised June 26, 1992

Revised July 8, 1994

Revised July 7, 1995

Revised June 28, 1996

Revised June 26, 1998

Revised July 9, 2005

Revised July 1, 2006

Revised June 28, 2013

Revised June 28, 2013

Adopted as amended July 1, 2017

Adopted as amended July 3, 2018

Adopted as amended July 3, 2019

Adopted as amended June 27, 2021

STANDING RESOLUTIONS

1.

(Adopted by the General Convention July 3, 1986)

THE PURPOSE OF CONVENTION

The General Convention exists to help people be open to the Lord's presence and leading especially by fostering personal and ordained ministries which facilitate the spiritual well-being of people, and which have in common a working for the Lord in bringing in the New Age – the descent of the Holy City, New Jerusalem.

The light in which we seek to walk shines from the Lord Jesus Christ in His second coming, available to us through the divine presence in our hearts and minds, and through revelation in the Holy Scriptures and in the work of the Lord's servant Emanuel Swedenborg.

With the purpose of creation being a heaven from the human race, we see the central purpose of the church as the promotion of the process of regeneration. External forms such as buildings, liturgies and organizational structures are valid only insofar as they are useful to this end. It is especially vital for an "organized religion" that its life of piety be constantly grounded in a life of charity. In the case of our Convention, constant accountability to the standards of Scripture and doctrine is the primary warrant for our existence as an organization. In particular, we are offered a vision of a New Age, a New Church radically different from the old, by which we can evaluate our present practices and directions.

OBJECTIVES

1. Facilitate the formation and growth of groups of people who support each other in understanding, loving and living "the life that leads to heaven." We will work to bring together such individuals and groups in a network which amplifies the creative spiritual energy that emerges when we work together.
2. Bring doctrine and life together constructively. We will support this being done in a way that allows them to challenge and enrich each other and that encourages the diverse activities of Convention to express Convention's Purpose consistently.
3. Provide for the discovery, development and evaluation of excellence.
4. Commit ourselves to growth in the number of active members.
5. Continue our commitment to the cause of religious unity.

6. Clarify and intensify our participation in and contribution to the Lord's New Age.
7. In accordance with our Doctrine of Use and in cooperation with Convention's constituent bodies, improve the management and use of the physical/financial resources available for the fulfillment of our Purpose.
8. Design and implement effective means of communication: means which will ensure an open and timely flow of information and will promote Convention's Purpose.
9. Design, adopt and maintain an organizational structure that is directly responsive to Convention's Purpose and needs, and that includes provisions for its own self-evaluation and growth.

Objective 1

***The Formation and Growth of Groups** – Facilitate the formation and growth of groups of people who support each other in understanding, loving and living “the life that leads to heaven.” We will work to bring together such individuals and groups in a network which amplifies creative spiritual energy that emerges when we work together.*

Regeneration, or the life of charity, takes place in connection with other human beings, and is impossible in isolation. The spiritual model we are offered, one of individuals gathered into societies which in turn are gathered into provinces, is inseparable from that individual's relationship with others in his or her immediate society; and the spiritual well-being of the society is inseparable from its relationship with the larger church, and with the world in which it is living.

Healthy relationships are characterized by both love and wisdom, which means that neither uncritical acceptance nor unsympathetic criticism is truly constructive. As even love of self is necessary and good in its proper place, so particular interests, talents and skills contribute to the health of the whole as they are appropriately and appreciatively related to each other.

Strategies

- A. Provide administrative, material and advisory support for the formation and growth of such groups.
- B. Provide training and resources for effective acts of worship, both individual and collective.
- C. Provide for the training of appropriately skilled leaders.
- D. Clarify criteria for membership in Convention in accord with Convention's Purpose and suggest ways for people to become members.

- E. Foster an understanding of networking, particularly as it applies to Convention.
- F. Establish and maintain communication among individuals and groups who share particular interests in common, or who face the same circumstances.
- G. Establish and maintain inventories of the available talents, skills and resources that are necessary for the formation and growth of groups, and provide for the best possible ways of meeting these groups' needs.
- H. Design and implement a means of evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies as they contribute to the formation and growth of groups within the church.

Objective 2

***Doctrine and Life** – Bring doctrine and life together constructively. We will support this being done in a way that allows them to challenge and enrich each other and that encourages the diverse activities of Convention to express Convention's Purpose consistently.*

This objective rests in the principle that doctrine alone, like external worship alone, does not make the church, but a life according to it. It looks toward a rejoicing in the fact that there are some of us who start from the books and some of us who start from involvement with people. For doctrine and life to come together, these need to be experienced as complementary rather than competitive approaches, each acknowledging its own incompleteness and therefore its needs for the other. Like the first objective, it assumes that the church cannot find an inner or spiritual well-being without trying to contribute to the spiritual well-being of the world in which it is living, and it further assumes that this contribution will not be made by conforming to that world but by seeking to understand and live our own distinctiveness.

Strategies

- A. Bring people of different perspectives together for specific purposes such as: worship, team ministries, workshops, camp programs, committees, music and writing projects.
- B. Support thinking that encourages differences of opinion, that acknowledges both the value of a variety of different approaches and the need to continue an on-going process, and that recognizes the beauty of finding inward coherence in a diversity of outward forms.
- C. Develop the ability to use everyday language to express theological ideas.
- D. Develop supportive procedures and resources for program planning and

evaluation. These procedures and resources must insist that theological presuppositions be made clear, that results be honestly evaluated, and that our primary concern be the relation between our central Purpose and the actual results of the program.

- E. Accept and fulfill our responsibility to express a spiritual perspective on contemporary issues in local, national and global affairs.
- F. Provide for the discovery, nurture and integration of diversity in all levels of structure.
- G. Design and implement a means of evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies.

Objective 3

***Excellence** – Provide for the discovery, development and evaluation of excellence.*

The Lord has created each one of us with quite extraordinary potentialities, and the church evades its responsibility if it falls into that common pitfall of volunteer organizations, becoming a haven for mediocrity. For example, we somehow expect people to become effective church treasurers by virtue of election, providing neither resources nor training, and then lament the sad state of local accounting procedures. It is the committee's sense that we are, as a church, already doing many of the "right things," and that we could do them more effectively if we worked toward providing appropriate training for available talent.

Strategies

- A. Develop and maintain an accessible inventory of available talents and skills.
- B. Develop and maintain an accessible inventory of needed talents and skills.
- C. Develop and maintain an accessible inventory of training possibilities.
- D. Facilitate the acquisition of needed talents and training in skills.
- E. Develop means for identifying and improving criteria of excellence.
- F. Update Convention's understanding and appreciation of excellence.
- G. Design and implement a means of evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies.

Objective 4

***Numerical Growth** – Commit ourselves to growth in the number of active members.*

This is the "let's finally face facts" objective. It is not an end in itself, and

must not be achieved to the detriment of other directives, any more than an individual should focus on physical health to the neglect of regeneration. But it also follows that just as physical health for the sake of use cannot be neglected, and must be given specific attention, so we need to give specific attention to numerical growth for the sake of use. Given the intense need for the New Church in the world around us, we cannot avoid our responsibility to find means of outreach that really work, and the clear, objective criterion lies immediately to hand.

Strategies

- A. In cooperative effort with associations, societies and other constituent bodies, develop programs intended to achieve growth.
- B. Develop centralized efforts that both encourage a desire for growth among Convention's constituents and strengthen our self-image.
- C. Develop centralized efforts that create interest among non-Swedenborgians and thus stimulate growth.
- D. Create programs that offer assistance and incentive to ministers and constituent bodies so that they develop the skills and programs necessary to increase growth.
- E. Design and implement a means of evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies.

Objective 5

Religious Cooperation – Continue our commitment to the cause of religious unity.

With the Lord working through all religions to provide the means for the life that leads to heaven, we are again called to a relationship of critical supportiveness. The committee is not recommending any notable increase in our national involvement, but the strategies are intended to relate that involvement more clearly to our purpose and to our other objectives.

Strategies

- A. Continue our involvement in the National Council of Churches and make significant contributions to the policies and programs of the Council.
- B. Improve upon the reporting of our Council representatives to Convention and make resources and services of the Council available to our churches.
- C. Support our ministers' and laity's regional and local involvement in councils of churches and in interfaith activities.
- D. Foster among our church membership an attitude of appreciation and open-

mindedness toward the religions of the world.

- E. Provide for the ongoing evaluation of our participation in ecumenical activities, with a view toward focusing that participation in areas most closely related to our central purpose.
- F. Design and implement a means of evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies.

Objective 6

The New Age – Clarify and intensify our participation in and contribution to the Lord's New Age.

There are strong indications in the world around us that the whole climate of thought is beginning to change. Specifically, the materialistic, mechanistic, “either-or” mentality so hostile to our message is under attack from within the scientific community itself, and there is a widespread resurgence of interest in spirituality. Again, the committee recommends a policy of critical supportiveness, with a strong sense that there are major opportunities in this area for both internal and external growth. The phrase “critical awareness” is intended to convey our belief that not everything new is necessarily in accord with our purpose, and that we have a great deal to learn about how the Lord is working for the new church in the world around us.

Strategies

- A. Foster an awareness of the freshness of our theology and its implications for our activities.
- B. Foster critical awareness of the congenial trends that occur in thought and activity outside Convention.
- C. Make ourselves and our theology known and available to persons involved in such thought and activity.
- D. Encourage and support involvement in New Age activities.
- E. Encourage the participation of “New Age” persons in Convention events and programming.
- F. Design and implement a means of evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies.

Objective 7

Use Our Resources – In accordance with our Doctrine of Use and in cooperation with Convention's constituent bodies, improve the management and use of the physical-financial resources available for the fulfillment of our

Purpose.

We are per capita a startlingly wealthy church, and yet we seem to have trouble finding the money to do what needs to be done. Given growth in the clarity of our sense of purpose, we need to be candid with ourselves about our use of resources, and foster a motion from less effective to more effective uses. The committee recognizes and values the distribution of responsibility inherent in our present situation of local autonomy, and insists that this motion cannot be healthy unless it is voluntary; but it also insists that the principle of local autonomy must not be used to evade accountability to the principle of use.

Strategies

- A. In cooperation with Convention's constituent bodies, create and maintain an inventory of these physical and financial resources.
- B. Create and implement a system to improve the management of Convention's resources. This system should include provisions for: resources evaluation, cost/benefit financial planning, accounting and other necessary items.
- C. Create and implement a system to aid Convention's constituent bodies in the management of their resources, and provide guidelines, standards, education and other assistance.
- D. Create and implement a system to aid Convention's financial resources. This program will take advantage of the breadth of our current support base and will seek new sources of income.
- E. Keep Convention's constituent bodies aware of the programs and persons involved in the efforts to accomplish this objective.
- F. Design and implement a means of evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies.

Objective 8

Communication – *Design and implement effective means of communication: means which will ensure an open and timely flow of information and will promote Convention's Purpose.*

The technology is available for the body of Convention to have a "central nervous system" that will overcome many of the liabilities of our wide geographical distribution, and both within and outside the church there is the expertise to design a system that will suit our particular needs. This objective relates closely to the "networking" strategy under Objective 1, as providing the means by which information resources may be made available when and where they are needed, and kindred individuals and groups kept in touch with each other.

Strategies

- A. Provide means for the on-going evaluation of Convention's communication activities. Make sure that they are consistent with Convention's central Purpose.
- B. Establish and maintain a central information exchange to collect, store, correlate and disseminate information both within and beyond Convention. This central exchange will:
 - Incorporate a relational structure rather than a hierarchical one.
 - Take advantage of advancing technology. For example, computers, video, communications satellites, etc.
 - Be the hub of a "distributed information system" (see Strategy C)
 - Administer this "distributed information system."
- C. Design and implement a "distributed information system." This system will provide for the open, direct and timely flow of information among the various constituent groups and individuals of Convention.
- D. Design and implement means to coordinate Convention's various publications and productions. This way we will strive for greater effectiveness and economy.
- E. Establish and maintain means to ensure that our communications to the world at large are coordinated and considered, and foster an appreciation of Convention's purpose and objective.
- F. Recognize and promote clear and precise communication.
- G. Design and implement a means of evaluating the effectiveness of these strategies.

Objective 9

Organized Structure – *Design, adopt and maintain an organizational structure that is directly responsive to Convention's Purpose and needs, and that includes provisions for its own self-evaluation and growth.*

Toward a Theology of Polity

The writings of our Church do not describe for us a particular form of church organization. Swedenborg insists that there must be order in the church; but since the possibility of a separate "Swedenborgian" ecclesiastical organization was not significant enough to mention, he was content to leave us with a few observations about church government based on eighteenth century European models.

Heavenly government is also a less useful model than we might expect. Since

heaven is characterized by essential unanimity, its “political system” can be described as democracy, aristocracy, oligarchy, anarchy, dictatorship, communism, socialism or what you will.

Our own polity has evolved pragmatically. It began from the desire of separate societies to get together on some regular basis, and has grown and changed in response to changing circumstances. It is largely a traditional pattern: though if one sees democracy as a result of the Second Coming, this would then be a major “New Age” feature.

Essentially though, our own polity rests on Newtonian, Euclidian mechanical models. That is, it seeks to promote order and effectiveness by such devices as marking off areas of responsibility – drawing a single territorial map, as it were – and by a system of checks and balances.

This leads to such anomalies as having the Board of Education responsible for Leaguers’ travel to convention, the Board of Missions’ virtual exclusion from the field of missionary publication, and cumbersome procedures for the guidance and support of any venture that does not fit some existing category. It also means that it is quite possible for an individual to have been a lifelong member of one of our societies without being able to identify one thing that Convention has done for the welfare of that society.

In order to distribute responsibility as widely as possible under this system, we need our policy that a single individual not serve on more than two Convention boards or committees at once. This means, however, that it is rare for members of one board to have an appreciation of the problems and labors of another; and General Council depends for its information largely on minutes which are not designed for such communication.

Essentially, the Ad Hoc Committee sees a pressing need that we reconceptualize our organizational presuppositions on a more profound and more realistic model, looking at patterns of relationship that are actually productive. We see three basic essentials in this – clear and direct lines of mutual communication and accountability, the ready gathering of compatible interests, skills and resources for particular tasks, and a constructive accountability to our common theological convictions.

The model that we have in mind may be unfamiliar in terms of physical models, but it is immediately recognizable in terms of personal experience. It involves seeing the identity of an individual or group as essentially determined not by fixed boundaries or “externals,” but by a particular center; and by the relationships of that center to other centers. Boundaries or circumferences may then expand or contract as we generalize or specialize; and the overlaps, rather than be-

ing problems to be eliminated, are the utterly necessary fields of mutual support, enlightenment and cooperation.

In this model, the primary function of the centralized administration would be to administer decentralization. This central body should be granted such power, and only such power, as it needs to accomplish this task, and should be held accountable by Convention to policies and priorities determined by Convention.

Strategies

- A. Design an organizational structure that is directly responsive to Convention's Purpose and needs, and includes provision for its own self evaluation.
- B. Create an ongoing process which ensures that the organization exercises self evaluation, is open to change, and encourages growth.
 - 1. Generate criteria for self evaluation and prepare a plan for adapting to change and growth.
 - 2. Generate feedback and data annually and encourage continual feedback.
 - 3. Assess and review the organization annually.
 - 4. Revise and adapt the plan each year and revise the structure as necessary.

2.

