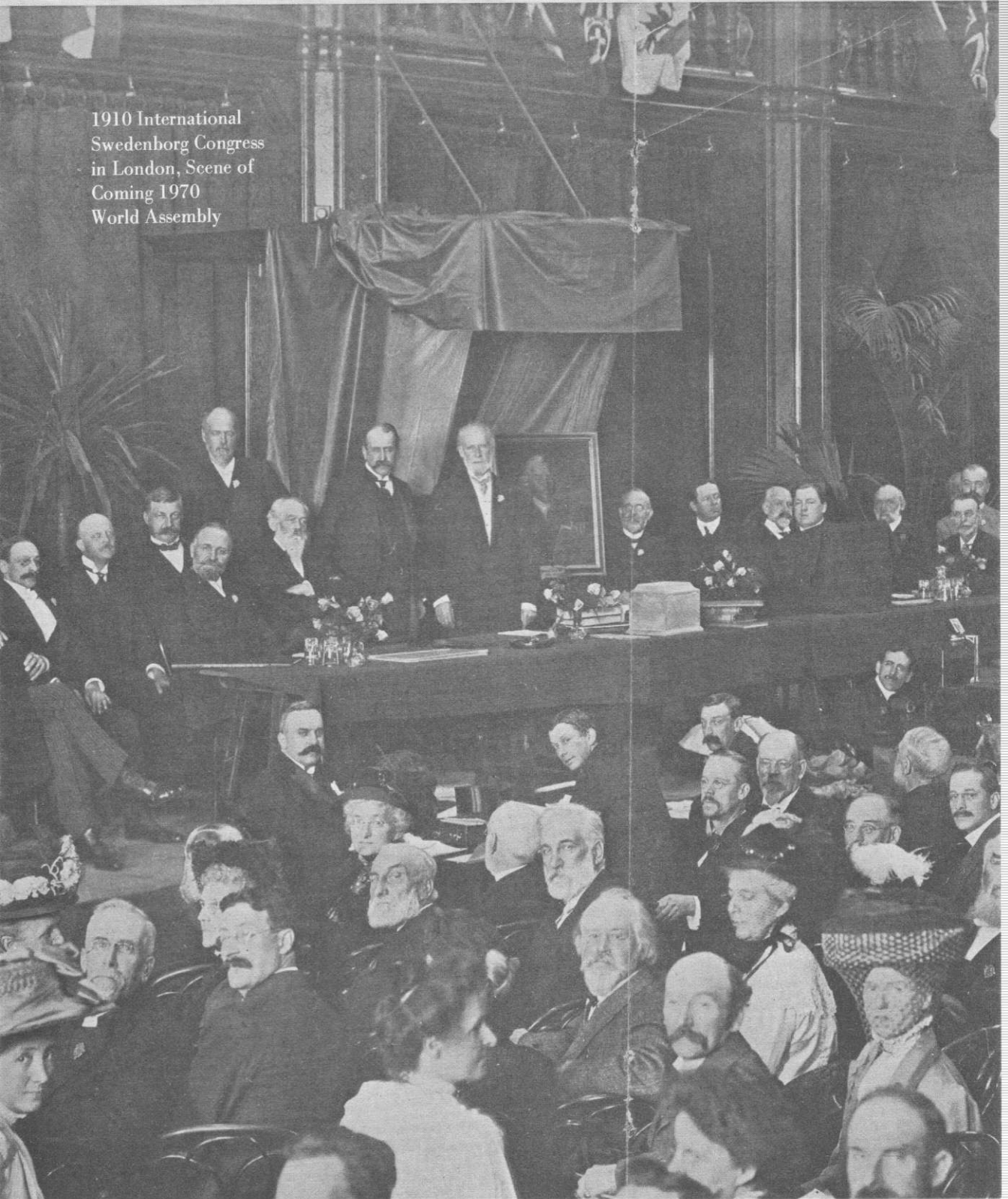


THE MESSENGER

Official Organ of the Swedenborgian Church

FEBRUARY 1970

1910 International
Swedenborg Congress
in London, Scene of
Coming 1970
World Assembly



REPORT TO THE GENERAL COUNCIL, JANUARY, 1970

Ernest O. Martin, President

OBSERVATIONS, CONCERNS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS

Program Link:

We are indebted to Bob Kirven for his penetrating study of the church program in Bellevue, Washington. His report includes an historical background of the program, descriptions of the spiritual growth groups, case histories of group participants, psychological evaluations of the groups, a study of the Fellowship as a form of the Church, an evaluation of the field work program in training our theological students, and the theological and sociological implications of the program.

The Board of Managers of the Swedenborg School of Religion spent several hours discussing Bob's report at their meeting on January 10. Because the report was not completed, the Managers were reluctant to make any kind of final evaluation. They voted to continue the evaluation and to ask the General Council to extend its deadline for another year.

As President of Convention, I am strongly in favor of Program Link, and see it as the most positive

and constructive program in the church today. Dorothea Harvey, chairman of the Board of Managers, has given the program her whole-hearted endorsement. She writes: "This is the most valuable experience we could give our students for the ministry, of what the church now has to offer, and we should continue to require it." The faculty of the SSR sees the field work program at Bellevue as an indispensable part of a student's training for the ministry.

I hereby recommend that Program Link be continued for the coming year, under the jurisdiction of the Swedenborg School of Religion, and that we ask the Board of Managers to communicate their recommendations to us upon the completion of their study.

Research and Planning:

I see an urgent need for a Research and Planning Committee to explore possibilities for the future of the church, and to make recommendations to the appropriate bodies of Convention. I recommend that such a committee be made up of the President of Convention, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, and the President of the Swe-

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Vol. 190 No. 2

February 1970

Whole No. 4929

Published monthly, except for the one double issue in July-August, at the office of the Editor, c/o Swedenborg School of Religion, 48 Sargent St., (P.O. Box E) Newton, Mass. 02158.

Second class postage paid at Boston, Mass.

The Messenger is the official organ of the Swedenborgian Church, founded 1817, incorporated as the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America.

Printed at Thomas Todd Company, 14 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. 02108. Incorporated publisher: the Swedenborg Press, Box 143, Madison Square Station, New York, N. Y. 10010.