(Adopted by the General Council, July 18, 1949)

Resolved: With regard to properties of local societies in which Convention has a contingent interest through conveyances providing that, in certain circumstances, the title would come to Convention, it is the policy of Convention not to make contributions toward the cost of maintenance of such properties, such maintenance being the sole responsibility of the Society in whose hands the title to the property is vested.

3.

(Adopted by General Convention, June 1960, Min. #58)

(Amended by General Convention, July 1, 1989, Min. #61)

(Amended by General Convention, June 30, 2015, Min. #20)

A Standing Resolution to Swedenborgians Everywhere:

Resolved: The General Convention/Swedenborgian Church assembled at Bridgewater State University, Bridgewater, Massachusetts for Convention June 30, 2015 reaffirms its belief that the Church Universal includes those of diverse origins.

In its ever-growing desire to serve all of God's children, the General Convention (aka The Swedenborgian Church), urges Swedenborgians everywhere to acknowledge that the Church Universal is inclusive and to act in this spirit. Let no Society of the Church exclude any from membership on such considerations as ethnic origin, race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, condition of health, handicap or economic status; but seeking those who accept our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as Redeemer of the world and who accept the essentials of faith of the Church, welcome all with joy and affection into the full and free community of the Church.

4.

(Adopted by General Convention, August 3, 1969)

Resolved: That the Secretary of Convention maintain a register of young men and women within the fellowship of the Swedenborgian Church who are recognized by the Selective Service System as conscientious objectors to war, and that the President of Convention appoint a minister to serve as spiritual counselor and advisor to these young men and women and to others who may apply to the Selective Service System for recognition as Conscientious Objectors; the purpose being that the Church might in this way show its sympathy with those whose conscience dictates such a step and may be of some assistance to them as they struggle with all of the implications and legal problems which such classification brings.

5.

(Adopted by General Convention, August 3, 1969)

Resolved: That the General Convention support the legalization of abortion in cases where it is responsibly applied for the physical and emotional welfare of those involved. Be it also resolved that such therapeutic abortion shall be considered primarily a matter of concern between the patient, attending physician and personal counselor.

6.

(Adopted by General Convention, July 2, 1976)

Resolved: That General Council be given a standing order to recommend to the Convention the names of such persons who in its opinion should qualify for emeritus status, for a vote by Convention.

7.

(Adopted by General Council, January 22, 1977)

Resolved: It is recognized that the establishment of the requirements for membership is the responsibility of the individual society or other body, and that various types of membership are utilized by different bodies. However, for the purpose of determining delegate strength for the voting at Convention sessions only adult active members defined as follows shall be counted: An adult active member of a society is one who is eighteen years of age or older and who has been accepted by the Society through Confirmation or other appropriate service of introduction, or by transfer from another Society, and who within the year has shown active interest in his/her membership. This is demonstrated by joining in the programs of worship and work or by contributing toward its needs physically and financially. It shall be the joint responsibility of members and Societies involved to ensure that the member is not counted in more than one Society's count for delegate strength.

8.

(Adopted by General Convention on recommendation of its Council of Ministers, July 1, 1978)

SWEDENBORG'S REVELATION**Perspectives of the General Convention**

The Lord's Second Coming promised in the Gospels is described in *True Christian Religion* 779 as a process of spiritual reawakening, beginning with a cosmic event in which Swedenborg was called to play a key role. Through spiritual experiences while reading the Holy Word, he received truth from the Lord into his understanding. From this enlightenment he worked out and published teachings for a new church to serve the new age of the Lord's Second Coming. The truth of these teachings revealed by the Lord to Swedenborg is presented to us with the authority of the Holy Word from which they are drawn, and by which they are confirmed. This new revelation teaches us three essential things to believe and do. The first of these is to worship our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as the one God in whom is the divine Trinity. The second is to hold to the conviction that the Word of God is holy, not only in its plain sense, but also because of the deeper meanings lying within it. The third is to commit ourselves to a life embodying love to the Lord and the neighbor. In living these three essentials, each of us must search with discernment for critical meaning in Swedenborg's theological writings. Any written form of revelation can be misunderstood if it is insisted that

a single interpretation is final and prescriptive. However, we are convinced that if love to the Lord and the neighbor permeate our perceptions, our church will be unified despite any number of particular differences of opinion as to interpretation and application of doctrine. In former times, when Christian doctrine was hammered out by theologians or determined by church councils, unity depended on obedience to creed, with reason subservient to faith. But in this new age, the spiritual freedom of the individual has been restored. Now it is permitted to enter with understanding into the mysteries of faith.

9.

(Adopted by General Convention, July 2, 1982)

Resolved: It is recognized that it is the responsibility of the church to voice its conviction on ethical and moral issues that arise from time to time in our nation and in our world. Where the issue is one of long-term relevance, and where opportunity has been afforded to societies and associations for prior discussion, a member of Convention may submit to the President, in time for announcement on the first day of a Convention session, a written proposal for a Standing Resolution. The President shall at that time accept motions to refer or to place on the agenda with time for discussion.

Should the issue be one of immediate urgency only a member of Convention may submit to the President, in time for announcement on the first full day of a Convention session, a written proposal that a particular resolution be adopted as “the sense of this meeting.” The President shall at that time accept motions to refer or to place on the agenda with time for discussion. Should such resolution come to a vote, the vote shall be counted and the tally included with any use of the resolution.

10.

(Adopted by General Convention, June 30, 1983)

(Amended by General Convention, July 3, 2019)

*[This Standing Resolution is no longer an operating policy
of the General Convention.].*

General Convention no longer provides ministers personal loans through the Building Fund. Outstanding loans that remain in good standing will continue as agreed until fully repaid. Ministers with outstanding loans from the building fund, who cease to remain on the Active Roll of the Council of Ministers, may have their loan called in and due and payable within ninety days.”

11.

(Adopted by the General Council, June 29, 1983)

Resolved: That it is the responsibility of the Vice President, together with a committee he may appoint, to conduct an annual review of the Central Office, covering staff, employees, organization, etc.

12.

(Adopted by General Council, January 30, 1983)

(Addendum, May 12, 1988)

(Addendum amended and adopted by the General Council on June 25, 2022)

Resolved: “Whereas: The American New Church Tract and Publication Society has indicated its desire to turn over its assets to the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the U.S.A. to continue the purposes for which the Tract Society was established, and

Whereas: these purposes are included within the broad purposes of General Convention; now therefore, be it

Resolved: that General Convention agrees to accept the funds of the Tract Society, and if when offered, to be held for the purposes given and specifically that the income of those funds be used first: for the publication and distribution of Our Daily Bread and second: for other publications efforts; and further be it

Resolved: that the Treasurer of General Convention be directed to assist the Tract Society in the orderly transfer of these funds.”

Addendum: Selection and appointment of the Editor of Our Daily Bread shall be made annually by the General Council at their Fall meeting. The Editor shall serve, at will, for a period of one year with reappointment, or appointment of a new editor, taking place each year on the anniversary date of appointment.

Should the position of Editor become vacant for any reason between General Council meetings, then the President of Convention may appoint a new Editor in the absence of a special meeting of the General Council. The Editor filling the unexpired term shall then serve until the Fall appointment schedule.

The General Council will serve as the Publisher, having the authority to settle any issues that may arise concerning editorial decisions, but otherwise leaving daily operating decisions to the discretion of the Editor. The publication of *Our Daily Bread* shall not be terminated without a vote of the General Council.

13.

(Adopted by General Convention, June 28, 1989)

That the AIDS Ministry Committee appointed by the Cabinet continue to carry out its task which shall include support of Swedenborgian Ministries to HIV persons, their families and friends; facilitation of ecumenical involvement in these ministries; and the provision of educational materials.

14.

(Adopted by General Convention, July 1, 2019)

**Statement of the Swedenborgian Church of North America on
Discrimination**

As Swedenborgians we affirm the core truths of our faith that honor the diversity of both heaven and earth, and recognize that loving people who are different from us is integral to the practice of a religious life.

We also acknowledge that broad generalizations of races, nations, genders, sexual orientations, physical abilities, and religions can be found in our sacred texts when interpreted literally and that these texts have been used on occasion to promote opinions that run counter to these core truths.

We hereby affirm our responsibility to interpret our texts in the light of love and inclusion, in heaven's light, and categorically reject interpretations of the Bible or of Swedenborg's writings that promote a discriminatory viewpoint. Where any translation or interpretation appears to invite the reader to engage in exclusionary or hateful thinking, promote stereotypes, or justify discrimination against anyone for any reason, regardless of the source, we stand against this. If any member, clergy, employee, or other affiliated person indicates by word, deed, works, writings, affiliations, or any other means, racism, anti-Semitism, anti-Muslim bigotry, gender bias, heterosexism, ableism, or any other expression of prejudice, they do not reflect nor represent the practical doctrine of the Swedenborgian church.

We encourage one another to advocate for those who face discrimination and to address these expressions of bias in our personal interactions and in the larger society. We also acknowledge that forms of discrimination come in many subtle shades, and that we have a responsibility to regularly investigate our actions and beliefs, both individually and collectively to align them with these truths, so that we can be greater vessels for Divine Love in the world.

15.

(Adopted by General Convention, July 1, 2019)

GOOD PRACTICES GUIDELINES***For Ministries of the Swedenborgian Church of North America*****Congregational Relations**

- Develop a Congregational Covenant for healthy communication practices in the congregation's life, and ensure the Covenant is visible and frequently referenced.
- Keep the congregation informed about what the ministry governing board or council is doing, such as regularly distributing Minutes to the membership and friends on e-mail.
- Offer open Board meetings for transparency and cohesiveness.
- Conduct periodic congregational surveys assessing experiences in the ministry, since such surveys facilitate a sense of congregational teamwork and enable a transparency and inclusion that often harvests information and viewpoints otherwise held back.
- Use a facilitator sooner rather than later when congregational dynamics seem to be stuck.
- Maintain a standing pastoral relations committee to provide a communication sounding board.

Administration

- Maintain clear job descriptions for all paid staff positions, including the ordained and consecrated leadership and perform annual reviews.
- Develop explicit guidelines on compensating members for work in the ministry.
- Create and annually update a Conflict of Interest Policy for the primary governing board.
- Avoid having more than one family member at the same time on the primary governing board.
- Review Bylaws regularly to ensure they fit the ministry purposes and keep them visible.
- Ensure the Bylaws have a properly worded dissolution clause that protects assets from improper takeover and provides guidelines for how assets will be distributed (e.g., to the denomination, the Association, the theological

school, a designated Convention ministry, or combination of these).

Denominational Relations

- Follow the denomination's Advisory Placement Committee's guidelines when conducting position searches.
- Send delegates annually to the Association and denominational gatherings and submit an annual ministry report for the denomination's Journal.*
- Keep the denomination's Central Office supplied with a copy of the ministry's current Constitution and Bylaws.

**Note: Receipt of timely annual ministry reports is required in order to be eligible for Augmentation Fund grants.*

A COVENANTAL SPIRITUALITY FOR THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA

A Covenant between Constituent Bodies and the Denomination

The Swedenborgian Church of North America promises to:

- Provide ministry resources for growth, outreach, and weekly programming.
- Provide information about potential grant opportunities
- Provide support and guidance when asked regarding internal conflict difficulties
- Support ministries without current ordained or consecrated leadership with 1) a registry of ministers and pastors willing to travel to churches, 2) a list of ministers seeking a pastorate position, and 3) the Advisory Placement Committee's guidelines
- Keep information about the denomination in front of the consciousness of local ministries to encourage relationship to and community with the larger spiritual community of Convention.

Constituent Ministries of the Swedenborgian Church of North America promise to:

- Participate annually if at all possible in the Association and the summer denominational convention meetings.
- Submit an annual ministry report for the denomination's Journal.
- Follow the denomination's Advisory Placement Committee's guidelines when conducting position searches.

- Keep the denomination's Central Office supplied with a copy of the ministry's current Bylaws, executive committee members, and any changes in pastorate positions and compensation as regards the pension fund.
- Keep the Association and the denomination in front of the consciousness of local members to encourage relationship to and community with the larger spiritual community of Convention.

16.

(Adopted by General Convention, June 27, 2022)

Welcome and Support of All People in the LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Plus¹) Community

The Swedenborgian Church of North America (SCNA) publicly declares itself to be LGBTQ+ Embracing. The SCNA encourages all its constituent bodies to become LGBTQ+ Embracing.

As an LGBTQ+ Embracing organization, the SCNA recognizes that the LGBTQ+ community, in particular those of color, continue to experience prejudice, discrimination, and condemnation at the hands of many religious institutions. The SCNA will clearly and publicly make known their welcome of all LGBTQ+ people, will advocate in the public sphere for their rights, and will educate themselves on the care and pastoring of people in the LGBTQ+ community. We welcome LGBTQ+ seekers and support their identities and loving relationships. All rites and sacraments of the SCNA are available to LGBTQ+ people including, baptism, confirmation, communion, marriage, consecration as a licensed pastor, ordination, and services of remembrance and resurrection.

The SCNA understands the message of love and inclusion taught to us through the Bible and insights of Emanuel Swedenborg to affirm diversity in all its exciting complexity, offering equal value and worth to all people with a variety of God given gender identities, gender expressions, sexual orientations, and loving relationships. The SCNA will seek to interpret the Bible and the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg in ways that honor the equal value and worth of all sexual orientations, genders, gender identities, and gender expressions. We will support everyone who is engaged in the regenerative journey—individual or partnered. We affirm any partnered relationships that are entered into freely, are grounded in mutual fidelity and respect, and have as their end the well-being and spiritual growth of each partner. We acknowledge that living in truly loving and wise ways

¹ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Plus—including: intersex, pansexual, two-spirit, non-binary, gender non-conforming, aromantic, and asexual

is possible for finite and fallible human beings only with the Lord's leading.

As our understanding of this continues to unfold, the SCNA is dedicated to educating itself and others. The SCNA respects the judgment of those who make decisions for its constituent bodies and lends its support to them as they discern whether to become LGBTQ+ Embracing and will offer resources and guidance to facilitate the process.

STANDING RECOMMENDATIONS

To Associations, etc.

Each Association, or other collective body of the Church, is requested to report annually a list of its ministers.

Associations are recommended to make such specific rules, under the general rules for the regulation of the ministry, as they may consider necessary or desirable.

Associations are requested to furnish the Secretaries with copies of all their printed *Journals* of past years, and also copies of their future proceedings, from time to time, as they may be published. (*Journal* of 1900, Minute 163.)

In the apportionment of delegates to the Convention, the Association shall try to secure a proportionate representation of the societies constituting them, and to that end shall consult the wishes of the various societies. (*Journal*, 1937, Minute 50.)

To Isolated Societies

To establish Sabbath school and to give it watchful care in which the truths of the Church shall be distinctly taught.

To adopt as rules of discipline, or laws of charity, what is taught by the Lord in Matt. v.23, 24, and xviii. 15-17.

To establish free libraries of the theological works of Swedenborg for loan to all who are interested.

To Ministers

To keep a record of names, ages, residences, etc. of all persons baptized by them.

To the Standing Committee of the American New Church Sunday School Association

To report annually to the Convention such statistics and such action by the Association as may be of general interest.

As to Collections of Convention

Collections at the Sunday morning service of the Convention to be for the general use of Convention. (*Journal* of 1993, Minute 6.)

Procedures of Appointments to the National Council of Churches

The President of Convention, with the counsel and advice of the Executive

Committee of the Council of Ministers, shall make the various appointments to the National Council of Churches, and that these then be confirmed by the General Council.