Subscription free to members of the Swedenborgian Church; non-members, \$3.00 a year; foreign postage, 25 cents extra. Gift subscriptions, if from a member, \$1.50. Single copies, 25 cents. Address subscriptions, checks, changes of address to the Publisher, Box 143, Madison Square Station, New York, N. Y. 10010.

Contributions toward the cost of publishing should be sent to:

The Treasurer, Swedenborgian Church

Chester T. Cook, Box 215, Deer Isle, Maine 04627

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Address all editorial correspondence and manuscripts to the Editor, *The Messenger*, P. O. Box E, Newton, Mass. 02158. The opinions of contributors do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or the Department of Publication, or represent the position of the church.

GENERAL COUNCIL MEETS IN PHILADELPHIA

The General Council held its mid-winter meeting at the Franklin Motor Inn in Philadelphia, January 23-25. Members met for supper at 6:30 P.M. on Friday, the 23rd, and began their formal meeting at 8:00 P.M. Present were Ernest O. Martin, president; Stewart E. Poole, vice-president; Chester T. Cook, treasurer; Ethel Rice, secretary; Randall Laakko, Peter Greeley, Norman Bestor, Paul Zacharias, Robert Tafel, Adolph Liebert, Richard H. Tafel, Virginia Branstom, Robert Young, August Ebel and Ellsworth Seibert.

The agenda included 35 items of business. Some were dispatched in a matter of seconds. Others took as long as 2 hours. The president, vice-president and treasurer had met all day Friday to put the finishing touches on the budget, and printed copies were available for all members when the council meeting began.

At its meeting the Council:

LISTENED to an encouraging up-to-date report from Urbana College by its president, Dr. Paul Zehner.

ADOPTED a budget of \$116,633 for the fiscal year 1970-1971, presented by the treasurer, Chester T. Cook.

ASKED that minutes of all meetings of Convention boards and committees be sent to General Council members so that they can be kept informed of Convention-wide activities and concerns.

STUDIED voting age requirements for convention delegates and agreed that delegates who were eligible to vote in their local churches would be certified as eligible to vote as delegates at convention.

SAW AND HEARD a colored-slide presentation of the National Council of Churches general assembly held in Detroit in December.

CONSIDERED a new pension plan for ministers presented by the Rev. Jerome Poole. The officers of Convention were asked to give further study to the proposal and make specific recommendations.

DISCUSSED the status of the national church in Washington, D. C., and recommended the development of a plan to make better use of the resources, which might well mean the sale of the property and the initiation of a new program. It was pointed out that Convention has adopted the policy of holding its annual meetings on college campuses and is unlikely to use the national church for any future convention.

REVIEWED the recommendation of the Board of Managers of the Swedenborg School of Religion that continued support be given to Program Link in Bellevue, Washington. Dr. Robert H. Kirven is completing a book-length study of the Bellevue program for the Board of Managers.

LOOKED at copies of the 1969 Convention Journal, fresh off the press, and voted to publish no Journal in 1970 (in the absence of a convention). A combined 1970-1971 Journal will be issued in 1971.

READ a report of the 1970 World Assembly to be held in London, submitted by the Rev. Othmar Tobisch. Registrations have been received from 190 persons, including 24 ministers and 17 wives.

APPROVED the appointment of a Research and Planning Committee made up of the president of Convention, chairman of the Council of Ministers, president of the Swedenborg School of Religion, and such consultants as they may engage. This committee will explore possibilities for the future of the church and make recommendations to appropriate bodies.

VOTED to sponsor a conference for selected laymen to share hopes, dreams, and ideas for the future development of the church.

HEARD a report from Stewart E. Poole that an increasing number of churches (including Associations) have joined Convention's "common fund," depositing their endowed funds in the Bank of Delaware. We have established our own mutual fund and receive the benefit of professional investment counsel.

REPORT cont'd. from p. 14

denborg School of Religion, with such consultants as they may wish to engage.

The church is engaged in a number of new ventures, including Program Link, El Cerrito, Cincinnati, and Miami, but it is important that an overall strategy be developed and communicated to the whole church. The conference at Urbana in August 1968 was an important step in long-range planning. The conference last June of faculty, managers, and directors of the theological school was equally important. The Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers is recommending a conference of laymen to feed new input into our long-range planning.

Central Office:

Convention's central office might be said to consist of the president, Ernest Martin; the editor of *The Messenger*, Robert Kirven; and the chairman of the Board of Missions, George Dole. Secretarial services are performed by Gladys Baker and Leona Freedman. Facilities such as the electric mimeograph machine and the SCM copier are shared with the theological school.

Copy for *The Messenger* is prepared each month on our new IBM composer. The 1969 Convention Journal was also prepared on the composer and will be distributed the end of January. The Department of Publication is also planning to publish some pamphlets through the central office.

We are grateful to the theological school for providing rent-free office space plus heat, light and telephone service. We have ample room for the archives of the church in the fire-proof vault of the school library, and for the files and records formerly kept in the office of Horace Blackmer when he was secretary of Convention. The Board of Missions files will also be kept here. We have an up-to-date address list of all Convention members, and mailings are made through the Boston Mailing Co.

MEETINGS OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES:

Board of Publication, August 4
Swedenborg School of Religion, Board of Directors, October 9
Board of Education, October 19-20
Trustees of Urbana College, October 18
Research and Development Committee, Oct. 31-Nov. 1

ANCL Executive Committee, November 2
Augmentation Fund Committee, November 3
Board of Missions, November 7-8
Wayfarers' Chapel, Board of Managers, November 14-15
Committee of Board of Education, December 31
Council of Ministers, Executive Committee, Jan. 4-5, 1970
Swedenborg School of Religion, Board of Managers, Jan. 9-10
Trustees of the National Church, January 18

ASSOCIATION MEETINGS:

Massachusetts Association, Newtonville, Oct. 4
Connecticut Association, New Haven, Oct. 14
Ohio Association, Cincinnati, Oct. 19

MEETINGS WITH LOCAL CHURCH MINISTERS, OFFICERS OR COMMITTEES:

Cincinnati, October 19
Cleveland, October 28
El Cerrito, November 16-17
San Francisco, November 16-18
Portland, Oregon, November 18-19
Vancouver, B.C., November 19-20
Colorado Springs, Colorado, November 20-23
Detroit, November 30
Washington, D. C., Jan. 18-19, 1970

PREACHED:

Congregational Church, Bridgton, Maine, August 17
Mass. Association, Newtonville, October 4
Conn. Association, New Haven, October 14
Ohio Association, Cincinnati, October 19
Colorado Springs, Colorado, November 23
Detroit, Michigan, November 30

SPECIAL SERVICES:

Dedication of Cincinnati Church, October 19
Resurrection Services:
Bell Quayle, Michigan, October 22
John Boyle, Cleveland, Ohio October 27

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

General Board, Indianapolis, September 11-12
General Assembly, Detroit, November 29-December 5

SWEDENBORG SCHOOL OF RELIGION:

Entertained students, faculty, and wives at our home, September 26
Join students, faculty, and families for luncheon each Thursday, and participate in school chapel services
Led discussion of a tape recording on "Life After Death" by Bishop Pike, November 7, at meeting of students, faculty, and families

THE NEW CHURCH WORLD ASSEMBLY 1970

Thursday 2nd July to Sunday 5th July

The complex threads of arrangements for the Assembly will soon emerge as a single strand so that early in 1970 members of New Church organizations throughout the world will receive a brochure giving the programme of events. The total number who can attend any meeting is limited to five hundred people because that is the maximum permitted in the Victoria Hall, Bloomsbury Square, London where most of the sessions will be held. This means that admission will have to be by ticket only. The cost of a ticket will be 8 pounds or \$20.00 U.S. which will cover the expenses of the Assembly, morning coffee, lunches, tea in the afternoon on the Thursday, Friday and Saturday, the Assembly Social on the Friday evening, and a buffet supper at the Houses of Parliament.

Recognising that not everyone will be able to attend all meetings, the tickets are transferable so that full use can be made of them. Tickets will not be necessary to attend the united service of Worship on the Sunday, as this will be held in the St. Pancras Assembly Hall in Camden Town Hall, Euston Road almost opposite St. Pancras Station, where there is room for nearly a thousand people. Even one restless small child can disturb a service of worship, so provision has been made for small children to be taken care of by capable "mothers" in a room in Camden Town Hall. Everyone attending worship will receive a souvenir copy of the order of service which can flow through in sequence and dignity without being punctuated by announcements: and to avoid a lengthy disturbance while the offertory is taken, those attending are asked to place their offerings on arrival in the bowls placed in the entrance of the Assembly Hall.

It has not been practicable to arrange for lunch on the Sunday.

The parking of cars in London is difficult at any time, and anyone travelling to the Assembly by car is advised to leave the car on the outskirts of the city and complete the journey by tube train or bus.

Sacramental services conducted according to the liturgical forms adopted by Conference, Convention and the General Church will be held on the

Saturday afternoon at the Conference societies at Kensington and Camberwell Churches and the General Church society in Brixton.

On the Sunday afternoon when visitors to the Assembly will be touring "Swedenborg's London", there will be an opportunity for those who have been unable to attend the meetings of the Assembly to meet the leading celebrities from overseas. Tickets will not be required for this. The President of Convention, the Rev. Ernest Martin and Bishop Willard Pendleton of the General Church have already signified their willingness to be present and there will be others. In making these arrangements the London Committee hoped particularly that young people of New Church organizations in Britain would take this first opportunity of meeting the leaders of the New Church from other countries. No special events have been arranged for them as it is felt they are as able as any older members of the Assembly to participate in the proceedings.

The tour of the Houses of Parliament and Supper in the Members' dining room should be an interesting experience. This has been arranged partly because the informality of a Buffet Supper gives much better opportunities for social contacts than is possible at a formal banquet. One of the great achievements of this World Assembly will be that for the first time in history members of the various organizations of the New Church throughout the world will be meeting together in a spirit of charity and goodwill. If the Assembly achieves nothing more than that, it will have been worthwhile.

In my next issue of "notes" I should be able to show how we have "spread the load" to ensure that leaders from various parts of the world take their part in each day's service of worship and in the general proceedings. Meantime readers may like to know that on the Wednesday preceeding the Assembly (1st July) at the Victoria Hall, the General Convention is holding a meeting covering a number of subjects (which will appear in the Brochure) when they invite visitors to be present. That same evening the Women's League of Britain, with whom the Women's Guild General Church will be collaborating, will be arranging a social. But I will leave them to advertise their own arrangements.

Individuals seeking further information are asked to get in touch with the New Church organization with which they are associated. They should not write directly either to the Secretary to the Assembly or to me!

*Roy Griffith
London*

SWEDENBORGIANS IN AFRICA

In the course of a study tour around Africa, Jean Heydon Hoyt and Eleanor Spiers Allen contacted a Bantu Swedenborgian group in South Africa. The following is an account of their visit.

South Africa is a beautiful country where Bantu (blacks) outnumber Africans (whites) four to one. There are about half as many Coloreds (mixed race) as whites and half as many Asians (Indians) as Coloreds. Signs are always in both Afrikaans and English, the two official languages. Multiracial politics and meetings are outlawed except by permit.

We were booked for a week in and out of Johannesburg and our most rewarding experience was in the Bantu city of Soweto, ten miles southwest of Johannesburg. It is an exclusive non-white community, equipped with neat brick homes, sewage, electricity, running water, schools, hospitals (all free), etc. Its population is 700,000 and is composed of 40 townships. During the second World War, industries in the cities attracted black labor and the unemployed crowded into inadequate housing, resulting in slum dwellings of the most miserable kind stretching miles out from the city limits. Faced with the prospect of cities becoming increasingly black, dominated by slums that were breeding places for crime and disease, the ruling Nationalist party decided on a program of building two distinct nations in South Africa. This program called Apartheid (pronounced Apart-hate), envisioned building settlements for the Bantu, giving them their own homes and community government. In time they would become completely self-governing in their own "Bantustans" and South Africa would then emerge as two distinct nations, one black and the other white living side by side. In Johannesburg the slums have been almost cleared, the result being Soweto which has its own City Council and mayor, but admission to the city is strictly controlled by the Johannesburg Council. Subsidized buses take the Bantu to and from work in the all-white city. Everyone has to have identification cards but the non-white cards are called passes and are more often inspected. Surprisingly, the press of South Africa is practically uncensored, and there is a Bantu press which speaks out boldly. The Rand Daily Mail of Johannesburg has become world famous for its reports on the conditions of imported mine workers.