The Nominating Committee

It is recommended to the Nominating Committee, that when preparing a slate of nominees to fill the elective offices of The General Convention, the slate be of such order that if elected, a nominee shall not serve on more than two Boards or Committees or a Board and a Committee simultaneously. “No individual who has accepted nomination for an office shall accept nomination for another office if election to one would invalidate election to the other.” It is further recommended that this order be kept by the Chair when accepting nominations from the floor of Convention.

To the Convention

To submit (to the President or Treasurer), in advance of the business session of Convention, any request for appropriation of funds.

To Leaders (adopted June 28, 2021)

*A Reminder to Pause Before Hitting ‘Send’, And Then Ask Yourself...
“How Am I Loving God and the Neighbor in this Post?”*

Good Practices for Social Media Use Understanding

In today’s world of pervasive social media use, all of our church leaders have become the outward face of the Swedenborgian Church. An essential question our leaders might now mindfully be thinking of asking themselves is: How am I loving God and the neighbor in what I post?

As church leaders—ordained clergy, licensed pastors, lay leaders, committee, and board members— both local and national, we have to be especially discerning as we speak for the local church and for the greater church. Like it or not, we carry additional authority and responsibility. We need to be consciously, and conscientiously, aware that our words and sentiments online can project a positive or negative influence, elicit a calming or angering effect, promote spiritual enlightenment or unrest.

As lay and clergy leaders in the Swedenborgian Church of North America, we affirm our tradition’s embrace of varied opinions as well as the importance of personal choice and freedom in all matters (Secrets of Heaven §2876). We value a diverse community that is bound together by shared love of the Lord and service to the neighbor. As Swedenborgian Church leaders, we also carry a responsibil-

ity in all we do and say—this can be especially challenging because of the blur between personal and professional communications. It is hoped that these “Good Practices for Social Media Use” can help lessen that challenge with thoughts on how to maintain a neighborly and respectable social media presence with God’s love and wisdom at the forefront.

It is a given that social media can be used as a powerful, positive tool for communication or a precarious emotional outlet that can lead to risky, contrary, and potentially harmful commentary. It is our responsibility to use our discernment. *Let’s consider asking ourselves the questions below before posting:*

- What kind of conversation am I starting or encouraging?
- Why am I posting? Am I feeling tired, angry, or scared? Am I feeling provoked?
- If there is conflict—how is my contribution going to de-escalate the situation?
- If I’ve already contributed to this conversation today—would it better to wait 24 hours before adding anything further?
- Would I choose to say these things face-to-face?
- Would this conversation be better handled privately?
- Will I be embarrassed or cause embarrassment if this post appears somewhere else?
- Are my comments towards people and/or the church following the sentiment expressed here?
- What can I do to make this conversation more inclusive, just, and equitable?

In addition to attending to the wisdom of the above list, special attention needs to be focused on how adults interact responsibly with our often-vulnerable youth online. Added to the all important moral, ethical, and spiritual reasons is the liability risk. *Following are further good practices that will help us maintain healthy and safe relationships all around:*

- All public content, communication, and information shared should be professional and youth appropriate.
- Unless other arrangements have been made with parents, leaders should not send requests outside of family to add youth to their network on a social media website (“friend requests”).
- Adults may accept friend requests from youth, however, we should carefully discern the level of contact we should maintain with youth prior to responding to these requests.
- If friend requests from youth are declined, we should explain to the youth

SEVEN YEAR CYCLE OF ANNUAL THEMES

It is part of the Lord's Providence that in every challenge there is an opportunity and the bigger the challenge, the bigger the opportunity. That's a good thing for us, not least because, as a church, we are facing a very big challenge indeed. The Standing Committee for Education and Resources for Spiritual Community (SCER) every year undertakes a useful way to meet that challenge, one that can offer us a considerable opportunity to grow and move forward as bearers of a new message of hope for the world.

A regular cycle of thematically-unified, denomination-wide programming, built around the key beliefs of our faith, will go far in restoring our church's confidence and capacity to play its proper part in the building of the New Jerusalem. As Swedenborgians we are blessed in many ways but especially with a love of learning. This is our strength and our opportunity. Let's learn and grow into a new future.

The Seven-Year Cycle of Annual Themes

1. THE YEAR OF THE LORD (2019-2020)

the primacy of Spirit:

- the one Lord, Love & Wisdom, Creator & Life
- the unifying truth, hope and power, known by many names
- revealed for us in Jesus, as friend, mentor, model

2. THE YEAR OF THE SPIRITUAL WORLD (2020-2021)

the nature of Life:

- the diverse, multi-dimensional & eternal nature of life
- the reality of the spiritual world; heaven, hell & world of spirits
- our journey with angels & demons, from this life to the next

3. THE YEAR OF PROVIDENCE (2021-2022)

the assurance of Purpose:

- the universe makes sense and we have a special, angelic purpose
- the laws of Providence are Love & Wisdom at work for us
- our call to "choose life" and become who we (really) are

4. THE YEAR OF REGENERATION (2022-2023)

the way of Change:

- spiritual life as intentional, committed, relational
- the journey of transformation & the second birth
- the work of repenting, reforming & regenerating

5. THE YEAR OF SPIRITUAL USES (2023-2024)

the call to be a Blessing:

- true faith as the life of charity, what we actually do, not just think or say
- discerning our gifts through love in action (charity)
- becoming our true use for the building of the New Jerusalem

6. THE YEAR OF THE WORD (2024-2025)

the power of holy Scriptures:

- correspondences & the Lord's presence in the Word
- the story of our lives in the Word
- the sacred character of all holy texts

7. THE YEAR OF THE NEW JERUSALEM (2025-2026)

the emergence of a New World:

- the Second Coming in the Spirit now
- the new world & new consciousness emerging now
- building the future: the unity of the human family in justice and peace

BYLAWS OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

PREAMBLE

The Council of Ministers is established by Article II of the Constitution of the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America which reads in part as follows: “The officers of the Convention shall be...a Council of Ministers, consisting of all ministers belonging to the Convention, of whom twelve shall constitute a quorum...”

In order that it may in more orderly fashion exercise the powers and perform the duties committed to it by Article III, Section 3, and Article V, Section 1, of the said Constitution, and Article XII of the Bylaws of the said General Convention, the Council of Minister, establishes these Bylaws as a guide to its procedure.

Article I.

Categories of Membership

Section 1. *Internal Categories of Clerical Standing with COM shall be:*

Active: defined as any ordained minister that:

1. is employed as a minister by a constituent body of Convention, or
2. is involved in a ministry recognized as valid by COM, or
3. is present at COM annual or regional meetings.

Inactive: defined as any ordained minister who does not meet the above requirements, but who has submitted an annual accounting of ministerial activity to the COM Secretary in accordance with denominational Bylaws, Article XII, Section 3.

Not in Good

Standing: A member who has not met the professional standards of ministry in the Swedenborgian Church.

Lapsed: defined as any minister that has not met any of the above requirements and has been not in good standing for a period of three years.

Retired: defined as any minister that has drawn on his or her retirement benefits and who has requested to be considered as retired on the Council’s Roll. Only those members that have retired in good standing shall be eligible for supplemental retirement benefits.

Severed: defined as any minister who has been removed from the Roll of

Ministers by request or as a result of disciplinary action.

Deceased: defined as any minister who has died.

Section 2. *Definitions of Clerical Standing*

“**Good Standing**” is defined as a member of the Council that: participates in continuing education on a biennial basis for the purpose of building and maintaining professional competence, in accordance with COM Standing Resolutions, paragraph 2, and participates in supervision on an ongoing basis for the purpose of maintaining a personal system of emotional support, in recognition of “Guidelines for Ministerial Work in the General Convention,” Section III, preamble, *and* is not under disciplinary action by the Council of Ministers.

“**Not in Good Standing**” is defined as a member of the Council that has not met the above requirements.

Amended 2008, Bridgewater, Massachusetts

Section 3. *Credentials*

All members of the Council who are not retired are requested to communicate with the COM Secretary *before the end of May* regarding their continuing education and supervision activities during the time since the last COM annual meeting. Those who do so shall be recorded as in good standing. The names of those who have not done so will be shared with the Executive Committee, who shall respond as follows.

Procedure for Changes in Clerical Standing

A member of the Council’s Executive Committee shall contact any member of the Council whose standing is in jeopardy at least thirty days before the Council convenes for its Annual Meeting. The Executive Committee shall take into account such member’s specific situation and shall suggest reasonable rectifying measures before any change in standing is considered. If the member in question is unwilling to comply with such measures, he or she will be considered temporarily “not in good standing” until such measures are taken. The Executive Committee shall continue to support and encourage an individual who is not in good standing throughout a restorative period.

A member who is not in good standing and who is in disagreement with such a standing may make an appeal to the Council as a whole, whose majority vote shall determine the standing of the member in question. The name of a member who is not in good standing for a period of three years shall be presented before

COM. They shall decide by vote whether or not to designate such member in the Roll of Ministers as “Lapsed.” A person whose membership has lapsed and who wishes to become active again may make a written appeal to the Council’s Executive Committee.

Amended July 8, 2005, Berkeley, California

Amended June 2008, Bridgewater, Massachusetts

Article II.

Sessions and Meetings

Section 1. Sessions of the Council of Ministers shall be held in connection with every session of the General Convention, at such times as may be assigned to it by the Business Committee of the Convention.

Section 2. Special meetings of the Council may be held at any time at the call of the Executive Committee or by letter vote initiated by petition of at least seven members. Public notice shall be given of the time and place of the proposed meeting.

Section 3. “Meetings of the Council of Ministers shall be of three types: public meetings, open to anyone who may be interested; business meetings, at which the business of the Council shall be transacted, attendance at business meetings being limited to members of the Council, the President of Convention if said person is not ordained, the Dean and full-time faculty of the Swedenborgian House of Studies, if said persons are not ordained authorized candidates, theological students, and others who may be admitted by vote of the Council; and executive session, for which all persons who are not members of the Council shall withdraw at the request of the Chair. Any guest may be invited to remain for executive sessions at the request of a Council member, together with a three-quarters vote of the Council.”

Amended July 9, 2004, Waterloo, Ontario.

Article III.
Officers

Section 1. The officers of the Council of Ministers shall be a Chair, a Secretary and three at large members of the Executive Committee.

Section 2. At its 1993 sessions, the Council of Ministers shall elect a chair for a two-year term, and a secretary for a three-year term. In subsequent years, when the offices become vacant, the chair and secretary shall each be elected for a three-year term. Officers who have served two consecutive full terms shall not be eligible for immediate re-election.

Amended June 27, 1992.

Section 3. The Chair of the Council shall preside at all meetings, and shall, unless in any case it be otherwise ordered by the Council, appoint all members of committees, except the Executive Committee and the Program Committee. The Chair shall designate the chairmen of such committees as he may appoint.

The Secretary of the Council shall perform the usual duties of a secretary, and in addition shall present to the Convention a report of all meetings of the Council, including the titles of all papers presented, a summary of the important business transacted and a statement of all matters referred by the Council of Ministers to the Convention and of all recommendations made to said Convention.

The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chair, the Secretary, and three members to be elected initially by the Council for terms of one, two, and three years, and thereafter one member to be elected annually by the Council for a term of three years. Executive Committee members who have served two consecutive full terms shall not be eligible for immediate re-election. It shall be the duty of the Committee to fill vacancies and to consider and act on matters connected with the business of the Council in the interim of its sessions. It shall have no power, however, to make decisions in the name of the Council with reference to any matter within the province of the Council's Standing Committees.

Amended June 2008, Bridgewater, Massachusetts

Section 4. In the interim between the sessions of the Council of Ministers matters requiring the immediate decision by the Council may be acted upon by

vote recorded by the Secretary through a letter, e-mail, or conference call, to be determined by the Executive committee. For such votes to be valid, at least twenty ministers must cast ballots. If by letter, ballots must be received within 30 days from the date of issuance. If by e-mail, ballots must be received within 7 days from date of issuance. If by conference call, the ballots shall be recorded orally at the time of the call. Every reasonable effort will be made to contact every active member of the Council.

Amended July 9, 2004, Waterloo, Ontario.

Article IV. Committees

Section 1. There shall be a Nominating Committee of three persons which shall present to the Council at each annual meeting a full slate of nominees including two nominees for Convention Preacher. At the meeting at which this Bylaw is adopted, one member shall be elected for a three-year term, one for a two-year term, and one for a one-year term, with the member whose term is next to expire to serve as chair.

Section 2. The Standing Committees of the Council shall be the Committee on Worship, the Committee on Program, The Committee on Ministerial Ethics, the Committee on Admission into the Ministry, the Committee on Revision of the Roll, the Misconduct Determination Board, and the Advisory Placement Committee.

In addition, the Chair of the Council upon the decease of any member thereof shall appoint a committee to prepare a memorial to be offered for presentation before the Convention. The Council may from time to time order the appointment of such special committees as it may deem necessary.

Amended June 2012, Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

Section 3. Members of Standing Committees shall serve until their successors are appointed.

Section 4. The Committee on Worship shall consider and report on all matters connected with the worship of the Church, as well as proposed changes in or additions to its liturgical books.

The Committee will explore and develop new forms, style and materials of worship and liturgy to meet the expanding needs of Convention Worship Leaders.

The Committee, or an appointed individual by the Committee, will oversee and coordinate, in conjunction with the host group and/or the Convention Planning Committee, the worship and music expenses of our annual convention.

Amended June 2009, Seattle, Washington

Section 5. The Committee on Program shall consist of the Chair of the Council of Ministers, the Secretary of the Council, and the Dean of the Swedenborgian House of Studies. Its duties shall be to prepare the program for each session of the Council.

Amended June 2008, Bridgewater, Massachusetts

Section 6. The Committee on Ministerial Ethics shall consist of the council appointed by the Chair for their depth of pastoral experience and background in the study of ethics. This committee shall:

1. periodically present issues for reflection and discussion for meetings of the Council and shall consist of three members of the council.
2. be available for consultation and advice in cases of need, and
3. propose such revisions in the Guidelines for Ministerial work in the General Convention of Swedenborgian churches as it may deem useful.

Section 7. The Committee on Admission into the Ministry shall consist of a chair, who will be a member of this council who has served at least one complete term (3 years) on the Committee on Admission to Ministry and shall be elected by the council for a three year term; two at-large members who are ministers with at least five years ministerial service within the denomination, one to be elected by the Council of Ministers and one to be elected by Convention; one lay person to be elected by Convention; and the President of Convention. The three elected members are to be elected for three-year terms, one to be elected each year. At-large members who have served two consecutive full terms shall not be eligible for immediate re-election. The chair may not serve more

than two consecutive terms as chair and is not eligible to serve as an at-large member following a term as chair. Members of the regular faculty of the theological school shall not be eligible for election, and should either the President of Convention or Chair of the Council of Ministers be a member of that faculty, said officer shall designate a member of the Council of Ministers as replacement, subject to the approval of the Council.

The primary duty of this committee shall be to oversee the maintenance of high standards for Convention's ministry. To this end, it shall interview all candidates for ordination or induction into our ministry, and make its recommendations to the Council of Ministers. It shall also annually grant or deny the status of candidates for ordination to all Swedenborgian affiliated theological school students or applicants who request it, confer regularly with such students, and report its decisions to each student concerned, to the faculty of the School and to the Augmentation Fund Committee.

It shall also confer with the candidate before ordination, to the end that the candidate may be mindful to the task ahead, and approach the Rite of Ordination truly prepared for consecration to the Lord's service.

Amended July 9, 2004, Waterloo, Ontario; Amended June 25, 2015, Bridgewater, Massachusetts

Section 8. The Committee on Revision of the Roll shall consist of three members; to it shall be referred without further action by the Council all matters of record involving changes in the Roll of Ministers of the General Convention, for report and recommendation to the Council.