Whites are allowed in Soweto only by official permit or if a head Bantu man is the escort. Jean and I were privileged to meet both requirements. Our first venture into that unusual city was with the tour group in an official bus. The bus stopped only twice, the first time at a lovely little park in the center of the city. It had an old stone tower and replicas of primitive thatched roof huts. There was also an artistically decorated park-house where we were served tea and soft drinks. The other bus stop was at an Olympic-sized swimming pool teeming with black boys in regulation swim suits, crowding eagerly over one another to have their pictures taken. We passed through street after street of compact little brick houses, schools, etc. With each house came a choice of two fruit trees for the tiny yards. Most of the streets were paved. There was some litter. Having read of the exploitive and confining nature of apartheid, it was a surprise to see no barbed wire around their community and no policemen. The oldest township in Soweto is Orlando and its main street is Mooki Boulevard, on which street is found the Mooki Memorial College, in memory of the Rev. David Mooki, who is responsible for the introduction of Swedenborg into South Africa.

Our second visit to Soweto was due to the good offices of the Rev. Brian and Mrs. Kingslake, New Church minister now serving in Washington, D. C. Mr. Kingslake had been General Superintendent of the Bantu missions in South Africa before coming to America. The missions were then under the auspices of the British Conference, but have been autonomous since January 1969. His secretary had been the Rev. Obed Mooki, son of the Rev. David. Mr. Mooki is now General Superintendent, having taken Mr. Kingslake's place. He is a very busy man, travelling all over South Africa, ministering to the leaders of its 25,000 members and teaching theological students.

Earlier in the week, Mr. Mooki had gotten in touch with us by phone and arranged to call for us on Sunday morning, March 2, to take us to his church. He proved to be a most delightful, outgoing and enthusiastic person. . . As we entered the yard of the Mooki Church, we were greeted by Mrs. Mooki and two members and ushered into their small but well furnished apartment attached to the rear of the Church. Mrs. Mooki is a pleasant, short, ample person and a real bundle of talent. She is not only organist and choir leader, organizer of the Women's

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REPORT FROM URBANA

Spring 1969

The winter has been mild for the students of Urbana College. While the east and west coasts suffered a siege of storms not only in weather, but in campus demonstrations, the people of Urbana and Urbana College were grateful for a quieter time. Nobody is unmindful of the fact that we are living in a turmoil before the greatest breakthrough in history. With men on the moon, true pioneering begins again. In the meantime man struggles for a breakthrough in surgery (replacing hearts and other vital organs) in psychiatry (working with central nervous systems) as well in wide areas of technology.

Many people view with alarm the deviants from the norm, and the irrationality of violence everywhere. I have read that "Stress occurs when an individual is no longer sure of himself or of the values he has traditionally held. When people act in a way they are not supposed to act, then we know stress is present."

The whole movement of Urbana College is like watching one person as he lives through the present because college is the original launching pad on this earth.

The average student is fully aware of big events coming, and he is under pressure to prepare himself for them. Petty frustrations seem magnified and he "blows his cool" over such things as needed gravel for the path through the woods from Browne to North Hall, an unnecessary mess in lounges that inconsiderate students render less than cozy and homelike. Additional parking areas needed by commuter students are a further gnat in the gravy, or perhaps some students want more voice in administration or choosing a college president. Strangely enough, although he may be overwhelmed by trivialities, a full schedule of studies, and little enough rest he frequently gripes that there "isn't enough to do" for recreation on weekends. The oldster is more likely to be the person who says with spirit, "This is an exciting and thrilling time in which to live. I'm glad to be part of it." A student is more apt to quote what somebody said, "The phenomenon of our time is that most people are wildly indignant about everything."

How many people have read an important new book, and then placed it (useless) on a shelf for ornamentation instead of mailing it as a contribution to the Urbana College Library?

The spokesman of tomorrow is on campus today. He will return perhaps in twenty-five years to talk to students on some homecoming weekend. Success should not be measured chiefly by money. His achievements may be scientific, humanistic, philosophic, economic, literary—not necessarily philanthropic.

You feel the youthful eagerness on campus as the student body reaches out, swatting the fly of destructive and distracting elements, moving into orbit of the coming breakthrough in all fields of endeavor.

Autumn 1969

There are many precious features about Urbana College that are somewhat or altogether lacking in huge, impersonal universities.

It means a great deal to a student to know his professor, to socialize with him, and to perhaps be invited to his home for an evening with other young people.

No matter how interesting, exciting, or charming any college may be, a student is ready to get away for a little while when Friday night comes. It isn't that he likes college any less, but perhaps the atmosphere of any institution plus the fatigue of studying all week makes him want to get off campus for awhile. Friday night is the zero hour of the week! Freshmen do not have cars, but in a small town like Urbana it is only a walk of a few blocks to reach the recreational facilities of the community. Older students with cars drive to Springfield, Dayton, or Columbus, none of which are far. But they don't have to contend with city traffic problems and noise just all of the time as if they were commuting to an enormous school, and then walking a great distance between classes.

People are changeable, and young people are no exception. One student who came in last fall said to me, "I don't want to be with all these cruddy kids, and I didn't choose this school." She has now changed her mind, intends to graduate here, and is grateful she waited long enough to appreciate Ur-

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VIRUS OR VITAMIN?

Recently as I rode two or three hundred miles by car on a Sunday, I felt like a mere lone virus in the blood-stream of a monster wholly ignorant of me or of anything I had to give it. And yet—knowing the Doctrines of the New Church, I thought I ought to be capable of helping to inoculate the monster with something that might prevent it from becoming a Lost Civilization with vast ruins of its greatness such as are found in parts of Central and South America. We were among hordes of moving pleasure vehicles—some passing us, some going our way—along tracts undisturbed by traffic lights, but punctuated by STOP—PAY—TOLL barriers.

We passed pile after pile of pan-cake-layer apartments—all occupied—all expensive, after passing clusters and clusters of separate houses—all occupied—all expensive. Patches of woodland and grass were preserved for their beauty along the way.

The long trip “there and back” which included a Church service and meetings with friends and the ride among hordes of fellow-travelers made me wonder about the Possibilities of the New Church. Old fashioned “Church-Going” has little, if any vitality left to it. In what form can the Virus or the Vitamin of the New Church take effect on the “monster” of humanity—even its intelligent and receptive part?

The “monstrous” civilization, of which I am after all a part, urges some people—both young and old—to try to get together to do this or that to it.

One marvel of our civilization is that such a ride was possible in a day, including the Church attendance and the visiting. Another wonder of our civilization was that we had music all the way—such as we chose to hear—not any of it forced upon us or interfering with what others chose to hear.

During the Church Service we were assured, at one point, that the Lord’s Church should come to “every kindred and tongue and people and nation” when the “little book should be opened” which contains the infinite particulars which the Lord alone knows but which are to be made known.

What can the tiny virus or vitamin of New Church Doctrine—not any mere Creed, but the entire wis-

dom newly given, do in the vast multitude of people “represented” by what one sees on a ride along a main highway on a Sunday?

Perhaps Vitamin NOT Virus should be the symbol of what the New Church Doctrine can do. A Virus does its work and can be recovered from. But when the real contents of New Church Doctrine gets into Society, will it not like a “Vitamin” or mineral work a beneficent transformation and renewal, making what is good in our civilization much better able to function?

Cornelia Hinkley Hotson

Mrs. Hotson is an isolated member with long-time connections with the church, and is a frequent contributor to The Messenger.

URBANA cont'd. from p. 19

bana College. It reminds me of a friend who came over from England, liked nothing here and was homesick, returned to her own country and then returned to live permanently in America. Perhaps comparison requires time.

I feel respect for the sensible, courageous, intelligent young people I meet at Urbana College. They tell me how their parents struggle to give them a college education. They show a loving, concerned spirit for family illnesses and problems. Many of them have to rush home after classes to help on a farm or take care of younger sisters or brothers. The family and community is an integral part of the college experience here. I know this is not typical of today’s affluence; for instance, students flying home for the weekend whether they live on the east or west coast, and having so much money they are tempted into wildly extravagant, erotic, lifelong and injurious habits. All young people are curious, experimentive, and gullible. But the carefully budgeted young student of Urbana College is just so much safer in the wholesome atmosphere of a smaller college than he is in mobs who sweep him along in protests against everything, but are often confused and become angry with one another in disagreement about what they are for. Nobody wants a war, for example, but they want action “immediately if not before” (I quote an Oz book) and militant action is war.

The student who has a strong faith, is clear headed, hard working, sincere in being of use to his college, his friends, his family, and community is a very precious person indeed. We have many of them at Urbana College.

Mrs. Abaecherli is a Swedenborgian from Cincinnati and a volunteer worker at Urbana.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir:

Here is a belated but most appreciative "thank you" for the superb job that was done in planning and executing the Convention issues of *The Messenger*. The detailed reports of what was said and done, and the many pictures of the people assembled, were a delight to their friends who could not attend the gathering but who yearned to know all about it. These *Messenger* issues truly did more than has ever before been done to bring Convention home to *all* its membership.

The descriptions of the "modernization" of the worship service were, to say the least, startling and implied a swing to the other extreme from traditional ritual. Is any extreme desirable, and is it valid to upset a procedure that some like and others don't, to replace it with a different one that others like and some don't? Shouldn't a group coming together from many places to worship, agree together as to how they want to do it—rather than have thrust upon them a new and strange procedure planned by a few? Undoubtedly it was the sort of occurrence that one should not evaluate without having actually been there—but the impressions of it, given by the reports and comments, are certainly disconcerting.

The "Letter to Adults" was both significant and amusing to us "old-timers" who, through the decades, frequently have heard New Church young people say the same thing! History does repeat itself, and each generation has to search anew. About ten years ago the young people complained of not being "taught Swedenborg;" they did not get much sympathy from the older folks and regrettably were not heard from again. Yet must they sit in a huddle like baby birds waiting for Swedenborg's writings to be dropped predigested into their mouths? When we were Leaguers (ANCL President and Field Secretary 37 years ago) we all felt that we were not being properly taught Swedenborg, so we produced our own study-course: a year's supply of monthly materials including suggested reading-lists, prepared by a committee of Leaguers and a young minister, mimeographed and distributed to Leaguers all over the country.

Have today's young people, if lacking the instruction which every New-Church group should offer, chosen a volume of Swedenborg and read it all the way through—as faithfully and studiously as they would read their textbooks in mathematics, science, or foreign languages? *All* new knowledge is "foreign" until we become accustomed to it, so its initial strangeness is no excuse for not learning—and this generation of young people is supposed to be the greatest where learning-ability is concerned!

One more comment: In "People Can Change" (December issue) the author—one of a group at our Bellevue Center—speaks of "Emanuel Swedenborg, Jesus Christ and all of the other enlightened men!" Bellevue is where our students from the Swedenborg School of Religion are sent for part of their training, and does this important New-Church center *not* teach and make clear the fundamental New-Church concept that Jesus Christ is *God*?

Gwynne and David Mack

Dear Sir:

Regarding your request December 1969, p. 206—The Second Coming of the Lord occurs when I try my utmost to live by the good that I know. Insofar as I struggle, He is coming. His adventful arrival is a one out of seven time of peace, resolution, effortless Oneness. His coming is not a rare event, but common, in fact the only event.

Wilson Van Dusen Ph.d

1969 INDEX

A complete index to articles published in *The Messenger* during 1969, reproduced suitable for binding with the year's copies, is available for anyone who wants it. Just write *The Messenger*, Box E, Newton, Mass. 02158.

MESSAGE TO LEAGUERS

Thursday I sat down and I was reading a book *The Secular Congregation*. I started getting a few ideas and I thought I would write them down and relate them to you. Most of them are questions that need answering and should be answered as soon as you can. Some of them I can't answer but I hope you can. So here goes.

How many of you went to the New York House-party?

Did you enjoy going there?

Did you find out how much you don't know about the church and about yourselves?

Did you feel that you want to do something about it?

Has anyone started to do something about it?

You must be concerned about the church, the league, and your neighbor or you wouldn't be here.

Is any of that love?

Did you feel any love from the houseparty?

Do you feel any love here now?

Do you leave league meetings with a feeling of enlightenment?

If you don't, why not?

Do you want a change?

Do you like the same old atmosphere that you have here?

Does a change startle your personal security? Your own personal world?

How many of you go to church? This church?

Why don't the rest of you?

Would a change in the service help?

Would a change in communion service help?

A few small changes could do the trick.

Do you get anything out of communion? The service as we now have it? I didn't. It was too impersonal.