It shall also be the duty of this Committee to keep a Roll of Former Ministers of Convention, to which the names of those who have ceased to be minister thereof, through death, resignation, or removal, shall be transferred in accordance with the rules of Convention.

Section 9. The Misconduct Determination Board shall consist of five members, three of which will be from the Executive Committee and two from the Ethics Committee. It shall be the duty of this Board to review charges and evidence given it from the Board of Inquiry and determine:

- i) if misconduct occurred, and
- ii) what actions should be taken.

The Misconduct Determination Board is to follow the policies laid out in the misconduct procedures adopted by the Council of Ministers and General Council.

Added June 2012, Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

Section 10. The Advisory Placement Committee shall consist of three members; the Chair of the Council of Ministers, the Dean of the Swedenborgian House of Studies, and the President of Convention who serves as Chair. It shall be the duty of this committee to provide resources and advise ministers who are seeking employment within the denomination and also societies that are seeking to call ministers.

Added June 2012, Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

Article V. Business

Section 1. The business of the Council shall be considered in the executive meetings in the following order:

1. Call to order
2. Address of the Chairman
3. Adoption of report of the Program Committee
4. Appointment of special committees for the session
5. Communications
6. Report of the Executive Committee
7. Reports of Standing Committees
8. Reports of Special Committees
9. Old Business
10. New Business
11. Election
12. Adjournment

The Standing Committees shall report in the order in which they are named in Article III, Section 1. If a report is not ready, it shall be passed over until all other committees have had an opportunity to report, unless the Council set a specific time for hearing of a report. No debate shall be allowed on any of the above reports until all of them have been presented, but a motion to refer or adopt a recommendation where there is no desire to debate shall be in order.

Section 2. The parliamentary procedure of the Council of Ministers shall be governed, in all cases not specifically covered by the Constitution and Bylaws of Convention or by these Bylaws, by Roberts Rules of Order. The Secretary of

the Council shall keep a copy of these Rules available for ready reference.

Section 3. All requests for appropriations in connection with the work of any of the committees of the Council, as being beyond the power and authority of the Council of Ministers, shall, if the Council of Ministers approves, be presented to the General Convention.

Article VI.

Amendments

These Bylaws may be amended or suspended by a three-fourths vote of those present at any regular meeting. They may be suspended at special meetings by a three-fourths vote of those present at such meetings.

COUNCIL OF MINISTERS STANDING RESOLUTIONS

Whereas ministry as a professional endeavor requires continuous development and personal growth, and, whereas education is a lifelong process not ending with ordination; therefore, be it resolved that the Council of Ministers of the General Convention of Swedenborgian Churches affirms that planned continuing education is not an elective but is a necessary process to build professional competence.

(Preamble, adopted at General Convention, June 28, 1988)

Periodically during its history, Convention has faced issues of suitability for ministry. It has dealt with questions of social class, race, divorce, and gender, as it currently faces the issues of sexual orientation and may in future years face questions presently unseen. Its decisions have in each case affirmed a consistent principle, which the Council of Ministers expresses as follows:

(Adopted at General Convention, July 3, 1986)

“In light of the inclusiveness of the vision of the Holy City, New Jerusalem, from which our theological perspective is drawn, the Council of Ministers believes that the central consideration in evaluating requests for ordination is the quality of the ministry that it believes the individual is capable of providing.

“It is the responsibility of the Council of Ministers, using the good office of its Committee on Admission to the Ministry, to evaluate the readiness and suitability of individual candidates in accord with the general principles outlined in Article V, Section 2 of the Constitution, and in the Preamble to Article XIII of the Bylaws of the General Convention.

“Article V, Section 2 reads: ‘Through its Board of Managers of the New Church Theological School, commonly known as the Swedenborg School of Religion, the General Convention shall within the limits of available resources, provide for the thorough professional training of individuals seeking ordination, such training to focus on the spiritual growth of its participants by development in understanding of our theology, sensitivity in human relations, appreciation of other traditions, and in the technical skills required for effective ministry.’

“The Preamble of Article XIII reads: ‘Jesus said to his disciples, you have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain.’ (John 15:16)

“The ordained ministry exists to facilitate the spiritual well-being of people, helping them to be open to the Lord’s leading and enabling them to lead useful lives. Resources for the ordained ministry in serving the church include the Holy Word, the doctrines of the church, the rites and sacraments, experiences of worship, and growth-oriented skills insofar as they promote the process of regeneration.”

GUIDELINES FOR MINISTERIAL CONDUCT IN THE GENERAL CONVENTION OF SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCHES

The Constitution of the General Convention (Article III, Section 3) assigns to the Council of Ministers “responsibility for the pastoral support of all ministries and for providing them with clear ethical standards.” It adds, “It shall exercise such disciplinary functions over the ordained clergy as it may in its collective wisdom adopt, subject to the provision of the Constitution and Bylaws.”

Given the importance of our purpose—to facilitate the spiritual well-being of people—and the variety of ministries devoted to this end, the task is both urgent and difficult. Our theology points to clear principles of spiritual well-being which do not change. It recognizes also that there are outward behavioral expectations which we ignore at our peril, but which do change with the passage of time, and which vary from region to region.

Accordingly, we have tried in the following revision to distinguish these two aspects of ministerial ethics, in an effort to be uncompromising in devotion to the Lord’s service and responsibly flexible in the means used for that service.

Theological Basis

For the Swedenborgian, spiritual well-being is a state of oneness of heart, mind, and life. The most adequate ministry will therefore lead by affection, precept, and example. Our theology also insists that human life is a process, that we do not achieve perfection, but can move toward it to eternity. As ministers, we need both self-forgiveness and forgiveness of others. Since charity is “acting with prudence to the end that good may result” (*The New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrine* 100), we are called in all circumstances, with-out exception, to consider not just what has happened, but what we can do for actual betterment. When we fail to hear or to heed this call, as we all do at times, then the call simply comes again, asking us to recognize our failure, and not to dwell on it but to consider what we can do about it.

In this effort, we cannot stand alone. Our very being is constituted in part by the affection and understanding we receive from each other, and our common involvement in ordained ministry gives special weight to our treatment of each other. Genuine affection, clear understanding, and unfailing fidelity within this fellowship work strongly for our purpose, and their lack brings a profound distress.

Under the Lord’s providence, something could emerge from this distress

which would recommend itself to everyone. There are times, however, when we fail to discover that ideal solution, and must resort to the discipline authorized by the Constitution. This may be freely accepted by all parties; but even when it is not, the imposition of discipline may be the best course of action available. We must then accept our imperfections and focus our efforts on minimizing the harm. It is at such times that the distinction between fundamental principle and local, human tradition is most critical, and when the spirit of the discipline is as important as the discipline itself.

As concerns ministry in particular, doctrine, history, and experience point up the perils of reliance on the authority of the clergy. It is particularly tempting to try to solve difficult problems by clerical pronouncement, ignoring the fact that to the extent that any course of action is taken under compulsion, it is not conducive to spiritual growth. At the heart of the following guidelines is the conviction that our choices as ministers need to be informed by the central purpose of our church, to facilitate the spiritual well-being of those who rely on us.

I. Personal and Interpersonal Conduct

We are unanimous in our acceptance of the law of love, but not necessarily in our understanding of it. Our understanding of the word “love” is demonstrated primarily by our behavior, which is at least as instructive as our words. We communicate by the way we act that the good life is difficult or easy, joyous or bitter, flexible or rigid; and no amount of talking effaces these messages. It is vital that we recognize that we ourselves are in process, being open about our failings and about our ideals alike.

1. Persons live only as they receive life itself from God. We have made public acknowledgment of that life by seeking and accepting the laying on of hands of ordination. We have a special responsibility to open ourselves to our own emotional, intellectual, and spiritual depths, to the wisdom and power of the Bible, to the theology of our church, and to the Lord in meditation and prayer. To work toward our goals, we need also to keep abreast of current developments in the religious and secular worlds around us, with a special responsibility for attention to currents of thought and feeling within Convention.
2. However differently understood and accepted, the Divine is equally present in all People, regardless of such outward attributes as race, class, sexual orientation, creed, gender, physical capabilities/limitations or age. Prejudice or discrimination of any kind is a denial of this central tenet of our theology.
3. As we are drawn to become more intimately connected to persons in our communities, it can be that a pastor finds a real friendship developing. Choosing

friends from among those one serves and leads has inherent complications. There is a difference between being friendly and being a close friend who shares confidences. It is better to find friends among colleagues and through organizations that promote your values and interests. However, if you develop a close friendship with a congregant, the following steps must be taken.

- Discuss the difficulties of being both spiritual leader and friend.
- Avoid discussing the business of the congregation with him or her.
- Avoid spending time together at congregational events.

4. Pastors who are single must often decide whether to date someone in their congregation. It is, after all, a place to meet someone with similar values and commitments. To date a congregant, however, introduces myriad complications and opportunities for misunderstandings. If you find yourself attracted to a member of your congregation, you must take the following steps.

- Inform him/her that you cannot be his/her spiritual leader and have a romantic involvement. Therefore, if the person wants to pursue a dating relationship, he/she should find someone else to serve as spiritual leader.
- Tell your governing body and supervisor about the relationship.

5. Human sexuality is a gift from the Lord, providing an avenue to the deepest and most abiding of human relationships. It is also an avenue to our deepest vulnerabilities, and its misuse can have tragic personal consequences, and can lead to severe legal consequences. We are called to fidelity in all our relationships, and particularly to the utmost respect for the sexual integrity of all persons. Sexual contact or sexualized behavior between a faith leader and a congregant, client, student, or employee with whom the faith leader has a pastoral or professional relationship is an abuse of power and constitutes sexual misconduct. Sexual misconduct is defined as sexual contact (not limited to intercourse) that violates the trust developed by the congregant, student, client or employee in the context of the pastoral or professional relationship.

6. The community in which we live is our neighbor, and our constructive participation in its affairs is an essential element in religious life. As ministers urging others to live by the Lord's commandments, we make a special commitment to live consistently ourselves. It is important that we be unquestionably fair in our financial dealings and reliable in keeping commitments made. This includes such matters as preparation for and attendance at meetings, clear and adequate reports, and prompt attention to correspondence. We should neither ask nor expect special favors or immunities because of our ministerial status. Where discounts, privileges, or special fees are offered, they may be accepted with appreciation, and with the acknowledgment that we are to give as freely as we receive, though not

necessarily in kind. Under no circumstances should special favors or immunities be offered or accepted in exchange for any ‘gift.’

7. In keeping with our sense of the holiness of all life, we are aware that excessive drinking and other forms of substance abuse, obscene stories and expressions, and raucous behavior diminish our effectiveness, as do the other extremes of prudery and self-righteousness. Both extremes betray a narrow egocentricity that renders us insensitive to the feelings and needs of those around us.

8. Personal appearance is one of the ways in which we communicate with each other, and excessive concern with and willful disregard for appearance are equally damaging. Our dress and grooming should reflect our interest in and concern for the human situations in which we engage and should be in general accord with local traditions.

9. Clergy use of social media for personal and professional use contribute to the public face of our denomination, and therefore constitutes clergy conduct. Decisions about what to post must conform to the ethical standards set forth in these Guidelines. Decisions on how and who to e-mail need careful attention, with thought given to include all who should be included, and not communicating electronically in ways we would not consider communicating in person or on the phone.

10. There are no quantitative measurements of spiritual well-being, and therefore no simple standards of evaluation of ministerial effectiveness. It is necessary that we be fully honest with ourselves and our employers, neither inventing unnecessary tasks nor avoiding necessary ones, fulfilling the terms of our employment in the spirit as well as in the letter. It is permissible to take other remunerative work with the knowledge and consent of the employer; but again, there is need of honest evaluation of the effect this has on our ministry.

11. The personal nature of ministry can allow it to intrude on the minister’s personal and family life. It is vital that the family not feel engulfed by the church and that the minister have time that is genuinely free for family involvement. Regular days off and complete vacations are necessities, and should be openly negotiated with the employing body.

12. As human service professionals, we are accountable for a self assessment of our physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. When mental health issues, stress due to family discord, and any other factors interfere with our daily lives and ability to minister to others, we have the responsibility to address our concern with peers, and when warranted, to contract for appropriate professional support. We also have the responsibility to be aware of signs of depression, substance abuse, domestic violence, mental illness, etc. that may arise in congregants, fam-

ily members or colleagues, and to assist them to access appropriate assistance.

II. The Relationship to the Group Served

The relationship of employee to employer can be ambivalent in the ministry. We are enjoined to lead our “employers” by truth to the good of life, a good which is genuine only if it is freely chosen. There are times when it seems that the welfare of the institution is at odds with the welfare of one or another of its members, or of its minister, and the available alternatives seem equally painful. Devotion to our central purpose is essential at all times, and never more than in times of difficulty.

1. Professionals in all the helping professions receive confidences, and are both legally and ethically bound to respect them. Ministers especially tend to be trusted, and a constant sensitivity to that trust is vital. Confidences, whether explicitly labeled or not, are not to be shared, even with colleagues and spouses. However, if individuals give us reason to believe that they are intending harm to themselves or others, we are obliged to weigh carefully the resources we have to prevent such harm, and to act according to our most prudent and compassionate judgment. We are responsible as well to know and to abide by the laws that apply in the particular regions of our ministries. We are to be guided at all times by a pastoral concern for those who trust us.

2. We recognize the trust placed in the therapeutic relationship, its unique power, and the inherent danger of exploitation in any dual role relationship. The role of Pastor and Congregant develops a ‘dual’ aspect when there are additional roles played by either party; i.e., committee chair/member, officer/employee, counselor/counselee, etc. These relationships need careful ethical attention. It is unethical to enter a counseling relationship with anyone with whom we have sexual, family, business, or friendship relationships.

3. Different ministers respond to different aspects of our theology. We should not make our own special interests into idols, but should try to present the full depth and breadth of our teachings and to foster an appreciation of colleagues whose special interests differ from our own.

4. We do not exist in a vacuum, but are sustained in our mental and emotional growth by our communications with each other. Our open acknowledgment of our inter-dependence upon each other is of critical importance to the health of our church.

5. Our belief in the Divine of the Lord entails rather than precludes the presence of that same Divine in all religions of the world. We are true to this principle only as we seek the best in and for all faiths; and we are false to it whenever we try

to exalt our own religion by demeaning others. Our task is not to try somehow to make our own understanding universal, but to discover the universality to which it points

6. Ministers are responsible to whole congregations or groups, and have a responsibility to nurture a fabric of healthy relationships. Ministers employed by hospitals, hospice organizations, schools, non-profits, etc. have a call to see these organizations as sacred community, and have the responsibility to support the relationships within these communities in the same manner as described for church communities. In all our communities, the fabric of healthy relationships is damaged by any form of favoritism toward individuals or subgroups, and by involvement in political games. Such issues require particular attention when critical decisions must be made, as when a group is relocating, or a minister is leaving.

7. The health of a society depends not only on its internal relationships, but on its relationships with the community and world in which it finds itself. Every effort should be made to nurture the conviction that the church is not a self-righteous enclave in a world of sin, but a participant in the process of community, nation, and world, called by virtue of its gifts to special service.

8. The minister's relationship to an employing body has personal, professional, and moral dimensions. A formal contract can be helpful in making unspoken assumptions explicit. No agreement, however informal, is to be terminated without adequate notice, except by mutual consent. We should be freely accessible to the employing body for discussion of continuation or termination of service, and should, unless explicitly invited to remain, absent ourselves from further discussion and from the actual voting procedure.

9. The minister's self-evaluation is essential to growth in service. An annual report to the employing body, with an open review of it by that body, is an excellent means of improving the effectiveness of the minister and the group, and of discovering hidden expectations.

10. A group grows far more by making decisions than by having decisions made for it. Ministerial leadership encourages general involvement in the understanding and formulation of policy and in the choice of particular courses of action.

11. Our spouses, while under no professional obligations, may come into positions of significant influence. It is incumbent upon us to do our best to communicate to them both the substance and the importance of these guidelines, and to nurture an appropriate sense of accountability to them.

III. Relationship to Other Ministers

Ministry as a profession is sufficiently different from most others in that we

look particularly to each other for understanding and support. We are not only professionals, but professionals dedicated to a common service to God in a calling that points beyond our human strength. For this we need relationships with our fellow ministers of comradeship, frankness, mutual respect, cooperation, mutual help, and recognition of a spiritual imperative over and above any professional standards. We need to hold ourselves ready to offer affection, understanding, and assistance, defending our colleagues against misunderstanding or injustice, and being with them in loving concern in times of need or distress.

When support and understanding are forthcoming, this is especially meaningful, and when they fail, the sense of lack is especially severe. Our geographic isolation intensifies the significance of every communication, both for better and for worse.

1. Our ministries are tending increasingly to take different forms, and there is a risk that this may provide occasions for dispute. Given the principle that a form is the more perfect as its constituents are distinctly different, and yet united (*Divine Providence* 4), we are called to see these differences as complementary rather than competitive, and to enrich our own limited understandings by insights that come from endeavors outwardly unlike our own.

2. As professionals, we are responsible for normal professional standards. This means a respect for the integrity of the professional work of fellow ministers, doing nothing directly or indirectly to interfere with that work (e.g., performing ministerial services in another parish without its minister's permission). This is in no way to be construed as a license for possessiveness or defensiveness, and calls us to support any efforts that further our central purpose (e.g., welcoming the participation of another minister in any such service, or the performance of tasks complementary to our own). Because we identify so closely with each other, we may well overreact when opinions or policies diverge. In cases of serious professional or personal misconduct, we should in virtually all instances refer the concern to the responsible officials. In most instances of disagreement, however, the most sympathetic interpretation is also the most constructive. Unsympathetic criticism of another minister, particularly one's predecessor or successor, is contrary to the central principles of a life of charity.

3. The relationship between a minister and an employing body is a sensitive one. It is unethical to make overtures to a church or employing body whose minister has not expressed the intent to resign or retire; and if overtures are received from such a body, the well-being of the incumbent minister should be of primary concern.

4. A pastorate, particularly a long one, builds strong bonds of affection which

can place an incoming minister at a serious disadvantage. Resignation or retirement should be handled with special sensitivity in this regard. Every effort should be made to enable the church to make its own free choice, to create a favorable climate for the successor, and to leave the field free by avoiding anything that might be interpreted as interference with the successor's work. It should be made clear to the church before departure that, however painful it may be, a decisive break in the relationship is necessary. If an invitation is received to perform ministerial services for a former parish, the present minister's permission must be sought and the participation of that minister encouraged.

5. An affirmative attitude needs to be expressed in visible forms. A departing minister should demonstrate his or her acceptance of the successor by some form of public welcome and by cordial introductions to as many of the members as possible. Personal notes and any materials of a confidential nature should be destroyed; but the successor should have free and immediate access to all official records; including membership and address lists, minutes, financial records, and legal and constitutional materials. Every effort should be made not to perpetuate divisions by prejudicing the successor against any individual or group within the church.

6. The best use of our limited ministerial resources requires constant attention. A minister contemplating a change should seek the best information possible concerning current areas of need, using the Ministerial Placement Committee as the most appropriate resource.

7. In the search for ministerial employment, if a minister should feel aggrieved, or should feel that the well-being of another is put at risk, by the conduct of another minister, the first step is to raise the issue privately with the individual concerned. If this effort fails, the good offices of the ordaining minister of Convention should be sought. Should this not provide a resolution, the Council of Ministers may be asked to render assistance.

IV. Relationship to Convention and Association

The essence of the church is the Divine presence with us as individuals and collectively. This essence is therefore the Infinite; but it works through forms of human design, for which we must take responsibility. Our highest loyalty in regard to Convention and the Associations is to their essential purpose, and this, to be effective, must be expressed in the most critical and caring participation in the organizations themselves.

1. The larger collective bodies of the church have provided the foundation on which current ministries rely, with significant contributions to the local churches,

to theological education, and to resources for ministry. Ordination therefore involves pledges to uphold the Constitution of Convention and be mindful of its welfare; and these pledges should be remembered and fulfilled at all times. We should stand ready to serve Convention, the Council of Ministers, and our Associations gladly as our particular abilities are needed, with the knowledge that their health contributes to the health of our own local efforts.

2. The wisdom and effectiveness of the collective bodies can be no fuller than we make them. Regular attendance at meetings of Convention and the Council of Ministers, responsive participation in them, and regular and accurate reporting of activities, developments, and statistics are the necessary foundations of a supportive larger church.

3. For the sake of the unity of the larger church, it is vital that its individual members share in its essential values. It is the responsibility of the minister on the local level to admit into membership to all who do so share, and not to admit those who, so far as can be ascertained, do not. The irreducible essentials of our faith—the Divine of the Lord, the holiness of the Word, and the life of charity—should be clearly presented, and a genuine commitment to them expressed.

4. Many of us work in relative isolation from each other, and the Supportive Peer Supervision program has been instituted to compensate in some measure for that isolation. It is left to individual ministers to stress the supervisory or the supportive aspects of the program; and this freedom entails a responsibility to exercise it well. Whether through the program or in some other way, it is our duty to periodically review our fitness for Convention's ministry. Should such a review raise serious doubts, the course of greatest wisdom is to seek the help and counsel of laypersons or clergy with whom there are bonds of affection and respect.

5. Standards for "Good Standing" as a Member of the Council of Ministers, and the requirements for Continuing Education and Professional Supervision, are outlined in Article I of the Bylaws of the Council of Ministers. "Good Standing" membership in the Council gives ministers an external affirmation, in the same manner that upholding these ministerial conduct guidelines gives an internal affirmation, of our appropriate living of our ministerial call from God.

6. Convention and its collective bodies are human institutions, and true loyalty to them includes the duty of thoughtful and constructive criticism. Experience indicates that if such criticism is addressed to the body's will to improve, without a prejudgment as to the best response, the result will be affirmative. The ideal is an unswerving devotion to fundamental principles, with a willing openness to the process of change.

V. Ministerial Misconduct

1. If an issue of ministerial misconduct arises, persons are required to follow the reporting process outlined in “Procedures for Handling Allegations of Misconduct Against Our Ordained Ministers Or Our Lay Leaders” from the *Council of Ministers Handbook* (dated July 2012).

Epilogue

For our own sakes, the Lord expects and wants our very best. The preceding guidelines are an effort to define that “best” in the context of our own times and culture, and they are offered in the knowledge that there will be failures and shortcomings. As we try to live up to them, there will be needs for clarification and change, and it is the responsibility of the Council of Ministers to keep us working on the subject of ethics for our ministry. Only to the extent that we are in agreement in principle will the guidelines be felt as supportive of our best rather than as threatening, and it is therefore crucial that any disagreement with them be openly expressed. They are not valid for all time, and will be effective only as they are truly an ongoing part of our collegial process.

**BYLAWS OF THE CORPORATION OF THE NEW CHURCH
THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL
DBA CENTER FOR SWEDENBORGIAN STUDIES**

Article I.

Name, Purpose and Location

Section 1. The Corporation of the New Church Theological School operates the Center for Swedenborgian Studies, an institution serving the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America and Canada (hereafter referred to as General Convention). The Corporation was incorporated in 1881 as the Corporation of the New Church Theological School under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and is a non-profit, tax exempt institution operating for religious and educational purposes.

Section 2. The address of the principal of the Corporation shall be as follows: Center for Swedenborgian Studies, 50 Quincy St., Cambridge, MA 02138-3013.

Article II.

Members of the Corporation

Section 1. The membership of the Corporation shall consist of two classes:

A. At-large Members

Any person who (i) has been accepted as a member at large of Swedenborgian Church pursuant to the Constitution of the General Convention or (ii) is a member of any Association or Society constituent of the General Convention, who is 18 years of age or older, may become an at-large member of this Corporation by signing these Bylaws and he or she shall cease to be an at-large member hereof upon ceasing to have the qualifications above named, or upon filing with the Clerk a written withdrawal of membership.

B. Representative Members

Each member of the General Council of the Convention shall be a representative member of the Corporation upon election to the General Council and each shall cease to be a representative member of the Corporation upon expiration of his or

her term of office on the General Council or upon his or her resignation therefrom.

Section 2. An adequate and current alphabetical file of the active membership of the Corporation shall be established and maintained in the offices of the Corporation by the Clerk, and shall be available for inspection at all reasonable times to the Trustees and members of the Corporation.

Article III.

Meetings of the Members

Section 1. Place for Meetings. All meetings of the at-large and representative members shall be held at the principal office of the Corporation in Massachusetts unless the Articles of Organization permit the holding of meetings of members outside of Massachusetts and unless a different place is fixed by the Trustees or the Dean and stated in the notice of the meeting.

Section 2. Annual Meeting. The annual meeting of the members shall be held during the annual convention of the Swedenborgian Church. If no annual meeting is held in accordance with the foregoing provisions, a special meeting may be held in lieu thereof, and any action taken at such meeting shall have the same effect as if taken at the annual meeting.

Section 3. Special Meetings. Special meetings of the members may be requested by the Chair or by the Trustees, and shall be called by the Clerk, or in the case of death, absence, incapacity or refusal of the Clerk, by any other Officer, upon written application of three or more members entitled to vote thereat.

Section 4. Notice of Meetings. A notice of every meeting of the members, stating the place, day and hour thereof and the purpose for which the meeting is called, shall be published by the Clerk in accordance with the provisions of Article V, Section 4 of these Bylaws.

Section 5. Quorum of Members. Ten at-large members and a majority of the representative members as shown on the records of the General Convention shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the members of the Corporation.

Section 6. Adjournments. Any meeting of the members may be adjourned to any other time and to any other place permitted by these Bylaws by the members present at the meeting, although less than a quorum; or by any Officer entitled to preside or to act as Clerk of such meeting if no member is present. It shall not be necessary to notify any member of any adjournment. Any business which could have been transacted at any meeting of the members as originally called may be transacted at any adjournment thereof.

Section 7. Voting. Each member of each class of the Corporation shall be entitled to one vote on all matters before the members, and at-large and representative members shall each vote as a separate class. When a quorum is present, a majority vote shall decide any matter except where a larger vote is required by the law, the Articles of Organization, or these Bylaws.

Any election of Trustees by the members of a class shall be determined by a plurality of the votes cast by members of that class present and entitled to vote at the election.

Article IV. Board of Trustees

Section 1. The business and affairs, including all academic affairs, of the Corporation shall be managed by the Board of Trustees, who shall have and may exercise all the powers of the Corporation except such as required by law or the Corporation's Articles of Organization or Bylaws to be otherwise exercised. Except as so limited, the powers and duties of the Board of Trustees shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. to determine and review periodically the purposes and the mission of the institution.
2. to select the Dean of the institution, and to support the Dean in the exercise of his or her responsibilities.
3. to recommend, review, and approve changes in the educational programs of the institution, consistent with its mission.
4. to establish policies and procedures regarding salary schedules, appointment, and dismissal of each class of employees.
5. to oversee and approve the budget of the institution, and establish policy guidelines for the endowment and for all investments and major fund raising efforts.
6. to authorize the purchase, management and sale of all land, buildings or

- major equipment for use by the institution.
7. to authorize the construction of new buildings and major renovations of existing buildings.
 8. to authorize the incurring of debts by the institution and securing thereof by mortgage and pledge of real and personal property tangible and intangible.
 9. to authorize any changes in tuition and fees within the institution.
 10. to authorize officers or agents of the institution to accept gifts or bequests on behalf of the institution.
 11. to ensure that adequate due process policies and procedures exist.

Section 2. Election and Tenure. The Board of Trustees shall consist of eight (8) elected members and four (4) ex officio members. At-large members and representative members shall each, voting as a separate class, be entitled to elect four (4) of the members of the Board of Trustees; PROVIDED THAT at least seventy-five percent (75%) of the members of the Board of Trustees elected by the at-large members of the Corporation and at least seventy-five percent (75%) of the members of the Board of Trustees elected by the representative members be members of the Corporation.

Other than as hereinafter provided, Trustees shall be elected for a term of four (4) years. The terms of the elected Trustees shall be staggered, so that the term of one at-large elected Trustee and one representative elected Trustee shall expire each year. When Trustees are elected, their term shall be designated in order to achieve such staggered terms.

No member of the Board of Trustees shall be elected for more than two (2) consecutive full four-year terms unless the members at the annual meeting of the Corporation vote to permit a member of the Board of Trustees to be elected for one (1) additional consecutive four-year term or part thereof, if applicable, where the members agree that extraordinary circumstances warrant such extension of the maximum term; PROVIDED HOWEVER THAT no further extension of the consecutive term of office for such member of the Board of Trustees shall be granted.

Upon the completion of the maximum term of the Board of Trustees, a minimum of a one-year absence is required before eligibility for re-election to membership on the Board of Trustees is restored.

As the terms of the Trustees originally elected by at-large members expire, successors will be elected by at-large members. As the terms of the Trustees originally elected by representative members expire, successors will be elected by representative members.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, any Trustee who fails to attend at least one (1) meeting of the Board of Trustees during any one (1) calendar year of their term (provided that more than one meeting was held in such year) shall be deemed to have submitted his or her resignation as a Trustee, with no further act on his or her part, to the Board of Trustees as of December 31st of such year; PROVIDED THAT the Chair, in his or her reasonable discretion, may waive such resignation requirement (either before or after said December 31st, but prior to the filling of the resulting vacancy) upon the receipt of a written notice from such absentee Trustee providing good and sufficient reasons for his or her absence. In the event that a Trustee shall be deemed to have submitted his or her resignation in accordance with this paragraph, the vacancy thereby created shall be filled in accordance with Section 3 of this Article IV.

The President of the General Convention of the Swedenborgian Church and the Dean of the Center for Swedenborgian Studies shall be ex officio members of the Board of Trustees with a vote. If the Clerk and Treasurer elected by the Board are not members of the Board, they shall become ex officio members of the Board without a vote. The President of the Graduate Theological Union and one representative from the CSS student body (see Section 9) shall sit on the Center for Swedenborgian Studies Board of Trustees without a vote. The aforesaid President, Dean and Graduate Theological Union representative ex officio members serve at the pleasure of the Corporation and are not governed by the term restrictions or rotation requirements of these Bylaws.”

Section 3. Vacancies. Any vacancy in the Board of Trustees, however occurring, may be filled by appointment by the Board of Trustees until the next annual meeting provided, however, that a vacancy resulting from the enlargement of the board shall only be filled by election by the members of the Corporation. In the case of a vacancy occurring other than by enlargement of the Board of Trustees such vacancy shall be filled at the next annual or special meeting only by the Class of Members who had elected the prior Trustee.

Section 4. Enlargement of the Board of Trustees. The number of the Board of Trustees may be increased or decreased at any annual or special meeting of the members provided however that the number of members of the Board of Trustees shall always be set at an even number.