Can we change something in the church so that it will have more of a meaning for everyone? I believe we can but it will take time.

Would you like to learn more about yourselves and other people?

Would more of you like to learn about the existential aspects of Swedenborg?

Can you express your love to other people? Can you express your feelings to other people to make them feel welcome? Can you do it sincerely?

Are you mature enough to do some of these things? I think you are.

The time has come. The church is ready for a change. At Convention, people I talked to from all over the country are really ready for a change. The church as I see it is too impersonal. I can't get too much out of it. Can we work together for a change?

Do you want to sit around like statues and not absorb anything or do you want to be an individual and to take your own meaning that is entirely yours from this place and apply it to your own life.

Do you want to be a whole complete person or just a social security number?

When do you want to start? Yesterday was too late.

Here are three areas that need a change: the league, the service, and Sunday School. Things will have to be changed at the local church because you are dealing with individuals and their feelings. You have to do things like changes with love in your heart. And if someone is doing something that we don't like, go up to them and in a kind loving way talk to them, see if they can understand. And if they see that you care, especially about them, they might be able to dig what you are rapping to them about.

You should have a committee for each thing. You are all smart enough to come out of the dark ages and make suggestions.

After all you are the upcoming church and you have got a duty and a responsibility to yourselves and the church to make it better. Can you dig it?

Ernie Ekberg

A member of the Elmwood Mass. Church, Ernest Ekberg is presently in the Air Force, stationed in Texas. After three terms as ANCL President, he is now League Adviser.

THE EMPTY PEW

All Religion is of the Life, and the Life of Religion is to do that which is good.

Emanuel Swedenborg (*Doc. Life, 1*)

Since the ANCL Executive Board meeting and the Wilmington retreat, I have been doing a good deal of thinking about our church: its teachings and its involvement with the "outside world." There has always been a lot of talk about the declining interest and membership in the New Church, and for a while this problem worried me, as it has and does many devoted Swedenborgians. But I am becoming more and more convinced that the quantity of Swedenborgian churches, ministers, and members should not be our foremost concern; and the fact that we are not yet irrevocably bound up by an intricate and impersonal church hierarchy which is only able to reach its "subjects" in an assembly line way, is definitely to our advantage.

The parish preacher set-up is a long established system of worship but not necessarily the most valuable or effective way to relate to God or share one's religion with his neighbors. Our church system, which seems to be losing popularity, or at best is certainly not as effective as it could be in reaching people and in communicating Swedenborg, is not the most important facet of what we as Swedenborgians have to offer.

And I really think we have a lot to offer. But one cannot go around passing out copies of T.C.R., or saying, "Why don't you come to my church this Sunday and see what it's all about." One has got to live his beliefs, in his everyday life and in his relationships with people, friends and strangers alike.

It's not really important to me if the people I influence (knowingly or not) become interested in joining our church, but it is very important to me that they are positively impressed with the image I am projecting, and as a result want to better themselves by trying to be more open, loving, and sensitive people. If Swedenborgianism is my way of living, and my basis for understanding religion, that's fine for me, but I do not feel a need to convert those about me to Swedenborgianism just to increase our church population and make the New Church a widely recognized and prosperous denomination.

I wonder if maybe our emphasis on church buildings and Sunday services is not somewhat lopsided. How many new, outside people do we reach each week through the weekly worship service? How many people would we reach if instead of maintaining a large and very beautiful church building—which is used perhaps only once or twice a week—we were to sponsor a community center or housing project at the present site of our church? Are we really doing all that we can to help mankind by taking up some land and erecting a building on it, and furnishing that building with very ornate and expensive altar cloths, stained-glass windows, intricately carved wood pews and pulpits and lecterns—all of which seem to be directed toward creating pleasant surroundings in which to worship God? Our God is a God of Love, not of Vanity, and surely Jesus was the simplest Man that walked this earth. Is all this materialism, then, necessary for effective worship of God?

Of course God is different for each individual. I think of God as a super-human kind of awareness of Love, a kind of Oversoul that is everywhere and within and without each person and every aspect of nature. The closer and more open I am with myself and those around me, the closer I am to God.

I am reminded of the time several years ago when Rev. Kingslake visited the Wilmington church. In illustrating the relationships we experience between God and our neighbors, he formed a ring of children around himself. The children, with hands clasped, were instructed to draw closer to one another thus simultaneously making the circle smaller and drawing closer to Rev. Kingslake, whose central position symbolized God. This illustration serves to emphasize for me the fact that my relationships with those around me are directly proportional to my relationship with God. Therefore, I am feeling we need to become more involved with people.

I have experienced very few worship services when I have felt really close to my neighbors, consequently close to God. My most meaningful and inspiring experiences have been at L.E.I. or Convention or on a retreat or during a "rap session" with a variety of people or by being involved with someone very special to me, or by giving something of myself to another or many other people. But I can only think of a very few instances when the weekly

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EMPTY PEW cont'd. from p. 23

ritualistic church service has really turned me on—and the hard and cold fact that our congregational population is dwindling is evidence enough that I am not alone in my disenchantment with the church establishment.

Why then, do we continue to cling to tradition, to architecturally beautiful but sometimes spiritually empty church buildings that are impractical in terms of upkeep and insufficient in terms of utility? *Now* is the problem, so why sit back and say our faith is in the “upcoming generation—the future of the church is in *their* hands.”

We could do so much more for our neighbors if we worked together, practicalized our doctrines and *lived* Swedenborgianism, rather than exalting its uniqueness, and building a white middle class wall fabricated with T.C.R.'s and Books of Worship and embroidered altar cloths and clerical collars and sometimes hypocritical social norms and intellectual *Messenger* articles and all the things that are easy to hide behind and can be very impressive and subconscious disguises and *could* distract or even discourage outsiders from wanting to explore the very basic and very useful things we as Swedenborgians have to offer.

I do want to share my understanding of Swedenborg with people, but *not* by labeling it a cut-and-dried religion with rules and doctrines that must be accepted or rejected; rather as a flexible way of life that even people who have never read Swedenborg nor participated in a church service can be aware of and perhaps want to imitate.