Section 5. Trustees' Meetings. The Board of Trustees shall meet at least three times each year. One of these meetings shall be held without notice as soon as practicable after the adjournment of the annual meeting of members.

Section 6. Notice of Trustees' Meetings. Meetings of the Trustees may be called by the Dean, the Chair or any three or more Trustees by a request in writing addressed to the Clerk. Notice of the time and place of all regular meetings of the Trustee shall be given by the Clerk and of any special meeting of the Clerk or the Officer calling the meeting. Notice may be given orally, by telephone, telegraph, e-mail or in writing; and such notice given in time to enable the Trustees to attend, or in any case, notice sent by mail, e-mail, or telegraph to a Trustee's usual or last known place of business or residence or e-mail address, at least ten days before the meeting, shall be sufficient. Any meeting of the Trustees shall be a legal meeting without notice if each Trustee, by a writing filed with the records of the meeting, waives such notice.

The Board of Trustees may permit any or all Trustees to participate in any meeting of the Trustees by, or conduct any meeting through the use of, any means of communication by which all Trustees participating may simultaneously hear each other during the meeting. A Trustee participating in a meeting by this means is considered to be present in person at the meeting.

Every Trustee who attends a meeting without protesting prior thereto or at its commencement the lack of notice to him or her, and every absent Trustee who shall before or after meeting waive notice thereof by a writing filed with the records of the meeting or who shall sign such records, shall be deemed to have been fully notified of the meeting.

Section 7. Quorum of Trustees. At any meeting of the Trustees, a majority of the trustees then in office shall constitute a quorum. Unless otherwise provided by law, the Articles of Organization or these Bylaws, a vote of a majority of those present at any meeting at which there is a quorum shall be sufficient to transact business or to take any action by the Trustees.

Section 8. Action by Unanimous Written Consent. Any action may be taken by the Board of Trustees without a meeting if the action is taken by the unanimous consent of the Trustees, The action must be evidenced by one or more consents describing the action taken, in writing, signed by each Trustee, or delivered to the Corporation by electronic transmission, to the address specified by the Corporation for the purpose, or if no address has been specified, to the principal

office of the Corporation, addressed to the Secretary or other officer or agent having custody of the records of proceedings of the Board of Trustees, and included in the minutes or filed with the corporate records reflecting the action taken, Action taken under this section is effective when the last Trustee signs or delivers the consent, unless the consent specifies a different effective date. A consent signed or delivered under this section has the effect of a meeting vote and may be described as such in any document.

Section 9. Student Representative. At the annual meeting of the Board of Trustees held at the annual meeting of the General Convention of the Swedenborgian Church each year, one student of the Pacific School of Religion enrolled in the Masters of Divinity Program with the Center for Swedenborgian Studies will be asked to serve on the Board of Trustees as a representative of all of the students enrolled with Center for Swedenborgian Studies. Such student representative is to attend all, or at least a portion, of any and all meetings of the Board of Trustees. The Executive Committee will determine in advance of each meeting whether such student representative is to be in attendance for the entire meeting or portion therefore. If attendance of only a portion of the meeting is required, the Executive Committee will also determine the parameters of attendance. Such position is an ex officio representation with no vote. Such student will be expected to make a report to the Board of Trustees at each meeting.”

Article V.

Officers of the Board of Trustees

Section 1. The Officers of the Board of Trustees shall be the Officers of the Corporation and shall consist of a Chair, a Vice Chair, a Clerk, a Treasurer, and other such officers, including one or more Assistant Treasurers and Assistant Clerks, as the Trustees may determine. These Officers shall be elected annually at the meeting of the Trustees following the annual meeting of the members by the Board of Trustees and shall serve until their successors are elected and assume the duties of their respective offices. The Chair and Vice Chair must be Board members but the Clerk, Treasurer, Assistant Clerks and Assistant Treasurers, need not be. Officers are eligible for re-election.

All Officers of the Board of Trustees shall serve at the discretion of the Board of Trustees and shall be subject to removal by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Trustees present at a meeting of the Board of Trustees.

A vacancy in any of the offices of the Board of Trustees may be filled at any meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Section 2. Chair. The Chair of the Board of Trustees shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Trustees and at the annual Corporation meeting, serve as Chair of the Executive Committee, and appoint all committees and their Chairs in consultation with the Dean of the Center for Swedenborgian Studies.

The Chair shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by law or by the action of the Board.

Section 3. Vice Chair. The Vice Chair of the Board of the Trustees shall perform such duties as shall be assigned by the Board. In case of death, absence, or inability of the Chair of the Board of Trustees to act, the Vice Chair shall discharge the duties of the Chair until such time as a new Chair is elected by the Board.

Section 4. Clerk. The Clerk shall serve as the Clerk of the Corporation and shall keep the records of the Corporation and the Board of Trustees, and shall give notice of all meetings of the Board of Trustees and of the members.

The Clerk shall be responsible for the maintenance of the file of the membership of the Corporation. He or she shall provide the notice of the Annual Meeting of the Corporation to be published in *The Messenger* at least 60 days prior to the date of the meeting. If *The Messenger* is not published at a convenient time, notices of the Annual Meeting shall be sent by first class to each member at least ten days before such Annual Meeting. Notice of special meetings of the Corporation shall be issued in the same manner. It shall be sufficient notice if mailed to the last and usual place of residence of each member in accordance with the records in the membership list. The Assistant Clerks shall have such powers and duties including any and all of the powers and duties of the Clerk as the Board of Trustees may prescribe.

Section 5. The Treasurer shall be responsible for carrying out the mandates of the Board of Trustees in overseeing the financial resources of the Corporation, including cash securities, stocks, bonds and all other property, personal or real, owned by the Corporation. The Treasurer shall assure that all books and accounts are accurately kept, and furthermore, shall present a full and detailed statement properly audited by an independent certified public accountant to the Corporation at its annual meeting and, if requested, at any other meeting of the

Board of Trustees or any meeting of its committees. The Assistant Treasurer shall have such powers and duties including any and all of the powers and duties of the Treasurer as the Board of Trustees may prescribe.

Article VI

Committees of the Board

Section 1. Executive Committee. There shall be an Executive Committee consisting of the Officers of the Board of Trustees. The Dean shall be an ex officio member of the Executive Committee with a vote. The President of the General Convention shall be an ex officio member of the Executive Committee with a vote. The Executive Committee shall have authority to act on behalf of the Board of Trustees on all matters except for the following which shall be reserved for the Board as specified elsewhere in these Bylaws: Dean Selection; Trustee and Board Officer Selection; Charter and Bylaws Amendment; Review of Institutional Mission and Purposes; Incurring Corporate Indebtedness; Expenditure of Funds Not Provided for in the Budget; Approval of the Annual Budget; the Conferral of Degrees; and the Purchase and Sale of Real Estate.

Section 2. Nominating Committee – At-Large Class. On or before March 1 every year the Chair shall appoint a Nominating Committee to select at-large nominees for the Board of Trustees. The Nominating Committee shall be composed of three at-large members of the Corporation at least one of whom shall not be a member of the Board of Trustees. The Nominating Committee shall make its report to the Annual Meeting of the Corporation.

Section 3. Nominating Committee – Representative Class. General Convention shall present nominees to the representative class at the Annual Meeting of the Corporation.

Other Committees. At the discretion of the Board of Trustees, other committees may be formed and discharged as needed.

Article VII.

Officers of the Institution

Section 1. The Dean shall be the chief educational and administrative officer of the institution. He or she shall exercise general responsibility for the overall affairs of the institution and shall bring those matters to the attention of the Board

of Trustees that are appropriate and necessary to keep it fully informed and to enable it to meet its policy-making responsibilities. The Dean shall be an ex officio member of the Board of Trustees and of all committees thereof.

The Dean shall appoint all other administrators, staff members, and temporary faculty members. Regular faculty appointments shall be presented to the Board for prior approval.

Article VIII. Indemnification

Section 1. Each person now or hereafter a Trustee or Officer of the Corporation (and his or her heirs, executors and administrators) shall be entitled, without prejudice to any other rights he or she may have, to be reimbursed by the Corporation for, and indemnified by the Corporation against, all costs and expenses reasonably incurred by him or her in connection with or arising out of any claim, action, suit or proceeding of whatever nature in which he or she may be involved as a party or otherwise or with which he or she may be threatened by reason of his or her having served as a Trustee or Officer of the Corporation, or by reason of any action alleged to have been omitted by him or her as such Trustee or Officer, whether or not he or she be such Trustee or Officer at the time of incurring such cost or expenses, including amounts paid or incurred in connection with reasonable settlements (other than amounts paid to the Corporation itself) made with the approval of the Board of Trustees of the Corporation and with a view to the curtailment of costs of litigation.

No such reimbursement of indemnity shall be paid or made for any expenses incurred or settlement made by such Trustee or Officer in connection with any matter as to which he or she shall be finally adjudicated in any such action, suit, or proceeding not to have acted in good faith and in the reasonable belief that his or her action was in the best interest of the Corporation, nor shall the amount of any such reimbursement or indemnity paid or made to any Trustee or Officer in respect of any matter on which settlement or compromise is effected, including the amount paid by such a Trustee or Officer in such settlement, exceed the expense which might reasonably have been paid or incurred by such Trustee or Officer in conducting such actual or threatened litigation to a final conclusion.

Payment by the Corporation of expenses incurred by such Trustee or Officer in defending any claim, action, suit or proceeding in advance of its final disposition may be made upon receipt of an undertaking by the person indemni-

fied to repay such payment if he or she shall be adjudicated to be not entitled to indemnification under the laws of Massachusetts. The Corporation and its Trustees and Officers shall not be liable to anyone for making any determination as to the existence or absence of liability, or for making or refusing to make any payment hereunder the basis of such determination, or for taking or omitting to take any other action hereunder, in reliance upon the advice of counsel.

Article IX.

Miscellaneous Provisions

Section 1. The Bylaws of the Corporation may be made, amended or repealed at any Annual or Special Meeting of the Members at which a quorum is present by an affirmative two-thirds vote of those at-large and representative class members present and voting, each class voting as a separate class, provided that notice of the substance of the proposed amendment is stated in the notice of such meeting.

Article X.

Miscellaneous Provisions

Section 1. Parliamentary Authority. The parliamentary procedure shall be governed, in all cases not specifically covered by these Bylaws, by Robert's Rules of Order.

Section 2. Fiscal year. Except as from time to time otherwise determined by the Trustees, the fiscal year of the Corporation shall end on June 30th.

Section 3. Seal. The seal of the Corporation shall, subject to alteration by the Trustees, bear its name and the year of its incorporation.

Section 4. Execution of Instruments. All check, deeds, leases, transfers, contracts, bonds, notes and other obligations authorized to be executed by and officer of the Corporation in its behalf shall be signed by the Chair or the Treasurer except as the Trustees may generally or in particular cases otherwise determine.

Section 5. Evidence of Authority. A certificate by the Clerk or a temporary Clerk as to any action taken by the Trustees or any officer or representative of

the Corporation shall as to all persons who rely thereon in good faith be conclusive evidence of such action.

Section 6. Articles of Organization. All references in these Bylaws to the Articles of Organization shall be deemed to refer to the Articles of Organization of the Corporation, as amended and in effect from time to time.

Article XI.
Former Bylaws

Section 1. All former Bylaws will be revoked and repealed immediately prior to the Annual Meeting following the adoption of these Bylaws, provided that General Convention, by appropriate votes, supports the provisions therein.

BYLAWS OF THE WAYFARERS CHAPEL

The Wayfarers Chapel is a national memorial to Emanuel Swedenborg and its services and programs bear witness to the vision of Christianity set forth in the teachings of Swedenborg and in the tradition and practices of the Swedenborgian Church.

Honoring and respecting a variety of approaches to the religious life, the Chapel welcomes all people. The Chapel gardens and grounds are to be maintained beautifully, so that the whole site may be consecrated to the worship and love of God, nurturing the experience of the Divine presence among us.

The uses of the Chapel are many, providing a unique experience for individual wayfarers, couples, groups, and families as a place to meditate and commune with God; a place to nourish the soul and spirit unfettered by the usual man-made structural separations from the natural world that God has created.

The Chapel and grounds provide an inspirational background for the celebration of worship; sacraments and special services to commemorate our Lord's birth, the Last Supper, and resurrection; and the celebration of marriage, baptism, and the transition which is called death.

The educational ministry of the Chapel can be carried out in the Visitors Center including the sale of books, classes and discussion groups, exhibits, lectures and films. Marriage counseling, personal growth enhancement programs and community events are also an integral part of experiencing the Wayfarers Chapel.

In summary the Chapel's uses are: solace and meditation for the wayfarer, celebration of the Christian rites and sacraments, educational programs and exhibits, personal growth programs, and community involvement in an environment as harmonious with God's own natural beauty as the imagination can envision.

BYLAWS

PREAMBLE

The Board of Directors was established by a vote of the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the USA, Inc., currently known as and hereinafter referred to as The Swedenborgian Church, at its session in June 1950. The vote at that time read in part as follows: "Resolved – That the use, maintenance, and management of the property at Palos Verdes now known as 'The Wayfarers Chapel: a National Memorial to Emanuel Swedenborg,' be placed in the hands of a Committee consisting of five members, a majority of whom shall be members of this Convention, who shall be appointed by the President with the approval of the General Council, and in addition the President of Convention and the President of

the California Association (now known as the Pacific Coast Association) both ex officio: . . . the initial appointment of said five members to be for terms of one, two, three, four, and five years each; three of said members to be residents within the limits of the Pacific Coast Association.”

At the annual session of The Swedenborgian Church in June 1979, the General Council increased Board membership from five members to seven.

At the annual session of The Swedenborgian Church in June 1983, the General Council reduced the number of appointed members from seven to six.

ARTICLE I

MEMBERSHIP ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1.

In accordance with the action of the General Convention cited above, the appointive members of the Board shall consist of six persons, two appointments to be made each year by the President of The Swedenborgian Church with the approval of General Council. Board members shall be appointed for a term of three years. Those members who have served three consecutive three-year terms, including ex-officio members, shall not be eligible for immediate reappointment.

A member who is chairperson of the Board at the completion of the third year of his/her membership term shall have that membership extended to the close of the next fall meeting of the Board.

A person appointed to fulfill an unexpired term of two years or longer is eligible for reappointment to only two additional consecutive three-year terms. Vacancies on the Board shall be filled by appointment by the President of The Swedenborgian Church with approval of General Council.

Section 2.

Ex officio members of the Board shall include the President of The Swedenborgian Church, the President of the Pacific Coast Association, and the members of the Leadership Team. In the absence of the President of the Swedenborgian Church, the President’s designated representative may represent the President and be accorded full voting privileges. In the absence of the President of the Pacific Coast Association, or when a Leadership Team member is President, a designated representative may be appointed to represent him/her, and be accorded full voting privileges. The Leadership Team members shall serve without vote.

Section 3.

Three or more of the appointive members of the Board must reside within the limits of the Pacific Coast Association. All voting members of the Board must be members of The Swedenborgian Church.

ARTICLE II**OFFICERS****Section 1.**

The officers of the Board of Directors shall be a Chairperson, Treasurer, and Secretary.

Section 2.

The Chairperson of the Board shall preside at all meetings of the Board and its Executive Committee. In the absence of the Chairperson, the Secretary will convene the meeting and preside over the election of a Chairperson, Pro Tempore.

Section 3.

The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and one other Board member (called a Member at Large) plus the Leadership Team serving ex-officio, without vote. The Executive Committee shall have the power to act for the Board in the interim between Board meetings with the limitations set forth in Article IV, Section 2.