Swedenborg, though still pretty much of a stranger to me, has impressed me with some really beautiful ideas about freedom of choice, “doing your own thing,” about love and sharing and relating to people, about the afterlife, and so many things that have been and continue to be very useful to me as an individual who is often alone, confused and struggling for an identity in this fast-moving world. I am finding the teachings of our church to be amazingly contemporary and pertinent to the problems of today. Why then, must we continue to emphasize only the Sunday worship service, rather than daily worship through unselfish, Swedenborgianly living and practical applications of Swedenborgianism through our relationships with people and nature? Why must we continue to be concerned with the *quantity* rather than the *quality* of New Church men and women?

The Sunday worship service need not be a separate entity that is untouchably sacred, and it need not be ritualistic or monotonous. God endowed us with creative minds that were meant to be exercised each according to his own interest and abilities, and I'm sure He doesn't derive any more pleasure or satisfaction than we do out of mouthed and mumbled phrases week after week. Ritual just doesn't strike me as being an effective way to give thanks.

If someone were to give me a dress as a gift, the best way for me to express my appreciation for the gift would be to *wear* it, but certainly not to call the giver once a week and say, “thank you,” while the dress remained in my closet. I cannot imagine that our God of Love would prefer us to spend a lot of time and money erecting sanctuaries and following prescribed orders of worship to our using that same time and money to live and love and share. “This is his commandment, that we love one another as he hath loved us.”

And so the “lover's quarrel” continues.....

Cathy Thomas

Cathy is an active member of the Wilmington Church and National Treasurer of ANCL.

1970 World Assembly

RECEPTION INVITATION

As most of you already know, the Women's League and the Women's Guild in London are arranging an informal reception for all those attending the New Church World Assembly in London on the eve of its official opening. This reception will be held in the Victoria Hall on Wednesday, July 1st, at 7:15 P. M. and will include buffet refreshments, short welcoming speeches and musical entertainment.

Since the Victoria Hall will only accommodate 500 people it is absolutely essential that the ladies know well in advance how many will attend. Therefore they are asking that we purchase tickets now at \$1.25 per person. March 15th is the deadline for receiving reservations. Admission will be by *ticket only*, so in order to be included, please send your reservation with check or money order for \$1.25 each to: Margaret S. Sampson, 330 East 84th Street, New York, N. Y. 10028. Your ticket with your name on it will be waiting for you in London.

STATISTICS

BIRTHS

Mr. and Mrs. Dick Zacharias of Pretty Prairie, Kansas are the proud parents of a baby daughter born on September 5th.

The following children were born to parents of the Edmonton, Alberta church: Melissa on July 6th to Mr. and Mrs. Van Bergen; Gillian Ardell on September 25th to Mr. and Mrs. Mowat; Darcy Leigh on October 22nd to the Ed Sawchuks.

Tonia Rae, born September 8th, arrived by adoption at the home of James and Marilee Frizzell, of Calgary, Alberta on October 28th.

A baby daughter, Lee Anne Marie, was born to Lloyd and Loretta Latimer of Calgary, Alberta, Canada on December 12th.

Mr. and Mrs. Bud Graber of the Pretty Prairie Church are the proud parents of a son, Roy Allen, born October 11th.

Kristen Leigh White, daughter of Garry and Joanna White, of San Diego, Cal. was born on December 20th.

Mr. and Mrs. James Lau of Lansing, Mich. are the proud parents of a son, Timothy Conrad, born on January 2nd.

Patricia Laurel, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Slough of Springfield, Ohio was born on January 7th. Rev. and Mrs. Erwin Reddekopp are the maternal grandparents.

BAPTISMS

On November 9th Kimberly Sue and Kevin Leon, children of Karl and Linda Wilson of Fryeburg, Maine were baptized by the Rev. Horace W. Briggs.

Rev. Othmar Tobisch baptized the following infants in San Francisco: October 5th Todd, son of Theodore and Barbara Anderson of San Francisco; October 5th Laura Karen, daughter of Daniel and Betty Wheeler of Daly City; October 12th Timothy James, son of Henry and Judith Weber of San Francisco.

Monica Faith, infant daughter of Marvin and Sharlene Broten of Meadow Lake, Sas., was baptized during the morning worship service at Meadow Lake on October 19th with Rev. Henry W. Reddekopp officiating.

In Fryeburg, Maine the following children were baptized: In November, Jason Scott, son of Bruce and Joyce Perkins; on November 23rd, Vicki-Lynne, daughter of William and Roberta Jones, and Michael Patrick, son of Michael and Sarah Clemons; on November 16th, Kelly Jean, daughter of Forest and Cheryl Cluff.

On December 9th in San Francisco, Cal., the Rev. Othmar Tobisch baptized Lane Adam, son of Lawrence and Jeannine Brown of Vallejo; and Robin Elisabeth, daughter of Robert and Judith Fewster of San Francisco.

At the Church of the Open Word in Creve Coeur, Mo. Cynthia Theresa, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. David Moorman, and Elizabeth Anne, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Orthwein III, were baptized on December 28th.

Jennifer Ann Braniff, daughter of William V. and Margaret Braniff of Kitchener, Ontario, was baptized on November 29th by the Rev. Paul B. Zacharias.

Mark Jonathan Lasso, son of Donald and Jeannette Lasso of Kitchener, Ontario was baptized on December 21st by the Rev. Paul B. Zacharias.

The Rev. Othmar Tobisch baptized the following infants in the San Francisco Church: November 30th, Peter Ronald, son of Peter and Annemarie Schnell of San Francisco; December 13th, Robert Michael, son of Dennis and Roberta Chinn of San Francisco; December 14th, Susan Maria, daughter of Fritz and Ruth Haas of Walnut Creek; December 21st, Julie, daughter of E. M. and Lorraine Fulmer of Singapore, Malaya.

CONFIRMATIONS

Marvin O. Butts and Richard L. Winsett were received into the membership of the Los Angeles Society on November 9th.

Kenneth John Froese of Rapid View, Sask. was received into New Church membership by the rite of Confirmation during a worship service at Meadow Lake, Sask. on October 19th.

MARRIAGES

John Jeffery and Audrey Lupul were united in marriage on October 4th in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Rev. Harvey A. Tafel and the groom's father officiated.

The Rev. Horace Briggs of Fryeburg, Maine united two couples in marriage on October 25th; Terry L. Lord and Muriel J. Eastman, and Russell A. Record and Margie C. Smith.

Philip O'Hanley and Bonnie Snow of the Fryeburg area were married at Our Lady of the Mountains on November 1st.

Mary Ann Caruana and Barth Bennitt were married at the Miami Church by the Rev. Ernest Frederick on October 26th.

In Kitchener, Ontario on December 26th Randy Poll and Phyllis Kurt were married by the Rev. Paul Zacharias.

Margaret Thomas and Ronald Farnsworth were married in the San Francisco Church on December 7th.

In Fryeburg two marriages took place in December: On December 13th Lindon Bartlett and Rhonda Ford were married; on December 27th Kenneth Ela and Rebecca Eakin were joined in marriage, the Rev. Horace W. Briggs officiating at both.

DEATHS

Miss Katherine P. Moore of the Connecticut Association passed away recently in Connecticut. She is survived by one brother who resides in Mexico.

Rev. Othmar Tobisch conducted a memorial service on October 10th for Dr. Frederick Fender of San Francisco. He is survived by his widow and three sons.

James Burtner, grandson of Frances Clark of the San Diego Church, was killed in a motorcycle accident on October 21st. He attended the church Sunday school for several years.

Daniel W. Schmitt of Denver, Col. passed away on October 20th. Resurrection Services were held on October 23rd at Denver with interment at Loveland, Col. He is survived by his wife, two daughters and one son.

Mrs. Agatha Reddekopp, former resident of Sunnyslope, Alberta, passed into eternal life on October 7th. Resurrection service was held from the United Church in Acme, Alberta, on October 11th with Mr. John Jeffery and Rev. Henry Reddekopp officiating.

Lawrence Victor Cass of Kitchener, Ontario, passed into the higher life on October 26th. Resurrection Service was conducted by the Rev. Paul B. Zacharias on October 29th.

On January 3rd, Resurrection Services were held for Harold W. Kiesman, long-time member of the Fryeburg, Maine Church. The Rev. Horace W. Briggs officiated.

Beulah White Hall died at Culpepper, Va. on December 4th at the age of 89. She was buried at Barnesville, Md.

The father of Rev. Brian Kingslake of Washington, D.C., Martin Kingslake, died in Brighton, England on December 13th, at the age of 93.

William Baxter of Trenton, N. J. died recently, and the funeral was held on December 30th.

Mrs. Sarah Zacharias, former resident of Herbert, Sask., Canada, passed into the spiritual world on October 29th at Abbotsford, B. C. at the age of 87.

Mrs. Pauline Switley of Vancouver, B. C. passed into eternal life on November 28th.

Dan Schmitt of the Kansas Association passed to the higher life on October 20th. Rev. Rollo Billings officiated in memorial services in Denver on October 23rd. He is survived by his wife, Della.

Mrs. Gertrude Rienstra, beloved wife of August Rienstra, passed away on November 4th at Grand Rapids, Mich. Resurrection services were conducted by the Rev. Paul Zacharias of Kitchener, Ontario on November 7th.

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AFRICA cont'd from p. 18

League and a Sunday School teacher but the principal of a day-school as well. After presenting our gifts and talking a few minutes, Jean took pictures of the children who had gathered by that time in the yard, before proceeding into the Church. This edifice had an attractive chancel and chairs rather than pews, seating possibly one hundred. It was packed. We were escorted to the front row near the choir and provided with kneeling cushions—the only ones in evidence! Mr. Mooki delivered the excellent sermon in English—for our benefit no doubt—and it was translated into two native languages by two fine looking young men standing beside him. The choir sang alternately in both languages, the words being typed on sheets distributed to the congregation. The offertory song, a spiritual, was sung in perfect English; "Oh, Lord, Won't you Rock my Soul." It was plaintively beautiful and moved us deeply. It was, in fact a climax to an unforgettable service which had lifted us to another plane.

After the service, we were invited to seats on the edge of the chancel, and introduced to the congregation, and then asked to say a few words. Mrs. Mooki did both the introducing and the translating. Heretofore, speaking in public was a minor agony for me, but on this day the sphere of good will was so strong that for two minutes the words flowed out like molten gold and for the first time in my life I was conscious of enjoying the experience. The amenities over, Jean had the congregation gather in the courtyard to take pictures. (One of the Women's League in uniform with Mrs. Mooki herewith). We were sad that she ran out of film just as she got to Mr. Mooki.



Women's League in uniform with Mrs. Mooki, pastor's wife, in choir robe, organist, choir leader, teacher and principal of day school.

Returning to the Mooki apartment, we found a tea cart with tea and sandwiches and other goodies laid out for us but no one else to partake. We had invited the Mookis to dine with us at the hotel, but Mrs. Mooki was too busy with choir practice.

(We had ascertained previously from Mr. Mooki if this was allowable.) After showing us the tiny rooms with double decker cots built for the theological students, and the pastor's study, Mr. Mooki drove us back to the hotel accompanied by his assistant, Edgar Patotse, who is also principal of a high school. Both spoke very good English. We were too late for dinner in the main dining room but were given permission to take them to our rooms for dinner. So we had a belated lunch on the low table in our reception room. We bade them a reluctant farewell just before descending to the lobby where our study group had gathered to be taken to the airport and Salisbury.

STATISTICS cont'd from p. 26

On November 11th, Mrs. Helen Owen Lee of Los Angeles, Cal. passed into the spiritual life. Resurrection services were held on November 14th, the Rev. Robert Young officiating.

Resurrection services were held in Fryeburg, Maine on November 8th for Edward F. Dolley, and on November 14th for Lewis F. Abbott of Conway.

Walter P. Bogdon of Kitchener, Ontario died on November 23rd. Resurrection services were conducted by the Rev. Paul B. Zacharias on November 26th.

John Hodge, husband of Jean Andrews Hodge, of the Detroit Church, passed into the higher life on November 27th. Resurrection service was held on December 1st in Livonia.

Johan Fatland, husband of Anna, of the Detroit Church, passed away on December 10th. Resurrection service was held in Livonia on December 12th, Rev. Erwin Reddekopp officiating. Beside his wife, he is survived by three daughters.

Donald Saul, husband of Mareta Saul of Garden Grove, Cal. and father of Mareta Tafel, passed away recently.

Mrs. Bertha Hill, a former member of the Detroit Church, passed into the higher life on December 31st at the home of her daughter in Ann Arbor. Memorial services were held on January 4th.

THE MESSENGER

FEBRUARY 1970

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