Section 4.

The Officers and other members of the Executive Committee shall be elected by the Board at the fall meeting and serve for one year.

ARTICLE III**MEETINGS****Section 1.**

There shall be three regular meetings of the Board, to be held normally in January, May, and September, open to all members of The Swedenborgian Church. The September meeting shall be the annual meeting. Special meetings of the full Board may be called by the Executive Committee or any three members of the Board, two of whom shall not be part of the Leadership Team. With the approval of the Board, any meeting can be held via telephone conference call. Votes taken by letter or the internet shall be confirmed at the next regular meeting of the Board. Minutes of the Board meetings shall be distributed to Board members and

shall be approved at the next meeting of the Board. A quorum shall consist of four voting members.

Section 2.

In the interim between Board meetings, the Executive Committee may meet if necessary. The Chairperson shall schedule an Executive Committee meeting upon request of any two members of the Executive Committee, one of whom may be an employee of the Board, or at the request of three members of the full Board, one of whom shall not be part of the Leadership Team. The Executive Committee minutes shall be distributed to all Board members. Actions of the Executive Committee shall be confirmed at the next meeting of the Board.

Section 3.

Between meetings of the Board, votes may be taken in any written form with the same effect as if taken at a regular meeting of the Board, except that in such written votes a two-thirds vote of the whole Board shall be necessary to decide the matter, and provided further that if any member of the Board requests its Chairperson in writing to delay action on the request under consideration, the Chairperson shall notify in writing all members of the Board of all objections made and reasons therefore, and shall allow two weeks for reversal of votes before the count of the vote is finally made.

Section 4.

The provisions of Robert's Rules of Order shall be used as a guide for the conducting of business.

Section 5.

Meetings of the Board or Executive Committee may be conducted by conference call, computer conference, or face to face.

ARTICLE IV

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 1.

The Board of Directors shall have superintendence of the services, programs, and activities of the Chapel. It shall employ the Leadership Team and evaluate their performance annually.

Members of the Board shall make themselves available to listen to problems and concerns of the Leadership Team and either individually or as a group, but decisions can only be made by the full Board or the Executive Committee as outlined in Article III.

The Board of Directors shall establish the general policies of the Chapel and

develop long-range plans for improvements.

The Board shall adopt the annual budget, submit copies to the General Council for their information and approval, and require a financial audit on the same schedule as the General Convention's audits, with a financial review in the years audits are not conducted.

The Board shall submit an annual report of The Wayfarers Chapel to the Secretary of The Swedenborgian Church for inclusion in the annual Journal of The Swedenborgian Church.

In carrying out its duties, the Board is responsible to The Swedenborgian Church and its General Council.

Section 2.

The Executive Committee shall act for the Board of Directors in the interim between Board meetings. Between Board meetings it shall have the authority to amend the budget so long as expenditures do not exceed the anticipated income.

The Executive Committee shall carry out the directives of the Board and act on all matters referred to it by the Board. It shall evaluate the effectiveness of the Leadership Team members and make recommendations to the full Board regarding their employment and salaries and other matters germane to Chapel operation.

Section 3.

The Leadership Team shall implement policies of the Board through day-to-day administration of Chapel activities as designated in the Responsibility Matrix. They shall employ, supervise, and evaluate Chapel staff. They shall keep the Board and Executive Committee informed of services, programs, activities, capital improvements, and the financial status of the Chapel.

Section 4.

The Leadership Team, working with the Treasurer, shall annually prepare a preliminary budget for the Board.

In carrying out their duties, the Leadership Team is responsible to the Board of Directors and its Executive Committee.

ARTICLE V

AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended at any meeting of the Board of Directors by a two-thirds vote of the Directors present at the time the vote is taken provided that notice of the proposed amendment shall first have been sent to Board members at least two weeks before the Board meeting. This notice may be dispensed with

for any special occasion by a unanimous vote of the Board members present and voting, provided a quorum exists.

Amendments to these Bylaws are subject to approval of the General Council.

Revised September 21, 2007. Approved by General Council July 2, 2008.

Revised January 8, 2010. Approved by General Council September 5, 2013.

Revised September 21, 2013. Approved by General Council November 1, 2013.

BYLAWS OF THE SWEDENBORGIAN COMMUNITY

A fully online, minister-led outreach and connectional ministry of the General Convention of the New Jerusalem, Inc.

The mission of this ministry is to create:

- a community where members are known to each other, feel free to share openly their personal journey of faith, and feel nurtured and supported in their walk with the Lord.
- an open and welcoming community for new spiritual seekers, introducing the Swedenborgian faith in an accessible way through powerful testimony and life experience with it.

BYLAWS

PREAMBLE – HISTORY

At its fall meeting in 2004, the General Council of the Swedenborgian Church (General Convention) determined to research the idea of an online ministry that would connect distant Church members and also be an outreach ministry to the world. A Research Committee was appointed for this project. The Research Committee reported regularly and in the summer of 2005, the General Council accepted a proposal to establish an online-only outreach and connectional ministry. The Research Committee was discharged with thanks and a Steering Committee was appointed to organize and create this Internet Ministry, with initial funding from the denomination.

In the fall of 2005, the Steering Committee brought a complete proposal to establish www.swedenborgiancommunity.org along with a request to fund a dedicated part-time minister. The General Council approved both requests and the search for a minister was opened. The General Council approved a part time contract for the first denominational “cyber minister” in the early spring of 2006, supported the design and implementation of a dedicated website for this new ministry and www.swedenborgiancommunity.org was officially launched at the denomination’s annual convention at Urbana University on June 26, 2006.

The Steering Committee continued to serve through June 27, 2008, when it was officially thanked for its diligent, excellent work and discharged. The General Council appointed an oversight committee for www.swedenborgiancommunity.org at its meeting on June 27, 2008. This committee is appointed annually by the General Council and has been named The Central Committee since 2011.

The General Council affirmed www.swedenborgiancommunity.org as a specific, recognized ministry of the denomination at its post-convention meeting

on July 8, 2012, in Bridgewater, MA.

ARTICLE I. CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Number and terms. The Central Committee of www.swedenborgiancommunity.org shall consist of three appointed members. Central Committee members will serve three-year terms, with one consecutive renewal possible. Terms of service will be staggered so that the entire committee membership is not new each year.

Central Committee Member Functions. The types of expertise and experience that the Central Committee will consider in recommending new members for the appointment include: familiarity with the functions of the General Convention, writing, ministry, financial budgeting and reporting, Internet technology, program creation and presentational skills. All Central Committee members will be/become registrants of the ministry, and at least one should be selected from the online community. At least two must be members of a General Convention ministry.

Appointment Process. Upon ratification and implementation of these Bylaws, the Central Committee will recommend Committee appointments to the General Council annually for affirmation by the General Council at its post-convention meeting.

Ex officio members. The minister of www.swedenborgiancommunity.org will serve ex officio without vote on the Central Committee, and is not counted toward a quorum. The Vice-President of the General Convention will serve ex officio with vote on the Central Committee.

Quorum. A quorum is achieved with one less than the number of voting Committee members at the time. If the Committee size should be reconfigured to six or more members, one more than half of the number of voting members will constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE II. OFFICERS

The Central Committee will self-select its internal organizational structure regarding facilitator, financial overseer and secretarial position from within its membership. If the Committee size should be reconfigured to six or more members, the Committee will formally vote to fill offices.

ARTICLE III. MEETINGS AND DECISION-MAKING

Regular and special meetings will be held via telephone conference call or computer-generated voice or video conference. As is possible, the Central Committee will meet in person during the annual convention of the Swedenborgian Church.

Generally, the Central Committee will make decisions through consensus. The Committee will have formal votes on legal matters such as the minister's annual contract recommendation, finalization of the annual budget for www.swedenborgiancommunity.org and on any major changes to the ministry's website.

ARTICLE IV. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE**Section 1. General responsibilities**

The Central Committee shall establish the general policies and have superintendence of the services, programs and activities of this ministry.

Individual members of the Committee shall make themselves available to listen to problems and concerns of the Minister or other employees, but decisions and/or adjudications can only be made by the Central Committee as a whole.

The Central Committee shall submit a report on the work of the online ministry to the General Council at least annually.

The Central Committee will also submit a report for inclusion in the annual Journal of the Swedenborgian Church.

Other reports will be prepared and submitted as necessary.

Section 2. Personnel Responsibilities

The Central Committee, following the denomination's open search process, will select the Minister for www.swedenborgiancommunity.org from the Roll of Ministers of the General Convention and recommend the hiring of that minister to the General Council of the General Convention. The contract will be between the selected Minister and the General Convention.

The Minister is responsible to the Central Committee and the Central Committee will evaluate the Minister annually. The Minister will implement policies of the Central Committee through day-to-day programming and services of www.swedenborgiancommunity.org. The Minister will report regularly to the Committee (frequency to be determined by the Committee and the Minister), and will direct/supervise and evaluate any part time technical/administrative assistant

if one should be in place.

Section 3. Financial responsibilities

The Central Committee, in consultation with the Minister, shall annually prepare a budget for the needs of www.swedenborgiancommunity.org. The Committee shall adopt the annual budget and submit it to the General Council for its approval. The annual budget for this ministry will be part of the complete annual budget of the General Convention, but the budget for www.swedenborgiancommunity.org will be administered by the Central Committee.

All financial transactions for www.swedenborgiancommunity.org will be handled through the General Convention's Central Office. As long as the day-to-day financial transactions are handled through the denomination's Central Office, and the ministry's annual budget is an identified part of the denomination's annual budget, audits and financial reviews of the finances of www.swedenborgiancommunity.org will be part of the overall audit/review process of the denomination as established by the General Council.

ARTICLE V. AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended at any meeting of the Central Committee by a two-thirds vote of the members present at the time the vote is taken, provided that notice of the proposed amendment shall first have been sent to Committee members at least two weeks before the Committee meeting. This notice may be dispensed with for any special occasion by a unanimous vote of the Committee members present and voting, provided a quorum exists.

Amendments to these Bylaws are subject to the approval of the General Council of the Swedenborgian Church in North America.

Approved by the General Council of the General Convention, June 25, 2013

Adopted by Central Committee of www.swedenborgiancommunity.org , July 13, 2013 (Central Committee membership at time of vote: Dr. Page Morahan, Rev. Dr. Jonathan Mitchell, Ms. Christine Laitner; Rev. Dr. Wilma Wake, ex officio w/o vote)

SWEDENBORGIAN BODIES

The following Swedenborgian organizations are independent of our organization but wish to maintain a close relationship with us. We welcome them in our fellowship.

UNITED STATES:

The General Church of the New Jerusalem

Mailing Address: Box 743, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009
P: (267) 502-4900
Exec. Bishop: Rt. Rev. Peter M. Buss, Jr.
Website: www.newchurch.org

The Lord's New Church Which is Nova Hierosolyma

Address: 1725 Huntingdon Road
Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006
P: (215) 947-2727
E-mail: info@thelordsnewchurch.org
Website: www.thelordsnewchurch.org

GREAT BRITAIN: The General Conference of the New Church of Great Britain

First Conference 1789; General Conference Deeds enrolled 1822. Incorporated, 1872

Headquarters: Purley Chase Centre, Purley Chase Lane, Mancetter,
Nr Atherstone, Warwickshire CV9 2RQ, England
Spiritual Leader: Rev. J Dunion
jack.dunion@generalconference.org.uk
Chair: Mrs. M. L. Cowie
Web Site: www.generalconference.org.uk

THE CONTINENTAL (EUROPEAN) ASSOCIATION OF THE NEW CHURCH

(Organized in 1965 by the French Federation, the Swiss Bund, the New Church in Germany, the New Church in Vienna, and the New Church in Italy.

Secretary: Rev. Jean Vidil
c/o Nouvelle Eglise et Centre Swedenborg
Rue Caroline 21
CH-1003, Lausanne, Switzerland
P: (0) 21-23-78-77

AUSTRIA: The New Church Society of Vienna

President: Mr. Werner Prochaska
Soesergasse 4, A-1010 Vienna

Secretary: Mrs. Gerda Scholz
Untere Augartenstrasse 1/3
A-1025 Vienna

Services: Intermittently at the home of Mr. W. Prochaska

DENMARK: Den Nye Kirkes Menighed

Vice Pres: Mr. Oliver Boolsen
Nansensgade 7 1 tv., 1366 Copenhagen V.
Tel: 31 13 52 39

Secretary: Miss Inger Ullrich,
Osterpark 1, 2630 Tastrup
Tel: 43-99 25 59

Treasurer: Mr. Manfred Ullrich
Valbyholm 33, 2, 292 Skellet, 2500 Valby
Tel: 36-45 00 30

Board Member: Mrs. Laura Boolsen
Osterbrogade 228, 1.th. 2100, Copenhagen O
Denmark
Tel: 369-27 04 15

Pastor: Rev. Gudmund Boolsen
Osterbrogade 228, 1.th. 2100 Copenhagen O
Denmark

FRANCE: Association Cultuzelle La Presle

Secretary: Colette Gagnon
Gvaude Rue, 71520 Tramayes

Chrysalis Centre (Workshops and Seminars)

Leader: Rev. Patrick Duvivier
Ipailla 06540 Saorge, France
Phone: 06 13 51 32 58
Email: Francecomechrysalis@msn.com

GERMANY: Neue Kirche in Deutschland

President: Mrs. Barbara Schmidt,
Rosbaumweg 21D-78 Freiburg i Br.

Berlin

President: Mr. Peter Keune
Schmarjestr. 2, D – Berlin – 37
Secretary: Mr. Werner Podlich
Falkenseer Chausse 207, D-1 Berlin 20
Treasurer: Mrs. Gertrude Engling
Services: Fontane Str. 17 A, Berlin 33, Grunewald

Berlin-Grunewald

Lay Leader: Mr. Peter Keune
Nordrhein Westfalen, Heuverstrasse 16, D-463
Bochum
President: Mr. Horst Moelleken
Im neuen Weg 34, D-5480 Remagen
Secretary: Rekha Moelleken
Im neuen Weg 34, D-5480 Remagen
Treasurer: Bernhard Willimzig, Detmold

South West Germany

President: Frau B. Schmidt
Rosbaumweg 20, 79110 Freiburg, Germany
Secretary: Mr. Friedmann Schmidt
Keferstrasse 3, Villigen D-7730
Lay Leader: Mr. Friedmann Schmidt

ITALY: Italian Society of the New Church

Secretary: Signor Fabio Barzelatto
Casella Postale 34, 30035 Mirano (VE), Italy

SWEDEN: Nya Kyrkans Svenska Forsamling

President: Mr. Milan Pokorný
Tallvagen 11, 12163 Johanneshov

Secretary: Mr. Nils-Sture Jansson
Distingsgrand, 37, Hagersten, Stockholm C

Services: Tegnerluden 7, Stockholm
(Occasionally at Gothenburg)

Pastor: Rev. Daniel Fitzpatrick

Lay Leader: Mr. Nils-Sture Jansson

SWITZERLAND: Neue Kirche Der Deutschen Schweiz

Apollostrasse 2, CH-8032 Zurich
www.swedenborg.ch

President: Mr. Heinz Grob Freie Str 22, CH-8280 Krenzlingen
Apollostrasse 2, CH-8032 Zurich

Treasurer: Mr. Philippe Galland, Rue San Pierre 3, case postale
62631002

Pastor: Jean Vidil
Rue Caroline 21, CH-1003, Lausanne
Tel: (0) 21-23 7877

PHILIPPINES: The National Convention of the Swedenborgian Churches (Philippines), Inc.

Incorporated in 1952. Consists of nine congregations totaling approximately 500 members.

General: Rev. Tomas C. Aquino

President: Dr. Simplicio de los Santos

Ministers: Rev. Tomas C. Aquino, Francisco Guzman,
Rev. Amos C. Aquino, Simplicio de los Santos

AUSTRALIA: The New Church in Australia

President: Rev. Julian Duckworth

Treasurer: Mr. Graham J. Hanna

Secretary: Mr. Kevin B. Attwatter
P.O. Box 9043, Port Macquarie, NSW, 2444
Website: www.newchurch.net.au/

AUSTRALIA: Australian New Church College

Director of Spiritual Training: Rev. David W. Millar
Website: www.anccollege.org

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland, Society of the New Church, 5 Ballarat St., Ellerslie
Minister: Rev. Richard Keyworth
15 Dunkirk Rd., Panmure, Auckland
Phone: 649-527 6401, E-mail: drkeyworth@hotmail.com

For further information consult the General Conference.

**OTHER NEW CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS AND
ADDRESSES ABROAD**

SOUTH AMERICA

Argentina, Buenos Aires

Christian Wildner
Sante Fe 1183, 3er Piso

Bolivia, La Paz

Richard Lago
Casilla 901

Ecuador, Quito

Hugo E. Happacher, c/o Lista de Correo

Paraguay, Chaco

Henry S. Bergen
Colonia Menno, Gruental

Surinam, Lilydorp

John Bosdorf

EAST INDIES

Java, Batavia

Ir. F. E. Eijken, Theresiahertweg 76

WEST INDIES**Cuba, Santiago**

Dr. J. Cos Oramos

Dominican Republic, St. Domingo

Mr. E. Juliao Abreu

Calle 5A, No. 14, Los Minas

Puerto Rico, Mayaguez

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2 Bosque Avenue, P.O. Box 848 00708

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George Herbert

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Madurai

New Church Society, David Arul, Secretary

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Mr. David Samuels, 5-23, 7 Wells Street

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Rev. Yoshii Yanase, Igusa 5-6-12, Suginami-Ku, Tokyo 167

Rev. Kei Torita, 1-170-3-1-606 Onuma-Cho, Kodaira-Shi, Tokyo 187-0001

Tokyo New Church, Rev. Kin'ichi Kinyeda

30-5 Iwasaki-cho, Hodogaya-ku, Yokohama, 240 Japan

Phone/Fax: 011-81-45-331-4089

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Rev. Young K. Lee, IPO Box 1707

Sri Lanka, Rajagiriya

The New Church of Sri Lanka, Walter Jayewardene, Secretary

6 1/3, Old Road, Nawala, Rajagiriya, Sri Lanka

AFRICA**South Africa**

Mooki Memorial College, P.O. Box 592, Orlando East 1803,
Republic of South Africa

President: President Archbishop Benjamin Ngwexane

Nigeria, Ondo

The New Church in West Africa

Conference Secretary: Rev. Lawrence Wariboko

Headquarters: Owo, Ondo, Nigeria

46 Fajuyi Road, P.O. Box 22, Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria

Mauritius, Curepipe

The New Jerusalem Church, Rue Remono, P.O. Box 50, Port Louis,
Rue Champ-de-Lort row 2

Rev. Raghbir Rizq

DIRECTORY OF ASSOCIATIONS

Please notify the Secretary of the Swedenborgian Church and the Central Office of any changes to this list.

EASTERN CANADA CONFERENCE

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Member Churches and Camps: Church of the Good Shepherd (Kitchener,
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Treasurer Barbara Halle
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Member Churches and Camps: The Swedenborg Library & Spiritual Growth
Center (Chicago, Illinois); LaPorte New Church (LaPorte, Indiana); Lenox
Township Church of the New Jerusalem (Norway, Iowa); Virginia Street Church
(St. Paul, Minnesota); Church of the Open Word (St. Louis, Missouri)

KANSAS ASSOCIATION

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OFFICERS

President **Carl Helm**

Vice-President *open*

Secretary Veneta Z. Lane

Treasurer Linda Kraus

Member Churches and Camps: Church of the New Jerusalem (Pawnee Rock, Kansas); Pretty Prairie New Jerusalem Church (Pretty Prairie, Kansas)

MAINE ASSOCIATION

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OFFICERS

President **Pastor Lorraine Kardash**

Vice-President Martha Richardson

Secretary Rev. Susannah Currie

Treasurer Robin Thurston

Member Churches and Camps: Bath New Church (Bath, Maine); Fryeburg New Church (Fryeburg, Maine); Fryeburg New Church Assembly (Fryeburg, Maine); Portland New Church (Portland, Maine)

MASSACHUSETTS NEW CHURCH UNION

CONTACT:

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OFFICERS

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Vice-PresidentRev. Donna Keane
SecretaryRev. Kevin Baxter
TreasurerMark Careaga
Board Members: (Representing Bridgewater) Marie Benoit, (Representing Cambridge) Mark Careaga, Herb Ziegler, (Representing Elmwood) Shirley Brigham, David Horton, (Representing Newtonville) Gretchen Frauenberger, Rev. Gladys Wheaton

Member Churches and Camps: Bridgewater New Jerusalem Church (Bridgewater, Massachusetts); Cambridge Society of the New Jerusalem (Cambridge, Massachusetts); Elmwood New Church (Elmwood, Massachusetts); Church of the Open Word (Newtonville, Massachusetts)

MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION

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SecretaryIan Barber
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TrusteesSharon Billings, Chris Laitner, Lori Patana
Member Churches and Camps: Almont New Church Assembly (Allenton, Michigan); Royal Oak Church of the Holy City (Royal Oak, Michigan)

MIDDLE ATLANTIC ASSOCIATION

CONTACT:

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Vice-President *open*

Secretary Rev. Shada Sullivan

Treasurer Robert W. "Robin" Tafel, Jr.

Member Churches and Camps: Church of the Holy City (Wilmington, Delaware); Church of the Holy City (Washington, District of Columbia); Temenos (West Chester, Pennsylvania)

NEW YORK ASSOCIATION

CONTACT:

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OFFICERS

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Vice-President *open*

Secretary Anna Martinian

Treasurer Young Chon Min

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OHIO ASSOCIATION

CONTACTS:

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OFFICERS

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Vice-President Gloria Toot
Recording Secretary..... Pastor Robbin Ferriman
Corresponding Secretary..... Anna Clem
Treasurer Frank G. Doyle III
Member Churches and Camps: Swedenborg Chapel (Cleveland, Ohio); New
Church of Montgomery (Cincinnati, Ohio); Urbana Society of the New Church
(Urbana, Ohio)

PACIFIC COAST ASSOCIATION

OFFICERS

President**Rev. Junchol Lee**
Vice-Presidentopen
Secretary Dr. Rebeccas Esterson
Treasurer Jennifer Lindsay
Members-at-large Pastor Helen Barler, Nancy Leras
Member Churches and Camps: Agapao Church, (Santa Ana, California), The
Garden Church, (San Pedro, California), New Church of the Southwest Desert
(Silver City, New Mexico), Swedenborgian Church of Puget Sound (Duvall,
Washington), Swedenborgian Church of San Francisco (San Francisco, Cali-
fornia), Hillside, an Urban Sanctuary (El Cerrito, California), Wayfarers Chapel
(Rancho Palos Verdes, California)

WESTERN CANADA CONFERENCE

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Taunya Semken Proudlove

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OFFICERS

President **Kelly Kennedy**

Vice-President Ardith Francis

Secretary Taunya Semken Proudlove

Treasurer Ardith Francis (acting)

Alberta Representative: Amanda Runka, *British Columbia Representative:*

Colleen Weins, *Manitoba Representative:* Gord Schellenberg, *Saskatchewan*

Representative: Darlene Sawatzky

Member Churches and Camps: Calgary New Church Society (Calgary, Alberta); Church of the Holy City (Edmonton, Alberta); Paulhaven Camp (Edmonton, Alberta)

DIRECTORY OF CHURCHES AND MINISTRIES

Please notify the Secretary of the Swedenborgian Church and the Central Office of any changes to this list, including area codes.

CALIFORNIA

EL CERRITO

HILLSIDE, AN URBAN SANCTUARY

1422 Navellier Street, El Cerrito, CA 94530-2255

E: hillside1422@gmail.com (510) 235-3646

W: www.hillsideswedenborg.org

Minister Rev. Thom Muller

Licensed Pastor Pastor Tassy Farwell

President..... Peter Gottschalk

Vice-President Birrell Walsh

Secretary Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence

Treasurer Holly Gottschalk and Pastor Tassy Farwell

Board..... Dr. Rebecca Esterson and Wendy Soneson

ORANGE COUNTY

AGAPAO CHURCH

288 Finch Street, Lake Forest, CA 92630

E: newchurchca@gmail.com (949) 422-9166

Licensed Pastor and President..... Pastor Jae Hyon Chung

Vice-President Tae Hwa Jo

Treasurer Sandy S. Kim

RANCHO PALOS VERDES

WAYFARERS CHAPEL

5755 Palos Verdes Drive South, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275-5950

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E: davidb@wayfarerschapel.org F: (310) 377-8589

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Chair..... Peter Gottschalk

Secretary Open

Treasurer Robert Carr

Board Member Stan Conger

Board Member Rev. H. Tafel

Board Member	John Booth
Board Member	Katharine Carr
Board Member	Michael Robbins
Board Member	Rev. Dr. Jim Lawrence
Executive Director:	Rev. Dan Burchett
Chapel Minister:	Rev. Dr. David Brown

SAN FRANCISCO

SAN FRANCISCO SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH

2107 Lyon Street, San Francisco, CA 94115-1611

Mail: 3200 Washington Street, San Francisco, CA 94115-1622

E: office@sfswebenborgian.org (415) 346-6466

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Minister **Rev. Junchol Lee**

President **Jennifer Lindsay**

Vice-President Andrew Jack Dodd

Secretary Laurie Carlson

Treasurer Robert Carr

SAN PEDRO

THE GARDEN CHURCH

429 W. 6th Street, San Pedro, CA 90731

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 5257, San Pedro, CA 90733-5257

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W: www.gardenchurchsp.org

Lead Pastor **Rev. Dr. Amanda Adams Riley**

Co-Pastor **Rev. Dr. David Brown**

Chair Elizabeth Sala

Vice-Chair Dottie Wine

Secretary Renee Almanza-Andersen

Treasurer *open*

DELAWARE

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CHURCH OF THE HOLY CITY

1118 North Broom Street, Wilmington, DE 19806-4315

E: thechurchoftheholycity@gmail.com (302) 654-5014

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MinisterRev. Shada Sullivan

PresidentJean Dougherty

Vice-President Ed Lach

Secretary Mildred Laako

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DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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Vice-PresidentMalcolm Peck

SecretarySheri Smith

Treasurer Tony Raffa

Member-at-large: Niki Ahamdi

ILLINOIS

CHICAGO

THE SWEDENBORG LIBRARY & SPIRITUAL GROWTH CENTER

77 West Washington Street, Room 1700, Chicago, IL 60602-3182

E: swedlib@gmail.com

(312) 346-7003

W: www.swedLib.org

Library Hours: Wed. & Fri., 1pm-5pm Central Time

Licensed Pastor **Pastor Karen Feil**

President **Catherine Laakko**

Vice-President **Amy Pappageorge**

Secretary/Treasurer **Pastor Karen Feil**

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812 Indiana Avenue, LaPorte, IN 46350-3406

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W: www.laportenewchurch.org

Minister **Rev. Kit Billings**

President **Tammra Mounce**

Vice-President **Jane McFeaters**

Secretary **Dawn Fox**

Treasurer **Barb Halle**

Trustee: Pat Tukos

IOWA

NORWAY

LENOX TOWNSHIP CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM

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(319) 329-9155

President **Jordan Uthoff**

Vice-President **Tom Hart**

Secretary **Kaci Uthoff**

Treasurer **Mike Weaver**

KANSAS

PAWNEE ROCK

CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM (SWEDENBORGIAN)

P.O. Box 2, 300 Santa Fe Avenue, Pawnee Rock, KS 67567-0002

W: www.facebook.com/PawneeRockNewChurch (620) 982-4520

President Connie Helm

Vice-President Vivian Bright

Secretary Anita Wilson

Treasurer Howard Bowman

PRETTY PRAIRIE

NEW JERUSALEM CHURCH

106 North Maple Street, Pretty Prairie, KS 67570-8615

Mailing address: P.O. Box 212, Pretty Prairie, KS 67570-8615

E: joyce.dnc.jb@gmail.com (620) 899-2200

W: www.facebook.com/NewJerusalemChurchPrettyPrairieKS

President Joyce Barker

Vice-President Veneta Lane

Secretary Jean Conkling

Treasurer Debbie Siebert

Trustees: Ron Graber, Linda Kraus, Melvin Schwartz

MAINE

BATH

BATH CHURCH OF THE NEW JERUSALEM

876 Middle Street, Bath, ME 04530

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FRYEBURG NEW CHURCH

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A SWEDENBORGIAN COMMUNITY ONLINE

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Committee Member Rev. Thom Muller

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1513 Cameron Road, Allenton, MI 48002-2201

(810) 798-8487

E: lorip.almontretreatcenter@gmail.com

W: www.almontretreats.com

Summer School Director: Craig Carson

A family camp. Modern facilities and a pond for swimming and fishing make this camp outstanding, but the keynote of Almont is Camp Spirit! From the flag raising ceremony and the singing of “Fling to the Breeze Our Glorious Banner!” to the evening vesper service, Almont campers of all ages are alive with projects, classes, games, and skits – helping one another, working and playing together as a big family.

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FRYEBURG NEW CHURCH ASSEMBLY

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E: ddyer@fryeburg.org

Camp Director: Rebekah Greenwood

E: rgreenwood@fryeburg.org

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About the Fryeburg New Church Assembly:

The FNCA is a two-week, multi-generational, Swedenborgian family camp typically held the beginning of August, located on 20+ acres of pine forest on the banks of the refreshing waters of the Saco River in Fryeburg, Maine.

The Main Building includes our dining hall, kitchen, lecture hall, adult lounge, children’s lounge, teen girls’ dorm, several second-floor private rooms, and two first floor rooms—each with a private half bath. Other buildings include nineteen family units located in cabins along the ridge overlooking the river, teen boys’ dorm, teen lounge, and laundry room. Tent and RV sites are also available with a bathhouse nearby. The Summer Session program includes something for everyone: chapel, lectures, religion classes and special programming for the children and teens, swimming, canoeing, and evening programs presented by campers. Horseshoes, volleyball, four-square, and ping pong are enjoyed during free time, working up an appetite for delicious meals provided by professional cooks, supplemented by a well-stocked salad bar.

What was originally called “the Promised Land” is now called “Our little slice of Heaven on Earth.”

PAULHAVEN

c/o The Church of the Holy City

9119-128 A Avenue, Edmonton, AB T5E 0J6 Canada

For information, contact Dianne Roessinger (403) 239-4192

Paulhaven children's camp is held at a wooded site on a lovely lake. Accommodations are primitive. The children are housed in cabins, but there is no running water, so this is a true camping experience. Adults do the cooking, but the children share in the chores of housekeeping. The religious program is staffed by members of the Western Canada Conference, which sponsors the camp. Swimming, boating, crafts, sports, hiking and group activities are enjoyed by campers and staff together. Campers come from widely scattered places, and camp is a high point in the lives of youngsters who often get only this opportunity to be with other New Church children.

TEMENOS

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